

**Psychology 497: Honors Seminar**  
**University at Buffalo, The State University of New York**  
**\*\*SAMPLE SYLLABUS\*\***

**Instructor:** Dr. Wendy Quinton  
**Office:** Park Hall 348  
**Office hours:**  
**E-mail:** wquinton@buffalo.edu  
**Phone:** 716-645-0230

**Course Section, Meeting Time, and Place:**

Wednesdays, 9:00am-11:50am, Park 241

**Required Textbook:**

American Psychological Association (2010). *Publication manual of the American Psychological Association* (6th ed.). Washington, DC: American Psychological Association. (**Note: make sure you do not get a copy of the first printing; you want the second printing or higher**)

**Other Readings:**

A variety of other readings will be required throughout the course. These readings will be posted on UBLearn the week prior to our discussing them in class.

**Program and Course Description:**

The Psychology Honors Program is the capstone experience for psychology undergraduates at UB. The program is designed to enable students to complete an individual research project (i.e., Honors Thesis) under the supervision of a faculty advisor. The Honors Program consists of two parts. The first part is the Honors Seminar, which meets only during the Fall semester. The topics covered during the Honors Seminar are intended to help students design, execute, write, and defend their Honors Thesis. In addition, we will discuss professional skills and issues relevant to choosing a career path in psychology or other areas. The second part of the Honors Program is completion of the Honors Thesis, which students work on throughout both the Fall and Spring semesters, and defend at the end of Spring semester.

**Student Learning Outcomes:** The student learning outcomes for this course address the goals detailed for the Department of Psychology's Undergraduate Program (<http://www.psychology.buffalo.edu/undergraduate/>).

After completing the Honors Seminar and Honors Program, you should be able to:	This will be assessed by:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop a research idea and design an empirical study</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Participation in discussion of assigned readings; writing assignments</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Review, critically evaluate, and synthesize scientific literature</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Participation in discussion of assigned readings; writing assignments</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Formulate hypotheses</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Participation in discussion of assigned readings; writing assignments</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Determine how to manipulate and how to measure variables</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Participation in discussion of assigned readings; writing assignments</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop research materials</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Participation in discussion of assigned readings; writing assignments</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Interact with research volunteers and/or subjects in a manner consistent with APA Ethical Guidelines</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Participation in discussion of assigned readings; completion of human/animal research participant/subject training</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Collect data*</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Your work with your advisor*</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Use statistical software to analyze data and understand what the results mean*</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Your work with your advisor*; Honors Thesis*; Honors Defense*</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Write an APA-style research proposal; write an APA-style research report (Honors Thesis)*</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Writing assignments</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Present, explain, and defend your work to an informed audience</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Class presentation; Honors Defense*</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Understand of some of the options available to you if you decide to pursue a career in psychology or related fields; appropriately prepare for and navigate the graduate school application process</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Participation in discussion of assigned readings; preparation of questions for guest speakers; writing a personal statement</li> </ul>

*Note:* Elements designated with an asterisk (\*) are learning objectives or assessments that are part of the Honors Program, but not directly part of this semester's Honors Seminar.

As you can see, this year will be packed with activity. The Honors Program is a great deal of work but hopefully will also be a highly rewarding learning experience that is a lot of fun (*yes, fun!*).

### **FALL SEMESTER HONORS SEMINAR COURSE ASSIGNMENTS:**

1) **Class Participation.** This course is a *seminar*, which means that we will not follow a standard lecture format. As a member of the seminar, you are expected to be an active participant throughout **each** of our class meetings. Arriving on time to all class meetings and attending all classes is expected; arriving late or any unexcused absence will negatively affect your grade. Coming prepared to class (i.e., having completed all required readings and other homework relevant to particular class meetings) and thoughtfully contributing to all class discussions is also expected; lack of preparation, poor participation, or inattention during the seminar will also adversely affect your grade. Specific homework assignments (e.g., preparing questions for guest speakers, statement of your hypotheses, completing human and/or animal subject IRB research certification, writing a personal statement for graduate programs or other career opportunities, writing an article review) will be due throughout the semester. Your class participation grade will be based on your performance on **all** of these elements.

