

PSYC*4540, Course Outline: Fall 2025

General Information

Course Title: Practical Applications of Psychology

Course Description:

This is a capstone course for students in the BA Psychology program. As the title suggests, the course is intended as an opportunity for students to apply what they have learned in psychology to practical problems they may encounter in their professional and personal lives after graduation.

This course is based on a project-based experiential learning model which may be quite different from prior courses that students have taken during their undergraduate program. Rather than focus on delivering content through lectures, in-class activities will focus on the instructor providing topics and questions to the class with students exploring answers and solutions through on-line research, group discussion, and class sharing. With this approach students will be actively engaged with the course material and will need to attend class prepared to discuss the issues at hand and to engage with others rather than passively sitting and listening to the instructor.

The coursework, both inside and outside of the weekly meetings, is split between two major activities. The first is a weekly class discussion based on assigned readings, and the second is a major project done by a small team of students. The class discussions will take place in the first five weeks of classes, followed by a midterm, with the following four classes providing an opportunity for teams to work on their projects and consult with the instructor. The final class will consist of in-person group presentations.

Credit Weight: 1.0

Academic Department (or campus): Psychology

Semester Offering: F25

Class Schedule and Location: Mondays 7:00 – 10:00pm in Mackinnon 225

Instructor Information

Instructor Name: Peter Hausdorf

Instructor Email: phausdor@uoguelph.ca

Office location and office hours: Wednesdays 10:00 – 11:00 on MS Teams

Course Content

Specific Learning Outcomes:

The table below summarizes the learning outcomes targeted by this course:

Learning Outcome	Facet	Definition	Mechanism of learning and assessment
Critical & Creative Thinking	Depth & Breadth of Understanding	Demonstrates knowledge of key concepts in psychology , and integrates that knowledge across disciplinary and sub-disciplinary boundaries	Readings, Class Discussions, Group Project
Critical & Creative Thinking	Inquiry & Analysis	A systematic process of exploring issues, objects and works in psychology through the collection and analysis of evidence that result in informed conclusions or judgments	Readings, Class Discussions, Midterm, Group Project
Critical & Creative Thinking	Problem Solving	A process in which one works through a series of operations to come to a conclusion	Group Project
Literacy	Information Literacy	The ability to know when there is a need for information, where to locate it and the ability to identify the value and differences of potential resources in a variety of formats	Class Discussions, Group Project
Global Understanding	Sense of Historical Development	Understanding of psychology in a modern society; its limitations and developments	Class Discussions, Midterm, Group Project
Communication	Oral Communication	Includes interpersonal skills, oral speaking and active listening as they apply to psychology	Class Discussions, Project Presentation
Communication	Written Communication	The ability to express one's ideas and summarize theory and research in written form	Midterm, Group Project
Communication	Reading Comprehension	The understanding of theoretical and empirical literature in psychology	Readings, Midterm, Group Project
Communication	Integrative Communication	A mental process that integrates existing psychological knowledge to develop and communicate new knowledge	Class Discussions, Project Presentation

Learning Outcome	Facet	Definition	Mechanism of learning and assessment
Professional & Ethical Behaviour	Teamwork	Working together in a respectful and collaborative manner to complete tasks	Class Discussions, Group Project
Professional & Ethical Behaviour	Personal Organization / Time Management	An ability to manage several tasks at once and prioritize	Readings, Midterm, Group Project

Course Assignments and Tests:

Date	Activity / Assignment	Class Topic
Sep 8	Class 1 (in person)	Course overview
Sep 15	Class 2 (in person)	What can Psychology contribute to solving homelessness in Canada?
Sep 22	Class 3 (in person)	What can Psychology contribute to solving climate change in Canada?
Sep 29	Class 4 (in person)	What can Psychology contribute to reducing vaccination resistance in Canada?
Oct 6	Class 5 (in person)	What can Psychology contribute to increasing remote work in Canada?
Oct 13	Thanksgiving (no class)	-
Oct 20	Midterm (in person)	Two hour written exam
Oct 27	Group Project Meetings 1 (MS Teams)	Case review, issue highlights, assumptions, and priorities
Nov 3	Group Project Meetings 2 (MS Teams)	Research evidence review to support priorities
<i>Nov 10</i>	Group Project Meetings 3 (MS Teams)	Application of research to specific case issues with caveats
Nov 17	Group Project Meetings 4 (MS Teams)	Report and presentation support
Nov 24	Group Project Presentations due (in person)	All groups will present their analysis, priorities, and recommendations

<i>Dec 2</i>	Project Report due (via email)	Reports to be submitted to the instructor via Courselink dropbox by 12pm EST
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Evaluation:

Midterm:	50%
Project Report:	40%
Project Presentation:	10%
TOTAL:	100%

Attendance Policy:

Attendance is mandatory for in-person and virtual classes. It is understood, however, that you may need to miss one class for reasons beyond your control. You are allowed to miss one of the classes or group meetings without a documented excuse and without making up the work. If you are uncomfortable with any of the class topics in weeks 2 to 5, then you can use your one free class absence to skip that class. Any other absences beyond the first one or for the midterm and group presentation will require a legitimate reason (medical, psychological, or compassionate) with written/email documentation.

Midterm:

The midterm will take place in class on October 20 for all students unless testing accommodations have been requested via Student Accessibility Services ([SAS Student Portal | Accessibility Services](#)). If you cannot attend the midterm, it must be for a legitimate reason (medical, psychological, or compassionate), and documentation must be provided. The midterm will consist of short answer questions based on the first 5 weeks of the semester. The questions will require students to think critically and to apply what they have learned in the course up to that date. Two hours will be provided for the midterm. More details about this will be provided in class.

