

Professional Development in Psychology

PSYCHOLOGY 499

Spring 2009

2 units

Wednesday, 4:00-6:00 pm

Instructor: **C. Miranda Barone, PhD**

Phone: (213) 740-2208 (email preferred)

E-mail: cbarone@usc.edu

Office: SGM 805

Hours: TBA

Introduction and Purposes

CATALOG COURSE DESCRIPTION:

This course focuses on career planning for psychology majors. Historical developments of the discipline, careers, and skills necessary for careers and graduate school are covered.

Course Objective

This course covers the scope and value of the psychology major. It is designed to expand students' understanding of the scope of psychology by covering key historical figures and the development of the discipline as an academic and applied science. Students will learn about the application of psychology to various disciplines within the social sciences and professional schools in order to consider future career options. Finally, students will focus on personal professional development including preparation for graduate work, career choices at varying degree levels, and essential skills necessary to make the transition to graduate school. This course will also coordinate and enhance the existing psychology undergraduate advisement efforts.

The specific goals of the course are to:

- 1) to introduce students to the breadth of topics relevant to psychology;
- 2) to familiarize students with key historical developments;
- 3) to acquaint students with information about the profession, such as major fields, characteristics of psychologists, and information about professional organizations;
- 4) help students find a focus within the field of psychology;
- 5) to provide information to help students design a plan of study and gain experiences to maximize their chances of being admitted to graduate school or competition on the job market with a BA degree;
- 6) to simulate the process of applying to graduate school so that the actual process will be familiar and, therefore, more successful;
- 7) to maximize students' undergraduate experience in order to prepare for their future.

These goals are measured through the students' performance on short papers and a semester project.

Course Requirements and Grades

REQUIRED TEXTS:

Kuther, T. L. (2006). *The psychology major's handbook* (2nd ed.). Belmont, CA: Thomson/Wadsworth.

Benjamin, L. and Baker, D. (2004) *From Séance to Science: A History of the Profession of Psychology in America*. Belmont, CA: Thomson Wadsworth

Course Reader – Available in the Book Store

ADDITIONAL READINGS:

There are extensive reading assignments listed in the course outline. Additional reading assignments will be made available in a Course Reader and on BlackBoard.

Statement for Students with Disabilities

Any student requesting academic accommodations based on a disability is required to register with Disability Services and Programs (DSP) each semester. A letter of verification for approved accommodations can be obtained from DSP. Please be sure the letter is delivered to me (or to TA) as early in the semester as possible. DSP is located in STU 301 and is open 8:30 a.m.–5:00 p.m., Monday through Friday. The phone number for DSP is (213) 740-0776.

Statement on Academic Integrity

USC seeks to maintain an optimal learning environment. General principles of academic honesty include the concept of respect for the intellectual property of others, the expectation that individual work will be submitted unless otherwise allowed by an instructor, and the obligations both to protect one's own academic work from misuse by others as well as to avoid using another's work as one's own. All students are expected to understand and abide by these principles. *Scampus*, the Student Guidebook, contains the Student Conduct Code in Section 11.00, while the recommended sanctions are located in Appendix A:

<http://www.usc.edu/dept/publications/SCAMPUS/gov/>

Students will be referred to the Office of Student Judicial Affairs and Community Standards for further review, should there be any suspicion of academic dishonesty. The Review process can be found at:

<http://www.usc.edu/student-affairs/SJACS/>

Internet and E-Mail Access:

This course involves use of BlackBoard and the Internet for student research and assigned readings. All students are required to have access to the Internet via some means as well as an active e-mail address. Students are responsible for all information transmitted to their student e-mail address and to any other contact information on file.

Methods of Evaluation

<u>Point Distribution for Assignments</u>	<u>Points</u>
Profile of Goals	10
Academic/Career Planner	10
GRE Practice Test	10
Questions for Graduate Students	10
Grid of Graduate Programs	15
Project – Application Simulation	25
Final Paper - Review of Profile of Goals	20
Total	100

Requirements for achieving a specific grade are as follows:

93 – 100 % - A	80 – 82.00% - B-	67 – 69.99% - D+
90 – 92.99% - A-	77 – 79.99% - C+	63 – 66.88% - D
87- 89.99% - B+	73 – 76.99% - C	60 – 62.99% - D-
83 – 86.99% - B	70 – 72.99% - C-	Below 60% - F

Assignments

- Assignment 1 – Profile of Goals

The purpose of this assignment is to encourage you to think about the reasons for your interest in psychology. Submit a 2 to 3 page paper on what attracted you to the discipline, what you plan to study and how you plan to prepare yourself during your undergraduate years, and the career plans you have in the future.

- Assignment 2 - Academic/Career Planner

The purpose of this assignment is to conduct a degree progress and create a plan for additional coursework, work/internship/research experience. This assignment is designed to help you gather information about possible career goals and focus on the things you need to do to achieve them such as selecting relevant courses. This assignment asks you to put in practice information you have learned so far (getting involved in your education), (APA format), and (career possibilities). Finally, reading and following the instructions for this assignment should give you practice in following the detailed instructions for the major project

- Assignment 3 – GRE Practice Test

In this assignment, you will have the opportunity to simulate the experience of taking a Graduate Record Examination and the Psychology Subject Test.

