

PSYCHOLOGY 4810: UNDERGRADUATE FIELD EXPERIENCE
Spring 2010

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Class Website: go to my.utah.edu – Academics – OLMS Login
or www.psych.utah.edu/olms

Prerequisites: PSY 1010

Objectives: This course is designed to provide an introduction to working in the field of psychology, broadly defined. It is mostly focused on clinical work, but expands to other areas of psychology (e.g., conducting surveys). More specifically, this course will help you:

- (1) **Learn** about the ways in which training in psychology can be put to use.
- (2) **Integrate** the theories learned in psychology classes with practical experience gained in the field.
- (3) **Develop** useful psychological skills.

Credit: Psychology 4810 allows variable credit with a maximum of 6 credit units **per semester**. Three hours per week spent at a placement earns one semester credit hour. Students can sign up for a total of 12 credit hours of Psychology 4810. Up to 6 hours total from PSY 4800-4810 classes can be applied to the psychology major, but more can be applied toward graduation. Students may sign up for Psychology 4810 for more than one semester. However, **students can only volunteer at one placement site for a total of 6 credit hours and/or two consecutive semesters.**

Requirements: You are **required** to sign the ethics pledge, attend class meetings, submit a training contract and fulfill the goals listed on it, and complete assigned readings, writing assignments, class projects, and placement evaluations. If you are unable to attend class meetings, you must complete a make-up paper for each missed meeting. Times and deadlines for each of these requirements are given in the "Important Dates" document. If, for any reason, you cannot complete the assignments by the required due date, special arrangements must be made with the instructor **at least 1 week before the due date**.

Grading: Until Summer 2009, PSY 4810 was a credit/no credit class. However, the class will be graded now **unless you opt for the credit/no credit option yourself**. You can elect the CR/NC option until **January 25**, and reverse this option until **April 23, 2010**.

Grading distribution:

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|---|-------------|
| • Field work (hours & supervisor evaluation; 65%) | 650 |
| • Contract (2.5%) | 25 |
| • Ethics Pledge (2.5%) | 25 |
| • Meeting attendance (3 x 4%) | 120 |
| • Answers to Thought questions (3 x 2%) | 60 |
| • Summaries of Research articles (3 x 2.5%) | 75 |
| • Final class presentation (2%) | 20 |
| • Placement evaluation (2.5%) | 25 |
| | ----- |
| | 1000 points |

Lower limit for grades: A (93%), A- (90%), B+ (87%), B (83%), B- (80%), C+ (77%), C (73%), C- (70%),

D+ (67%), D (63%), D- (60%), E (<60%)

Placement: Placements must be arranged by the end of the second week of class and approved by the instructor before you can start to volunteer. Students who do not have an approved placement by the third week of class will have to enroll the following semester. **Keep in mind that many placements require background checks that may take some time.** Any placement listed on the Psychology 4810 list has been approved in the past and will, most likely, be approved again. This list is available in the Psychology Advising Center Office (BEHS 507) or online at <http://www.psych.utah.edu/advising/field-placement.php>

All placements on the list are volunteer positions. ***Students are not allowed to receive University credit if they are being paid to work at their placement.*** This course is designed so that students can gain new experiences in the field. No exceptions will be made. If your placement is not on the approved list, you must submit a written description of the agency's activities and a summary of the qualifications of your supervisor before the contract deadline. Please include your supervisor's degree, title, and years of experience. You must be supervised by someone with a Master's degree or higher in Psychology or a related field (such as Social Work).

Contract: The written contract specifies your learning goals and the activities that will help you accomplish those goals for the semester. You should work with your placement supervisor in developing your contract. A standardized form is provided for you and your supervisor to complete. One contract goal that everyone must complete throughout the semester is reading **three recent (published within the last 10 years) professional journal articles** pertaining to the population with which you will be working. To complete this goal, you need to conduct a literature search via Ebsco to find three appropriate articles:

1. The **first article** must be a **review article** that comprehensively reviews characteristics of your placement population (e.g., etiology of problems, treatment options). This means that the article gives an overview of the topic of interest (e.g., child abuse, juvenile delinquency) based on previous research studies. A book review is not appropriate! Tips to find a review article and, as well as an example of a review article will be posted on the OLMS class site. Review articles come in two forms:
 - a) literature review (which describes many previous studies)
 - b) meta-analysis (which statistically analyzes many previous studies)
2. The **other two articles** must cover aspects of your placement population which you find particularly interesting and/or relevant to your placement work. These must be **research articles** from professional journals (describing original research studies).

