

# Psychology 4990 (Senior Thesis)

## STEPS FOR ENROLLING

- ⇒ Successful completion of Psychology 3140 Research Methods in Psychology, *or* PSYC 3150 Small N Research Methods, *or* NEUR 3600 Research Methods in Neuroscience. Successful completion is indicated by earning a grade of 'B' or higher, or permission from your faculty thesis advisor.
- ⇒ \*Email from a faculty member of the Department of Psychology stating that they are willing to serve as the primary advisor of the student's work. This may be combined with the student's email.
- ⇒ \*Email from student requesting permission to enroll in PSYC 4990. Include the number of credit hours requested and cc the thesis advisor. Include docx or pdf attachment (not a link) of a 1-page project summary with citations and 2 – 3 references. Put your last name as the first word of your attachment's file name.

\*Send email(s) to the Chair of the Psychology Department's Undergraduate Program Committee (UPC) for approval. The Chair of this committee will file documentation for eligibility, issue a permit to register, and provide notification to the student. The second semester permit may be obtained by sending an email request to the Chair of the UPC at the time of enrollment for the second semester.

## STEPS FOR COMPETING THE THESIS

1. Form Thesis Committee of 2 members: 1) primary thesis advisor 2) faculty member from any department who can contribute expertise relevant to the project. Optional 3<sup>rd</sup> faculty member from any department may be added.
2. Submit a 1- or 2-page thesis proposal with citations to the Thesis Committee for approvals.
3. Obtain IRB or IACUC approvals if required.
4. Complete Psychology Senior Thesis Proposal Approval Form. Email completed form to Chair of the Psychology UPC for filing. Put your last name as the first word of the attachment's file name.
5. Complete work, write thesis.
6. Determine mode of presentation requirement (i.e., submit for a conference or publication, or hold a public oral presentation). If choosing the option of a public oral presentation in advance of the defense (see syllabus), schedule date, time, and room, create flyers, and post announcements at least 2 weeks prior to presentation.
7. Schedule thesis defense.
8. Defend thesis. Revise written thesis as recommended by committee.
9. Obtain signatures on Completion Report, give a copy of report to thesis advisor, and send Completion Report and final version of thesis (after all revisions) to the Chair of the Psychology UPC for filing. Put your last name as the first word of the attachments' file names.
10. Celebrate!

## Psychology 4990 Senior Thesis Syllabus

### Credit Hours

Three (3) credit hours per semester for two (2) semesters (recommended) or six (6) credit hours in one semester. Students gain one (1) credit hour for every 30-50 hours of work. Thus, 3 credit hours requires no less than 90 hours and no more than 150 hours. Hours include readings and other required work outside the laboratory.

### For Whom the Course Is Designed

This course is designed primarily for students working toward the completion of the Bachelor's Degree in Psychology. The first 3 credit hours may fulfill the Distribution in Additional Perspectives or a Psychology Elective course. The second 3 credit hours may serve to satisfy the requirement of the upper-level experimental/laboratory course in the major.

### Prerequisites

The prerequisite for this course is the completion of a Research Methods course (PSYC 3140, *or* PSYC 3150, *or* NEUR 3600) with a grade of 'B' or better.

The student must also obtain a statement from a faculty member of the Department of Psychology specifying they are willing to serve as the primary advisor of the student's work. Application materials will be considered by the Chair of the Undergraduate Program Committee before granting permission to the student to register for this course.

### Course Objectives

The course is designed to provide the student with the opportunity to initiate, design, analyze, and write an original empirical study in an area of mutual interest to the student and faculty advisor. It is expected that the student will complete the course in time to complete at least one (1) of the following 1) submit the investigation for presentation to one or more national, regional, local, or university conferences or forums, 2) submit for publication in an appropriate journal, or 3) hold an oral presentation (30 – 45 minutes) of the thesis, open to all students and faculty, scheduled and advertised (i.e., via posted flyer and/or Canvas/Department social media post) to students and faculty at least two weeks prior to the presentation.

