

# PSY/CGS/CLDP/NSC/SPAU 4375: Honors Seminar 2013

Green Hall 4.204 Mondays 1:00-3:45 PM

## Professor Contact Information

Dr. Susan Jerger

GR 4.116 972-883-2268

[sjerger@utdallas.edu](mailto:sjerger@utdallas.edu)

Office hours: By Appointment

**Course Description:** The Honors Seminar is for students who are completing an Honors Thesis. The goals of the course are 1) to enhance critical thinking skills, 2) to promote independent scholarship, 3) to promote writing skills and facilitate the creation of an outstanding Honors Thesis, and 4) to promote the development of professional skills, particularly the ability to present yourself and your ideas more effectively. The course's format strives to enrich the meaningfulness of the educational experience by providing a means for students to become active, rather than passive, learners. Typically, the class meets for a shorter time than the designated 3 semester-hour session, with students working independently or with Dr. Jerger on their theses for the remainder of the class time. Dr. Jerger is available to work with students on an individual or small group basis for the remainder of the class time.

## Student Learning Objectives:

After completing the course, students should be able to:

- 2.3 Locate, accurately summarize, and evaluate bodies of scientific literature in psychology.
- 2.4 Use critical thinking to write reports that present narrative and graphic results, interpret findings, and describe the strengths and limitations of the findings as they bear on research questions.
- 2.5 Demonstrate proficiency in writing research reports following APA Style Guidelines that include abstract, introduction, results and discussion sections.
- 3.1 Use critical thinking to a) evaluate quality of information, including its source, context, and credibility; b) determine extent to which research findings support conclusions; and c) identify weak, contradictory, and inappropriate assertions.
- 3.2 Use critical thinking to a) evaluate whether research methods are appropriate for hypothesis/question, b) determine extent to which findings support hypothesis and explanatory contentions, c) evaluate whether conclusions are warranted, and d) evaluate strengths and limitations of research.
- 4.1 Demonstrate professional writing conventions (e.g., grammar, audience awareness, formality) appropriate to purpose and context, and use APA style effectively in empirically-based reports and literature reviews.
- 4.2 Demonstrate effective oral communication skills (e.g., lecture) and for various purposes (e.g., informing, teaching, explaining, defending, persuading, arguing).

## Required Textbook:

Galvan, J. (2013). *Writing literature reviews. A guide for students of the social and behavioral sciences, 5<sup>th</sup> Edition*. Glendale, CA: Pyczak Publishing. ISBN 978-1-936523-03-0

## Other Important Resource

Strunk, W. & White, E. (2000). *The elements of style, 4/e*. New

York: Longman. Originally published in 1918, this classic reference book is a must-have for students and conscientious writers. It details the elementary rules of English usage and principles of composition.

A dictionary. Few people know what the word "ironic" means, but they still use the word. Don't be one of them. Find a good resource.

A thesaurus. There is often one best word for a given situation. You know it exists, but you can't think of it. Don't compromise. Find a good resource.

Publication manual of the American Psychological Association, 6th Edition, American Psychological Association. The Manual is a useful reference and is considered the definitive book for organizing and formatting manuscripts. **Exception:** NSC students are to cite and format their resources according to the style of the *Journal of Neuroscience* (see <http://www.elsevier.com/journals/journal-of-neuroscience-methods/0165-0270/guide-for-authors#68000>).

Some helpful resources are available online, e.g., <http://www.bartleby.com> and <http://www.uwsp.edu/psych/apa4b.htm>.

## Format of Seminar:

The first half of each Seminar is devoted to presentations and discussions of assigned readings and lectures. The second half of each Seminar is focused 1) on issues of interest to individual students and 2) on how to achieve continuing excellence and handle success in professional careers.

## Exams and Requirements:

There will not be any formal examinations or pop-quizzes.

Each student is required 1) to complete writing and reading assignments, 2) bring questions and points of discussion about assignments to class, 3) present/co-present formal lectures on assigned readings/topics, 4) present a formal lecture on your thesis topic to the class, 5) write a mini-thesis, and 6) complete three requirements for your thesis, namely the selection of your a) approach (library research or empirical research), b) topic and tentative research question, and c) a faculty sponsor and second reader.

