PSYCHOLOGY PROSEMINAR
PSY 5300.001
Fall 2020

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Office Hours (by e-mail or Zoom): T & W, 2:00 – 4:00 p.m.; R 2:00 – 3:00 p.m.

Course Information:
Monday, 4:00 – 6:30 p.m.
*Hybrid: online & livestream (via Zoom)

PSYC 5300 Psychology Proseminar (Professional Seminar):

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course will include graduate-level coverage of professional issues in the field of psychology. Students will be introduced to topics related to the professional practice of psychology, as well as to faculty research, and will be guided in building professional portfolios and developing individual research interests.

TEXT AND MATERIALS


Recommended:


• Additional articles and chapters posted to Brightspace/D2L
GOALS FOR THE COURSE

The goals for this course are to assist students in developing an understanding of professionalism as it relates to graduate educational pursuits and to various vocational specialties within the field of psychology, and to aid students in crystallizing their individual professional goals and research interests over the course of the semester.

To accomplish this, students will be exposed to literature addressing professional dispositions and practices. Students will also investigate various areas of psychological research being conducted in the department, as well as important areas of professional development such as academic writing, submitting articles for publication, and developing professional presentations.

As a class, we will discuss the importance of initiating and maintaining evidence of consistent productivity for professional success, and students will develop evidence of productivity by the end of the course. Since academic writing is a key component to success in this field, students will learn and implement effective writing strategies by the end of the semester.

Students will also learn about expectations for professional relationships with faculty, peers, and other professionals in the field. Moreover, students will be exposed to departmental expectations regarding thesis projects, and will develop a preliminary plan for satisfactorily completing a thesis in a time-efficient manner. Finally, students will understand the significance of embracing a commitment to becoming a life-long learner and an ethical and effective professional in their chosen career path.

PROGRAM LEARNING OUTCOMES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PLO</th>
<th>Proficiency Level</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The student will demonstrate familiarity with the major concepts, theoretical perspectives, empirical findings, and historical trends in psychology as related to professional practice.</td>
<td>Advanced/Mastery</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The student will understand and apply basic research methods in psychology, including research design, data analysis, and interpretation.</td>
<td>Advanced/Mastery</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The student will respect and use critical and creative thinking, skeptical inquiry, and when possible, the scientific approach to solve problems related to behavior and mental processes.</td>
<td>Mastery</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The student will understand and apply psychological principles to personal, social, and organizational issues.</td>
<td>Mastery</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The student will value empirical evidence, tolerate ambiguity, behave in an ethical manner, and reflect other values that demonstrate the underpinnings of psychology as a science.</td>
<td>Advanced/Mastery</td>
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STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES

Upon completion of this course, students will have successfully:

1. Analyzed various components that lead to success in psychology graduate programs and in future careers.
2. Evaluated several areas of psychological research inquiry and identified a feasible topic for a thesis project.
3. Evaluated several areas of psychology-related advanced education and/or career opportunities and set attainable goals regarding future academic or professional pursuit.
4. Developed a Curriculum Vitae (CV) and an application letter for a doctoral program or professional position.
5. Established an effective writing routine which produces a thorough literature review that could potentially serve to inform a future thesis project and/or research presentation.

WHAT IS A SEMINAR CLASS?

Seminars are typically small, discussion-based classes (as opposed to larger, lecture-based classes). This type of instruction is best suited for advanced level students who will read assigned materials prior to class, reflect upon and ponder the significance of the readings, add to their understanding by independently taking the initiative to read additional relevant information regarding the assigned topic, and who come to class prepared with discussion points and their own questions based on the assigned topic.

Though the Professor serves as an overall facilitator of the course, the quality and cohesion of a Seminar Class is primarily shaped by the amount and depth of participation from the students. Thus, in order to attain maximum benefit from this learning experience, students are expected to be active participants in the learning process as opposed to being passive recipients of information.

Remember, this course has been designed to help you enhance your own development and contribute to your success as a potential and future professional in the field of psychology. The concepts learned in this course will be of a qualitative and cumulative nature. Students may expect to assimilate and retain valuable information that they will remember long after the conclusion of the course.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

The following components will be assessed to determine students’ grades:

- Class participation
- Professional dispositions
• CV and personal statement
• Analysis and goal for future academic or professional pursuit
• Documented effort toward establishing a consistent writing schedule
• Interview with Professor
• Preliminary plan for thesis
• Literature review
• Increasing evidence of productivity
• Final binder presentation and organization

Class Participation: Students will be graded significantly on preparation for and participation during class which will meet via Zoom. The expectation is that students will be punctual and present for every class. Students are expected to read all assigned chapters and articles prior to class. Taking notes or highlighting while reading may assist students in referring to important points during class. For any particular class meeting, students should be prepared to succinctly summarize the main points of assigned reading material as well as being able to offer individual viewpoints on the most compelling parts of the reading as well as critique any short-comings. Always come to class with discussion points.

