

Psych 499 A-B-C

Orientation meeting

Tuesday January 9, 2018



University of
Waterloo



Today's Session

- **REG Coordinator & Ethics Administrator**
 - Michelle Manios, PAS 3013, regadmin@uwaterloo.ca
- **Library liaison**
 - Tim Ireland PAS 3013, regadmin@uwaterloo.ca
- **Psych 499 Coordinator**
 - Richard Eibach, PAS 3053, reibach@uwaterloo.ca

General Remarks

- **The Honours Thesis is a unique opportunity**
 - apprenticeship in how to conduct research from developing a hypothesis through to writing an empirical paper
 - individual interaction and collaboration with faculty member and graduate students
 - capstone experience for undergraduate honours degree
 - essential preparation for graduate studies

General Remarks

- **Finding Information on Psych Dept. Webpage**
 - Current Undergrad Students
 - Courses
 - Psych 499 A/B/C
- **Information on:**
 - Honours thesis handbook (updated)
 - Orientation meetings
 - Deadlines & Important dates
 - Oral Presentation Schedule
 - Contact information
 - And more..... (e.g., where to find a sample thesis)

Agenda

- **Supervisors**
- **Course format**
- **Common problems**
- **Additional opportunities**

Supervisors

- **Finding a supervisor**
 - **Contact faculty members after you've enrolled in Psych 499A**
 - **You might have to ask several different profs**
 - **Ordinarily, make email contact first with:**
 - Unofficial transcript
 - Statement of interest (why do you want to work with this particular faculty member)
 - What terms you hope to enroll in Psych 499A/B/C
 - Request an appointment to meet in person

Supervisors

- **Selecting a thesis topic**
 - Consider an on-going project in the faculty member's lab or suggest an idea of your own
 - **If suggesting your own topic,**
 - Be prepared to explain why this topic interests you
 - What you've already read on this topic
 - Topic needs to be narrow enough to develop a clear research question and specific, testable hypotheses

Supervisors

- **Supervision styles**
 - Some are structured, others less so
 - Up to you to establish and maintain regular contact with supervisor
 - Plan accordingly if supervisor is going on sabbatical
 - Be sure to clarify and manage expectations
 - How often will you check in (virtually or f-to-f)?
 - Level of independence expected
 - Deadlines

Supervisors

- **Supervisors are useful to you beyond the thesis**
 - Letters of reference
 - Information about:
 - applying for scholarships
 - applying to grad programs

Course Format

- **Psych 499 enrollment requires a Psych average of 82%**
- **Only contact potential supervisors when you're officially enrolled in 499A**

Course Format

- **There are 3 components:**
 - 499A: literature review, research question(s), & thesis reviewer nominations
 - 499B: research design, proposal, & presentation
 - 499C: data collection, analysis, & final write-up
- **Psych 499 can take 2 to 5 terms**
 - Many students complete in 2 terms (499A/B in term 1, 499C in term 2)
 - Up to 5 terms might be necessary for coop students
- **Be flexible**

Course Format, cont'd

- **Registering for 499A vs. 499A&B**
 - Email name of thesis supervisor by **Jan 12** to Nadine Quehl: nquehl@uwaterloo.ca
 - **499A only** –
 - Submit progress report to Richard Eibach's mailbox by noon on April **24th**
 - Email Thesis reviewer nominations to Richard (reibach@uwaterloo.ca) by April **4th**
 - Complete your presentation the following term

Course Format, cont'd

▪ **499A&B** –

- Email Thesis reviewer nominations to Richard (reibach@uwaterloo.ca) by **Jan 19th**
- If you COMPLETE 499B, then you do NOT need to hand in 499A progress report
- If you do not complete 499B even though registered for it, you MUST complete progress report
- TIP: book 499B presentation slot early!

