

Psychology Honors III: Spring, 2006
PSYC 492, Section 001

Facilitator/Instructor: Dr. Linda Chrosniak

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Office Hours: Monday: 1:30 – 3:30, Wednesday: 9:30-10:30 and by appointment.

Semester Objectives:

- 1) Complete proposed honors project/thesis.
 - 2) Create a professional-quality poster presentation for the 'Psychology Honors Showcase'.
 - 3) Formally present an oral defense and written manuscript to faculty committee.
 - 4) Submit final, bound and approved copy of manuscript to the Psychology Honors Program by **Wednesday, May 4th, 2005**.
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Class Meetings: Students are expected to keep the Honors Director apprised of their progress, including any difficulties that may arise. Periodic group meeting times will be held throughout the semester for students to meet with the director and other students. Students are responsible for the information presented during these meetings and are expected to attend.

Grading: Final grades will be based on a 100 point scale.

99 - 100 = A+	87 - 89 = B+	77 - 79 = C +
93 - 98 = A	83 - 86 = B	73 - 76 = C
90 - 92 = A-	80 - 82 = B-	70 - 72 = C-

Specific Grading Breakdown:

20 points: Presentation of Honors Project at GMU Psychology Honors Showcase

The Psychology Honors Showcase is scheduled for **April 27th, 2006**. Each student will be expected to create a poster describing his/her independent project. Guidelines are included with this syllabus (see page 4) and are intended to mimic the established guidelines for professional conference poster presentations. Grading will be based on the quality, clarity, accuracy, appropriateness, and completeness of presented information, in addition to the style of the poster.

Students are responsible for any materials needed to hang their posters and are expected to set up their posters *before 10:00 am on 4/27*. Between 10:00 am and 2:00 pm, students should spend a minimum of one hour standing in front of their posters, dressed professionally. Students should be prepared to answer questions and discuss different aspects of the project such as the design and analyses.

80 points: Defense of Honors Project/Thesis

To receive full credit, the following sequence of requirements must be completed by Wednesday, **April 26th, 2006**.

- Schedule oral defense date with all committee members.
- Reserve room and equipment for oral defense.
- Submit 'final version' of honors paper to all committee members at least **10 days** before the oral defense.
- Successfully present an oral defense of honors project/thesis to committee members.
- At defense, get committee signatures on 3 copies of cover page for final paper (**see page 3 for a sample cover page**). Student is responsible for bringing copies of the cover page to the defense.

The student's committee members will assign the honors project defense grade. The grade will be based on three factors:

- 1) the quality, accuracy, and professionalism of the oral defense - particular attention will be paid to the student's ability to handle questions asked by the committee members.
- 2) the quality, accuracy, and timeliness of the written manuscript submitted before the oral defense (**Please note that the grade will be based on the paper at the time of the defense. The grade will not be based on subsequent revisions.**)
- 3) the student's level of professionalism throughout the whole semester

Additional Grading Considerations:

Presentation of the honors project at a professional psychology conference or GMU's Innovations, 2006 will be considered favorably when the final grade is determined. Missed deadlines will result in grade penalties, to be determined by the student's committee. Students who take an incomplete for any reason, other than a university-approved withdrawal, will be assessed an automatic 8-point deduction from the final grade. Failure to complete the honors project by the established deadline may also result in loss of eligibility for psychology honors awards.

Oral Defense Format and Guidelines:

- Professional dress is required
- Briefly remind the committee of the rationale for the project (should have been extensively covered in proposal)
- Briefly remind the committee of the methods - note any change that occurred following the oral proposal
- Carefully and fully describe statistical analysis and results - consider the most attractive and accessible method to convey this information (make sure you clearly understand your analysis and results)
- Carefully and fully describe your interpretation of the findings and the implications of your results. Explain how your research "fits" with previous research.
- Briefly explain limitations of the study, questions raised, and future directions
- Thank your committee and ask for questions

Paper Format and Guidelines:

General: Paper should follow APA guidelines. References, tables, and figures should be included at the end of the manuscript per APA style.

Introduction: The introduction should incorporate committee feedback from the oral and written proposal.

Method: The method section should be changed **to past tense** following completion of the project.

Analysis & Results: This section should present the analysis and findings with statements suggesting what the analysis tells you. (e.g., "This finding indicates that experimental group performed significantly better in both conditions relative to the control group.") Please note that the results will be *interpreted* in the discussion section and conclusions can be discussed here. Statistics and results should be appropriately referenced.

