

University of Waterloo, Department of Psychology
Psych 389, SSARM 001: Research in Developmental Psychology
Psych 393, Research in Developmental Psychology
Fall 2017, Tuesdays & Thursdays, 2:30-3:50pm, ML 246

Instructor & T.A. Information

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Course Description

This course is designed to help you develop key skills used by researchers in developmental psychology, and in psychology more broadly; many of these skills are also useful in non-academic contexts. The course is designed to be driven by your own interests and you will gain experience asking research questions, designing studies, conducting literature searches, collecting and interpreting data, and presenting findings. Please note that you will not directly work with children in this course. You will observe children, and collect observational data, in the Psychology Department's Early Childhood Education Centre; but you will only directly collect data from your fellow students in the class. To succeed in this course, you must attend class, be engaged, and complete a series of assignments.

Readings

I have uploaded readings (and some links) to LEARN.

Assignment & other requirements

A1. Test of literature search skills, Sep 19 (5%)

A test of your ability to find citations and conduct literature searches.

A2. Graph 2 sets of data; graphs due at beginning of class, Sep. 26 (2%)

You will download two sets of data and graph them. Please bring printed versions of the graphs to class.

A3. Observation in ECEC & Reflection paper. Paper due Oct. 5 (2%)

Observe children's free play in the ECEC for a minimum of half an hour, and then write a reflection paper describing something you observed, and reflecting on its significance; the paper is due on Oct 5. This should be no longer than 400 words, not including the title. You could write about something that happened in the span of one minute, some repeated event, or a general feature of children's play that you noticed. The topic depends on what catches your attention and interest. But the paper should not be merely descriptive, so please do not just describe events. You could also discuss why the thing you observed is interesting or important, and discuss questions that your observation raises.

Free play at the ECEC takes place between 10:30-11:30am (morning) and 2:30-3:30pm (afternoon). You may visit the ECEC on any of the following days: Sep 25-29, Oct 2-4; please NOTE, on Sep 29, only the morning session is available. To observe free play, please call Karen Barna at 33167 and let her know when to expect you.

A4. Observational experiment & poster presentation (20% overall)

Working in groups of 2-3, you will come up with a question to be investigated using observational methods, and will devise an observational scoring scheme for investigating the question. This assignment occurs in three steps:

1. Oral proposal; October 17; worth 2%. With your group, you will give a 3 minute oral presentation, addressing the following questions: i) What basic question will you be trying to answer? ii) Why is your question or topic interesting or important? iii) How will you examine the question? For this question, it will be especially helpful, if you bring in a chart showing your coding scheme, though it will not be graded.

2. Testing at ECEC. You will use your group's coding scheme to collect data across at least two ECEC sessions. Free play at the ECEC takes place between 10:30-11:30am (morning) and 2:30-3:30pm (afternoon). You can visit the ECEC on Oct 6, 12-13, 16-20; please NOTE, on Oct 6, 13, & 20 the sessions are only available in the morning. Please call Karen Barna at 33167 and let her know when to expect you.

3. Creating a poster. To create the poster, you will share data with the other member(s) of your group. However, you will INDIVIDUALLY create posters, and upload them to LEARN by Oct 24 (posters must be uploaded before the beginning of class). You will also print out your poster. (See below for information about creating and printing a poster).

4. Poster sessions, Oct 24 & 26; worth 18%. In two classes, we will hold poster sessions. In each session, half the students will present their posters to the other half of the students, who will individually visit the posters. You should briefly describe your project for each visitor (i.e., in 5 minutes or less). This is what happens at poster sessions in academic conferences, and is also similar to a science fair.

FURTHER INFORMATION ABOUT CREATING & PRINTING YOUR POSTER

Posters should be no larger than 86cm X 111cm, though you may choose landscape or portrait orientation. You can save money by making your poster black and white. To get ideas for your poster, walk around the research area on the 4th floor of the PAS. Feel free to get creative (e.g., color it in by hand). Also, a template for creating posters in PowerPoint is in the "Useful Files" folder in LEARN. You don't have to use it.

You can print your poster using a regular printer. Print it on individual sheets of paper, and arrange them in a rectangle (e.g., 4 X 4 sheets). You could also tape/glue the sheets, so that there are no gaps between them. For this option, "poster printing" should be one of your printer settings in Powerpoint; it is found in the same place as settings for "multiple pages per side".

You can also have your poster printed commercially; Fedex in University Plaza near Harvey's may be cheapest. We recommend ordering a black&white poster on normal paper (ask for an over-sized black&white print, 34x44inches). This costs approx. \$10 + tax, though please confirm the price and other details before making your poster. Ordering a color poster is more expensive and unnecessary, so please save yourself the money! You will probably need to provide the company with a .pdf of your poster.

Also, remember to leave at least a 1/4 inch of margin room in your design. Finally, if you decide to go with a commercial printer, call in advance to learn about wait times (Fedex: 519-746-3363).

