



Psychology 483

Current Issues in Personnel Psychology

Instructor: Dr. Tom O'Neill
Phone: 403-220-5207
Email: toneill@ucalgary.ca
Office: Admin 264
Office Hours: By appointment

Lecture Location: Admin 253
Lecture Days/Time: Thursdays, 2:00-4:45

Course Description and Goals

The purpose of this course is to offer a detailed consideration of selected topics in personnel/industrial psychology. The focus will be on current research and best practices. Core issues include work analysis, testing and assessment, personnel selection with a focus on personality testing and the job interview; legal issues involving adverse impact, protected classes, and discrimination; and measurement, interpretation, and use of performance appraisal data. Lectures will provide a foundation that supports in-depth literature reviews and practical contributions in selected areas, and knowledge acquisition will be tested through a midterm exam. The course will be structured such that the instructor will provide an introduction to course concepts, and then students will identify concepts for further independent literature reviews, integrations, and implications for practice. Students will become experts on selected topics and convey this expertise through applied presentations reporting on the development of a novel human resources intervention and through research papers. The course is geared toward research and practice although there will be a slightly stronger focus on research. Students will gain experience in integrating and interpreting research findings with an eye toward identifying future research needs and applications of organizational interventions involving personnel psychology.

Prerequisites

Psychology 205 and one of Psychology 321 or 421 or 423

Required Text

Readings will comprise published research papers.

Evaluation

Midterm exam: 25%, **November 1st**

Two sections, one involving multiple-choice items (75 minutes) and the other involving written responses (75 minutes), will be equally weighted in order to examine knowledge of key course concepts delivered in lecture and further described in the course readings.

Team presentation of HR intervention: 25%

Students will deliver a 30-minute class presentation in teams of three. The presentation will require the team members to become experts in a course-relevant area of their choosing, as approved by the course instructor. With a focus on their area of expertise, the team will conduct a work analysis using appropriate methodology. Next, using the work analysis results as its basis, a tool, instrument, or intervention with real-world application will be developed that serves some practical purpose as relevant to the topic. Effective presentations will include an interesting, concise, clear, well-organized, methodologically sound, digestible delivery of material, and will stimulate class interest through demonstration of the importance of the work-analytic findings and the resulting practitioner-ready tool. Clear alignment of the work analysis methodology employed and the purpose of the HR instrument is essential. If a student fails to appear for his or her assigned presentation, on the designated date, he or she will receive a grade of 0%.

Note that grades for the presentation will be assigned on an individual basis by the course instructor and class ratings. Each presenter will be responsible for his or her own sections, on which will form the basis for his or her grade. The instructor grade will count for 2/3 of each presenter's overall grade; the average of the classmate ratings of each presenter will count for 1/3 of the presenter's overall grade.

Attendance during team presentations: 5%

Attendance during team presentations is critical for learning about the practical application of theoretical course concepts. Attendance will be recorded by completing rating forms of the team presentations.

Team "psychology works" fact sheet: 20%, **deadline: Friday, December 7th, 11:59pm, by email to this address: toneill7@gmail.com**

Students will work with their team members to complete a fact sheet (see <http://www.cpa.ca/psychologyfactsheets/>). I/O fact sheets are evidence-based best-practice recommendations for quick and efficient use by lay people. You should address the following headings in a concise, well-researched fact sheet: What is the topic (i.e., define it, report on prevalence, importance, and so on)? What are some difficulties with implementing the practice? What are the key best-practices in light of the best available evidence? Where can people find more information? Length will be dictated by topic – an appropriate length, not too short or too long, should be adopted. With author permission, the top-scoring fact-sheet will be submitted to the Canadian Psychological Association for peer review and then posted on their website. A single grade will be assigned to the entire team by the instructor. Late fact sheets will be

penalized 10% per day, including weekends. Fact sheets more than two days late will not be accepted (cutoff: 48 hours after the deadline).

Term paper: 25%, **deadline: December 19th, 11:59pm, by email to this address: toneill7@gmail.com**

Term papers involve critically reviewing and integrating research findings in a selected topic area as approved by the course instructor. Papers should not exceed 8 pages of text proper, but not be less than 7 pages of text proper. Articles reviewed should be from leading academic journals and have important implications for research and practice. A major component will involve a critical examination of the research (e.g., how could it be improved, what does it tell us about theory and practice) and exploration of novel linkages among the different articles reviewed. Key insights regarding the research implications for practitioners must be identified by the student and conveyed in the report. Papers limited to the reiteration of literature without added insight that demonstrates critical thinking and a new perspective that makes linkages across issues will be considered marginal (at best). Late term papers will be penalized 10% per day. Papers more than two days late will not be accepted (cutoff: 48 hours after the deadline). Even legitimate reasons for a late paper will not be considered unless the instructor is contacted before the deadline and appropriate medical documentation is provided.

Grading Scale

A+	96-100%	B+	80-84%	C+	67-71%	D+	54-58%
A	90-95%	B	76-79%	C	63-66%	D	50-53%
A-	85-89%	B-	72-75%	C-	59-62%	F	0-49%

As stated in the University Calendar, it is at the instructor's discretion to round off either upward or downward to determine a final grade when the average of term work and final examinations is between two letter grades. To determine final letter grades, final percentage grades will be rounded up or down to the nearest whole percentage (e.g., 89.5% will be rounded up to 90% = A but 89.4% will be rounded down to 89% = A-).