You will demonstrate that you have read and thought about each article by writing a one-page summary and linking it to your field experience. At the end of the summary, **add a few sentences about how the contents of this article relate to your own volunteer work at the placement agency.** One summary (along with an emailed copy of the article) is due with each set of answers to "Thought Questions" that will be handed out in class. Please read and summarize the review article before the other two articles.

APA Ethics Code: In addition to the readings described above, **everyone must read the APA Ethical Principles of Psychologists and Code of Conduct.** A link to this reading will be posted on the OLMS class website. After you've read the Ethics Code, you must sign the Ethics Pledge and return it to me with your contract. You will also be asked to comment on it during your first writing assignment and we will discuss it in subsequent meetings. You, as a student of psychology, are bound by these ethical guidelines. If ethical dilemmas ever arise at your placement, you should turn to your supervisor or me for guidance.

Writing Assignments: You will be required to complete **three writing assignments**, consisting of approximately 4 thought questions designed to help you organize your thoughts and experiences during this course. They will also serve as a means of recording your progress toward your goals as specified in

your contract. Keeping a **written journal** is not a course requirement, but it is highly recommended. You will be asked to comment on your experiences in great detail in your writing assignments and during class. I recommend that you write down notes and/or reflect on your experiences on a weekly basis.

Writing assignments must be typed. While there are no strict guidelines as to the content, style, or length of your written assignments, I expect your responses to be well thought-out, proofread, and complete. These questions are designed to promote critical thinking. **Therefore, there are no right or wrong answers.** These questions are designed to give you an opportunity to grapple with some of the controversial issues occurring at your agencies and/or in the field of psychology.

Writing assignments will be posted on OLMS. They (and the article summaries) are due **before each class meeting** (see Important Dates). You will need to submit the research articles to me for approval before the assignment is due. Email your assignments to ilse.dekoeverylaros@utah.edu or place them in my mailbox on the 5th floor of the Behavioral Science building, by the end of the day on which they are due (11:59pm). **For every day late, I will deduct 3% from your grade for that assignment.**

Placement Evaluation: At the end of the semester, you are required to complete a placement evaluation. The purpose of this evaluation is twofold: (1) to evaluate the quality of your experience and (2) provide valuable information for future 4810 students. Forms for the placement evaluation will be posted on OLMS.

Student Evaluation: At the end of the semester, your supervisor will also be asked to complete an evaluation of your performance during the semester. Forms for the student evaluation will be mailed to your supervisor toward the end of the semester.

Class Meetings: During the semester, four class meetings have been scheduled (see "Important Dates"). Attendance is **mandatory**. No alternative is available for the initial orientation meeting. For the other three meetings, make-up assignments are available, but **you have to let me know ahead of time if you will be unable to attend**. During class meetings, topics relevant to practicing psychology will be discussed. You will also participate in group discussions and activities where you will be encouraged to problem-solve and share your experiences, ideas, and opinions with other students in the class.

During the last meeting, you will give a short (5-10 minute) presentation on your volunteer experiences. More information on how to structure this presentation will be posted on OLMS. Depending on class size, **the final class meeting may need to be longer than the other meetings to accommodate all of the student presentations.**

Papers (Make-up Assignments): If you cannot attend the meetings, you are required to complete and submit a 3-page typewritten paper for each meeting missed. The paper is designed to make up for the information missed during the class meeting. **Papers are due one week after scheduled class meeting.** If you are not able to attend class for whatever reason, contact me ASAP for detailed information regarding the paper topic. It is preferred that you notify me *in advance* that you are going to miss class, so that you have adequate time to complete the paper.

Equal Access:

Accommodation Policies: Please read the University's Accommodation Policies available at <http://www.admin.utah.edu/facdev/accommodations-policy.pdf> Policy 9-7, Section 16

Students with Disabilities. The University of Utah seeks to provide equal access to its programs, services and activities for people with disabilities. If you will need accommodations in this class, reasonable prior notice needs to be given to the instructor and to the Center for Disability Services, 162 Olpin Union Building, 581-5020 (V/TDD). CDS will work with you and the instructor to make arrangements for accommodations.

Scheduling Accommodations. Consistent with Section A of the University's policy, I am willing to accommodate university activities as well as values-based obligations (including religious or other values-based

activities) that conflict with course activities. No later than the end of the second week of the semester, please send me an e-mail with the nature and date of your anticipated absence (earlier if your conflict occurs before that deadline). That will give us time to work out a way for you to make up any missed work.

Content Accommodations. There will be no content accommodations in this class.