Integrative Seminar
PSYC 4884-01
(subject to revision)

University of West Georgia

Spring 2019 (1st block)
TR 9:00 am – 12:20 pm
Nursing 122

Instructor: Alan Pope, Ph.D.
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Email: apope@westga.edu
Office Hours:
    TR 12:45 pm – 1:45 pm;
    & by appointment

Ours is a cell-phone-free classroom.

“The unexamined life is not worth living.”
Socrates

“The test of a first rate intelligence is the ability to hold two opposed ideas in the mind at the same time, and still retain the ability to function.”
F. Scott Fitzgerald

Course Description

Integrative Seminar is the senior capstone seminar course for psychology majors. Its goal is to help seniors integrate their accumulated learning within the discipline of psychology intellectually, professionally, and personally. The course is organized in a temporal sequence with respect to each student’s life (i.e., past, present, and future). The unit on the past reflects upon what students have learned during their time as psychology majors, in particular revisiting and integrating the principle theoretical perspectives presented at West Georgia. The unit on the present helps students to reflect on who they are now, which includes examination of their deepest values and aspirations. This unit includes developing an APA-formatted proposal for studying a psychological research question of current interest. The unit on the future focuses on the discovery of one’s vocational calling and the practical steps required for actualizing it. Here the culminating project is an “aspirational life plan.” In addition to these course elements, students will learn principles of mentoring, and participate in assessing the psychology program.

Required Texts

The main text in this course will be generated by you, and it will be the text of your life, including your past, present, and future. That said, the following two texts provide support for this purpose.

You are required to bring the Palmer text to class on the days that we cover it. Therefore, you must purchase this text, preferably in print versus electronic form. (Cell phones are not permitted in class; tablets or computers are permitted only for purposes of bringing up assigned materials during classroom discussion.)


It is recommended that you purchase the Landrum & Davis text, but a copy will be kept on reserve in the library for the sake of those with financial restrictions. You are nevertheless expected to read all assigned materials, and in some cases you may need to photocopy from the book in connection with assignments to be submitted in class.

**Useful Free Resources**

The Purdue Owl APA website is an excellent, easy-to-use resource for writing in APA style: https://owl.purdue.edu/owl/research_and_citation/apa_style/apa_formatting_and_style_guide/general_format.html.


**Recommended Text**

Strunk, W., & White, E. B. (1979). *The elements of style*. New York: Macmillan. As many will attest, working with this small classic has the potential to improve your writing immeasurably.

**Course Objectives & Learning Outcomes**

- Students will reflect on their learning as psychology majors and integrate that understanding in their overall education and their personal and professional lives.
- Students will identify a psychological question of personal interest and develop a research proposal as to how they might study it.
- Students will demonstrate effective writing skills in developing their research proposal, including the correct use of APA style.
• Students will articulate their values, aspirations, emotions, strengths, and weaknesses and how they relate to their felt sense of vocational calling.
• Students will develop an aspirational life plan.
• Students will prepare a professional resume or curriculum vitae.
• Students will prepare a professional cover letter or letter of interest.
• Students will learn about mentoring and participate in a mentoring activity as will be described in class.

Course Expectations

• Arrive to class on time and ready to engage.
• Turn off all cell phones and place them out of sight. Use of cell phones in class will count as an absence.
• Accept personal responsibility for all assignments and course materials, including when absent from class.
• Consult the syllabus before asking questions about course pragmatics.
• Read all materials and prepare all assignments prior to the class in which they will submitted and/or discussed.
• Bring a printed copy (electronic is only acceptable with computer or tablet, no phones) of assigned readings to class for the sake of textual analysis. (This mainly applies to the book by Palmer; you needn’t bring Landrum & Davis to class.)
• Provide constructive and respectful feedback to peers during classroom discussion, and be prepared to receive such feedback from others.
• Adopt a critical stance toward your own work, and be open to constructive criticism from others.
• Respect your classmates and the professor, as well as people of all backgrounds, sexual preferences, and gender identities.
• Do not eat in class or create other distractions. Beverages discretely used are okay.
• Maintain professional and mature conduct as would be required of a job.
• Notify me of any special accommodations as sanctioned by the university within the first two weeks of class.

Class Format

Classes will be conducted primarily in seminar or workshop format requiring active student participation. Students are expected to complete all assigned readings and writing assignments prior to the class for which they are due, and to be prepared to discuss them. Also, students should bring blank paper to every class in the event that they are expected to respond to questions in writing. For classes in which we are discussing the Palmer book in particular, it is essential that students bring their copy to class. Periodically, students will give brief presentations in class, individually and/or collectively. Each class will begin and end with a brief meditation exercise as a way of focusing attention and promoting comprehension and retention.
Owing to the long class sessions, we will take a 10-minute break in the middle of each class period.