- Assignment 4 - Questions for Graduate Students

List Ten questions you have for the Graduate Student Panel.

- **Assignment 5 - Grid of Graduate Programs**

The purpose of this assignment is to learn to search and select graduate programs of interest. A grid and detailed instructions will be provided in BlackBoard. You will be required to print the grid and enter at least five factors important to you in a school down the left column, and the names of no less than five schools across the top. Enter the factors in the order of their importance to you. Insert data in all columns as instructed.

Assignment 6 - Project – Application Simulation

Deciding to attend graduate school, preparing for graduate school, and completing the applications comprise a process that should be started as early as possible. In doing this project, you will see the many steps involved in applying to graduate school. Those steps include: selecting a field of interest; identifying graduate schools offering programs in your interest area; identifying factors of importance to you in selecting programs to which to apply and subsequently narrowing the list of schools; matching your qualifications with those expected by the schools to which you would like to apply; ascertaining your chances of being accepted to the schools you prefer; completing a generic application; identifying who will write letters of recommendation for you and how to request them; and writing the personal statement .

In addition, seeing what is needed to be a successful graduate school applicant should help you plan the remainder of your academic career. You still have time to improve your GPA, gain research and/or applied experience, establish contacts with mentors, consider who will write your letters of recommendation, and participate in department activities.

- **Assignment 7 - Final Paper - Review of Profile of Goals**

The purpose of this assignment is to assess what you have learned about career planning in Psychology.

Course Schedule

Week	Date	Activity, Topic, and Reading
1	Jan. 14	Why Psychology?
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Expanding the vision of what Psychology is • Is Psychology for you?
		Assignments:
		Paper: Profile of Goals due Jan. 28
		Self- Assessments - in class
		Readings:
		Kuther Chapters 1 and 2
		Psychology: Scientific Problem Solvers: Careers for the 21st Century
		(Available on BlackBoard and at
		http://www.apa.org/students/brochure/brochurenew.pdf)

Week	Date	Activity, Topic, and Reading
		Course Reading 1 - Getting the Most out of my Psychology Major
2	Jan. 21	A Brief History of the Discipline of Psychology
		Readings:
		Benjamin & Baker Chapter 1
		Course Reading 2 - A Brief History of Psychology
3	Jan. 28	A Brief History of Professions
		• Subfields and Divisions
		• Careers
		Assignments: Profile of Goals Paper due
		Readings:
		Course Reader 3 - APA Divisions
		Benjamin & Baker Chapter 2 - 5
4	Feb. 4	Being a Psychology Major
		• Getting Involved in your Education (Research, Fieldwork, Psych groups)
		• Reading the Literature
		Readings:
		Kuther Chapters 3 - 6
		Course Readings 4 and 5
5	Feb. 11	Preparation for Graduate Study or Jobs with a B.A.
		• Transcript Analysis
		• Research and Fieldwork
		• GRE; the Psychology subject Test, MCATS; GMAT etc....
		• Academic/Career Planner
		Assignments:
		Things to do before you apply to Grad School
		GRE Practice Test
		Questions for Graduate Students
		Readings:
		Kuther Chapters 7 - 9
		Course Reader 6 -7 - Transcript Analysis
6	Feb. 18	Aspects of Graduate School
		• Grad Student Panel
		Readings:
		Kuther Chapter 10 and Course Readings: 8 - 9
		Graduate study in psychology.
		Perceptions of graduate admission directors: Undergraduate

Week	Date	Activity, Topic, and Reading
		student research experiences:
7	Feb. 25	Graduate Programs in Clinical and Counseling
		• Speakers and Discussion
		Assignments: Academic/Career Planner due
8	Mar. 4	Research Programs in Psychology and related fields
		(Developmental, Social, Neuroscience, etc.)
		• Speakers and Discussion
		Course Readings: 10
9	Mar. 11	Applied Programs in Psychology and related fields
		(Organizational, Forensic, etc)
		• Speakers and Discussion
		Course Readings: 11
10	Mar. 25	Masters & Certificate Programs
		(I/O, Human Factors, Program Eval, MFT, Recreational Therapy, Professional Coaching, etc.)
		• Speakers and Discussion
		Course Readings: 12
11	April 1,	Related Fields
		(School Psych, Social Work, etc.)
		• Speakers and Discussion
		Course Readings: 13
12	April 8,	The Application Process
		• Evaluating Graduate Programs
		• Narrowing the Possibilities
		Assignments:
		Grid Assignment and Summary of programs of interest
		Course Readings: 14
13	April 15,	The Application Process
		• The Match
		• The Statement of Purpose
		• Letters of Recommendation
		Course Readings: 15

Week	Date	Activity, Topic, and Reading
14	April 22,	After the Application
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Graduate School Funding ● The Interview and Considering Offers
		Assignment:
		Project Due
15	April 29,	What to do if you don't get in
		Course Readings: 16
16	Final	Paper due: Review of Profile of Goals