Group Project:

The group project is an opportunity for small groups (of 5-6 students each) to apply their critical thinking skills and psychological research to a complex case. The group should consider themselves to be a team of consultants who use research evidence to help their clients solve practical problems. The detailed case and evaluation rubric is provided in a separate document in Courselink.

Class time from October 27 to November 17 will be provided to support groups with their projects. During that time each group will meet virtually with the instructor to discuss their project. The specific times for these meetings will be provided after the project teams have been formed with the amount of time per team based on the total number of teams. Project team members will only be required to attend their project team meeting each week (i.e. not for the other team meetings).

Each group will submit a written report (due on December 2) and deliver an in-person presentation in class on November 24. The purpose of the presentation is to share how each group approached the case, their priorities, and recommendations. This presentation should be designed as if the group was speaking with the senior leaders of the organization and encourage them to implement the recommendations. Detailed instructions about what the presentation should include can be found on Courselink.

All team members will receive the same grade for the Project Report and Project Presentation unless there is a major issue that cannot be resolved. Therefore, it is up to each group to ensure that everyone is contributing equally to the project. It is acceptable for group members to have different roles (e.g. researcher, writer, presenter, etc.) as long as the work is shared equitably. If there are issues with any group member, the group should discuss this with the instructor who will assist in helping to resolve the issue. The instructor is also available to help resolve any conflicts amongst group members. The group should attempt to resolve issues on their own first before seeking advice from the instructor. When supporting groups to deal with any group member issues, the instructor will provide coaching and advice and only intervene directly when all other solutions have been attempted by the group.

University Policies

Academic Consideration

When you find yourself unable to meet an in-course requirement because of illness or compassionate reasons, please advise the course instructor in writing, with your name, id#, and e-mail contact. See the academic calendar for information on regulations and procedures for

Academic Consideration:

[Academic Consideration, Appeals and Petitions](#)

Academic Misconduct

The University of Guelph is committed to upholding the highest standards of academic integrity and it is the responsibility of all members of the University community, faculty, staff, and students to be aware of what constitutes academic misconduct and to do as much as possible to prevent academic offences from occurring.

University of Guelph students have the responsibility of abiding by the University's policy on academic misconduct regardless of their location of study; faculty, staff and students have the responsibility of supporting an environment that discourages misconduct. Students need to remain aware that instructors have access to and the right to use electronic and other means of detection. Please note: Whether or not a student intended to commit academic misconduct is not relevant for a finding of guilt. Hurried or careless submission of assignments does not excuse students from responsibility for verifying the academic integrity of their work before

submitting it. Students who are in any doubt as to whether an action on their part could be construed as an academic offence should consult with a faculty member or faculty advisor.

The Academic Misconduct Policy is detailed in the Undergraduate Calendar:

[Academic Misconduct Policy](#)

Accessibility

The University of Guelph is committed to creating a barrier-free environment. Providing services for students is a shared responsibility among students, faculty and administrators. This relationship is based on respect of individual rights, the dignity of the individual and the University community's shared commitment to an open and supportive learning environment. Students requiring service or accommodation, whether due to an identified, ongoing disability or a short-term disability should contact [Student Accessibility Services](#) as soon as possible.

For more information, contact SAS at 519-824-4120 ext. 54335 or email accessibility@uoguelph.ca or the [Student Accessibility Services Website](#)

Course Evaluation Information

Please refer to the [Course and Instructor Evaluation Website](#) .

Drop date

The last date to drop one-semester courses, without academic penalty, is **November 28**. For regulations and procedures for Dropping Courses, see the [Schedule of Dates in the Academic Calendar](#). [Current Undergraduate Calendar](#)

Additional Course Information

Use of Artificial Intelligence in Group Project

You have my permission to use any artificial intelligence application to support your research for the group project under the following specific conditions. You can use it as a search engine and to help establish a preliminary understanding of topics in the course. You must be prepared to answer questions about how and why you used the tool. When using it you should always verify the information sources with other search engines. Also, don't accept its output without thinking about it critically and asking additional questions to evaluate how it developed its answers. If you use it in your group project then you will need to be transparent about which platform you used, the questions you asked, and what you used from it. Most AI tools will allow you to retain the questions and links (e.g. ChatGPT provides a share option that retains the questions and links). These can be provided in an appendix to your report. ***You are not permitted to use any AI tool to write your report.***

[University of Guelph Statement on Artificial Intelligence Systems, ChatGPT, Academic Integrity - U of G News](#)

Plagiarism

Course instructors are allowed to use software to help in detecting plagiarism or unauthorized copying of student assignments. Plagiarism is one of the most common types of academic misconduct on our campus. Plagiarism involves students using the work, ideas and/or the exact wording of other people or sources without giving proper credit to others for the work, ideas and/or words in their papers. Students can unintentionally commit misconduct because they do not know how to reference outside sources properly or because they don't check their work carefully enough before handing it in. Whether or not a student intended to commit academic misconduct is not relevant for a finding of guilt. Hurried or careless submission of assignments does not excuse students from responsibility for verifying the academic integrity of their work before submitting it. Students who are in any doubt as to whether an action on their part could be construed as an academic offence should consult with a faculty member or faculty advisor.

In this course, your instructor will be using Turnitin.com to detect possible plagiarism, unauthorized collaboration or copying as part of the ongoing efforts to prevent plagiarism in the College of Social and Applied Human Sciences.

A major benefit of using Turnitin is that students will be able to educate and empower themselves in preventing misconduct. In this course, you may screen your own assignments through Turnitin as many times as you wish before the due date. You will be able to see and print reports that show you exactly where you have properly and improperly referenced the outside sources and materials in your assignment.