- 2) **Research Proposal.** Your full research proposal consists of: Title Page, Abstract, Introduction, Proposed Method, Data Analysis Plan, and References. It is due on the last day of class, December #, 20##.
- **Statement of Hypotheses.** A clear statement of the hypotheses that you plan to include in your proposal is due on September #, 20##.
  - **Outline of Introduction.** A 3-5 page outline of the Introduction section of your proposal is due on October #, 20##. This outline needs to: clearly set up the structure of your Introduction, cite all relevant work that you will include in your Introduction, and end with your hypotheses.
  - **Full Draft of Introduction.** A complete written draft of your Introduction section is due November #, 20##.
- 3) **Class Presentation.** You will present your proposal to the class during one of the last two class meetings.

**Course Grading Breakdown:** The Honors Seminar course grades will be determined as follows:

<u>Course Assignment</u>	<u>% Worth</u>	<u>% Earned at End of Class</u>	<u>Grade in Class</u>
Class Participation:	25%	93.00% to 100.00%	A
Research Proposal:	40%	90.00% to 92.99%	A-
Outline of Introduction:	5%	87.00% to 89.99%	B+
Full Draft of Introduction:	15%	83.00% to 86.99%	B
Class Presentation:	15%	80.00% to 82.99%	B-
<u>TOTAL</u>	<u>100%</u>	77.00% to 79.99%	C+
		73.00% to 76.99%	C
		70.00% to 72.99%	C-
		67.00% to 69.99%	D+
		60.00% to 66.99%	D
		< 60.00%	F

\*Consistent with UB policy (see the Undergraduate Catalog), no Incompletes will be given to students with otherwise failing grades.

**Course Announcements, Supplemental Readings, and Assignments:** Announcements, readings, and assignments will be periodically posted on UB Learns and/or sent to your UB email account. You are expected to check both on a regular basis. Not checking these sources of information will not be accepted as an excuse for being unaware of course-related information.

**Policy on Late Assignments and Missed Class:** Assignments are expected to be handed in *at the beginning of class* on the specified due date. Be sure to factor in printing time (printing on campus often has long delays). Late assignments will be accepted *without penalty* only in cases of confirmable personal tragedy or extreme illness. To be fair to those who turn in assignments on time, assignments that are late for other reasons will be penalized one letter grade for each day that they are late. Each missed class or missed portion of class (i.e., absence, partial absence, or late arrival) reduces a student's class participation grade. If you are absent from class and would like to attempt to make up the lost credit, contact me as soon as possible to discuss the reason for the absence and the possibility of make-up work. Except in cases of confirmable personal tragedy or extreme illness, no make-up work will be offered to students who wait more than 24 hours after the missed class to contact me. Assigned oral presentation dates are set at the beginning of the semester; except in cases of confirmable personal tragedy or extreme illness, failure to complete the oral presentation on the scheduled date will result in a zero on the assignment.

**Academic Integrity:** The University has a responsibility to promote academic integrity and develop procedures to effectively deal with academic dishonesty. You are responsible for the honest completion and

representation of your work, for accurate citation of sources, and for appropriate conduct regarding others' academic endeavors. By placing your name on your academic work, you are certifying the originality of all work not otherwise identified by appropriate acknowledgements. *Any* form of academic dishonesty will be handled in accordance with the *UB Catalog*, which states that academic dishonesty may involve any of the following: being given no credit for a particular assignment, an "F" in the class, suspension, and/or expulsion from the university.

**Writing Advice and Assistance:** PSY 497 and the Psychology Honors Program involve a great deal of high-level writing. Completing all writing assignments far enough in advance so that you can proofread your work (and potentially get your advisor's or other critical feedback) and make improvements as necessary is strongly recommended. UB's Center for Excellence in Writing (<http://writing.buffalo.edu/>) is a terrific resource, and they have free drop-in or scheduled appointments; if you are struggling with writing in any way, use their services! *Not seeking help when it is needed and/or trying to complete writing assignments a day or two before they are due often leads to panic, poor grades, and unsuccessful completion of the Psychology Honors Program.*

**Incomplete Grades:** If you are experiencing a serious, documentable problem (i.e., a death in your immediate family, serious illness) that is preventing you from optimally performing in the course, see me as soon as the issue arises to discuss an Incomplete. Incompletes cannot be given retroactively; that is, if you come see me toward the end of the semester after performing poorly and tell me you have been experiencing personal issues, I cannot give you an Incomplete. If an issue arises, you need to see me immediately to let me know that you will not be able to complete upcoming work; in that situation, an Incomplete may be an option. Consistent with UB policy (see the *UB Undergraduate Catalog*), no Incompletes will be given to students with otherwise failing grades.

