Description

This capstone course helps senior psychology majors gain perspective on their accumulated learning within the discipline of psychology and contextualize that learning more broadly within their general education. At a practical level, this course also guides students in the final steps of vocational discernment and preparation.

Requisites

Prerequisites: PSYC 1101 and PSYC 2010
Corequisites:

Contact Information

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

Meeting Times

Monday/Tuesday 2:00 – 5:10 pm
Melson 207

Materials

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.

**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.

**Evaluation**

- **Professionalism & Participation** 25%
- **Research Proposal & Presentation** 25%
- **Reflection/Assignment Portfolio** 25%
Assignments

**Professionalism & Participation (25%)**

- **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.
- **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.
- **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.
- **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:

- **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.
- **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.
- **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 that the others; handwritten is okay if legible.)

Your portfolio will be graded on:

- **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.)

- **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.

- **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.

**Schedule**

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

Course Policies and Resources

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.

Honor Code

At the University of West Georgia, we believe that academic and personal integrity are based upon honesty, trust, fairness, respect, and responsibility. Students at West Georgia assume responsibility for upholding the honor code. West Georgia students pledge to refrain from engaging in acts that do not maintain academic and personal integrity. These include, but are not limited to, plagiarism, cheating, fabrication, aid of academic dishonesty, lying, bribery or threats, and stealing.

The University of West Georgia maintains and monitors a confidential Academic Dishonesty Tracking System. This database collects and reports patterns of repeated student violations across all the Colleges, the Ingram Library, and the School of Nursing. Each incidence of academic dishonesty is subject to review and consideration by the instructor, and is subject to a range of academic penalties including, but not limited to, failing the assignment and/or failing the course. Student conduct sanctions range from verbal warning to suspension or expulsion depending on the magnitude of the offense and/or number of offenses. The incident becomes part of the student’s conduct record at UWG.

Institutional Policies

Academic Support

Accessibility Services: Students with a documented disability may work with UWG Accessibility Services to receive essential services specific to their disability. All entitlements to accommodations are based on documentation and USG Board of Regents standards. If a student needs course adaptations or accommodations because of a disability or chronic illness, or if he/she needs to make special arrangements in case the building must be evacuated, the student should notify his/her instructor in writing and provide a copy of his/her Student Accommodations Report (SAR), which is available only from Accessibility Services. Faculty cannot offer accommodations without timely receipt of the SAR; further, no retroactive accommodations will be given. For more information, please contact Accessibility Services (https://www.westga.edu/student-services/counseling/accessibility-services.php).

Center for Academic Success: The Center for Academic Success (http://www.westga.edu/cas/) provides services, programs, and opportunities to help all undergraduate students succeed academically. For more information, contact them: 678-839-6280 or cas@westga.edu.

University Writing Center: The University Writing Center (https://www.westga.edu/writing/) assists students with all areas of the writing process. For more information, contact them: 678-839-6513 or writing@westga.edu.

Online Courses

UWG takes students’ privacy concerns seriously: technology-enhanced and partially and fully online courses use sites and entities beyond UWG and students have the right to know the privacy policies of these entities. For more information on privacy and accessibility for the most commonly used sites, as well as technology requirements visit the UWG Online (https://uwgonline.westga.edu/) site.

Students enrolled in online courses can find answers to many of their questions in the Online/Off-Campus Student Guide (http://uwgonline.westga.edu/online-student-guide.php).

If a student is experiencing distress and needs help, please see the resources available at the UWG Cares (http://www.westga.edu/UWGcares/) site. Online counseling (https://www.westga.edu/student-services/counseling/index.php) is also available for online students.
Additionally, the student is responsible for safeguarding his/her computer account. The student’s account and network connection are for his/her individual use. A computer account is to be used only by the person to whom it has been issued. The student is responsible for all actions originating through his/her account or network connection. Students must not impersonate others or misrepresent or conceal their identities in electronic messages and actions. For more information on the University of West Georgia Honor Code, please see the Student Handbook (https://www.westga.edu/administration/vpsa/handbook-code-of-conduct.php).

UWG Email Policy

University of West Georgia students are provided a MyUWG e-mail account. The University considers this account to be an official means of communication between the University and the student. The purpose of the official use of the student e-mail account is to provide an effective means of communicating important university related information to UWG students in a timely manner. It is the student’s responsibility to check his or her email.

Credit Hour Policy

The University of West Georgia grants one semester hour of credit for work equivalent to a minimum of one hour (50 minutes) of in-class or other direct faculty instruction AND two hours of student work outside of class per week for approximately fifteen weeks. For each course, the course syllabus will document the amount of in-class (or other direct faculty instruction) and out-of-class work required to earn the credit hour(s) assigned to the course. Out-of-class work will include all forms of credit-bearing activity, including but not limited to assignments, readings, observations, and musical practice. Where available, the university grants academic credit for students who verify via competency-based testing, that they have accomplished the learning outcomes associated with a course that would normally meet the requirements outlined above (e.g. AP credit, CLEP, and departmental exams).

HB 280 (Campus Carry)

UWG follows University System of Georgia (USG) guidance: http://www.usg.edu/hb280/additional_information# (http://www.usg.edu/hb280/additional_information)

You may also visit our website for help with USG Guidance: https://www.westga.edu/police/campus-carry.php (https://www.westga.edu/police/campus-carry.php)

Mental Health Support

If you or another student find that you are experiencing a mental health issue, free confidential services are available on campus in the Counseling Center. Students who have experienced sexual or domestic violence may receive confidential medical and advocacy services with the Patient Advocates in Health Services. To report a concern anonymously, please go to UWGcares.

Additional Items

Detailed Course Description

Integrated 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.”

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.