## Make-up Assignments:

Make-up assignments will be given only in the case of a

documented serious personal emergency (e.g., you have a serious illness and have documentation from a physician or you have a police report documenting that you were detained the day and time of class). In the case of such an emergency, you qualify for an excused absence. Students must notify Dr. Jerger prior to the missed class. Students with excused absences may turn in missed assignments late; it is students' responsibility to obtain the missed assignment and turn it in within one week of the scheduled due date. Due assignments will not be accepted late from students with unexcused absences, e.g., conflicts due to trips, doctor's appointments, friends/family with non life-threatening problems, etc. Assignments must be turned in at the beginning of class. Students who do not attend class and do not have an excused absence may email the assignment due on that class date but it must be received by 1:15 p.m. on the due date. The emailed assignment will not be printed out nor returned with comments and points earned. Students who miss class are responsible for obtaining and turning in future assignments on the due date. Tardy assignments will not be accepted from students with unexcused absences. A grade of zero (0) will be given for a missed quiz/tardy assignment that was not completed in accordance with class guidelines. Make-up assignments/tests will be designed to be more difficult and more extensive, to compensate for the advantage of greater study time.

#### **Attendance:**

Each student's active participation, and the sharing of his or her questions/discussion points with other students, is critical to the success of the Seminar. Attending classes is thus important.

#### **Grading Policy**

Grades are based on your presentations, your weekly writing and reading assignments, your mini-thesis, and your completion of the three requirements for your thesis.

The three presentations/co-presentations [on textbook topic, on your thesis topic, and on excellence/success topic] are worth 10 points each, for a total of 30 points. The form for scoring the presentations will be handed out and discussed.

The weekly written assignments are worth 5 points each, for a total of 25 pts.

The five sections of the mini-thesis [abstract, introduction, method, results, discussion) are worth 10 points each, for a total of 50 pts..

Completion of the three requirements for your thesis (the selection of your approach (library research or empirical research), your topic and tentative research question, and your faculty sponsor and second reader) is **Mandatory**. Lack of completion earns a failing grade (F) in the class.

For example, you might skip one of the 5-pt weekly writing assignments or you might wish to gain 5 bonus points from the extra weekly assignment to use as a buffer against not earning 100% of the pts offered for the mini-thesis or the presentations. A student's grade for the course is determined by the total number of points earned. The conversion of numeric total points to alphabetic scores is as follows:

A+: >100 pts  
A or A-: 90-100 points  
B+, B, or B-: 80-89 points  
C + or C: 70-79 points  
C- : 65-69 points  
D+, D, or D-: 55-64 points  
F: less than 55 points

Division within a grade level into pluses and minuses is based on the distribution of standard scores.

Overall, 105 possible points may be earned. As you can see below, 5 discretionary points are offered. You may use them as you wish.

*All outside reading written assignments must conform to format specified in class handout*

Date	Topic	Text
Jan 14	1) Overview of course and requirements	----
Jan 21	<b>Holiday</b>	
Jan 28	Writing reviews of academic literature: An overview Considerations in writing reviews for specific purposes New written assignment handed out Textbook S: _____ (10 pts) Textbook S: _____ (10 pts) Excellence/Success Topic: S: _____ (10 pts)	Ch. 1 & Ch. 2, pp.1-16
Feb 4	Selecting a topic and identifying literature for review Hand in previous assignment (5 pts); New written assignment handed out Textbook S: _____ (10 pts) Textbook S: _____ (10 pts) Excellence/Success Topic: S: _____ (10 pts)	Ch. 3, pp. 17-30
Feb 11	General guidelines for analyzing literature Hand in previous assignment (5 pts); New written assignment handed out Textbook S: _____ (10 pts) Excellence/Success Topic: S: _____ (10 pts)	Ch. 4, pp. 31-44
Feb 18	Analyzing quantitative research literature Hand in previous assignment (5 pts); New written assignment handed out Textbook S: _____ (10 pts) Excellence/Success Topic: S: _____ (10 pts)	Ch. 5, pp. 45-56
Feb 25	Building tables to summarize literature Hand in previous assignment (5 pts); New written assignment handed out Textbook S: _____ (10 pts) Excellence/Success Topic: S: _____ (10 pts)	Ch. 7, pp. 65-72
Mar 4	Synthesizing literature prior to writing a review Hand in previous assignment (5 pts) Happy Spring Break Textbook S: _____ (10 pts) Excellence/Success Topic: S: _____ (10 pts)	Ch. 8, pp. 73-82
Mar 11	<b>Spring Break</b>	
Mar 18	Guidelines for writing a first draft Mini-thesis assignment: Write the Method Textbook S: _____ (10 pts) Excellence/Success Topic: S: _____ (10 pts)	Ch. 9, pp. 83--94
Mar 25	Guidelines for developing a coherent essay Guidelines on style, mechanics, and language usage Mini-thesis assignment: - Turn in Method (10 pts) - Write the Results Textbook S: _____ (10 pts) Excellence/Success Topic: S: _____ (10 pts)	Ch. 10, pp. 95-100 Ch. 11, pp. 101--108