**Sharing of Course Performance Information:** To facilitate your progress in the Psychology Honors Program, at the end of the semester, your grade in PSY 497 and feedback about your individual course performance will be shared with your advisor.

**Office of Accessibility Resources:** If you have a disability (physical or psychological) and require reasonable accommodations to enable you to participate in this course, such as note takers, readers, or extended time on assignments, please contact me and the Office of Accessibility Resources (OAR) (*formerly Office of Disability Services*), 60 Capen Hall, 716-645-2608, during the first two weeks of class. OAR will provide you with information and review appropriate arrangements for reasonable accommodations.

## **GENERAL INFORMATION ABOUT THE PSYCHOLOGY HONORS PROGRAM**

**Spring Semester:** There is no seminar during the Spring semester, but you will still enroll in "Honors" units. You should register for the 497-level Honors course that is associated with your faculty advisor, who will be responsible for the grade given. During the Spring semester, you should spend your time completing all tasks necessary (e.g., data collection, data analysis, writing) to finish your Honors Thesis. I will remain available to help during the Spring semester (feel free to e-mail/call, stop by my office hours, or make an appointment to see me).

**Honors Thesis:** The final (i.e., complete, advisor-approved) version of your individual research project write-up (i.e., Honors Thesis), containing Title Page, Abstract, Introduction, Method, Results, Discussion, References, and Table(s)/Figure(s) (if included) is due Wednesday, May #, 20##. Be sure to give your faculty advisor adequate time to read many drafts of your Honors Thesis so that you will meet this deadline. Your advisor must approve your Honors Thesis prior to you turning it in on May #. You need to submit your

thesis in both paper and electronic forms on the due date; specific information regarding where, how, and to whom you will submit these copies will be given during the Spring semester.

**Oral Defense:** During the Spring semester, you will schedule the oral defense of your work. Typically, your oral defense will involve a committee of two faculty members (not your Honors Thesis advisor) who will meet to hear you give a brief presentation of your project and then pose questions to you about your work. Once I assign committee members, you are responsible for contacting them to schedule the date and time of your oral defense. Information regarding scheduling a meeting time and site and reserving necessary equipment (e.g., laptop, etc.) will be provided during the Spring semester.

**Graduation with Honors and the Feldman-Cohen Award:** If you successfully complete an Honors Thesis and oral defense, you will receive one of three levels of Honors at graduation: Honors, High Honors, or Highest Honors; students who submit an Honors Thesis that is evaluated below threshold and/or whose performance during the oral defense is evaluated below threshold will not receive any level of Honors. The awarding of Honors, including level of Honors, is primarily determined by input from the two faculty members who form your oral defense committee; your faculty advisor's input may also factor into the decision. If one Honors Thesis in a given academic year is evaluated as superlative (both in write-up and oral defense), the student who authored the project may receive a special honor, the Feldman-Cohen Award. This honor, which includes a monetary award, is typically given to a student who receives Highest Honors and is judged to have the superior project in a given year. If none of the projects is evaluated to be of exceptional quality, the Feldman-Cohen award may not be conferred. In the event of a tie, I will cast the deciding vote.

