

## Psychology, Neuroscience & Behaviour Senior Thesis Class 2015-16

PNB 4D06; 4D09; 4DD6

(Last updated, September 8 2015)

**Instructor:** Dr. Karin Humphreys

**Email:** [krh@mcmaster.ca](mailto:krh@mcmaster.ca) (preferred contact method);

You MUST email me from your McMaster email account, otherwise it will likely be spam filtered and I will never even see it.

**Phone:** 905 525-9140 x23011

**Office:** PC-410

**Office Hours:** By appointment.

**Course Coordinator:** Sally Presutti

**Email:** [pthesis@mcmaster.ca](mailto:pthesis@mcmaster.ca)

**Phone:** 905 525-9140 x23026

**Office:** PC-102

**TAs:** Jessica Cali [calij@mcmaster.ca](mailto:calij@mcmaster.ca), Laura Cirelli [cirelllk@mcmaster.ca](mailto:cirelllk@mcmaster.ca), Swapna Krishnamoorthy [krishs6@mcmaster.ca](mailto:krishs6@mcmaster.ca)

**Office Hours:** By appointment; Most questions can best be answered before or after lectures, in the tutorials, or via Avenue

**Classes:** This class has reserved Tuesdays and Wednesdays 2:30pm-4:20pm in Term 1, and Tuesdays 2:30-4:20 in Term 2.

HOWEVER, students will only be required to attend TWO hours of class per week.

Term 1: Week 1-5, all students will be together in lectures in PC-155 during the Tuesday class time.

Week 7-12, (beginning October 20/21) students will be in a small tutorial group, on EITHER

Tuesday, OR Wednesday. Assignment to tutorial groups will be done at the beginning of term.

Term 2: There are only TWO scheduled classes in Term 2 – one lecture in PC-155 on February 23 2015, and the poster session on March 29, 2015. There will, however, be additional drop-in sessions about data analysis questions, thesis questions, grad school application questions, and any other questions with Dr. Humphreys during term 2. (dates to be announced, plus appointments by request)

See schedule below for weekly details

**Avenue:** The course website is available to registered students by logging into Avenue <http://avenue.mcmaster.ca> You will need to learn how to use Avenue to access the course content, announcements, and discussions. All PowerPoint slides from the lectures will be made available on Avenue only after the lectures, as pdfs. It is your responsibility to keep up to date with class announcements made on Avenue.

In this course we will be using Avenue. Students should be aware that, when they access the electronic components of this course, private information such as first and last names, user names for the McMaster e-mail accounts, and program affiliation may become apparent to all other students in the same course. The available information is dependent on the technology used. Continuation in this course will be deemed consent to this disclosure. If you have any questions or concerns about such disclosure please discuss this with the course instructor.

**Course objectives and content:** In this course you will be proposing an honours PNB thesis, undertaking the research for it, making a research poster (required for 4D09 students, but optional for 4D06 and 4DD6 students), and writing your thesis. In the lectures, you will receive additional information intended to help guide your thesis work, and in the tutorials, you will be making presentations about your research proposal.

**Recommended Text:** *Making Sense in Psychology: A Student's Guide to Research and Writing*. Margo Northey & Brian Timney. OUP: Canada.

This text is not required, but is recommended as a guide and reference throughout your thesis process.

**Changes in course requirements:** Details of the course requirements may be subject to change. If requirements are altered, a revised course outline will be posted on the webpage and announced in class. The instructor reserves the right to assign grade cutoffs.

**Special Needs:** If you have special needs please contact the instructor so accommodations can be made.

**Academic Integrity Policy:** Please be aware of the University Academic Integrity Policy. Cases of academic dishonesty include, but are not limited to: copying or the use of unauthorized aids in tests, examinations and laboratory reports; plagiarism, i.e., the submission of work that is not one's own; aiding and abetting another student's dishonesty; giving false information for the purposes of gaining admission or credit; giving false information for the purposes of obtaining deferred examinations or extension of deadlines; and/or forging or falsifying McMaster University documents. Students who infringe on the resolutions of the University Academic Integrity policy will be treated according to the published policy.

