PSC 192: Field Work in Psychology (Winter, 2016)

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Office Hours: By appointment
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PSC 192 provides an opportunity to integrate psychological research and theory with the practical experience and insights you’re acquiring during an internship. You do this by writing weekly journal entries and completing a research term paper.

You may register for one unit of PSC 192 for every 30 hours of internship work you complete during the quarter (i.e., approximately 3 hours per week for each unit), up to a maximum of 6 units. To receive permission to enroll and the course CRN, submit your completed enrollment application (with your supervisor’s signature) to Prof. Lagattuta during the first week of the quarter (contact Prof. Lagattuta if this poses a problem for you). The PSC 192 application form is available online on the psychology website.

Before completing the form, it’s a good idea to contact Prof. Lagattuta to check that your internship is appropriate for PSC 192. This is especially important if you’ll be interning for an organization or agency that isn’t listed in the “Volunteer and Internship Opportunities” document on the course website.

Course Requirements

1. **Internship hours.** For each unit of PSC 192, you must complete at least 30 hours of supervised internship work during the quarter. This amounts to a weekly average of 3 hours for each unit.

2. **Research term paper.** The principal requirement for PSC 192 is to write a term paper in which you integrate your own internship experiences with one or more topics in psychological theory or research. This assignment requires that you identify a psychological research topic or question that is somehow related to your internship experiences and observations. You’ll use PsycInfo, recent Psychology textbooks, and similar sources to locate specific research studies and theoretical articles that address your topic.

   The psychological research question or topic that you identify will be the main focus of your paper, but you’ll also discuss how your internship-related observations and experiences fit with (or, perhaps, contradict) the empirical literature addressing that question.

   Your paper’s minimum length and minimum number of citations of scholarly articles, books, and chapters depends on the number of units for which you register (see the table below).

   Your paper must be double-spaced with the pages numbered in the top-right corner and 1-inch margins all around. Include a separate page with the title, your name, the date, and your e-mail address. Use APA format (6th edition) throughout your paper, especially in your in-text bibliographic citations and your References section. (Note that your References section must
begin on a new page.) Additional advice about writing your term paper can be found at the end of this document. Direct quotations from scholarly works should be used very sparingly in your research paper (2 maximum). Be very careful to avoid plagiarism.

3. **Weekly journal entries.** Every week (by Saturday night at 11:59 pm: 1/9, 1/16, 1/23, 1/30, 2/6, 2/13, 2/20, 2/27, 3/5, 3/12), you’re required to submit a journal entry of 1-2 double-spaced pages as an attachment in MS Word format. These should be uploaded to Smartsite using dropbox.

In it, you’ll discuss what you experienced in your internship during the previous week and, as much as possible, situate your experiences in the context of relevant psychological research and theory (e.g., journal articles you’ve found through PsycInfo, theories you’ve discussed in Psychology classes, materials provided to you by your internship supervisor or agency).

The goal of the journal assignments is to help you to think about your internship in relation to key empirical research findings, theories, or principles of psychology and, in doing so, to provide you with material for your term paper.

Your first few entries will most likely be in diary form (“I did this,” “I saw this,” “They taught me this,” etc.). As the quarter progresses, however, your entries should increasingly demonstrate that you’re thinking about psychological theory and research and how they relate to your work. It is expected that you’ll be regularly citing relevant research studies or psychological theories in your journal entries by the fourth or fifth week of the quarter. For example, you may want to write about a particular study or article that you located in PsycInfo, using your internship experiences to illustrate key points. (Note that all citations of research studies and other sources must conform to APA format 6th edition requirements.)

Prof. Lagattuta will read each entry and, when appropriate, return it to you or reply with brief comments. When you receive comments or corrections, be sure to heed them in preparing your subsequent journal entries and your term paper.

You are required to submit 7 weekly journal entries to receive credit for the course. (In other words, you are only required to submit journal entries for 7 out of the 10 weeks of the quarter).

Most jobs and careers related to psychology require you to be able to write well and keep professional records. To enhance this aspect of your training, your weekly journal entries will be evaluated not only for content but also for grammar, spelling, punctuation, writing style, and correct use of APA format 6th edition. A journal entry that is poorly written will be returned to you. To receive credit, you’ll be required to revise and resubmit it.

