

Honors/Independent Capstone Guide

Psych 4976/4977

Director

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Student Eligibility

- Psychology major
- Have taken Psych 3020 (Research Methods 2)
- Will graduate in May or December of the calendar year they complete the capstone
- Identify a faculty mentor willing to work with the student on a psychology-relevant project
- Honors eligible students must have a 3.5 G.P.A. or above as of the first day of the fall semester, Independent capstone students must meet all other requirements, but no G.P.A. requirement.

Capstone Seminar

Students must attend the weekly capstone seminar on Wednesdays from 9-9:50 a.m. During these weekly sessions, the capstone director will present information on how to write each section of an empirical research article, how to create research posters, lead students through peer reviewing, and professional development sessions on applying to graduate school. Attendance will be taken and students will be expected to submit various pieces of their thesis, along with other small assignments over the course of the year.

Student Expectations

- Write an APA-style, journal manuscript-length thesis of their study which includes: title page, abstract, introduction, method, results, discussion, references, tables/figures
 - Introduction & Method sections due during Fall semester
 - Results & Discussion sections (and final product) due during Spring semester
- Propose, create, and present a research poster for the Midwestern Psychological Association meetings (Chicago, IL) and the MU Undergraduate Research and Creative Achievements Forum.
 - Conference proposal submitted in early November to MPA
 - Poster presentations in April
- Work towards capstone requirements approximately 9-10 hours per week. This timeframe should include weekly seminar, regular meetings with mentor/lab, reading relevant research, writing thesis, creating poster, data collection, lab tasks, data analysis, other relevant tasks.
 - How the data collection/lab tasks portion of the 9-10 hours per week is allocated will be determined by the faculty mentor and based on the type of project the student is conducting. For example, if a student is collecting their own original data for their project, their time may be entirely taken up by submitting IRB applications, setting up tasks, running participants, data entry/cleaning, etc. For students utilizing pre-collected data for their thesis, students may participate in alternative data collection, coding, research assistant-type tasks in order to give them related research experience.
- Attend both the MPA conference and Research Forum in April
- Attend the May Psychological Sciences Honors Recognition Reception (Friday evening of graduation weekend).

Mentor Expectations

- Mentor requirements can be fulfilled by the faculty mentor or a lab designee (i.e., graduate student, post-doc, lab coordinator), or a combination.
- Mentors should meet regularly with their student—every 1-2 weeks is suggested. This could be in the form of individual meetings, small group meetings, lab meetings, or “virtual” meetings.
- Participate in a Mentor Q&A interview.
- Assist student in identifying and conducting an original research study, including IRB submission, if necessary.
- Review and provided feedback for the following items prior to submission at the assigned times throughout the year: research questions/hypotheses, method, MPA conference proposal, introduction, results, poster, discussion, final thesis.
- Attend (or send a designee) the May Psychological Sciences Honors Recognition Reception (Friday evening of graduation weekend).

Grading

- *85% Mentor portion:*
 - At the end of each semester, I will email your mentor and ask them what grade percentage (0 – 100) they would like you to receive for your work with them on the independent project. I will multiply this number by .85 and then add it to...
- *15% Director portion:*
 - Throughout each semester, you will receive points for the proseminar for attendance, peer reviewing, and submitting various portions of the project on time. These will add up to 100 points—I will multiply your point total by .15 and add it to your mentor portion described above to get your semester grade. ALL ASSIGNMENTS AND PEER REVIEWS MUST BE SUBMITTED VIA CANVAS
- *Fall Semester Seminar Grading*
 - Class Attendance/Participation: (11 classes X 3 points each = 33 points)
Receive 3 points for attending each of the class sessions indicated on calendar by *
 - Peer Reviewing: (3 writing sections X 10 points each = 30 points)
3 pieces of writing will be peer reviewed over the course of the fall semester (Method section, MPA proposal, Introduction). For each piece, receive 3 points for each review you conduct of another student’s (up to 2) and 2 points for each review you receive (and turn-in) from another student (up to 2) for a total of 10 points each. Specific class periods are set aside to do this (indicated on calendar by **), but you may also arrange to do this electronically with other students as long as they can be completed by 9 a.m. the following morning of the class session. Late peer reviews will be docked 50% of your points.
 - Large Writing Assignments: (2 thesis sections X 10 points each = 20 points)
Your Method section and Introduction section of your thesis will be submitted during this semester. Turning in each on the date indicated and with a signed mentor cover sheet indicating they read and approve of this section will receive 10 points (late sections docked 2 points, missing mentor cover sheets docked 2 points).
 - Smaller Assignments: (4 submissions X 5 points each = 20 points)
Throughout the semester, 4 smaller assignments are due: Mentor Q&A interview, IRB CITI online training certificate, Research Questions/Hypotheses, submitting copy of your previously online submitted MPA proposal. Turning these in on time will receive 5 points each (late submissions docked 1 point).
 - TOTAL = 103 points possible (100 points = full credit)

- *Spring Semester Seminar Grading*
 - Class Attendance/Participation: (12 classes X 3 points each = 33 points)
Receive 3 points for attending each of the class sessions indicated on calendar by *
 - Peer Reviewing: (3 writing sections/poster X 10 points each = 30 points)
3 pieces of writing will be peer reviewed over the course of the semester (Results section, Poster, Discussion section). For each piece, receive 3 points for each review you conduct of another student's (up to 2) and 2 points for each review you receive (and turn-in) from another student (up to 2) for a total of 10 points each. Specific class periods are set aside to do this (indicated on calendar by **), but you may also arrange to do this electronically with other students as long as they can be completed by 9 a.m. the following morning of the class session. Late peer reviews will be docked 50% of your points.
 - Writing Sections: (2 thesis sections X 10 points each = 20 points)
Your Results section and Discussion section of your thesis will be submitted during this semester. Turning in each on the date indicated and with a signed mentor cover sheet indicating they read and approve of this section will receive 10 points (late sections docked 2 points, missing mentor cover sheets docked 2 points).
 - Final Products: (2 submissions X 10 points each = 20 points)
Submitting your complete thesis and final poster will be worth 10 points each. These are both due the Friday of Graduation weekend at noon. Late submissions will be docked 50% of your points.
 - TOTAL = 103 points possible (100 points = full credit)

SEE SEMESTER SPECIFIC SCHEDULE FOR DUE DATES