**Missed Assessment:** If an absence for assessment has been registered, please contact the instructor as soon as possible to arrange for makeup assessment to take place. Please also see below note re mandatory assessment.

**Evaluation:**

The final grade for the thesis will be determined by the grade provided by your supervisor (worth 80% or 90%) and the grade that you earn in thesis class (worth the remaining 20% or 10%--see below). Your supervisor's grade is based on an overall evaluation of your laboratory work and of your written thesis document. The grades submitted by your supervisor and from thesis class are completely independent. Therefore, your supervisor does not know what your final thesis grade will be.

**Marking Scheme for 4D09:**

- Thesis: 80% (graded by your supervisor)
- Poster Presentation 10% (held on Tuesday March 29, 2016 and graded by 3 independent judges).
- Class meetings: 10% (graded by your TA/Dr. Humphreys)
  - Summary of thesis topic, plus timeline document 1%
  - Presentation 4%
  - Participation 3%
  - Library project 1%
  - Second version of timeline document 1%

### **Marking Scheme for 4D06 and 4DD6:**

- Thesis: 80% or 90% (graded by your supervisor)
- Poster Presentation (optional) 10% (held on Tuesday March 29, 2016 and graded by 3 independent judges)
- Class meetings: 10% (graded by your TA /Dr Humphreys)
  - Summary of thesis topic, plus timeline document 1%
  - Presentation 4%
  - Participation 3%
  - Library project 1%
  - Second version of timeline document 1%

### **NOTE RE MANDATORY ASSESSMENT:**

For all students, the thesis presentation in Term 1 is mandatory, and a passing mark will not be entered for the course until a presentation is completed.

For 4D09 students, participation in the poster session in Term 2 is mandatory, and a passing mark will not be entered for the course if a poster is not presented on Poster Day.

If a presentation needs to be rescheduled for a later date, without an MSAF or documentation to the associate dean, the presentation will receive one lower letter grade as a penalty.

Poster Day can be missed only in extreme circumstances, and must be arranged with Dr. Humphreys. If a poster is unable to be presented at Poster Day, arrangements will be made to present the poster to Dr. Humphreys and other judges at a later date, as arranged by the instructor.

### **Summary of thesis topic plus timeline document (1% - signed hard copy due in class at 2:30pm September 29)**

The goal of this assignment is to verify that you and your supervisor have agreed on a thesis topic for you, that you understand the purpose of your proposed study, and that you and your supervisor have discussed preliminary timelines for the year. Your job is to write something resembling an abstract of a journal article that is no more than 200 words giving a tentative title for your thesis, and a brief background, purpose, and method for your proposed study. You and your supervisor also need to fill out the timeline document. Both the abstract and the timeline must be signed by you and your supervisor. The signatures verify that you and your supervisor have agreed on the topic for your thesis, and have discussed some timelines for completions of various components of the thesis.

### **Oral Presentation (4%)**

Students will give an individual PowerPoint presentation on their proposed thesis research on a date to be assigned between October 20 and the end of semester. Your grade will be based on scholarly merit of the presentation, delivery, clarity of slides, and on ability to answer questions.

### **Participation (3%)**

You are expected to attend all scheduled classes and student presentations. Your grade for participation will be determined primarily by your attendance at, and involvement in, the student presentation sessions. To get credit for a missed session, you must submit appropriate documentation to me for missed work. It is your responsibility to follow-up with your TA immediately after your return to classes.

### **Library Project (1% - due via Avenue at 2:30pm October 20)**

There will be a library assignment to demonstrate your library skills. How to do the project will be explained in class on October 6.

### **Second Term Timeline Document (1% - signed hard copy due to physical drop box in Psych lobby, January 26)**

This is an updated version of the timeline document handed in during first term. You need to fill in which goals have been accomplished, and updated deadlines for remaining components. This needs to be filled out and signed by both you and your supervisor. (A new form will be distributed via Avenue at

a later date.)