**Course Requirements and Grading System**

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Component</th>
<th>Weight</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Participation</td>
<td>25%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Research Proposal &amp; Presentation</td>
<td>25%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Reflection/Assignment Portfolio</td>
<td>25%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Aspirational Life Plan</td>
<td>25%</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>100%</td>
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**Participation (25%):**

1. **Class citizenship:** You are expected to be a good class citizen and comport yourself in a professional manner. This includes making the classroom environment conducive to learning and meeting the “Course Expectations” described above. Disruptive or lackadaisical conduct will lower your participation grade.

2. **Attendance policy:** You are allowed two absences for the semester, no questions asked. *Please reserve these two absences for genuine emergencies or illnesses.* Being late to class twice will count as one absence. Beyond your two allotted absences, each additional absence will lower your participation grade by 15%. Each violation of cell phone policy will be counted as an absence. Five or more absences (constituting 8 weeks of a regular semester) will result in failure of the course.

3. **Classroom discussion:** You are expected to be fully prepared for and to actively participate in classroom discussions. This includes reading assigned materials and preparing in other ways directed in advance.

4. **In-class brief informal presentations:** You may be asked to come to the front of the class to present on something from the course material or from your personal experience/reflections. You will be given advanced notice.

**Research Proposal and Presentation (25%):**

You are to identify a suitable question pertinent to the discipline of psychology to research this semester. Your research will culminate in a formal research proposal that you will submit to me and present to the class. Your paper will be in correct APA format. More details will be forthcoming. Your research topic must be approved in advance. Here are key due dates:

- Identification of a research question (to be approved), due **January 17**.
- “Research Paper Scaffold” due on Course Den before class, **January 29**.
- Completed Research Proposal and Presentation both due **February 7**.

**Reflection Portfolio (25%):**

This portfolio will reflect the body of reflective work you have done this semester in addition to the professional documents to be composed toward the end of the semester (resume/vita & cover letter/letter of interest). You are also encouraged to periodically record journal items, which reflect your spontaneous reflections throughout the semester. Basically, whenever you write something down in this course, you should put it in this portfolio. Here is a breakdown of the different components:
(1) **Directed reflection papers** assigned in advance are to be submitted on Course Den; in addition, for purposes of classroom discussion they should be printed and brought to class on the day they are due. This printed copy will go into your portfolio. Unless otherwise specified, these papers will be typed, double-spaced, 12 pt. Times New Roman font.

(2) **In-class reflections** will be brief hand-written essays on a topic presented during class. If you are not present in class, you will not be able to do these assignments. Please don’t forget to include them in your portfolio.

(3) **Notes in preparation of discussing Palmer.** Each time we discuss a chapter from Parker Palmer’s book, you are to prepare a brief write-up (one paragraph) about an idea, with passage indicated by page) that you found especially interesting or compelling and would like to discuss in class. Indicate what intrigues you about it and perhaps how you related to it. Include these brief write-ups in your portfolio. (These documents can be more informal that the others; handwritten is okay if legible.)

(4) (Optional) As mentioned, you are encouraged, though not required, to include additional reflections stimulated by the course, which can include what you have learned academically or personally, your vocational calling, the process of research, some aspect of your own values or aspirations, and so forth. These reflections may be handwritten or typed.

Your journal will be graded on:

1) **Spirit of the content:** How thoroughly and carefully have you reflected on the course material, the field of psychology, your academic career, yourself, and so forth? The emphasis is not on whether you are “right or wrong” (irrelevant to reflection), but how effectively you have described your inner process as evidence of substantial reflective and contemplative learning. Your entries don’t need to be APA style, but they should not include gross errors either. (For typed work, use your spell-checker, proofread, and edit for readability. Typed work should always be prepared with care.)

2) **Professional presentation:** Your reflection/assignment portfolio should be well-organized and neat, as though you are presenting it as a job applicant at a company. This requirement means that you will need to determine how to neatly combine handwritten and typed materials and how to organize different types of reflective materials (e.g., chronologically, by type, some other way?). You should take pride in the appearance of your body of reflective work, as it is also a reflection of your own psyche and its state of development into an organized and effective force for good in the world.

3) **Completeness and Timeliness:** Points will be deducted for missing documents and for late reflection papers (as will be documented by the time stamp on Course Den). Late directed reflection papers will be charged a 2-point deduction from the overall portfolio grade; each missing directed reflection paper result in a 5-point deduction; all other missing documents will lead to a 3-point deduction.

