

Psyc 591
Professional Seminar [Biopsychology]
Fall, 2011

Dr. Robert Smith
Office: DK 2005
Phone: 703 993 4339
Email: bsmith@gmu.edu
Hours: by appt

Week	Topic
Aug 31	Introduction to the animal lab; lab safety, SOPs
Sept 7	Teaching and TAing as a grad student
Sept 14	Overview: getting the most out of grad school; Mason resources
Sept 21	Research ethics with animals (and people)
Sept 28	Professional vitas
Oct 5	Effective presentations
Oct 12	Effective writing for many occasions
Oct 19	Open; accumulated questions and answers
Oct 26	The MA thesis, and Mason resources for thesis work
Nov 2	Faculty evaluations of you: how to thrive
Nov 9	Ethics: avoiding your undoing; begin presentations
Nov 16	No class [SFN convention]
Nov 23	No class [Thanksgiving]
Nov 30	Presentations
Dec 7	Eyes on the prize: careers

Course goals: This course is designed for first (or second) year graduate students. The focus is on integrating you into the graduate program, giving you information to enable you to get the resources, make the decisions, and perform at a high level. There is less emphasis on a grade per se, and more on getting you to the level where you can navigate graduate training well and easily.

Course supplements. I *strongly encourage* you to attend some of the Neuroscience faculty presentations [Thursdays at 1030, schedule to be provided] and Krasnow seminars

[Mondays at 4:30, schedule to be provided]. These are an important part of broadening your knowledge of the methods and foci of research in neuroscience at Mason, as well as the field in general. Your interests should dictate which of these you choose to attend.

Deliverables:

1. A course goals statement [your original writing] and an evaluation plan for a course you are teaching or TAing, or would like to teach or TA. [Oct 12]
2. An IACUC [or IRB] protocol draft for your research. [Oct 19]
3. A draft vita [Oct 26], AND a draft of how you would like your vita to look in three years [Nov 9].
4. Two professional writing samples [Nov 30]:
 - a. a poster for presentation of either research you have completed, or what you expect your current research to look like, suitable for a conference presentation
 - b. any other writing sample – this could include a literature review for a course such as 611 or a content course, a thesis proposal, a technical report on a project, a manuscript for a journal submission, etc.
5. An 8-10 min talk on either 4a or 4b – talks will be scheduled over the last three class meetings

Questions: I encourage any questions, any time. I'll try to include as much as I can of the information and skills you will need, but you are highly likely to have other questions. If you are wondering about something, odds are very high you are not the only one.

Students with Disabilities. If you are a student with disability and you need academic accommodations, please see me and contact the Disability Resource Center (DRC) at 709-993-2474. All academic accommodations must be arranged through that office.

Add/Drop deadlines: Last day to add: September 6. Last day to drop: Sept 19.

Resources:

A.P.A. (2002). *Ethical principles of psychologists and code of conduct -- 2002*. Washington, DC: American Psychological Association. Available online at [http://www.apa.org/ethics/
http://www.apa.org/ethics/code2002.pdf](http://www.apa.org/ethics/http://www.apa.org/ethics/code2002.pdf)

A.P.A. (2003). *Research with animals in psychology*. Available online at <http://www.apa.org/science/animal2.html>