Tentative Lecture Schedule

Ideally in table format with date of class, topics to be covered, and chapters/readings to be read. Due dates for tests/exams and assignments should be included in this schedule as well.

Date	Topic/Activity/Readings/Due Date
T Sep 11	Lecture begins.
R Sep 13	
R Sep 20	
F Sep 21	Last day to drop a course with no W grade and tuition refund.
M Sep 24	Last day for add or swap courses.
R Sep 27	
R Oct 4	
R Oct 11	

R Oct 18	
R Oct 25	
R Nov 1	Midterm Exam
T Nov 13	Reading Days – No Classes
R Nov 15	
R Nov 22	
R Nov 29	
R Dec 6	
F Dec 7	Fall Term Lecture ends.
Dec 10-19	Fall Term Final Exams

Reappraisal of Grades

A student who feels that a piece of graded term work (e.g., term paper, essay, test) has been unfairly graded, may have the work re-graded as follows. The student shall discuss the work with the instructor within 15 days of being notified about the mark or of the item's return to the class. If not satisfied, the student shall immediately take the matter to the Head of the department offering the course, who will arrange for a reassessment of the work within the next 15 days. The reappraisal of term work may cause the grade to be raised, lowered, or to remain the same. If the student is not satisfied with the decision and wishes to appeal, the student shall address a letter of appeal to the Dean of the faculty offering the course within 15 days of the unfavourable decision. In the letter, the student must clearly and fully state the decision being appealed, the grounds for appeal, and the remedies being sought, along with any special circumstances that warrant an appeal of the reappraisal. The student should include as much written documentation as possible.

Plagiarism and Other Academic Misconduct

Intellectual honesty is the cornerstone of the development and acquisition of knowledge and requires that the contribution of others be acknowledged. Consequently, plagiarism or cheating on any assignment is regarded as an extremely serious academic offense. Plagiarism involves submitting or presenting work in a course as if it were the student's own work done expressly for that particular course when, in fact, it is not. Students should examine sections of the University Calendar that present a Statement of Intellectual honesty and definitions and penalties associated with Plagiarism/Cheating/Other Academic Misconduct.

Academic Accommodation

It is the student's responsibility to request academic accommodations. If you are a student with a documented disability who may require academic accommodation and have not registered with the Disability Resource Centre, please contact their office at 403-220-8237. Students who have not registered with the Disability Resource Centre are not eligible for formal academic accommodation. You are also required to discuss your needs with your instructor no later than 14 days after the start of this course.

Absence From A Test/Exam

Makeup tests/exams are NOT an option without an official University medical excuse (see the University Calendar). A completed Physician/Counselor Statement will be required to confirm absence from a test/exam for health reasons; the student will be required to pay any cost associated with this Statement. Students who miss a test/exam have 48 hours to contact the instructor and to schedule a makeup test/exam. Students who do not schedule a makeup test/exam with the instructor within this 48-hour period forfeit the right to a makeup test/exam. At the instructor's discretion, a makeup test/exam may differ significantly (in form and/or content) from a regularly scheduled test/exam. Except in extenuating circumstances (documented by an official University medical excuse), a makeup test/exam must be written within 2 weeks of the missed test/exam.

Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy (FOIP) Act

The FOIP legislation disallows the practice of having student's retrieve tests and assignments from a public place. Therefore, tests and assignments may be returned to students during class/lab, or during office hours, or via the Department Office (Admin 275), or will be made available only for viewing during exam review sessions scheduled by the Department. Tests and assignments will be shredded after one year. Instructors should take care to not link students' names with their grades, UCIDs, or other FOIP-sensitive information.

Course Credits for Research Participation (Max 2% of final grade)

Students in most psychology courses are eligible to participate in Departmentally approved research and earn credits toward their final grades. **A maximum of two credits (2%) per course, including this course, may be applied to the student's final grade. Students earn 0.5% (0.5 credits) for each full 30 minutes of participation.** The demand for timeslots may exceed the supply in a given term. Thus, students are not guaranteed that there will be enough studies available to them to meet their credit requirements. Students should seek studies early in the term and should frequently check for open timeslots. Students can create an account and participate in Departmentally approved research studies at <http://ucalgary.sona-systems.com>. The last day to participate in studies and to assign or reassign earned credits to courses is **Dec 7, 2012**

Evacuation Assembly Point

In case of an emergency evacuation during class, students must gather at the designated assembly point nearest to the classroom. The list of assembly points is found at <http://www.ucalgary.ca/emergencyplan/assemblypoints>
Please check this website and note the nearest assembly point for this course.

Student Organizations

Psychology students may wish to join the Psychology Undergraduate Students' Association (PSYCHS). They are located in Administration 170 and may be contacted at 403-220-5567.

Student Union VP Academic: Phone: 403-220-3911

suypaca@ucalgary.ca

Student Union Faculty Rep.:

Phone: 403-220-3913

socialscirep@su.ucalgary.ca

Important Dates

The last day to drop this course with no “W” notation and **still receive a tuition fee refund** is **September 21, 2012**. Last day for registration/change of registration is **September 24, 2012**. The last day to withdraw from this course is **December 7, 2012**.