

PSYCH 4988 WI: Psychology Capstone in Medical Decision Making  
SP 2019

**\*\*COURSE INFORMATION\*\***

Instructor: Victoria Shaffer, PhD  
Office: 208 McAlester Hall  
Office hours: By appointment  
Phone: (573) 882-904  
Email: [shafferv@missouri.edu](mailto:shafferv@missouri.edu)

Teaching Assistant:  
Email:

**\*\*COURSE DESCRIPTION AND OBJECTIVES\*\***

This course is a capstone experience, bringing together several elements of your education in Psychology through a special topic: medical decision making. In this course, you will learn how patients make decisions about their own healthcare and how doctors make diagnostic and treatment decisions for their patients. We will read two books written by prominent physicians who study decision making along with a set of primary research articles that will be available on Canvas. In addition, you will develop a deeper understanding about conducting research in psychology and writing in APA style. **NOTE: This course is writing intensive!**

The objectives of this course are to:

1. Introduce students to the psychology of medical decision making
2. Understand the research methods used in this area
3. Provide students with experience writing an APA style research proposal

**\*\*REQUIRED MATERIALS\*\***

Ubel, P. A. (2012). *Critical decisions: How you and your doctor can make the right medical choices together*. New York, NY: Harper Collins.

Gawande, A. (2007). *Better: A surgeon's notes on performance*. New York, NY: Picador.

*Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association, 6<sup>th</sup> Edition*. (2009). Washington, DC: American Psychological Association.

Other academic articles, which will be available on Canvas

**\*\*CANVAS COURSE WEBSITE\*\***

A website for this course is available via Canvas. You will need to visit the Canvas course website regularly as it is my primary method of communication with you. The course website contains important course documents and details about all assignments and required readings.

## **\*\*ASSIGNMENTS AND GRADING\*\***

There are three types of grading events for this course: a literature review paper, a group research proposal, and a series of reflection papers. Your primary assignment in this class is your **literature review paper** (7-10 pages in length), for which you will summarize and evaluate literature on an approved topic of interest. The final paper is due toward the end of the semester; however, there are six paper assignments prior to the final paper submission that will provide you with feedback on your paper and prepare you to submit the final product. The second major assignment in this class is the **group research proposal**. For this project, you will work with other members of your class to create a proposed experiment to address a research question of interest. The project will result in a research poster that will be presented during the final exam period. As with the literature review, there will be several assignments due prior to the final product through which Dr. Shaffer can provide feedback to the group. The third major contribution to your final grade is a series of **reflection papers**. In these papers, you will be asked to reflect upon a readings assigned to the class; these papers will be approximately 1 page in length.

### LITERATURE REVIEW PAPER (220 POINTS TOTAL)

- Paper assignment #1: Description of paper topic and list of references (20 points)
- Paper assignment #2: Literature review chart (20 points)
- Paper assignment #3: Article summary 1 (20 points)
- Paper assignment #4: Article summary 2 plus peer review (20 points)
- Paper assignment #5: Completed draft of literature review due to peers (20 points)
- Paper assignment #6: Peer review of paper draft (20 points)
- Paper assignment #7: Final literature review paper (100 points)

### GROUP RESEARCH PROPOSAL (180 POINTS TOTAL)

- Group assignment #1: Description of topic and specific research question (20 points)
- Group assignment #2: Description of proposed design (20 points)
- Group assignment #3: IRB application (20 points)
- Group assignment #4: Research materials and analytical plan (20 points)
- Group assignment #5: Final research proposal (50 points)
- Group assignment #6: Research poster (50 points)

### WEEKLY REFLECTION PAPERS (10 POINTS EACH, 100 POINTS TOTAL; ONLY 10 COUNT TOWARD FINAL GRADE)

There will be a series reflection papers assigned during the semester. Papers must be submitted via Canvas Friday afternoon by 5pm. There will be 12 reflection papers throughout the semester; only 10 will count toward your final grade. Therefore you may miss two papers without providing an excuse. If you submit all 12 reflection papers, I will drop your two lowest reflection paper grades. Because of this policy no one will be permitted to submit reflection papers after the due date for **any** reason.