A5. Journal article presentations (15%)

You will choose a research paper based on your own interests, and present it to the class. Give the presentation using PowerPoint (or similar software), and both review and assess the paper. Tell us why the topic is interesting, what you liked, what didn't you like, remaining question, and possible follow-up work that might be conducted. You must confirm your chosen paper with me in advance, and post a PDF of your chosen paper to LEARN by Nov 2. If a paper has already been chosen by someone else, you will need to choose a different paper. Presentations should be no longer than 15 minutes long; additional time will be allotted for questions.

A6. Final project (46% overall)

You will design an experiment to be conducted on adults and on children aged somewhere between 3- and 5-years-old. You will test the others students in class (i.e. adult participants), and "fake" data for the child participants. You will then write an APA style research paper reporting your experiment.

The adult participants should be tested using methods appropriate for testing children. Only a few exceptions are permitted: 1) if children are shown a scenarios with adult narration, adults can look over a cartoon with the narrative written down; 2) if children are asked questions verbally, adults can answer questions using pen-and-paper; 3) if items meant to tax children's abilities would be too easy for adults, more difficult items can be used.

Here are the steps in completing your APA style research paper:

a. Write up a first draft as an APA style paper; due Nov 23 by midnight. This is ungraded, BUT: If you do not submit your first draft, you will not be allowed to review anyone else's paper (see b below), nor will you be able to respond to reviews (see d. below), and so this will lead to an automatic 8% deduction in your final grade!

b. Two anonymous reviews. Max pages = 2 per review; worth 4% (i.e. 2% each); due Nov 28 by 7pm. Each paper will be assigned two anonymous reviewers, and you will each review two papers. See LEARN for a PDF called "Sample reviews and revisions"; it will show you what reviews typically look like. *These are graded by the author of the reviewed paper.*

c. Final draft of paper. Max pages = 10; worth 40%; due Dec 7 by 5pm. Revise paper in response to reviews to arrive at a final draft.

d. Letter responding to reviewers. Worth 2% (all-or-nothing); due Dec 7 by 5pm. Write a letter explaining your responses to the reviewers' concerns. Best method is to keep the original review in its entirety, and respond below each of the reviewer's recommendations in bold, either describing how you revised the paper in response to the recommendation, or explaining why you chose to not revise in accordance with the recommendation. (Again, see the PDF, "Sample reviews and revisions".)

Participation (10%)

This includes attendance (~half the grade) and contributions to class discussions and question sessions.

Course Outline

Date	Topic
Sep 7	Introduction to the course.
Sep 12	We introduce ourselves & describe potential interests
Sep 14	Meet in LIB329 (a computer lab). Learn literature search skills.
Sep 19	Meet in PAS1237 (computer lab). Complete A1, test of literature search skills. A2 will be assigned
Sep 21	Discuss Intros & Methods. A3 will be assigned
Sep 26	Meet in PAS1237 (computer lab). A2 is due at beginning of class. Learning EXCEL and GRAPHING.
Sep 28	Talk about writing papers & experimental design.
Oct 3	***Tentatively: dissect-a-paper; tips on concise writing; tips on oral presentations. ***
Oct 5	A3 is due. Discuss observational studies, then form groups of 2-3, and assign A4.
Oct 10	STUDY DAY – NO CLASS
Oct 12	Lab day; Observation in ECEC; class cancelled.
Oct 17	A4 Observational study proposals
Oct 19	Lab day: Observation in ECEC; class cancelled.
Oct 24	A4 is due. All posters must be uploaded by class time. A4 poster presentations, part 1.
Oct 26	A4 poster presentations, part 2.
Oct 31	A5 paper presentations 1/7
Nov 2	A5 paper presentations 2/7
Nov 7	A5 paper presentations 3/7
Nov 9	Everyone administers tests on everyone else
Nov 14	Continue administering tests.
Nov 16	Continue administering tests.
Nov 21	A5 paper presentations 4/7
Nov 23	A5 paper presentations 5/7; 1st draft of A6 paper due
Nov 28	A5 paper presentations 6/7; Anonymous reviews due (2 per person) & given to authors.
Nov 30	A5 paper presentations 7/7; [***A6 final paper & letter responding to reviews due on Dec 7***].

Some notes on written assignments

- All written assignments will be uploaded to LEARN
- Unless otherwise specified, assignments must be uploaded by the beginning of class.
- All written assignments should be in .doc, .docx, or .rtf format, and written in 12pt Times New Roman font, double spaced, with all margins set at 1 inch (2.54 cm). Page/word limits *do not include*: title pages, abstracts, figures, tables, or reference sections.
- Many of the assignments will require you to use APA (American Psychological Association) format. i.e. the style described in the 6th edition of the APA Publication Manual (2010). A “mini-manual” has been uploaded to LEARN

Late assignments & extensions

Unless otherwise specified, files for all assignments should be uploaded to LEARN before class on the date due, and please doublecheck that file is uploaded correctly. No broken printers, no hard-drives failures, computer crashes as excuses. Save it often, e-mail it to yourself as an attachment as a backup, and please don't leave it till the night before or the due date.