Discussion: Results should be interpreted in this section and general conclusions can be made. Logical arguments should be used to interpret the data based on previous research and to demonstrate how the current project fits into existing research. Plausible alternative interpretations should also be addressed. **The introduction and discussion section should complement one another.** They should contain similar themes, but not be identical. The introduction may need to be revised as the discussion section is written, to ensure their compatibility. Limitations and future directions should also be included in this section.

Requirements for Graduating with Honors in Psychology:

To graduate with honors, the following requirements must be completed by **Wednesday, May 3rd, 2006**.

- Any revisions required by the committee at the oral defense must be incorporated into the final written manuscript.
- The student's advisor must approve the final version of the manuscript prior to submission. If committee members have requested to see the changes, those members also must approve the final version of the manuscript.
- A final bound copy of honors manuscript, including the signature page, must be submitted to the Honors Director by May 3rd. A bound version should also be submitted to the student's advisor. Binding can be done relatively inexpensively at any copy center. For examples, see previous submissions in DK 2051.
- Note: **Students must have a 3.5 grade point average across the three honors courses in order to graduate with honors.**

Awards:

- Three peer-determined awards will be given at the 'Psychology Honors Showcase' (Best Honors Researcher, Best Honors Project, Best Honors Poster).
- A faculty committee will select one recipient for The Outstanding Honors Project Award at the end of the semester.

Honor System: The Honor Code of George Mason University will be strictly enforced in this course.

Last Day to Add (Full Semester Course)

February 7, 2006

Last Day to Drop (Full Semester Course)

February 24, 2006

Elective Withdrawal Period (Full Semester Course)

February 24, 2006

Additional Information:

If you are a student with a documented disability and require some academic accommodation, please see me and contact the Disability Resource Center (DRC) at (703)993-2474. All academic accommodations must be arranged through that office.

"THE TITLE OF YOUR PAPER"

by

"Your Name"

Paper submitted to the faculty of George Mason University
in partial fulfillment of the requirements for graduation with

HONORS IN PSYCHOLOGY

APPROVED:

"Name of Faculty Advisor", Advisor

"Name of Committee Member", Member

Linda D. Chrosniak, Director

Poster Guidelines

Posters should be professional in appearance and easy to follow. An effective poster will communicate important information simply and clearly. For examples, please see the posters currently displayed in the psychology department (DK Hall).

Poster Content

- Title
- Introduction and rationale for study
- Methods
- Results
- Brief discussion/conclusion/implications (take home message: why is your study important?)
- Reference section (if needed)

Poster Materials

Ensure that information is securely fastened to the board or backing that you use. Posters are typically displayed in the department for a semester to a year. Design your poster to have the durability to remain posted for that length of time. Each student is responsible for providing any material needed to hang the poster for viewing (e.g., thumbtacks) and for having the poster displayed before 10:00am on the day of the Showcase.

Title

The title should be larger than the rest of the text. The student should be first author. The major advisor should be recognized as second author on the poster. Typically, committee members are not authors; however, if a committee member has contributed significantly to the conception or design of your project, you may recognize him/her with authorship. Committee members can be thanked elsewhere on the poster if desired (e.g., a notation following reference section).

Layout

Your poster sections should be sequential and symmetrical. Make sure to clearly label each section to help direct the reader to the flow of information. Maintain a consistent style throughout the poster. Ideally, the poster should fit within about a 4 feet by 4 feet space. Take a look at posters around the department and see what is or is not clear and “appealing.”

Text of Poster

Font should be large enough and of a style to be easily legible to a person standing 1-2 feet from the poster. Make full use of your allotted space, but do not cram too much material on your poster. Be concise. Decide what is most important and convey that information. Make sure there are **NO** spelling or grammar errors.

Use of Color

Use color to emphasize, differentiate, and add interest. Avoid focusing on style over substance. Both are important; however, in science, substance is the top priority.

Pictures, Charts, & Tables

Pictures, charts, diagrams, or tables can be a compelling way to present data. A poster should be simple, interesting, and informative. Therefore, careful consideration should be made regarding the best format to convey results. Clearly label any objects that are used.

Student Presenter

Students should dress and behave professionally. Students should be prepared to direct viewers through the main ideas of the poster and/or to answer questions.