If you aren’t proficient at writing, if you lack experience writing in English, or if you simply want a knowledgeable person to check your grammar and spelling, you should take advantage of the free assistance available to you at the Student Academic Success Center (2205 Dutton Hall). Writing specialists and tutors are available on a drop-in basis or by appointment to help you with writing and proofreading your work. **Very important:** All bibliographic citations in your journal entries and term paper must be in correct APA format 6th edition (both in text and in your References).
4. **Preliminary outline of your term paper.** By **12:00 noon on Friday, February 12**, submit a statement of your paper topic, a preliminary outline or summary of the paper, and a bibliography (in APA format 6th edition) of research articles that you plan to cite in your final paper. You can submit this as an attachment in MS Word format using Smartsite dropbox.

The number of sources cited in your preliminary bibliography should be equal to or greater than the number of PSC 192 units you’re taking (e.g., at least 2 sources if you’re taking 2 units, at least 6 sources if you’re taking 6 units). Note that your final term paper must cite a larger number of sources (see the chart below).

5. **Evaluation by your internship supervisor.** Near the end of the quarter, you’ll receive an evaluation form from Prof. Lagattuta via e-mail. Print it out and give it to your supervisor, along with a stamped envelope (unless the supervisor can use an agency envelope and postage), addressed to:

Prof. Kristin Lagattuta  
UC Davis Center for Mind and Brain  
One Shields Avenue  
Davis CA, 95616

The completed form must be **received** by Prof. Lagattuta by **Monday, March 14** (postmarks don’t count). Follow up to make sure your supervisor mails it in advance of this deadline so you don’t receive a grade of Incomplete for the course.

### Summary of Due Dates

- Submit your 1-2 page (double-spaced) weekly journal entries as MS Word attachments via Smartsite no later than **11:59 pm each Saturday**.

- Submit a draft outline or summary of your term paper and a preliminary bibliography in MS Word format by **12:00 noon on Friday, February 12** to Smartsite. Your in-text citations and References section must conform to APA format 6th edition.

- The completed evaluation form from your supervisor must be **received** by Prof. Lagattuta no later than **Monday, March 14** (postmarks don’t count).

- Submit your final paper in MS Word format no later than **5:00 pm on Monday, March 14** to Smartsite.

**Conferring with Prof. Lagattuta.** You’re welcome to arrange meetings with Prof. Lagattuta during the quarter, either in person, via telephone, or by e-mail.
### Time Commitments and Term Paper Requirements

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Units</th>
<th>Your Total Time Commitment (and average weekly commitment over 10 weeks)</th>
<th>Paper’s Minimum Length (excluding References and Title Page)</th>
<th>Minimum Number of Scholarly Sources Cited</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
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<td>6 Pages</td>
<td>2</td>
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<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>60 hours total (on average, 6 hrs. per week)</td>
<td>8 Pages</td>
<td>3</td>
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<td>3</td>
<td>90 hours total (on average, 9 hrs. per week)</td>
<td>10 Pages</td>
<td>4</td>
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<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>120 hours total (on average, 12 hrs. per week)</td>
<td>12 Pages</td>
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<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>150 hours total (on average, 15 hrs. per week)</td>
<td>14 Pages</td>
<td>6</td>
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<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>180 hours total (on average, 18 hrs. per week)</td>
<td>16 Pages</td>
<td>7</td>
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### Writing Your Psychology 192 Term Paper

**Purpose of the assignment.** The weekly journal entries are intended to provide you with an opportunity to think critically about psychology while you work at your internship. The purpose of the research paper is to take you to the next step: to develop an idea (most likely one that you’ve discussed in one or more of your journal entries) and compare or substantiate your own personal observations and experience with current empirical psychological research (as discussed in journal articles and textbooks).

**Don’t stress!** If you enjoy writing any paper during your college career, it should be this one. You’re researching a topic that relates to your interest and experiences, so the paper should have personal meaning for you.

**Don’t be afraid to ask for help.** Remember: You can confer with Prof. Lagattuta (via e-mail, phone, or in person) at any point during the writing process. But don’t wait until the last minute to ask for help!

**Choosing a topic.** You should choose a specific topic for your paper before your draft outline and preliminary bibliography are due. It’s a good idea to inform Prof. Lagattuta of your topic via e-mail before you write your outline. Selecting your topic early will ensure that you have enough time to complete the background research and confer with Prof. Lagattuta if necessary (e.g., if you’re finding it difficult to select a topic or if you want to check that your idea for a topic is appropriate, contact Prof. Lagattuta.

