

Description: Directed Research provides a hands-on opportunity for students to learn about psychological research. By working with faculty and graduate students in approved laboratories, students will gain exposure to various aspects of the research process, such as data collection, data entry, and poster presentations. This course is particularly valuable for students interested in graduate study in psychology, and it can also be an impressive entry on a job resumé.

Prerequisites: Students must complete the following prerequisites before the start of Directed Research*:

- Overall QPA of 3.0 or higher
- 12 credits of Psychology (including current term)
- STAT 0200/1000/1100- Statistics
- PSY 0035- Research Methods in Psychology

* If you do not meet the prerequisites, the research supervisor can admit you by completing a *Directed Research Prerequisite Waiver Form*. This form can be obtained in the Psychology Advising Office.

Credit Option: Students may take a maximum of 3 credits of PSY 1903 in any one term, and a maximum of 6 credits on any one research project. The course is offered only on an S/N basis. Credits are determined by the number of hours spent on the project over the term:

1 credit = 55 hours

2 credits = 85 hours

3 credits = 120 hours

Please read the following information closely:

- ✓ The PSY 1903 (or 1902 or 1900) experience must be non-paid in order to earn credit.
- ✓ Psychology majors are required to take three upper-division (1000 level) courses. A maximum of 3 credits in PSY 1903, 1900 (Supervised Field Placement), OR 1902 (Directed Reading) may be applied toward this requirement. For example, if a student has 3 credits of PSY 1903 and 3 credits of PSY 1900, the PSY 1903 credits could be used to fulfill one of the required 1000-level course requirements, while the PSY 1900 credits would count as elective credits (or vice-versa).
- ✓ Only 12 credits of PSY 1900, PSY 1902, and PSY 1903 may be applied toward the B.S. degree, with a maximum of 9 credits under one course number. However, there are other ways to gain additional research/internship experiences. The College of Arts and Sciences (CAS) allows a maximum of 24 research/internship credits toward a B.S. degree. Therefore, students can take 12 research/internship credits through CAS or other CAS departments in addition to the 12 credit maximum in the psychology department.

Registration: To register for Directed Research, the student must complete the following 3 steps:

1. Complete the *PSY 1903 Directed Research Learning Agreement* with the research supervisor.
2. Make two copies of the signed agreement form. Keep one copy for yourself and give one copy to the research supervisor. Finally, take the original copy to the Psychology Advising Office to obtain an *Admission to Restricted Class* form.
3. Process the *Admission to Restricted Class* form with the Registrar in Thackeray Hall.

To Earn Credit: In order to earn credit, the student must work the required number of hours and perform their duties in a satisfactory manner. In addition, the student must complete two evaluations of the project AND a research paper. Each of the latter requirements is described further below:

Evaluations:

Students are required to complete two evaluations, one due at mid-term and one due towards the end of the term. Evaluations are to be submitted directly to the Psychology Advising Office and will remain strictly confidential. Due dates for the evaluations will be provided with the *Admission to Restricted Class* form.

Research Paper:

Students must submit a type-written paper of approximately 5-7 pages to BOTH the Psychology Advising Office and their research supervisor. Papers must be submitted **ONE WEEK BEFORE** the last Friday of regular classes (i.e., before the last week of regular classes and well before finals week). Suggested paper content is described below.

If you have any questions about these guidelines, or anything else related to the PSY 1903 course, please contact the Psychology Advising Office, 3117 Sennott Square, (412) 624-4540.

PSY 1903 Directed Research Paper Guidelines

The following are questions that should be answered in your PSY 1903 research paper. However, your research supervisor may prefer that you write your paper differently. Make sure to discuss the paper format with your supervisor well before it is due so that you understand what he or she would like to see in your paper.

Rationale for Study & Hypotheses

1. What are the specific aims, or basic research questions, of the project on which you are working?
2. Why are these research aims important? That is, how does this research fit into the current knowledge of this subject, and what will this research tell us that we don't already know? *To adequately answer these questions, you will have to review key literature in the field. You should ask your supervisor to direct you to important articles related to the research.*

Research Method

3. What are the independent (predictor) and dependent (criterion) variables in this study?
4. What variables, if any, are controlled in this research? How are they controlled?
5. How are the measures recorded (e.g., scored questionnaires, coded videotapes, behavior checklists)?
6. How were the measures derived? That is, are they standard measures used by other researchers, or were they created specifically for this project? If the latter, how were they created?

Results & Interpretation

7. Have any statistical analyses been performed yet? If so, which statistics were calculated and what did they show?
8. If no statistical analyses have been performed yet, what are your guesses or intuitions about what the results will show? Why do you expect the results to turn out this way?

Overall Learning Experience

9. What have you learned about 1) the subject matter and 2) research techniques while working on this project?