

UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA, MERCED
PSY 289 Psychology Colloquium
Fall 2012
COB 265
Wednesday 2:00pm

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Office Hours: Wednesdays 4:00 – 6:00pm, or by appointment

I. Course Description: This course provides an opportunity for students to learn about current research in psychology through direct exposure to researchers of varying expertise who utilize a variety of methodological approaches. Speakers will include UC Merced faculty and graduate students as well as invited researchers from outside institutions. Students will learn about contemporary research across a broad range of psychological focus (e.g., social, personality, clinical), however research in developmental, health, and quantitative psychology will be emphasized. Students will also be given the opportunity to participate in informal discussion with speakers outside of the classroom.

II. Course Goals and Outcomes:

- a. **Course Goals:** The overarching goal of this course is to provide graduate students with research breadth and depth by attending talks from leading researchers in psychology and related disciplines (most of whom come from outside UC Merced). The lecture series is designed to engage students and speakers with questions and discussions about lecture topics. Series topics and corresponding speakers change each semester so that students may benefit from this learning experience throughout their graduate careers. There will be a particular emphasis on topics related to developmental, health, and quantitative psychology.
- b. **Learning Outcomes:** By the end of this course students will:
 - Read and understand published papers and relevant literature (as provided by speakers) that are relevant to their respective lectures
 - Demonstrate engagement and participation in lectures and professional discussions with presenters
 - Provide written discourse and evaluation of how research presentations and/or readings informed the development of their own research progress

Learning outcomes will be measured by written assignments, in-class discussion, and attendance at lectures.

III. Format and Procedures: This course will largely adopt the format of a “speaker series.” Therefore, students are expected to appropriately engage in formal presentations with thoughtful questions and commentary. Students are invited to ask questions, express their thoughts regarding the material presented, and demonstrate respect and sensitivity to individual differences and opinions. Awareness of the discussion topic and context is expected. Thus, class attendance is fundamental to student learning. Students are expected to attend all classes, read all designated articles prior to class meetings, and complete all assignments according to the schedule. Assignments will not be accepted late. Promptness to class is expected unless the instructor is notified in advance.

IV. Course Requirements:

a. *Course readings and class attendance/participation:*

Attendance and participation is a central element to student learning in this course. Students are expected to provide interesting points/questions to class discussion and engage in scholarly exchange. When provided by speakers, students are expected to read relevant background articles. Students are expected to attend all meetings, though 2 absences are allowed without penalty.

b. *Reflections papers:*

In addition to assigned readings and class participation, students will complete 3 reflection papers during the semester. However, students who opt to present their work as a featured speaker will only be required to submit 2 of the 3 reflections. Papers should be no more than 1 page (double-spaced) and describe how their learning about a particular speaker's research findings or approach will be useful in informing their own research activities and projects. Students are encouraged to submit reflections from presentations most relevant to their interests and to highlight the elements of a particular talk that were found to be most useful to the student. Papers will be graded on a pass/fail basis. Unacceptable papers will be returned and students will have 1 opportunity to resubmit.

V. **Grading Procedures:** Students will be graded on a pass/fail basis. Requirements for a passing grade include meeting the attendance and participation expectations (described above), and successful submission of 3 reflection papers.

VI. **Academic Integrity:** Each student in this course is expected to abide by the University of California, Merced's Academic Honesty Policy. Any work submitted by a student in this course for academic credit will be the student's own work. Penalty for violation of this Policy can also be extended to include failure of the course and University disciplinary action.

VII. **Accommodations for Students with Disabilities:** The University of California Merced is committed to ensuring equal academic opportunities and inclusion for students with disabilities based on the principles of independent living, accessible universal design and diversity. I am available to discuss appropriate academic accommodations that may be required for student with disabilities. Requests for academic accommodations are to be made during the first three weeks of the semester, except for unusual circumstances. Students are encouraged to register with Disability Services Center to verify their eligibility for appropriate accommodations.

VIII. **Relationship to Program Learning Outcomes and Requirements:** Program learning outcomes for the Psychological Sciences Ph.D. are directly aligned with the landmarks of Ph.D. training and include:

- *Core Knowledge:* Graduate students will demonstrate advanced knowledge in a specialized area of Psychological Sciences of their choosing.
- *Statistics and Methods:* Graduate students will demonstrate skills in the use the basic data gathering methods statistical techniques used for typical analyses in conducting research in the Psychological Sciences.
- *Pedagogy:* Graduate students will participate in classroom pedagogy used in undergraduate education.
- *Writing:* Graduate students will produce written communications of the quality and in the style expected in Psychological Science.
- *Professionalism:* Graduate students know and participate in the intellectual and organizational aspects of the profession of psychology.
- *Independent Research:* Graduate students will conduct independent research resulting in an original contribution to knowledge in Psychological Sciences, including all steps from generating an original question to writing a manuscript describing all aspects of the study.

This course is designed to contribute to breadth needed for understanding background literature relevant to specific projects and dissertations and for writing comprehensive literature reviews, developing independent research projects, and understanding the application of various statistical approaches and research methods.

- IX. Weekly Schedule:** The following is a proposed weekly schedule of topics and key assignment dates. *The instructor reserves the right to make any changes to the course syllabus and/or schedule at any time during the course as appropriate. Students will be informed of all changes in advance.*

August

29 No speaker, introduction week, students should attend

September

5 Carol Sipan UC Merced, Visiting
12 Alan Chan UC Davis, Psychology
19 TBD
26 Lorin Lachs Fresno State, Cognitive Science

October

3 Yanine Hess UC Davis, Psychology
10 Ashley Sanders-Jackson UCSF, Center for Tobacco Control
17 Jeff Sherman UC Davis, Psychology
24 Keith Widaman UC Davis, Psychology
31 Alexandra Main UC Berkeley, Psychology

November

7 Wesley Moons UC Davis, Psychology
14 Emilio Ferrer UC Davis, Psychology
21 Paul Brown UC Merced, Public Health
28 Sara Hitchman UCSF, Cardiovascular Research Institute

December

5 Ricardo Cisneros UC Merced, Public Health