The University of Hong Kong
Department of Psychology

An Overview of Capstone Project in Psychology (PSYC7317)

Course Description

This course comprises an independent research study in an area of psychology of the candidates' choice, subject to availability of supervision. Students will conduct a research project or read within an area of study, to be agreed with their instructor, and write an extended essay or research project report. The essay or project write-up should be about 4,000 to 5,000 words in length (excluding tables, figures, bibliographies, and appendices) and should follow the practice of communication in top psychology journals.
Assessment: 100% coursework.

Course Objectives

1. Have students engage in individual exploration and learning within an area of psychology
2. Require students to meet regularly and frequently with an instructor to discuss readings
3. Students will write an extended report, such as a long essay or a research proposal

Course Learning Outcomes

On completing the course, students will be able to:
1. Read and explore within an area of psychology
2. Write an extended piece of work that addresses an issue in psychology in some depth

Course topics

The course will involve group supervision of the students by an instructor. Student and instructor will have weekly meetings to discuss readings.

Recommended Reading List

Readings will be determined by the instructor.

Assessment method

- Research Report (100%): A report on research work performed with relevant background and reflections on learning achieved.
- Suggested word count for research report: 4,000 – 5,000 words

The research study can be from any areas of psychology. The Program Director/Associate Program Director should sign off on whether the supervisor and topic are appropriate.

You may approach teaching staff in the Psychology Department for research supervision. You have to submit a Working Title Confirmation form in early start of the 2nd Semester.

Data Collection and Research Ethics Application

A supervisor might suggest student to collect some data. If your group is required to do so and your research area is in Psychology, you should submit an online research ethics application by end of February. Late submission will be penalized. Failure to submit an ethics application will lead to a failure in the course. Please see details of ethics application in Psychology web-page (https://psychology.hku.hk/useful-information-to-current-students/).

Submission of Research Report

1. The deadline of submission is **23:59 on 15 June 2026**.

2. The Group Representative should submit the research report to Moodle before the deadline.
   a) Your submission must be in one single file PDF format including all the chapters.
   b) All covering pages, pictures, tables and charts must be included in appropriate position of the file.
   c) There is no need to submit SPSS, Excel or other files separately.

3. The penalty for late submission is one mark for each calendar day, including Saturday, Sunday and public holidays.

4. Extension of submission deadline can only be granted on medical reasons. All the following are strictly required: a letter from certified medical practitioners, prior approval from the Programme Director, and supervisor's consent.

5. Make sure that due acknowledgement is given when referring or quoting from literature, books, webpages, essays or any other information sources.

6. The softcopy will be checked for plagiarism against a database of articles, books, webpages, and essays submitted by students at HKU and other universities. No credit will be given if the work contains plagiarized materials. Further penalties will also be applied, including a zero mark for the course. Plagiarism will be kept at the Department for consideration of possible disciplinary action. Please be sure to read the website to know more about how to avoid plagiarism: https://tl.hku.hk/plagiarism/how-to-avoid-plagiarism/

7. All raw data and research materials must be retained. Data must be stored in accordance with The University's Policy on the Management of Research Data and Records (https://www.rss.hku.hk/integrity/research-data-records-management). The department may invite you for an oral examination in addition to the submission.

Presentation of Research Report

Around the end of June, students will be required to present the research project on group basis in the form of a poster presentation.