



Psychology 483

Current Issues in Personnel Psychology

Winter 2014

Instructor: Dr. Tom O'Neill

Lecture Location: ES 054

Phone: 403-220-5207

Lecture Days/Time: M 5:00-7:50

Email: toneill@ucalgary.ca

Office: A264

Office Hours: By appointment

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 or Psychology 200 and 201, and either Psychology 321 or 421

Required Text

Published research articles available for download on U of C's access to PsycInfo.

Evaluation

Midterm exam: 25%, **March 17th**

Two sections, one involving multiple-choice items and the other involving written responses, 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 applied work analysis and corresponding HR intervention: 35%

March 24th – April 14th

Students will deliver a 30-minute class presentation in teams of about 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.

Term paper: 35%, **deadline: April 29th, 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 12 pages of text proper, but not be less than 11 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 documentation is provided.

Department of Psychology Grade Distribution Policy

The distribution of grades in Psychology courses (the percentage of A grades, B grades, etc.) will be similar to the distribution of grades in other courses in the Faculty of Arts. The Department monitors the grade distributions of 200-, 300-, and 400-level courses in the Faculty to ensure that the grade distributions in Psychology courses are comparable. Based on these reviews, students can expect that 1) up to 30% of grades in 200- and 300-level psychology courses will be "A" grades (A+, A, and A-), and 2) up to 40% of grades 400-level psychology courses will be "A" grades.

Department of Psychology Criteria for Letter Grades

Psychology professors use the following criteria when assigning letter grades:

A+ grade: *Exceptional Performance.* An A+ grade indicates near perfect performance on multiple choice and short answer exams. For research papers/essays/course projects/presentations, an A+ grade is awarded for exceptional work deserving of special recognition and is therefore not a common grade.

A, A- Range: *Excellent Performance.* Superior understanding of course material. Written work is very strong in terms of critical and original thinking, content, organization, and the expression of ideas, and demonstrates student's thorough knowledge of subject matter.

B Range: *Good Performance.* Above average understanding of course material. Written work shows evidence of critical thinking and attention to organization and editing but could be improved in form and/or content.

C Range: *Satisfactory Performance.* Adequate understanding of course material. Knowledge of basic concepts and terminology is demonstrated. Written work is satisfactory and meets essential requirements but could be improved significantly in form and content. Note: All prerequisites for courses offered by the Faculty of Arts must be met with a minimum grade of C-.

D range: *Marginally meets standards.* Minimal understanding of subject matter. Written work is marginally acceptable and meets basic requirements but requires substantial improvements in form and content. Student has not mastered course material at a level sufficient for advancement into more senior courses in the same or related subjects.

F grade: *Course standards not met.* Inadequate understanding of subject matter. Written work does not meet basic requirements. Student has not demonstrated knowledge of course material at a level sufficient for course credit.

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

Date	Topic
W Jan 8	Winter term lectures begin.
M Jan 13	Introduction to Psych 483; Assessment, testing, & measurement
F Jan 17	Last day to drop Winter Term half-courses.
M Jan 20	Job performance assessment Last day to add or swap Winter Term half courses. Last day for change of registration from audit to credit or credit to audit.
F Jan 24	Fee payment deadline for Winter Term fees.
M Jan 27	Job performance assessment Personality assessment
M Feb 3	Personality assessment
M Feb 10	Employment interview
Feb 16-23	Reading Week. No lectures. University open (except Family Day).
M Feb 17	Alberta Family Day, University closed (except Taylor Family Digital Library, Law, Medical, Gallagher and Business Libraries). No lectures.
M Feb 24	Personality assessment GMA, utility, legal issues, test batteries
M Mar 3	GMA, utility, legal issues, test batteries
M Mar 10	Cover remaining issues Exam review
M Mar 17	Midterm exam
M Mar 24	Team presentations
M Mar 31	Team presentations
M Apr 7	Team presentations
M Apr 14	Team presentations Winter Term Lectures End. Last day to withdraw from full courses and Winter Term half courses.
Apr 19-29	Winter Term Final Examinations.

Important Dates

Date	Topic
W Jan 8	Winter term lectures begin.
F Jan 17	Last day to drop Winter Term half-courses.
M Jan 20	Last day to add or swap Winter Term half courses. Last day for change of registration from audit to credit or credit to audit.
F Jan 24	Fee payment deadline for Winter Term fees.
Feb 16-23	Reading Week. No lectures. University open (except Family Day).
M Feb 17	Alberta Family Day, University closed (except Taylor Family Digital Library, Law, Medical, Gallagher and Business Libraries). No lectures.
M Apr 14	Winter Term Lectures End.

	Last day to withdraw from full courses and Winter Term half courses.
Apr 19-29	Winter Term Final Examinations.

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; no reappraisal of term work is permitted after the 15 days. 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.

Travel During Exams

Consistent with University regulations, students are expected to be available to write scheduled exams at any time during the official December and April examination periods. Requests to write a make-up exam because of conflicting travel plans (e.g., flight bookings) will NOT be considered except under exceptional circumstances. Students are advised to wait until the final examination schedule is posted before making any travel arrangements.

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 255), 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 **April 14, 2014**.

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

Student Ombudsman's Office

The Office of the Student Ombudsmen provides independent, impartial and confidential support for students who require assistance and advice in addressing issues and concerns related to their academic careers. The office can be reached at 403-220-6420 or ombuds@ucalgary.ca (<http://www.su.ucalgary.ca/services/student-services/student-rights.html>).

Safewalk

The safewalk program provides volunteers to walk students safely to their destination anywhere on campus. This service is free and available 24 hrs/day, 365 days a year.

Call 403-220-5333.

Important Dates

The last day to drop this course with no “W” notation and **still receive a tuition fee refund** is **January 17th, 2014**. Last day for registration/change of registration is **January 20th, 2014**. The last day to withdraw from this course is **April 14th, 2014**.