Integrative Seminar  
PSYC 4884-01  
(subject to revision)

University of West Georgia

Spring 2020 (1st block)  
Monday/Wednesday 2:00 – 5:10 pm  
Melson 207

Instructor: Alan Pope, Ph.D.  
Office: Melson 103  
Phone: 678-839-0601  
Email: apope@westga.edu  
Office Hours:  
T & W 12:45 pm – 1:45 pm;  
&  by appointment

“Know thyself.”  
Delphic Oracle/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 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.”

Required Texts

Requiring Purchase


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.)

Available Free Online


By using your school account, you have free online access to this book through our university website. Be sure to select the 4th edition.

American Psychological Association: *Careers in Psychology.*


This document is also posted on Course Den.

Additional required texts are posted on Course Den.

Recommended Supplemental Texts


This is a useful resource with additional material related to conducting research and applying for jobs and graduate school.


A free alternative is the Purdue Owl APA website, 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](https://owl.purdue.edu/owl/research_and_citation/apa_style/apa_formatting_and_style_guide/general_format.html).


As many will attest, working with this small classic can 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 formal research proposal for studying it, sharpening research skills in the process.
• 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.

Course Expectations

• Comport yourself in a professional and mature manner as would be required of a job.
• Arrive to class on time and ready to engage.
• Turn off all cell phones and place them out of sight or upside down on the desk in front of you. Unauthorized use of cell phones in class will reduce one’s professionalism/participation grade.
• 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 be 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.
• 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. See me if you have a medical or practical need to do otherwise.
• 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. The last 20 minutes of most classes will be devoted to individual student interviews.
Course Requirements and Grading System

Professionalism & Participation  25%
Research Proposal & Presentation  25%
Reflection/Assignment Portfolio  25%
Aspirational Life Plan & Presentation  25%

100%

Professionalism & Participation (25%):
(1) Professionalism: 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. You are required to submit a personal professionalism assessment on January 22 and again at the end of the term on February 26.

(2) Attendance policy: You are allowed two absences for the semester for any reason whatsoever, no questions asked. Please reserve these two absences for genuine emergencies or illnesses. Being late to class three times will count as one absence. Beyond your two allotted absences, each additional absence will lower your participation grade by 15%. 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 actively participate in classroom discussions. This includes reading assigned materials and preparing as otherwise 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 both in class (printed form) and on Course Den before class, January 15.
- Annotated Bibliography due on Course Den before class, January 29.
- Completed Research Proposal and Presentation both due on February 10. Both the proposal and self-evaluation form are to be submitted on Course Den prior to class.

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). The reflections will include in-class exercises. 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 (or portion of a chapter) from Parker Palmer’s book, you are to prepare a brief write-up (one paragraph) about an idea that you found especially interesting or compelling and would like to discuss in class. Indicate what intrigues you about it and perhaps how you relate to it. Include these brief write-ups in your portfolio. (These documents can be more informal than the others; handwritten is okay if legible.)

Your portfolio 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 3-point deduction from the overall portfolio grade; each missing directed reflection paper result in a 7-point deduction; all other missing documents will lead to a 2-point deduction with the exception that you are permitted two missing in-class reflection assignments.

**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
   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).)

**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.

**INTRODUCTION**

Week #1 (1 & 2)
January 6
- READ: Syllabus

January 8
- READ: Palmer, Chapter 1 (prepared to discuss, which includes writing a paragraph);
- SKIM: The Craft of Research, Part I (includes chapters 1 & 2) (online access through library account); “APA Careers in Psychology” (on Course Den)

**UNIT I – PAST**

Week #2 (3 & 4)
January 13
- READ: The Craft of Research, Chapters 3 & 4 (online access through library account).
• DUE: Reflection Paper #1: *Significant Learning Experiences*

January 15
• GUEST SPEAKER: Professor Angela Pashia, Head of Learning and Research Support, Ingram Library
• READ: Palmer, Chapter 2, pp. 9-17 (prepared to discuss);
• SKIM: *The Craft of Research*, Chapter 5; “Sharpening Library and Research Skills” (on Course Den)
• DUE: Reflection Paper #2: *Role Models and Mentors*
• DUE: Research Question (electronically on Course Den and printed in class)
• DUE: Deposit on Course Den a random paragraph from a previous psychology course (for workshopping next class)

**Week #3 (5 & 6)**
January 20
MARTIN LUTHER KING DAY—No Classes

January 22
• READ: Palmer, Chapter 2, pp. 17-30 (prepared to discuss); “Understanding Yourself: The Power of Narrative” on Course Den
• SKIM: Study Purdue Owl (online website) and learn how to format citations in APA style.
• DUE: Reflection Paper #3: *Intellectual and Career Interest Autobiography*
• DUE: Personal Professionalism Assessment (printed and handed in at beginning of class period)

**Week #4 (7 & 8)**
January 27
• READ: Palmer, Chapter 2, pp. 30-36 (prepared to discuss)
• DUE: Reflection Paper #4: *Personal History Timeline*
• DUE: In-class presentation of personal history timeline (with images).

**UNIT II – PRESENT**

January 29
• READ: Palmer, Chapter 3, pp. 37-43 (prepared to discuss)
• DUE: Reflection paper #5: *Personality Inventory*
• DUE: Annotated Bibliography (on Course Den)

**Week #5 (9 & 10)**
February 3
• READ: Palmer, Chapter 3, pp. 43-44 (prepared to discuss)
• DUE: Reflection paper #6: *Strengths and Limitations Inventory*
February 5
- No class—reassigned time to work on Research Proposal

Week #6 (11 & 12)
February 10
- DUE: Research Proposal (on Course Den)
- DUE: In-class presentation of research proposal

UNIT III – FUTURE

February 12
- Guest Speaker: Dr. Jessica Nguyen, Career Services
- READ: Palmer, Chapter 4 (prepared to discuss); “Preparing Your Resume” (on Course Den)
- DUE: Reflection paper #7: Values and Aspirations

Week #7 (13 & 14)
February 17
- READ: Palmer, Chapter 5 (prepared to discuss); “Writing a Personal Statement” (on Course Den)
- DUE: Resume/CV (bring to class)

February 19
- READ: Palmer, Chapter 6 (prepared to discuss)
- DUE: Cover Letter/Personal Statement (bring to class)

Week #8 (15)
February 24—STOP & REFLECT
- DUE: Reflection paper: What Have I Learned?

February 26
- DUE: Personal Professionalism Assessment
- DUE: Reflection/Assignment Portfolio
- DUE: Aspirational Life Plan
- DUE: In-Class Presentation of Aspirational Life Plan

Let’s have a great semester!