There will be a number of mini-assignments during the semester, and students’ completion of these will need to be demonstrated.

Professional Dispositions: Students will research what is meant by professional dispositions and write a paper detailing the importance of developing professionalism, including already established behaviors as well as those which still require refinement. More information will be forthcoming about this assignment. This will be included in the binder.

CV and Personal Statement: As part of preparing for your future educational and professional pursuits, students will develop a curriculum vitae and letters of application. An initial CV draft will be completed early in the semester, and students will craft a letter of application for either a doctoral program or for a professional position by mid-semester. A description of the doctoral program or job posting must accompany the letter. Both the initial CV and letter of application will be returned with feedback. Both the draft and final versions will be included in the binder.

Analysis and Goals for Future Academic and Professional Pursuit: Students will spend time exploring future educational and/or professional pursuits. As goals and interests are malleable and sometimes change over time, it is important that goals are periodically reassessed so that subsequent actions can be adjusted to help meet those goals. Hence, using APA guidelines, students will write a paper that describes their initial educational/
professional goals coming into the course, additional options discovered with analysis of how those options might or might not assist in attaining those goals, and finally a description of current academic/professional future plans, and the process by which you arrived at that plan. Students will be graded on the quality of writing (always!), and on substantially demonstrating that genuine thought and reflection have gone into reassessment of future goals. This paper will be included in the binder.

**Effort toward Establishing Consistent Writing Schedule:** This course is designed to motivate students to initiate writing rather than merely talking about it. The expectation is that students will complete the assigned tasks from the two books by Silvia as well as trying other suggestions from Silvia. Throughout the semester, students will share their prewriting and writing experiences. *Grades in this area will be determined by your effort and improvement in writing over the semester. Students will also include a self-assessment of writing efforts in the binder, including strategies that were helpful and those that had minimal impact, as well as documentation from your writing sessions (i.e., graphs or progress notes).*

**Interview with Professor:** Students will develop a list of relevant questions and will interview one Professor in regard to professionalism and his/her research interests. Students will write a paper summarizing the interview and their reflection on what was learned from this Professor as related to the on-going topical discussions in our class.

**Thesis Plan:** Students will be able to develop a fairly clear plan for their theses. This will be included in the final binder, and will describe your plans for your thesis, including: the topic and how you chose it; who you plan to work with; your anticipated timeline; other relevant information.

**Literature Review:** Students will write a 10-15 page literature review on a topic of their choice that is related to a future thesis or research presentation topic. Primarily, journal articles should be used as sources (as opposed to books or websites). All citations should be in correct APA style. Suggestion: use SFA’s thesis formatting guidelines regarding margins and font for this document. The paper should be organized logically, use graduate level grammar and sentence structure, and be written in a scientific writing style. It should cover what is known about the topic based on research. Make sure to also include appropriate theory as it relates to your topic. Conclude the paper with an analysis of what is lacking from the literature (which should help lead to your future research questions). Feedback provided on drafts should be incorporated into your final version. This literature review will be included in your final binder. Grading is based on how thoroughly and proficiently the stated criteria above are met.
Increasing evidence of productivity: To be successful in psychology education and careers, individuals must show evidence of productivity. Students will be graded based on the extent to which meaningful activities are added to the CV over the course of the semester. The final CV will be compared to the initial CV. New activities that have been added to the CV should be highlighted or designated in some manner.

Final binder presentation and organization: Binders and e-portfolios are often used in professional settings. Thus, you will be graded on the presentation of your materials. Are they organized and presented in a professional manner? Consider using a table of contents and section headings.

In sum, there are 10 grades in this course. Each will be awarded a score based on a 0-10 scale (with 0 = omitted/not completed, and 10 = excellent). The total possible points are 100 (A = 90-100; B = 80-89; C = 70-79; D = 60-69; F = 0-59). Grades are firm. Ultimately, students receive the grades they have earned through their efforts. Standard rounding rules apply (.5 and above).