**Aspirational Life Plan (25%)**
You are to develop a life plan that conveys your overall integration of the past, present, and future and carries with it an aspirational component. You will present your aspirational life plan to the class at the end of the semester. More details will be forthcoming during the semester.
Additional Information

1. **The Honor Code and Plagiarism:** You are expected to abide by the university’s honor code (see below). Plagiarism (the misrepresentation of another’s words or ideas as your own, from whatever source) is strictly prohibited and will result in a failing grade and be reported to the university. Please let me know if you have any questions as to what constitutes plagiarism. The honor code ([http://www.westga.edu/undergrad/1762.htm](http://www.westga.edu/undergrad/1762.htm)) reads as follows:

   At West Georgia, the student is expected to achieve and maintain the highest standards of academic honesty and excellence. Not only does academic honesty preserve the integrity of both the student and the institution, but it is also essential in gaining a true education. The West Georgia student, therefore, pledges not to lie, cheat, steal, or engage in plagiarism in the pursuit of his or her studies and is encouraged to report those who do. See *Connection and Student Handbook*, Appendix E, Academic Dishonesty.

2. **Student Rights and Responsibilities:**

   Please carefully review the information provided by the following link: [https://www.westga.edu/administration/vpaa/common-language-course-syllabi.php](https://www.westga.edu/administration/vpaa/common-language-course-syllabi.php)

   This file contains important information pertaining to your rights and responsibilities in this class. These statements are updated as federal, state, university and accreditation standards change, so you should review this information anew each semester.

3. **Technological resources:** Audio-visual equipment (e.g., computer and overhead projector) will be used for Power Point and other video presentations. Course Den will be used as an electronic learning environment. Presentation of the syllabus, paper assignments, and other communications will be conducted via this means. Any electronic communication regarding grades can and must be had through Course Den as opposed to email. (For all other communication, please use my regular email address (apope@westga.edu).)

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**Course Outline**

(subject to change)

- The following readings and assignments are subject to revision as the semester progresses. This could include the addition of assignments not listed below; I will try to give ample notice and will post updated versions of the course outline on Course Den.

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**INTRODUCTION**

Week #1 (1 & 2)

January 8

- READ: *Syllabus*

January 10

- READ: Palmer, Chapter 1; *skim* Landrum & Davis, Chapters 2, 3
UNIT I – PAST

Week #2 (3 & 4)
January 15
- GUEST SPEAKER: Dean Andrea Stanfield, Reference Librarian
- READ: Landrum & Davis, Chapter 9; review “Research Paper Scaffold” on Course Den (“Course Resources” folder)
- DUE: Reflection Paper: Significant Learning Experiences

January 17
- READ: Palmer, Chapter 2
- DUE: Reflection Paper: Role Models and Mentors
- DUE: First page of “Research Paper Scaffold” (print and bring to class)
- DUE: Deposit on Course Den a random paragraph from a previous psychology course (for workshopping next class)

Week #3 (5 & 6)
January 22
- READ: Landrum & Davis, Chapter 10.

January 24
- READ: Palmer, Chapter 3
- DUE: Reflection Paper: Personal History Timeline
- DUE: In-class presentation of personal history timeline (with images).

UNIT II – PRESENT

Week #4 (7 & 8)
January 29
- DUE: Reflection paper: Personality Inventory
- DUE: Remainder of “Research Paper Scaffold”

January 31
- READ: Palmer, Chapter 4
- DUE: Reflection paper: Strengths and Limitations Inventory

Week #5 (9 & 10)
February 5
- No class—reassigned time to work on Research Proposal

February 7
- DUE: Research Proposal (on Course Den)
- DUE: In-class presentation of research proposal
UNIT III – FUTURE

Week #6 (11 & 12)
February 12
• READ: Palmer, Chapter 5; Landrum & Davis, Chapter 4.
• DUE: Reflection paper: *Values and Aspirations*

February 14
• READ: Palmer, Chapter 6; Landrum & Davis, Chapter 5
• DUE: Resume/CV (bring to class)

Week #7 (13 & 14)
February 19
• READ: Landrum & Davis, Chapter 6.
• DUE: Cover Letter/Personal Statement (bring to class)

February 21—STOP & REFLECT
• DUE: Reflection paper: *What Have I Learned?*

Week #8 (15)
February 26
• DUE: Reflection/Assignment Portfolio
• DUE: Aspirational Life Plan
• DUE: In-Class Presentation of Aspirational Life Plan

*Let’s have a great semester!*