### Organization

The course is to be completed under the supervision of a faculty member of the Department of Psychology. The course normally does not include participation in classroom meetings or classroom-related activities, although a faculty member who is advising several research projects at the same time may elect to meet with the students collectively at a predetermined time.

The student is expected to engage in informal discussions with the faculty advisor in developing an appropriate topic and methodology for investigation and deciding on the other member(s) of the Thesis Committee. The Thesis Committee will be comprised of the student's thesis advisor and one other faculty member who has expertise relevant to the topic of the thesis. This faculty member may be from any department. A third faculty member from any department may be added but is optional. The student will present a written proposal (no longer than two pages plus citations) to their Thesis Committee. Thesis Committee members will be responsible for evaluating the student's project before allowing the student to engage in data collection and final report writing.

If the student's project involves the use of human or animal participants, the student must procure institutional review and approval of the project from the appropriate ethics review committee (e.g., IRB, IACUC) before beginning data collection.

Students may call a committee meeting at any point to revise the proposal. All revisions must be approved by all faculty members of the Thesis Committee at least 90 days before the defense date.

Upon completion of the investigation, the student will present and defend the written thesis in a meeting with the Thesis Committee responsible for evaluating the study. No grade will be assigned until all members of the committee are satisfied with the final report including all revisions recommended by the committee members. If a student presents the research in a public colloquium, the formal defense will typically follow immediately afterwards with only the student's committee members present.

### Resource Materials

There are no predetermined readings or supporting materials required in this course. However, it is expected that the student will be able to demonstrate considerable familiarity with the theoretical and experimental literature associated with the proposed area of research. The student is expected to demonstrate knowledge of the literature by providing a written research thesis that includes an acceptable Abstract, Introduction, Method, Results, Discussion, and Reference section. It is expected that the research proposal and final report will conform to the latest version of the American Psychological Association Style Manual.

### Evaluation

The student will be evaluated primarily based on the quality of the experimental effort and final report. Grading will use the standard letter grade approach. Scholarship will not be the sole basis for evaluating the quality of the student's performance; professional conduct and comportment will be considered. The letter grade will be assigned by the thesis advisor with the concurrence of others on the Thesis Committee. Letter grades along with the student's name and NUID# are to be submitted by the thesis advisor to the Psychology Department Chairperson (not the UPC Chair) during finals week. Grades of 'IP' are acceptable if the work crosses more than one semester and the amount of work accomplished is not yet sufficient to assign a letter grade. Care must be taken to avoid complications with graduation, as all finalized letter grades are required prior to the end of the semester of graduation.

### Accommodations

Reasonable accommodations are provided for students who are registered with Accessibility Services Center (ASC) and make their requests sufficiently in advance. For more information, please contact ASC (Location: HK 104, Phone: 402.554.2872, Email: [unoaccessibility@unomaha.edu](mailto:unoaccessibility@unomaha.edu)). In addition to accommodations in the classroom, the ASC helps coordinate accommodations for students with disabilities at practicum sites, internships, service learning experiences, or other field placements. It is important to speak with an ASC representative early in the site selection process. Please make an appointment with ASC well in advance of the field placement to ensure that reasonable accommodations can be made.

# PSYCHOLOGY SENIOR THESIS PROPOSAL APPROVAL FORM

Name:

NUID:

Major Department:

Degree Sought:

I approve:

*(type thesis proposal title)*

THESIS SUPERVISORY COMMITTEE - Electronic signatures are acceptable.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Thesis Committee Chairperson                      Signature                      Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Committee Member                      Signature                      Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Committee Member (optional)                      Signature                      Date

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I understand the revisions (if any) to my proposal required or suggested by my Senior Thesis Supervisory Committee are to be completed prior to the assignment of a grade. A copy of the proposal and any revisions to it are to be filed in accordance with departmental policy.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Student's Signature                      Date

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Approval from the Supervisory Committee must be obtained prior to beginning work on the Senior Thesis. These signatures do not reflect final approval of the completed thesis. Please give this form to your Committee Chairperson and email a copy to the UPC Chair to put in your permanent file in the Psychology Department. Put your last name as the first word of your attachment's file name.

