

Washington & Lee University
Directed Individual Study (PSYC 403)
Fall 2015 Syllabus

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COURSE OBJECTIVES

This directed study seminar will give you an opportunity to explore an empirical question in the field of Developmental Psychopathology. Our activities will include conducting an independent literature review of a topic of your choice, generating a specific hypothetical model, designing a study that could test your hypotheses, and giving a conference-type presentation of your study. Although the ultimate product of this course will be a detailed research proposal, it is the process that is arguably most important. This will be an excellent opportunity to learn about your own process of conceptualizing and writing about research in a supportive and stimulating environment of peer collaboration and mentorship.

GRADED ACTIVITIES

50% **Seminar Participation, Collaboration Effectiveness, and Empirical Article Reviews**

Attend class and make well-informed contributions to discussions. Review and critique empirical articles related to your topic of inquiry, making written reviews available to seminar colleagues when relevant.

50% **Research Proposal**

In a step-by-step process, craft **and revise** each section of a research report to culminate in the production of a proposal in APA style.

Sections of the Research Proposal:

- Introduction culminating in The Current Study section with clearly stated hypotheses
- Method (Participants, Procedures, Measures)
- Plan for Data Analysis
- Reference
- Figure: Graphic Model depicting study hypotheses
- Tables presenting measures formatted for administration

WEEK/Meeting	Individual and group responsibilities in preparation for meeting
Sept 14	Begin exploring a topic of your choice. Use PSYCHINFO to find 4 abstracts of studies in peer-reviewed journals (i.e., not <i>Dissertation Abstracts International</i>) on your topic. Select one of these studies to print out, read, and review (using empirical review structure). Present initial ideas about topic of interest to group.
Sept 21	Present 2 additional articles on topic of interest; begin formulating hypotheses for your research proposal and discuss in group.
Sept 28	Present initial working hypotheses to the group.
Oct 5	Create a graphic model of potential hypotheses to be tested. Begin finalizing hypotheses in written form. Explore measures that would be appropriate to assess major constructs of your study.
Oct 12 (Reading Days)	Get copies of potential measures. Using literature review material, draft an outline of the logical progression of ideas / literature leading to your hypotheses.
Oct 19	Graphic model and hypotheses complete. Get and provide peer feedback, integrate feedback, then forward to KKM. Discuss potential measures, including pros and cons of each. Begin drafting methods section. Additional independent literature review as necessary.
Oct 26	Finalize measures. Write descriptions of each for methods section. Discuss methodology of study. Begin filling in outline of Introduction.
Nov 2	Discuss plan for data analyses. Continue filling in outline of Introduction. Finish methods section.
Nov 9	Get and provide peer feedback on hypotheses, graphic model, and methods sections, integrate feedback, then forward to KKM. Write data analysis section.
Nov 16	Write final draft of paper.
Nov 23	THANKSGIVING HOLIDAY
Nov 30	Get and provide peer feedback on first draft of complete paper, integrate feedback, then forward to KKM.
Dec 7	Revise proposal using KKM feedback, resubmit for final grade.