



**SENIOR RESEARCH THESIS  
PSYCHOLOGY 452 A  
DEPARTMENT OF PSYCHOLOGY  
SPRING 2005**

---

**Class Time:** Monday, Wednesday, and Friday 1:00-1:50  
Behavioral Processes Lab RMSC-217E

**Professor:** Alliston K. Reid, Ph.D.

**Office:** RMSC-206E

**Office hours:** I have an open-door policy. Drop by when you want or by appointment

**Office phone:** (864) 597-4642

**Email:** [Alliston.Reid@wofford.edu](mailto:Alliston.Reid@wofford.edu)

**Texts:** Galvan, J.L. (2005). Writing Literature Reviews: a guide for students of the social and behavioral sciences. Los Angeles: Pyrczak Publishing.

American Psychological Association (2001). Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association, 5<sup>th</sup> edition. Washington, DC: American Psychological Association.

**Course Rationale** The senior research thesis is an intensive research experience that will require you to call upon all the knowledge and skills that you have obtained from the psychology core. This experience may be one of the most challenging and rewarding experiences of your college education. It will allow you the opportunity to provide prospective schools and employers with an example of your abilities to work independently and as a team on a project of your creation. You will be at the cutting edge of science, producing scientific knowledge that no one has seen. At the end of the semester, you should be expert in the field.

**Course Description** A research-oriented seminar focusing on the mechanisms of behavior and cognition. The senior thesis requires you to perform the duties of a research scientist in psychology. You will conduct a major experiment with human or animal subjects and present your findings as an APA-style written report. A comprehensive written review of the professional literature in your area of research is also required of each student. As you conduct your research, you will learn to use a computer for data collection, organization, analysis, and storage. You will frequently present your research to the rest of the team, and your team will present your final project to the Wofford community.

**Course Goals**

The main goal for this course is to instruct you on how to develop, conduct, analyze, and critique scientific research in psychology. To this end there are a number of specific goals for this course:

- Develop the ability to acquire, evaluate, organize and present previously conducted scientific research in the form of a comprehensive literature review of a given sub field. In order to reach this goal, you will be asked to learn how to develop a research plan and conduct library research.
- Develop the ability to plan and execute a novel scientific project. In order to achieve this goal you will work as a team to develop a research project. You will then be required to conduct the project, acquire and analyze the resulting data, and submit a written report on the project.
- Develop the ability to synthesize and present information in a clear and concise manner. In order to achieve this goal, you will frequently be asked to review and present an area of research to the other members of the team.

**Class Participation, Conduct, and Attendance**

Class periods will be devoted to discussion of the literature review and research projects. You will be responsible for active participation each time. You will be called upon to present your research to your peers for review and comment. This is all part of being a scientist. You will be expected to attend every class period without exception. You will be treated as professional researchers, and you will be expected to act as professional researchers.

**Course Requirements**

Each student will have two sets of responsibilities for the course:

- Work as a team member on a research project. This includes the development and implementation of the project as well as data entry, data analysis, and completion of the final report.
- Develop, research, and write a literature review on an approved area of experimental psychology. The literature review will be done individually.

In order to expedite the two responsibilities, there is a set of deadlines that will be met in order to have the projects progress efficiently and not become a burden to you later in the semester.

Date	Requirement
<b>February 21, 2005</b>	Identify and have approval for a well-developed design for the literature review
<b>March 21, 2005</b>	Submit a detailed outline of the main sections of your review and the papers you have already accumulated
<b>April 18, 2005</b>	Complete draft of literature review given to Dr. Reid. Begin preparing Final Thesis.
<b>April 25, 2005</b>	Electronic submission of the final review of the literature (in APA style)

<b>May 2, 2005</b>	Final Thesis Paper due for Dr. Reid's review. Provide copy on disk and paper.
<b>May 9, 2005</b>	PowerPoint Presentation due.
<b>May 13, 2005</b>	Student Research PowerPoint Presentation. Senior thesis students will make a professional PowerPoint presentation of their research to the Wofford Community. (We'll all party afterwards!)
<b>May 18, 2005</b>	Poster due for Dr. Reid's review. Electronic submission of the final report on the experiment (also in APA style)

**Grading**

Although this is a seminar, every attempt will be made to measure your work objectively. Because you will be carrying out research on a daily basis for the next semester under close supervision, it will be easy to determine your level of participation in the research. You will be expected to keep notes on class discussions, research topics, journal articles and discussions with your peers and me. Throughout the semester, you are expected to read many articles (approximately 25) relevant to your research and take notes and commentaries in your journal. I may evaluate your journal and this may be a factor contributing to your grade. You are expected to seek opportunities to discuss this research with professors (especially me!), rather than assume that we will call you about your work. In terms of your final grade, greater weight will be given to the literature review (40%) than the final lab report (30%). You will also be evaluated on your in-class presentations, which include your academic and professional conduct (20%) and the quality and professionalism of your presentation to the Wofford Community (10%).

**Academic Misconduct**

Academic misconduct (cheating, plagiarism, etc.) will result in a referral to the Honor Council.

**This syllabus subject to change upon notification**