* At least one half of the references you cite must be articles in scientific journals (e.g., *Psychological Science, Developmental Psychology, Child Development, Emotion, Journal of Clinical and Consulting Psychology*). The remaining references may be scholarly books or chapters from edited books. If you’re unsure as to whether or not a particular source is appropriate, contact Prof. Lagattuta.
appropriate to the assignment). Make sure you choose a topic that you like – that will make the process more enjoyable for you. Here are some general suggestions:

- **Find a topic that directly relates to what you’re actually doing in your internship.** This will make the paper more interesting for you to write. For example, if you are working with people with schizophrenia, an abstract discussion of various causes of schizophrenia may be less interesting than a discussion of theories of treatment and your personal observations of the treatment process (the title might be, for example, “The Role of Caregivers and Therapists in the Treatment of Schizophrenia”).

- **Find a topic you’re passionate about.** If you have a strong opinion about some aspect of your work, write about it! You’ll find the paper-writing process goes much more smoothly if you really believe in the points you’re arguing.

- **Look for a topic that is neither too broad nor too narrow.** If a topic is very broad (e.g., “Psychotherapy”), your discussion of it will necessarily be superficial. On the other hand, if it’s extremely narrow or specialized, you may have trouble finding enough to say. Look for a topic of manageable breadth that allows you to explore some interesting issues in depth.

- **Stick with one central topic.** Relatively brief papers that try to cover several different topics (e.g., leadership, communication, and motivation) often aren’t very good. It’s fine to build your paper around comparisons – for example, of two different theories, of different approaches to treatment, of different cultures or age groups. But the number should be limited. For example, papers that compare two types of psychotherapy generally work; those that try to cover three or more tend to be too “thin.”

- **Use PsycInfo as a resource.** Review published research that relates to what you’re doing. Read the abstracts of journal articles and learn what professionals are saying about your topic. You’ll probably find something in one or more abstracts that piques your interest and makes your choice of topics easier (e.g., because it is eye-opening or, in your opinion, incorrect). Look for recent publications so you know the research you’re discussing isn’t outdated. If no literature exists on your topic, you may be defining it too specifically. If the number of references is overwhelming, you may be defining it too broadly. It can help to search in Google Scholar as well.

- **Integrate your internship experience into your discussion!** This may be the part you enjoy the most. For example, you might use examples from your experience to set up your research question, to illustrate each of your points, or to conclude the paper with a real-world application of a psychological theory. It’s not a good idea, however, to use your own experience to justify or support your points. For example, the fact that the schizophrenic patient you’re working with loves chocolate doesn’t mean that all people with schizophrenia are “chocoholics.” This is why your paper must be grounded in the current empirical research literature – it tests whether your own observations can be generalized to other people and settings.
Sample Topics

Here are some of the topics that PSC 192 students have chosen in the past. They’re not the only topics you may choose, and many will not apply to your particular internship or interests. But the list may give you some ideas.

- Why Battered Women Remain in Dangerous Relationships
- Bilingual Education
- Strengths and Weaknesses of Peer Counseling
- Health Advocacy: How To Promote Healthy Behaviors
- Treating Alcoholics
- Motivating Student Athletes
- Community Mental Health
- Leadership and Communication in a High Tech Industry
- Effective Preschool Teaching
- Working with Eating Disorders
- Behavior Modification and Autism
- Assessment of a Treatment Program for Autism
- Psychoactive Drugs and the Treatment of Schizophrenia
- Preventing Suicide
- The Psychology of Advertising
- Peer Group Pressure and Conformity in the Middle School
- Working with Dyslexics
- Play Therapy
- Sexual Harassment in the Workplace
- Accepting Death: Life in a Hospice
- Antidotes for Delinquency
- Social Life in a Preschool
- Developing Management Skills
- Principles of Effective Communication in the Workplace
- Strengthening Values in High School Students
- How Gender Roles are Reinforced by Teachers and Counselors in Public Schools
- Attachment Disorder and Speech Delays in Maltreated Children
- Teaching Infants Sign Language To Promote Language Acquisition
- Suicide among Individuals with HIV/AIDS