COURSE POLICIES

E-mail/Course Website: E-mail is the best way to contact Dr. Middlebrook. Please send e-mails to my D2L e-mail (middlebrs@d2L.sfasu.edu) from your Brightspace by D2L e-mail account. If you cannot access Brightspace by D2L for some reason, e-mail me at middlebrs@sfasu.edu. In this case, be sure to send e-mail from your jacks.sfasu.edu e-mail account, and include “Psy. Proseminar” in the subject line. The server is sensitive and may send unrecognized e-mail from personal e-mail accounts (such a gmail, Hotmail, yahoo, etc.) to junk mail.

It is imperative that you check your SFA and Brightspace/D2L e-mail accounts regularly. I will post class materials on Brightspace/D2L, and I strongly encourage you to check it at least once a day. If you are unfamiliar with Brightspace/D2L or have difficulty accessing Brightspace/D2L, please notify me as soon as possible. Assistance with Brightspace by D2L is available through the Center for Teaching and Learning, or by calling 936.468.1919.

Responsibility Statement and Disclaimer: You are responsible for all information presented in this syllabus and for course-related information in announcements or messages provided throughout the semester during class meetings (even if you miss class), in books and articles, on the course Brightspace by D2L page, and/or via e-mail. By remaining in this course, you acknowledge and accept the policies as stated herein and accept the policies as stated or amended during the course of the semester.

Course Etiquette: Students are to exhibit maturity in their choice of words and are to act with civility at all times. This means respecting oneself, other students, and the Professor. Discourteous or disparaging behavior will not be tolerated. Students engaging in uncivil or disruptive behavior may be asked to exit the Zoom class. Audio or video recordings without express permission are not allowed. Students who
perform poorly on coursework may be referred to the iCare Early Alert Program. This program provides students with recommendations for resources or other assistance that is available to help SFA students succeed.

**Copyright Statement:** Some of the materials in this course are possibly copyrighted. They are intended for use only by students registered and enrolled in this course and only for instructional activities associated with and for the duration of the course. They may not be retained in another medium or disseminated further. They are provided in compliance with the provisions of the Teach Act.

**Academic Integrity (A-9.1):** Academic integrity is a responsibility of all university faculty and students. Faculty members promote academic integrity in multiple ways including instruction on the components of academic honesty, as well as abiding by university policy on penalties for cheating and plagiarism. All forms of academic dishonesty will be dealt with seriously and immediately. Please respect SFASU, yourself, and the faculty enough not to participate in academic dishonesty.

**Definition of Academic Dishonesty:** Academic dishonesty includes both cheating and plagiarism. Cheating includes, but is not limited to: (1) using or attempting to use unauthorized materials to aid in achieving a better grade on a component of a class; (2) falsification or invention of any information, including citations, on an assignment; and/or (3) helping or attempting to help another in an act of cheating or plagiarism. Plagiarism is presenting the words or ideas of another person as if they you’re your own. Examples of plagiarism include, but are not limited to: (1) submitting an assignment as if it were one’s own work when, in fact, it is at least partly the work of another; (2) submitting a work that has been purchased or otherwise obtained from the Internet or another source; and (3) incorporating the words or ideas of an author into one’s paper or presentation without giving the author due credit. Please read the complete policy and the appeals process at: [http://www.sfasu.edu/policies/4.1-student-academic-dishonesty.pdf](http://www.sfasu.edu/policies/4.1-student-academic-dishonesty.pdf)

**Disputes About Course Grades:** Please contact me if you have any questions about your grade or this course. If you wish to formally dispute a grade, please refer to the University policy: [http://www.sfasu.edu/policies/final-course-grade-appeals-by-students-6.3.pdf](http://www.sfasu.edu/policies/final-course-grade-appeals-by-students-6.3.pdf).

**Withheld Grades Semester Grades Policy (A-54):** At the discretion of the instructor of record and with the approval of the academic chair/director, a grade of WH will be assigned only if the student cannot complete the course work because of unavoidable circumstances. Students must complete the work within one calendar year from the end of the semester in which they receive a WH, or the grade automatically becomes an F. If students register for the same course in future semesters, the WH will automatically become an F and will be counted as a repeated course for the purpose of computing the grade point average.

**Students with Disabilities:** To obtain disability related accommodations, alternate formats and/or auxiliary aids, students with disabilities must contact the Office of Disability Services (ODS), Human Services Building, and Room 325, 468-3004 / 468-1004 (TDD) as early as possible in the semester. Once verified, ODS will notify the course instructor and outline the accommodation and/or auxiliary aids to be provided. Failure to request services in a timely manner may delay your accommodations. For additional information, go to [http://www.sfasu.edu/disabilityservices/](http://www.sfasu.edu/disabilityservices/).