Apr 1	Incorporating feedback and refining the first draft Preparing a reference 6 Mini-thesis assignment: Turn in Results (10 pts) - Write the Introduction Textbook S: _____ (10 pts) Excellence/Success Topic: S: _____ (10 pts)	Ch. 12, pp. 109-112 Ch. 13, pp. 113-116
Apr 8	Comprehensive self-editing checklist for refining the final draft Mini-thesis assignment: Turn in Introduction (10 pts) - Write the Discussion Textbook S: _____ (10 pts) Excellence/Success Topic: S: _____ (10 pts)	Ch. 14, pp. 117--121
Apr 15	Student presentations on Thesis or Thesis topic (10 pts) Mini-thesis assignment: Turn in Discussion (10 pts) - Write the Abstract Excellence/Success Topic: S: _____ (10 pts)	
Apr 22	Student presentations on Thesis or Thesis topic (10 pts) Mini-thesis assignment: Turn in Abstract (10 pts) Excellence/Success Topic: S: _____ (10 pts)	
Apr 29	Student presentations on Thesis or Thesis topic (10 pts)	

## Student Conduct & Discipline

The University of Texas System and The University of Texas at Dallas have rules and regulations for the orderly and efficient conduct of their business. It is the responsibility of each student and each student organization to be knowledgeable about the rules and regulations which govern student conduct and activities. General information on student conduct and discipline is contained in the UTD publication, *A to Z Guide*, which is provided to all registered students each academic year.

The University of Texas at Dallas administers student discipline within the procedures of recognized and established due process. Procedures are defined and described in the *Rules and Regulations, Board of Regents, The University of Texas System, Part 1, Chapter VI, Section 3*, and in Title V, Rules on Student Services and Activities of the university's *Handbook of Operating Procedures*. Copies of these rules and regulations are available to students in the Office of the Dean of Students, where staff members are available to assist students in interpreting the rules and regulations (SU 1.602, 972/883-6391).

A student at the university neither loses the rights nor escapes the responsibilities of citizenship. He or she is expected to obey federal, state, and local laws as well as the Regents' Rules, university regulations, and administrative rules. Students are subject to discipline for violating the standards of conduct whether such conduct takes place on or off campus, or whether civil or criminal penalties are also imposed for such conduct.

## Academic Integrity

The faculty expects from its students a high level of responsibility and academic honesty. Because the value of an academic degree depends upon the absolute integrity of the work done by the student for that degree, it is imperative that a student demonstrate a high standard of individual honor in his or her scholastic work.

Scholastic dishonesty includes, but is not limited to, statements, acts or omissions related to applications for enrollment or the award of a degree, and/or the submission as one's own work or material that is not one's own. As a general rule, scholastic dishonesty involves one of the following acts: cheating, plagiarism, collusion and/or falsifying academic records. Students suspected of academic dishonesty are subject to disciplinary proceedings.

Plagiarism, especially from the web, from portions of papers for other classes, and from any other source is unacceptable and will be dealt with under the university's policy on plagiarism (see general catalog for details). This course will use the resources of turnitin.com, which searches the web for possible plagiarism and is over 90% effective.

## Email Use

The University of Texas at Dallas recognizes the value and efficiency of communication between faculty/staff and students through electronic mail. At the same time, email raises some issues concerning security and the identity of each individual in an email exchange. The university encourages all official student email correspondence be sent only to a student's U.T. Dallas email address and that faculty and staff consider email from students official only if it originates from a UTD student account. This allows the university to maintain a high degree of confidence in the identity of all individual corresponding and the security of the transmitted information. UTD furnishes each student with a free email account that is to be used in all communication with university personnel. The Department of Information Resources at U.T. Dallas provides a method for students to have their U.T. Dallas mail forwarded to other accounts.