To receive full credit, all paper and group assignments **MUST** be turned in promptly at the assigned time. All assignments must be submitted electronically via Canvas. Electronic submission will close at 5pm on the date the assignment is due. You are permitted to submit late assignments via email to me for up to 24 hours after the due date. Late assignments (1min late or 24 hours late) will only be considered for half credit (number of points the assignment is worth divided by two). Assignments more than 24 hours late will automatically receive a zero.

## FINAL GRADES (BASED ON 500 TOTAL POINTS)

For the final grades, plus/minus grading will be assigned according to the scale below. Students can earn a maximum of 500 points. Students will NOT be graded on a curve, and, unless I have made a mathematical error, I will not change either an assignment grade or a final grade.

LETTER	PERCENTAGE
A+	98-100%
A	93-97%
A-	90-92%
B+	87-89%
B	83-86%
B-	80-82%
C+	77-79%
C	73-76%
C-	70-72%
D+	67-69%
D	63-66%
D-	60-62%
F	BELOW 60%

### **\*\*GENERAL CLASSROOM GUIDELINES\*\***

#### **ACADEMIC HONESTY**

Academic integrity is fundamental to the activities and principles of a university. All members of the academic community must be confident that each person's work has been responsibly and honorably acquired, developed, and presented. Any effort to gain an advantage not given to all students is dishonest whether or not the effort is successful. The academic community regards breaches of the academic integrity rules as extremely serious matters. Sanctions for such a breach may include academic sanctions from the instructor, including failing the course for any violation, to disciplinary sanctions ranging from probation to expulsion. When in doubt about plagiarism, paraphrasing, quoting, collaboration, or any other form of cheating, consult the course instructor.

## INTELLECTUAL PLURALISM

*The University community welcomes intellectual diversity and respects student rights. Students who have questions or concerns regarding the atmosphere in this class (including respect for diverse opinions) may contact the Departmental Chair or Divisional Director; the Director of the [Office of Students Rights and Responsibilities](http://osrr.missouri.edu/) (<http://osrr.missouri.edu/>); or the [MU Equity Office](http://equity.missouri.edu/) (<http://equity.missouri.edu/>), or by email at [equity@missouri.edu](mailto:equity@missouri.edu). All students will have the opportunity to submit an anonymous evaluation of the instructor(s) at the end of the course.*

## UNIVERSITY OF MISSOURI NOTICE OF NONDISCRIMINATION

The University of Missouri System is an Equal Opportunity/ Affirmative Action institution and is nondiscriminatory relative to race, religion, color, national origin, sex, sexual orientation, age, disability or status as a Vietnam-era veteran. Any person having inquiries concerning the University of Missouri's compliance with implementing Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, the Americans With Disabilities Act of 1990, or other civil rights laws should contact the Assistant Vice Chancellor, [Human Resource Services](#), University of Missouri-Columbia, 130 Heinkel Building, Columbia, Mo. 65211, 573/882-4256, or the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights, U.S. Department of Education.

## AMERICANS WITH DISABILITIES ACT

The University of Missouri complies with the guidelines set forth in the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990.

*Students with Disabilities:*

*If you anticipate barriers related to the format or requirements of this course, if you have emergency medical information to share with me, or if you need to make arrangements in case the building must be evacuated, please let me know as soon as possible.*

*If disability related accommodations are necessary (for example, a note taker, extended time on exams, captioning), please register with the Office of Disability Services (<http://disabilityservices.missouri.edu>), S5 Memorial Union, 882-4696, and then notify me of your eligibility for reasonable accommodations. For other MU resources for students with disabilities, click on "Disability Resources" on the MU homepage.*