Also, unless you have an appropriate doctor's note, a death in your family (or some equally severe situation), extensions will not be provided for late assignments. Instead, late assignments will receive a maximum grade of 50%.

Academic Integrity

Academic Integrity: In order to maintain a culture of academic integrity, members of the University of Waterloo are expected to promote honesty, trust, fairness, respect and responsibility. See the [UWaterloo Academic Integrity webpage](#) and the [Arts Academic Integrity webpage](#) for more information.

Discipline: A student is expected to know what constitutes academic integrity, to avoid committing academic offences, and to take responsibility for his/her actions. A student who is unsure whether an action constitutes an offence, or who needs help in learning how to avoid offences (e.g., plagiarism, cheating) or about “rules” for group work/collaboration should seek guidance from the course professor, academic advisor, or the Undergraduate Associate Dean. When misconduct has been found to have occurred, disciplinary penalties will be imposed under Policy 71 – Student Discipline. For information on categories of offenses and types of penalties, students should refer to [Policy 71 - Student Discipline](#). For typical penalties check [Guidelines for the Assessment of Penalties](#).

Concerns About a Course Policy or Decision

Informal Stage. We in the Psychology Department take great pride in the high quality of our program and our instructors. Though infrequent, we know that students occasionally find themselves in situations of conflict with their instructors over course policies or grade assessments. If such a conflict arises, the Associate Chair for Undergraduate Affairs (Richard Eibach) is available for consultation and to mediate a resolution between the student and instructor: Email: reibach@uwaterloo.ca; Ph 519-888-4567 ext. 38790

Grievance: A student who believes that a decision affecting some aspect of his/her university life has been unfair or unreasonable may have grounds for initiating a grievance. Read [Policy 70 - Student Petitions and Grievances](#), Section 4. When in doubt, please be certain to contact Richard Eibach, the Associate Chair for Undergraduate Affairs who will provide further assistance; reibach@uwaterloo.ca.

Appeals: A decision made or penalty imposed under Policy 70 - Student Petitions and Grievances (other than a petition) or Policy 71 - Student Discipline may be appealed if there is a ground. A student who believes he/she has a ground for an appeal should refer to [Policy 72 - Student Appeals](#).

Accommodation for Students with Disabilities

Note for students with disabilities: The [AccessAbility Services](#) office, located on the first floor of the Needles Hall extension (1401), collaborates with all academic departments to arrange appropriate accommodations for students with disabilities without compromising the academic integrity of the curriculum. If you require academic accommodations to lessen the impact of your disability, please register with the AS office at the beginning of each academic term.

Accommodation for course requirements

- Students requesting accommodation for course requirements (assignments, midterm tests, final exams, etc.) due to illness should do the following:
 - Consult the University’s [examination regulations](#) for information about procedures and policies for requesting accommodations
 - seek medical treatment as soon as possible
 - obtain documentation of the illness with a completed uWaterloo [Verification of Illness Form](#)

- submit that form to the instructor within 48 hours. Students in Centre for Extended Learning (CEL) courses must submit their confirmation of the illness to CEL.
- (if possible) inform the instructor by the due date for the course requirement that you will be unable to meet the deadline and that documentation will be forthcoming.
- In the case of a missed final exam, the instructor and student will negotiate an extension for the final exam, which will typically be written as soon as possible, but no later than the next offering of the course.
- In the case of a missed assignment deadline, midterm test, or quiz, the instructor will either:
 - waive the course component and re-weight remaining term work as he/she deems fit according to circumstances and the goals of the course, or
 - provide an extension.
- In the case of bereavement, the instructor will provide similar accommodations to those for illness. Appropriate documentation to support the request will be required.
- Students who are experiencing extenuating circumstances should also inform their academic advisors regarding their personal difficulties.
- Elective arrangements such as travel plans are not acceptable grounds for granting accommodations to course requirements per the uWaterloo Examination Regulations and Related Matters.

Official version of the course outline

If there is a discrepancy between the hard copy outline (i.e., if students were provided with a hard copy at the first class) and the outline posted on LEARN, the outline on LEARN will be deemed the official version. Outlines on LEARN may change as instructors develop a course, but they become final as of the first class meeting for the term.

Mental Health Services

Mental Health Services aim is to provide holistic programming and services to help you lead a healthy and balanced life. We strive to provide a secure, supportive environment for students of all orientations and backgrounds.

Students suffering from problems with anxiety, depression, problems with sleep, attention, obsessions or compulsions, relationship difficulties, severe winter blues, etc., may make an appointment by phone or in person. Appointments are usually available within two days of initial contact with one of our medical doctors. All contacts are completely confidential.

Contact Health Services

[Health Services Building](#)

Call 519-888-4096 to schedule an appointment

Call 1-866-797-0000 for free 24/7 advice from a health professional

Contact Counselling Services

[Needles Hall Addition, NH 2401](#)

Call 519-888-4567 x 32655 to schedule an appointment

counserv@uwaterloo.ca