

Guidelines for Supervisors and Students

Psychology 3QO3 (Individual Library Study) & Psychology 4QO3 (Advanced Individual Library Study)

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Psychology 3QO3 and 4QO3 involve an independent library-based project. These courses provide students with the opportunity to study in depth, under the supervision of an individual faculty member, a topic in psychology of mutual interest. The student is expected to read widely on the topic and to produce a major written document. Students intending to register must submit an on-line ballot (see Psych Dept web page)

Students may select a supervisor from within the Psychology department or from outside the department from our list of approved external supervisors. Students are encouraged to contact potential supervisors before filling out the ballot to find out who might be available and what sorts of projects are available.

<http://www.science.mcmaster.ca/psychology/psych4d6/internalsupervisors.htm>

<http://www.science.mcmaster.ca/Psychology/thesisadv/externals.html>

SUPERVISION

The student and supervisor should come to a clear understanding as early as possible as to the supervisor's expectations regarding the student's responsibilities, and the time commitment involved for the student. Regular meetings (at least weekly) should be scheduled so that the student is able to obtain continuous guidance, feedback, and support from the supervisor. Although it is primarily the responsibility of the student to meet the specified deadlines, the supervisor should provide a degree of supervision that would allow the student to complete the essay on schedule.

Although it is not possible to give an exact figure for the time required for a successful project, the student should plan on spending, on average, about 10 hours per week if registered in a 1-term course or about 5 hours per week if registered in a 2-term course. Students sometimes run into difficulties because they do not begin the project early enough or pursue it diligently throughout the course and, as a result, leave too much for the end of the term.

Very occasionally, there may be some disagreements between student and supervisor concerning the project. For example, a student may think that he/she is not getting sufficient access to the supervisor to discuss the readings or the preparation of the written report, or the supervisor may think that the student is not fulfilling his/her obligations with respect to the project. It is important that the student and/or supervisor

bring such disagreements to the attention of the Undergraduate Secretary as soon as possible. It is too late to deal with such problems when it is almost time for submission of the grade.

EVALUATION

The final grade for 3QO3 and 4QO3 is not determined by a standard numerical formula. Rather, the supervisor will assign a letter grade based on an overall evaluation of the work during the term and of the final written document.

DEADLINE

The date for the submission of grades is determined by the registrar's office. It is usually a few days after the end of classes in December and in April. Students should aim to have completed the project before the last week of classes. The Undergraduate Secretary will inform supervisors of the due date as soon as she receives the grade sheets from the registrar's office.

Extensions of the due date for grades are rarely granted. If the supervisor thinks an extension is warranted, he/she can request an extension by writing to the Associate Dean of the student's Faculty, giving the reasons for requesting an extension and specifying the date of the new deadline. Copies of the supervisor's letter and the response from the Associate Dean must be copied to the course coordinator. If the student is not registered in the Faculty of Science, this material must also be copied to the Associate Dean of Science.