

Professional Development in Psychology

Overview of course

The focus of this course will be the various disciplines within the field of psychology and the various career paths within the field. The course will start with a general survey of the sub-disciplines and their emphases (e.g., social, clinical, cognitive, developmental etc.). Students will then explore their own interests and identify the sub-disciplines within psychology those interests best fit. The course will then cover the various degrees and career trajectories in Psychology. Students will then identify which degrees and/or career trajectories best match their own interests. This will enable students to analyze what coursework and opportunities they need in order to be best prepared for pursuing their desired career trajectory. Finally, the course will provide training on how to communicate effectively in the professional realm, with an emphasis on CV development and statements of research interests. At the end of the course students will have developed a detailed professional development plan that includes short-term and long-term goals.

Course objectives

- (1) Students will be able to describe the various sub-disciplines within psychology and career trajectories.
- (2) Students will summarize their interests and how these relate with the sub-disciplines and career trajectories
- (3) Students will create a detailed professional development plan that they can follow and execute during their undergraduate career.
- (4) Students will draft research statements and resume/curriculum vita that reflect effective, professional communication skills

Course Requirements

Students will need access to the internet and the ability to connect to the online course regularly throughout each week.

Course Format

This course will be worth 1 credit hour. Its format will be entirely on-line. The on-line course will include discussion boards, videos, interactive calendar tools, links to key websites and an online system for submitting all assignments and receiving grades and feedback. The course will track students' time spent on the site and their engagement in the discussion boards.

Assignments and Grading

Detailed Professional development plan: Over the course of the semester students will develop a detailed professional plan that includes a summary of their interests and the relevant sub-disciplines. The plan will then describe at least two options for pursuing these interests and a description of the “dream job”. This section will be analogous to the “Introduction section” of a research article or grant proposal. The second half of the plan will be analogous to a “methods section”. In this section students will specify short term and long term goals that will optimize their ability to pursue their career trajectory.

The professional plan will be developed gradually throughout the course. Three subsections of the plan will be due throughout the semester and grades as assignments. Together these 3 assignments will be worth 60% of the overall grade.

The finished product will be worth another 30% of the grade.

The final 10% of the grade will be based on performance on quizzes and assignments from week to week.

Tentative Schedule:

Week	Topic	Assignments
1-2	Psychology as a field and its sub-disciplines	Quizzes and Scavenger hunts
3-4	Exploration of student interests	Surveys Part I of plan
5-6	Degree and Career options in Psychology	
7-8	Identifying/applying for advanced degree programs Identifying/applying for immediate full-time employment in a psychology-related field	Part II of Plan
9-10	Undergraduate professional development: Course work and experiences outside the classroom	
11-12	Professional communication and networking Elements of a CV/Resumé	Part III of Plan
13-14	Establishing short term and long term goals	
15-16	Revision of the plan	
		Finalized Plan