- **At the end of 499C you will submit your final thesis**

Thesis reviewer

- **Thesis reviewer nominations**
 - Email the following to Richard, reibach@uwaterloo.ca
 - brief description of thesis topic (approx. 50 words)
 - names of **3 faculty members** who you're nominating as reviewer
- **Richard will contact faculty members to find out if they're available**
- **Reviewer responsibilities:**
 - read and attend 499B proposal presentation and provide feedback
 - read 499C thesis paper
 - help assign final grade

Progress report

- **Progress Report 499A**
 - 5-10 pages
 - General statement about research area
 - A brief description of relevant literature
 - The research question
 - Outline of further steps

Research proposal

- **Research Proposal 499B**
 - Due 2 business days before your oral presentation date (Thurs 4:30pm for a Tues presentation)
 - 10-15 pages
 - Title, Abstract
 - Concise background literature & clear statement of research questions/hypotheses
 - Method (measures/experimental procedures)
 - Expected Results
 - Plans for data analysis & Proposed timeline to complete project
 - Approved by supervisor (signed) and submitted to mailbox of your thesis reviewer

Oral presentation

- **Oral presentation for 499B**
 - 50 min; talk 20-25 min; remainder for discussion
 - Use PowerPoint; Practice in advance
 - Explain your rationale, purpose, methods, and hypotheses
 - Not formally graded
 - Reviewer will ask general questions, probe your knowledge, make suggestions
 - Attend other students' presentations to familiarize yourself with format
- (Note: Oral presentation before data collection)**

Course Issues

- **499C**

- Ethics approval (or end of 499B)
- Data collection
- Analysis
- Write up (more on next slide)

Final thesis paper

- **Final Report 499C**

- Due by **April 16th**
- 20-30 pages
- Title, Abstract, Introduction, Literature Review & Hypotheses, Method, Results, General Discussion, References, Tables & Figures, Appendices
- Submit an electronic version and print copy to Nadine Quehl: nquehl@uwaterloo.ca
- Graded by Supervisor who comments and suggests a grade range, and 499 Reviewer, who comments and assigns final grade
 - same grade applied retroactively to 499A/B/C

Common Problems

- **Don't allow enough time for:**
 - ethics clearance
 - data collection
 - data analysis
 - writing multiple drafts of the final product
- **Final product is not APA format or is missing:**
 - abstract
 - **introduction/overview before** literature review
 - clear and specific statement of **hypotheses**
 - writing for a **general** psych audience

Conference Opportunity

- **Ontario Undergraduate Psychology Thesis Conference**
 - an informal forum for students in Ontario to present a summary of their theses
 - either orally or in poster format
 - to a friendly and enthusiastic audience of peers and to discuss your work with others who have similar interests
- **Friday, May 4th (abstract due earlier) at Ryerson University**
- **No registration fee for presenters or faculty members and lunch is provided**
- **Opportunity to network with Psychology students and faculty at other universities**
- **Participants report that the event is very worthwhile and enjoyable**
- **Looks great on graduate school applications**

Who Can Answer Questions

- **Nadine Quehl, Psych 499 course administrator**
 - Paperwork (enrolment, extensions, etc.)
 - Scheduling 499B presentation
 - Email: nquehl@uwaterloo.ca
- **Richard Eibach, Thesis Coordinator**
 - Should I be taking the thesis?
 - Issues with your supervisor
 - Email: reibach@uwaterloo.ca
- **Your thesis supervisor**
 - Research question & literature, designing your study, analyzing data, writing final product

Course Issues

- **Thesis Awards**

- Recognize exceptional performance throughout all stages of the thesis project
- Awarded annually in June for theses completed the prior three terms
- Nominated by Supervisor

Responsible Research Conduct

You are responsible for following research integrity standards and university policies

Information/resources about responsible research conduct, FAQs etc.

Link:

<https://uwaterloo.ca/research/office-research-ethics/research-integrity/training-and-resources>

2-Minute Thesis Option

- **Consider creating a short "video snapshot" of your work.**
 - Great way to tell others about your thesis & your experience at UW
 - Create a 1-2 min. video where you explain what you researched and what you found out
 - Use a smartphone or Department's video camera
- **Logistics**
 - Make your video after you submit 499C paper (within 2 weeks please)
 - You are responsible for emailing your video to Nadine Quehl (nquehl@uwaterloo.ca)
 - We will review, upload to the Psych Dept. website, and let you know when you can share the link with others
- **Note: Completing a video is optional**
 - Whether or not you choose to capture your thesis on video will in no way affect your grade in PSYCH 499 or eligibility for thesis awards