Senior Seminar
Fall 2004

Dr. Anita Davis
119 Clough Hall
843-3989 (office); 272-0885 (home, before 10 pm)

Office Hours:
Wednesdays 11-1
Other times by appointment.

Course Description:
This course is designed to give students the opportunity to apply and enhance the skills that are at the core of being a psychology major. Students will be exposed to theoretical, empirical, and applied research, especially as it relates to conducting research in community settings.

Course Objectives:

(1) To expose students to various aspects of the research process including conducting literature reviews, managing a data set, conducting data analysis, writing up research results in APA format, and disseminating results.

(2) To enhance students oral communication and presentation skills by giving them the opportunity to make presentations of their work and additional readings throughout the semester.

(3) To expose students to a research-collaboration model in which they gain experience working as part of a research team and gain experience providing critical feedback to their peers on their work.

Grading Policy:

I. Discussion Points/Class Participation (15%): Students are expected to attend all class meetings as class discussion and feedback to peers are critical to the success of the course. To help facilitate this, at least two students will be required to each prepare four to five discussion points for class based on assigned readings. These discussion points should provide a brief amount of background information and raise an issue or question to help facilitate discussion. Each discussion point should be approximately a paragraph in length. Copies of the discussion points for all members of the class must be put on my door by 9:00 am on the day the readings are due. The class participation grade will be based on the quality of the student’s discussion points, the student's ability to facilitate classroom discussion, and the student’s overall level of participation in class discussions. If students have an excused absence on the day on which they are assigned to lead class discussion, they will be assigned additional readings for which they will write discussion points.
II. Research Paper (50%): Each student or student research group will conduct a research project and submit a final paper based on their work. Papers must be written according to APA style (5th edition of the Publication Manual) including citations and references. Students will be assigned research projects in consultation with me. Options for the project include continuing ongoing work with a faculty member or working on one of several research projects that are ongoing in my lab. The final paper should be approximately 20-25 pages excluding references, tables, and figures. Ideally, this paper will be of high enough quality to be submitted to a psychological journal. The amount of weight given to each of the different components of the paper will be as follows:

A. Abstract 2%
B. Literature Review 15%
C. Method Section 10%
D. Results Section 10%
E. Discussion 13%

Late papers will be penalized by ½ letter grade for each day that they are late.

III. Draft of Research Paper (15%): Each student will be expected to submit a draft of the literature review section of their part of the group paper. Sections on their research questions/hypotheses, preliminary analyses, and bibliography should also be included. Papers should be written according to APA style.

IV. Professional Presentation (10%): Each student or student research group will be required to present their work to a public professional audience. Alternative ways of satisfying this component of the course include presenting their work at a professional conference, presenting at an on-campus poster session, giving a professional power point presentation, or presenting their work to the non-profit agency for which they are “consulting.”

V. Peer Group Evaluation (10%): To assess each student’s contribution to the successful completion of group research projects, other group members will evaluate each student. All evaluations will be kept strictly confidential. For students working alone, these points will be distributed evenly between the class participation and oral presentation components of the course.

VI. Attendance Policy: Given the importance of class discussion/feedback, your grade will be lowered by 2 points for each class that you miss. If you feel that you have a legitimate excuse for an absence, you should talk with me in advance.

* All work is covered by the Honor code.
Tentative Class Schedule and Assignments:

AUG 25  Brief overview of Course/Introduction of Projects

SEP 1  Discussion of Readings (on reserve)
8     Discussion of Readings (on reserve)
15    Preliminary research questions you hope to answer due to me

22    Discussion of Readings (on reserve)
29    Research Team meetings

OCT 6   Research Team Meetings (Exchange lit review sections with group)
13    Research Team Meetings (Typed feedback for group members is due –
     provide a copy of the literature review and comments to me)
20    Research Team Meetings
27    Draft of the literature review section of paper due to me along with
     a. Tentative hypotheses/research questions and analysis plan (i.e.,
        what analyses you propose to test your hypotheses and why)
     b. Preliminary bibliography with a minimum of 15 articles (be
        sure to indicate which articles you have in your possession and
        those you plan to retrieve)
     NOTE: Remember this WILL be graded (15% of your grade)

NOV 3   Research Team Meetings
10    Research Team Meetings
17    Draft of entire paper due to me if you desire feedback
24    Thanksgiving Break

DEC 1   Possible date for class presentations/poster session
8     Possible date for class presentations/poster session
13    Research Papers due by 5pm (Monday)

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Numerical scores corresponding to letter grades for all assignments in the course:

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Letter Grade</th>
<th>Numerical Score</th>
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<tr>
<td>A</td>
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<tr>
<td>A-</td>
<td>90-93</td>
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<td>87-89</td>
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<td>B</td>
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<td>F</td>
<td>Below 60</td>
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Note: For assignments returned with only a letter grade, your numerical score corresponds to the
      highest number of points allowed for that letter grade.