## **Poster Plus Poster Abstract Submission (10% - poster abstract due March 8, Poster Day is March 29)**

### **Thesis Submission and Deadline**

The final copy of the thesis must be e-mailed, in one PDF file, to the Psychology Department at [pthesis@mcmaster.ca](mailto:pthesis@mcmaster.ca) and to the supervisor **no later than Wednesday, April 13, at 5 p.m. If this file is not received, by 5 p.m. on that day, a grade of F will be recorded for 4D06, 4DD6, or 4D09.** Extensions of the deadline are rarely granted. If the supervisor thinks an extension is warranted, he/she can request that the student obtain a "Request for Incomplete" form from the course coordinator. This form is completed and signed by the student, the supervisor, and the Chair of the Department of Psychology, Neuroscience & Behaviour. This form must be submitted to Sally in the main office room 102. It will be submitted for approval to the Associate Dean of the student's Faculty, and the student will be advised by email, if the request has been approved. This process must not be left to the last minute. If approved, the forms will be returned to the student's Faculty Office and a copy must be sent to the Associate Dean of Science, if the student is not registered in the Faculty of Science. However, please remember that an incomplete grade on the thesis will likely delay graduation.

### **Work schedule for thesis students**

For many students, especially those conducting research off-campus, the required work schedules may not correspond to the McMaster term and vacation schedules. For example, you may be rostered to work over Reading Week or Winter break. Your supervisor is allowed to require this of you. If you wish to have specific time off, it is recommended that you negotiate this with your supervisor as soon as possible, but with the knowledge that it may not be possible.

### **For Students Conducting Research in a Hospital Setting**

Hospitals have their own requirements, many of which must be completed before research begins. For example, the requirements for doing research at Hamilton Health Sciences are:

- Immunization clearance
- Police clearance for placements with the McMaster Children's Hospital at Chedoke
- Signed confidentiality agreement
- Signed learner undertaking and agreement form (expectations for the placement)
- Completion of WHMIS learning package and quiz
- Completion of fire learning package and quiz
- Completion of Student Orientation Handbook.

If documentation of completion of ALL of these requirements has not been received by the time the final grades are due, then the student will receive an INC until these are completed.

### **Tentative Outline of Topics**

<b>Date</b>	<b>Class Type</b>	<b>Topic</b>
Tu Sept 8	Lecture	Intro
Tu Sept 15	Lecture	Ethics I
Tu Sept 22	Lecture	Ethics II
Tu Sept 29	Lecture	Library/How to do Presentations
Tu Oct 6	Lecture	Grad School Info
Tu Oct 13	FALL BREAK	FALL BREAK
Tu Oct 20	Tutorial	Presentations
Wed Oct 21		
Tu Oct 27	Tutorial	Presentations
Wed Oct 28		
Tu Nov 3	Tutorial	Presentations
Wed Nov 4		
Tu Nov 10	Tutorial	Presentations
Wed Nov 11		
Tu Nov 17	Tutorial	Presentations
Wed Nov 18		
Tu Nov 24	Tutorial	Presentations
Wed Nov 25		
Tu Dec 1	Tutorial	Presentations
Wed Dec 2		
Tu Feb 23	Lecture	How to make a poster
Tu March 29	POSTER DAY	

### **Due Dates:**

Sept 29	In class	Abstract plus timeline document
Oct 20	to Avenue	Library Assignment
Oct 20- Nov 26 (TBA)	in tutorial	Project presentation
Jan 26	Physical dropbox in lobby	Second timeline document
Mar 8	Upload (instructions to come)	Poster abstract
TBA	Email to print centre	Poster printing discount price deadline

Mar 29	MUSC	Poster Day CIBC Hall
TBA	via email	Abstract submission for Ontario Undergrad Psychology Thesis Conference (optional)
April 13	email to pthesis@mcmaster.ca	Final Thesis
mid May - TBA	TBA	Ontario Undergraduate Psychology Thesis Conference (optional)