## Withdrawal from Class

The administration of this institution has set deadlines for withdrawal of any college-level courses. These dates and times are published in that semester's course catalog. Administration procedures must be followed. It is the student's responsibility to handle withdrawal requirements from any class. In other words, I cannot drop or withdraw any student. You must do the proper paperwork to ensure that you will not receive a final grade of "F" in a course if you choose not to attend the class once you are enrolled.

## Student Grievance Procedures

Procedures for student grievances are found in Title V, Rules on Student Services and Activities, of the university's *Handbook of Operating Procedures*.

In attempting to resolve any student grievance regarding grades, evaluations, or other fulfillments of academic responsibility, it is the obligation of the student first to make a serious effort to resolve the matter with the instructor, supervisor, administrator, or committee with whom the grievance originates (hereafter called "the respondent"). Individual faculty members retain primary responsibility for assigning grades and evaluations. If the matter cannot be resolved at that level, the grievance must be submitted in writing to the respondent with a copy of the respondent's School Dean. If the matter is not resolved by the written response provided by the respondent, the student may submit a written appeal to the School Dean. If the grievance is not resolved by the School Dean's decision, the student may make a written appeal to the

Dean of Graduate or Undergraduate Education, and the dean will appoint and convene an Academic Appeals Panel. The decision of the Academic Appeals Panel is final. The results of the academic appeals process will be distributed to all involved parties.

Copies of these rules and regulations are available to students in the Office of the Dean of Students, where staff members are available to assist students in interpreting the rules and regulations.

## Incomplete Grade Policy

As per university policy, incomplete grades will be granted only for work unavoidably missed at the semester's end and only if 70% of the course work has been completed. An incomplete grade must be resolved within eight (8) weeks from the first day of the subsequent long semester. If the required work to complete the course and to remove the incomplete grade is not submitted by the specified deadline, the incomplete grade is changed automatically to a grade of **F**.

## Disability Services

The goal of Disability Services is to provide students with disabilities educational opportunities equal to those of their non-disabled peers. Disability Services is located in room 1.610 in the Student Union. Office hours are Monday and Thursday, 8:30 a.m. to 6:30 p.m.; Tuesday and Wednesday, 8:30 a.m. to 7:30 p.m.; and Friday, 8:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m.

The contact information for the Office of Disability Services is:  
The University of Texas at Dallas, SU 22  
PO Box 830688  
Richardson, Texas 75083-0688  
(972) 883-2098 (voice or TTY)

Essentially, the law requires that colleges and universities make those reasonable adjustments necessary to eliminate discrimination on the basis of disability. For example, it may be necessary to remove classroom prohibitions against tape recorders or animals (in the case of dog guides) for students who are blind. Occasionally an assignment requirement may be substituted (for example, a research paper versus an oral presentation for a student who is hearing impaired). Classes enrolled students with mobility impairments may have to be rescheduled in accessible facilities. The college or university may need to provide special services such as registration, note-taking, or mobility assistance.

It is the student's responsibility to notify his or her professors of the need for such an accommodation. Disability Services provides students with letters to present to faculty members to verify that the student has a disability and needs accommodations. Individuals requiring special accommodation should contact the professor after class or during office hours.

## Religious Holy Days

The University of Texas at Dallas will excuse a student from class or other required activities for the travel to and observance of a religious holy day for a religion whose places of worship are exempt from property tax under Section 11.20, Tax Code, Texas Code Annotated.

The student is encouraged to notify the instructor or activity sponsor as soon as possible regarding the absence, preferably in advance of the assignment. The student, so excused, will be allowed to take the exam or complete the assignment within a reasonable time after the absence: a period equal to the length of the absence, up to a maximum of one week. A student who notifies the instructor and completes any missed exam or assignment may not be penalized for the absence. A student who fails to complete the exam or assignment within the prescribed period may receive a failing grade for that exam or assignment.

If a student or an instructor disagrees about the nature of the absence [i.e., for the purpose of observing a religious holy day] or if there is similar disagreement about whether the student has been given a reasonable time to complete any missed assignments or examinations, either the student or the instructor may request a ruling from the chief executive officer of the institution, or his or her designee. The chief executive officer or designee must take into account the legislative intent of TEC 51.911(b), and the student and instructor will abide by the decision of the chief executive officer or designee.

***These descriptions and timelines are subject to change at the discretion of the Professor.***