**F-1 Visa Holders:** There are important federal regulations pertaining to distance education activity for F-1 Visa holders. All students with an F-1 Visa should follow the instructions at the following link to make sure they are in compliance: [http://sfaonline.sfasu.edu/f1visaholders.html](http://sfaonline.sfasu.edu/f1visaholders.html).
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**Fall 2020**  
**Sylvia Middlebrook, Ph.D., BCBA-D**

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<tr>
<th>Week</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Activity</th>
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| 1    | 08/22/2020 | Welcome to PSYC 5300 Psychology Proseminar!  
First class meeting via Zoom.  
Syllabus Review  
Discussion of course format and expectations.  
Introduction of concept of Professional Dispositions. |
| 2    | 08/31/2020 | Discussion of Chapters 1 - 4 in Silvia (2007), and advanced educational and professional options in psychology (read chapters 21, 23, and 24 in Giordano, Davis & Licht (2012).  
Discussion questions pertaining to these chapters presented to class. |
| 3    | 09/07/2020 | Discussion of Chapters 1 & 2 from content on d2L (Sharma, 2020; Why Professionalism Matters & Learning the Expectations).  
Reflections paper on professionalism. |
| 4    | 09/14/2020 | Read Chapter 2 in Giordano online book and Chapter 1 in content from d2L (The Compleat Academic, a Career Guide; Darley, Zanna, & Roediger, 2007).  
Read other materials as posted on d2L (TBA). |
| 5    | 09/21/2020 | CV draft due.  
*Schedule and visit with faculty members this week. You should prepare by creating a list of questions regarding graduate education and careers. Read at least two articles published by faculty.  
Write reflections paper on visits.  
Begin process of solidifying your area of interest and thesis idea. |
| 6    | 09/28/2020 | Discuss reflections on visits with faculty members – each student contributes. Read Chapter 14 in Giordano and posted d2l material: Thesis process discussion. |
| 7    | 10/05/2020 | Read and discuss Chapters 5 - 8 in Silvia (2007), and Ch. 11 in Giordano.  
You should have started collecting and reading research and journal articles pertinent to your area of interest for your thesis. |
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<th>Week</th>
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<th>Activity</th>
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<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Week of 10/12/2020</td>
<td>Read and discuss Chapters 1 – 3 in Silvia (2015), and Chapters 4 and 10 in Giordano. &lt;br&gt;Start drafting an outline for your paper.</td>
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<td>9</td>
<td>Week of 10/19/2020</td>
<td><strong>Letter of Application draft due.</strong> &lt;br&gt;Read Chapters 4 - 5 in Silvia (2015); class discussion regarding these chapters and other material posted on d2L. <strong>Submission of outlines.</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Week of 10/26/2020</td>
<td>Discussion of chapters 6 - 8 in Silvia (2015) and additional materials as posted on d2L (TBA). Discussion of outlines. &lt;br&gt;&lt;i&gt;You are now beginning to write your papers.&lt;/i&gt;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Week of 11/02/2020</td>
<td>Discussion of chapters 9 – 10 in Silvia (2015), and other materials. Discussion of process of submitting work to journals.</td>
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<td>12</td>
<td>Week of 11/09/2020</td>
<td>Teaching and professional presentation skills (read Chapters 12 &amp; 15 in Giordano (reflection papers on teaching style). &lt;br&gt;&lt;strong&gt;Draft of paper due and feedback from peers.&lt;/strong&gt;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>Week of 11/16/2020</td>
<td>Discussion of Chapter 18 in Giordano and other material posted on d2L (TBA); the Master’s thesis defense.</td>
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<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>Week of 11/23/2020</td>
<td>Happy Thanksgiving!</td>
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<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>Week of 11/30/2020</td>
<td>Professionalism issues: material posted on d2L (TBA). Be prepared to discuss your final reflections on professionalism, writing, thesis, and future academic/professional plans. &lt;br&gt;&lt;strong&gt;Turn in [submit] final binder of materials.&lt;/strong&gt;</td>
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<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>Week of 12/07/2020</td>
<td>Final Class Meeting.</td>
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*<strong>Tentative Schedule: The Professor reserves the right to change the course calendar based on students' level of comprehension, mastery of material presented, need for modification, and/or other circumstances.</strong>*