**Course Outline:**

Week	Seminar Topics & Assignment Due Dates
Week 1:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Introduction to Honors Seminar</li> <li>• <i>For next week: Complete readings (check email and UBLearns)</i></li> </ul>
Week 2:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Developing Research Ideas</li> <li>• <i>For next week:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <i>Complete readings (check email and UBLearns)</i></li> <li>▪ <i>Prepare questions for guest speakers</i></li> </ul> </li> </ul>
Week 3:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Communicating with Your Advisor; Becoming a Professional</li> <li>• <i>For next week:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <i>Complete readings (check email and UBLearns)</i></li> <li>▪ <i>Prepare questions for guest speaker</i></li> </ul> </li> <li>• <i>Over the next two weeks:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <i>Work on writing statement of your hypotheses</i></li> <li>▪ <i>Begin IRB/IACUC Certification (ask your advisor which is appropriate)</i></li> </ul> </li> </ul>
Week 4:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Graduate School: The Application Process and Beyond</li> <li>• <i>For next week:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <i>Complete readings (check email and UBLearns)</i></li> <li>▪ <i>Complete statement of your hypotheses</i></li> <li>▪ <i>Complete IRB/IACUC Certification (ask your advisor which is appropriate)</i></li> <li>▪ <i>Prepare questions for guest speaker</i></li> </ul> </li> <li>• <i>Over the next two weeks: Work on writing your Personal Statement</i></li> </ul>
Week 5:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>**STATEMENT OF HYPOTHESES DUE**</b></li> <li>• <b>**IRB/IACUC CERTIFICATION DUE**</b> (bring a copy of your certificate)</li> <li>• Ethics in Research</li> <li>• <i>For next week:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <i>Complete reading (check email and UBLearns)</i></li> <li>▪ <i>Familiarize yourself with APA Guide (you will need to bring it to class Weeks 6 &amp; 7)</i></li> <li>▪ <i>Complete your Personal Statement</i></li> </ul> </li> </ul>
Week 6:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>**PERSONAL STATEMENT DUE**</b></li> <li>• Writing a Research Proposal: Part 1 (APA Style, Introduction, etc.) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <u>Important</u>: Bring your APA Guide to class!</li> <li>▪ <i>Complete readings (check email and UBLearns)</i></li> <li>▪ <i>Start writing an outline of your Introduction</i></li> </ul> </li> </ul>
Week 7:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Writing a Research Proposal: Part 2 (Method, Results, Statistics, Discussion, etc.) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <u>Important</u>: Bring your APA Guide to class!</li> </ul> </li> <li>• <i>For next week:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <i>Complete outline of your Introduction</i></li> <li>▪ <i>Prepare questions for guest speakers</i></li> </ul> </li> </ul>
Week 8:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>**OUTLINE OF INTRODUCTION DUE**</b></li> <li>• Career Paths in Psychology</li> <li>• <i>For next week:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <i>Complete readings (check email and UBLearns)</i></li> <li>▪ <i>Prepare questions for guest speaker</i></li> </ul> </li> <li>• <i>Over the next few weeks: Start writing your Proposed Method and Data Analysis Plan</i></li> </ul>
Week 9:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Representing Yourself Well: Social Media Presence, CVs, Job Applications, and Interview Skills</li> <li>• <i>For next time:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <i>Complete the full draft your Introduction</i></li> <li>▪ <i>Refresh your familiarity with the portion of Week 6 reading that focused on how to give a talk</i></li> </ul> </li> </ul>
Week 10:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Writing Day—No Class</i></li> </ul>
Week 11:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>**FULL DRAFT OF INTRODUCTION DUE**</b></li> <li>• Organizing a Talk about Your Research</li> <li>• <i>For next week:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <i>Complete readings (check email and UBLearns)</i></li> <li>▪ <i>Complete Article Review</i></li> </ul> </li> </ul>

Week 12:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>**ARTICLE REVIEW DUE**</b></li> <li>• Criticism: How to Give It, How to Take It</li> <li>• <i>For next few weeks:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <i>Draft and revise your class presentation of your Research Proposal</i></li> <li>▪ <i>Finish writing and revising your complete Research Proposal</i></li> </ul> </li> </ul>
Week 13:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Fall Holiday—No Class</i></li> </ul>
Week 14:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>**CLASS PRESENTATIONS**</b></li> </ul>
Week 15:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>**COMPLETE RESEARCH PROPOSAL DUE**</b></li> <li>• <b>**CLASS PRESENTATIONS**</b></li> </ul>

Note: The schedule of topics may change as the semester progresses. We may cover more or less material on a particular day or week than is indicated above, and readings may be added as needed.