

# **PSYC\*1300: Course Outline**

## **General Information**

**Course Title: Learning Disabilities - Experience to Understanding Fall 2015**

### **Course Description:**

Learning Disabilities: Experience to Understanding is a credit course offered through Student Accessibility Services (SAS) for students diagnosed with a specific learning disability. Offered since 1999, this course is highly recommended by students who have taken it in the past.

This special course is designed to provide students with an understanding and acceptance of their learning needs. It aims to help students become more self-directed, active and successful learners.

Lectures introduce students to central issues in the area of LD and provide an opportunity for discussion, question asking and group sharing. A variety of modules are offered to assist students in applying and practicing strategies to aid in their understanding of their specific learning needs.

**Credit Weight:** 0.5

**Academic Department (or campus):** Psychology

**Semester Offering:** Fall 2015

### **Class Schedule and Location:**

Lectures: Mondays & Wednesdays, 11:30 - 12:20, MCKN 234

Modules: Section 1: Tuesdays & Thursdays, 9:30 - 10:20, MCKN 315

Section 2: Tuesdays & Thursdays, 1:30 - 2:20, MCKN 308

### **Instructor Information**

Instructor Name: Kevin Noble

Instructor Email: noblek@uoguelph.ca

Office location: Mackinnon Building 118A

Office hours: Available by appointment

## **GTA Information**

GTA Name: Jessica Dalley

GTA Email: [jdalley@uoguelph.ca](mailto:jdalley@uoguelph.ca)

GTA Office: Mackinnon Building 118A

GTA: Julia Wreford

GTA Email: [jwreford@uoguelph.ca](mailto:jwreford@uoguelph.ca)

GTA Office: Mackinnon Building 118A

GTA: Hayley Bowers

GTA Email: [hbowers@uoguelph.ca](mailto:hbowers@uoguelph.ca)

GTA Office: Mackinnon Building 118A

## **Course Content**

### **Specific Learning Outcomes:**

This course is a part of the Learning Opportunities Program for students at the University of Guelph who have a learning disability. The goal of this course is to foster a high level of motivation and sense of self-responsibility, an understanding of learning disabilities in general and one's own ability-disability profile, and the acquisition and enhancement of strategies to become a good information processor. The course is also aimed at helping students understand themselves as learners, at enhancing self-determination, and at developing proactive internalized approaches to successful task completion. By the end of this course, successful students will develop a rich understanding of the key concepts of learning disabilities, especially their own learning profile. Students will be able to apply a variety of effective learning strategies to improve their memory, reading, and writing skills, time management, organization, active learning skills, and oral presentation skills. Students will develop self-advocacy skills and be able to conduct scholarly literature reviews. Please see the course schedule for detailed lecture and module topics, assigned readings, and major assignments with due dates.

## **Lecture Content:**

Lectures will introduce students to central issues in the area of learning disabilities and provide an opportunity for discussion, question asking, and group sharing. Topics will highlight the continuum of cognitive characteristics associated with learning disabilities, what is known about successful and unsuccessful learners, and research findings and psychological concepts to support the strategies practiced in accompanying modules. As such, they will serve as a foundation for the application in the modules and students' ongoing work. Assigned readings will accompany lectures.

## **Seminars:**

Modules are designed to complement what is learned in lecture and to assist in the completion of course assignments. One purpose of the modules is to help students apply information processing strategies and to help students regulate their thoughts and cognitive state. Assigned readings and exercises accompany the modules.

## **Course Assignments and Tests:**

This is a 0.5 credit course, requiring the regular amount of time associated with a credit course (10 -12 hours per week for the average student). The final grade is a pass or fail. This alternate grading scheme has been selected to minimize competition between students and maximize focus on the process of the learning. Students' performance will be monitored in five major areas to determine whether the credit will be awarded. Due dates are to be met.

### **1. Modules (20%)**

All students are required to attend and participate in the modules accompanying the lectures. In each module, students will complete a portion of their Individual Learning Plan (see below) which will be handed in at the end of the semester; therefore, attendance is key. Students will be evaluated on their completion of the module assignments and preparedness/participation within the module. If a module is missed, it is the student's responsibility to contact the teaching assistant and complete any exercises that were done at the missed module.

### **2. Written Assessments (20%)**

Oct 1: *Hypothetical Advocacy E-mail*

Given what you know about your own individual learning profile, your task is to write a professional, assertive, and respectful e-mail to a professor advocating for an accommodation that you believe your learning profile merits in their course (e.g., an extension for a particular assignment, extra time for a quiz, etc.). Choose any course that you are currently taking and write a *hypothetical* e-mail to this professor. This will be submitted to your TA in module and marked on spelling, grammar, and professionalism. This is not intended to be sent to your

professor. Rather, this assignment gives you the opportunity to increase your confidence in advocating for your learning needs in a respectful and assertive manner.

Nov 2: *Mock exam questions*

Students are to compose a term test. Two questions and answers from each week's readings and/or lectures are required for a total of 14 questions and their answers. Questions should be three different formats such as multiple-choice (4 choice options), short-answer, fill in the blank, and list-type formats. This assignment can be completed each week as you go along.

Nov 16: *In-class quiz*

All students will receive time and a half to write a brief in-class quiz on material from the course.

### **3. Essay Research (20%)**

Oct 5: *Essay Backbone (see separate handout for more detailed instructions)*

This assignment requires you to select a topic in the field of learning disabilities, gain primary sources, note key ideas from these sources, and prepare a bibliography in standard APA reference format. You do not have to write the essay; the emphasis is on the research process and preparing to write. Two library modules are provided to help develop library research skills. Your essay backbone will be evaluated according to how well you have followed the requirements as noted in the assignment instructions. *You may use the research you do here as the material for your oral presentation.*

### **4. Presentations (20%)**

Nov 10: *Outline of Presentation (hand in to your TA)*

Nov 17, 19, 24, & 26: *Student Presentations*

Students are to make a 5-minute presentation on an aspect of learning disabilities followed by group discussion in their module. You may elaborate on material learned in readings and lectures using your own experience or present new information acquired while preparing your essay outlines. To encourage you to plan your talk carefully and to assist in scheduling presentations, a written outline of your presentation (*point form is acceptable*) must be submitted by November 10<sup>th</sup>. Evaluation will be based on submission of the outline, the presentation, and participation following your own and other students' presentations.

Nov 30: *Creative Metaphor on Learning Disabilities*

Essays and spoken presentations are not the only way of communicating meaning and experience. Non-text formats can be a powerful means of expression for the creator and insightful learning for the viewer. Your creative metaphor on learning disabilities can be a picture, poem, song, sculpture, found object, etc. – something that conveys an aspect of

learning disabilities in a novel fashion. A brief commentary about the meaning of your metaphor should accompany your creation. These “metaphors” are to be brought to the Library Conference Room on November 30<sup>th</sup>. We will spend the class time browsing each others’ presentations.

### 5. Individual Learning Plan (ILP) (20%)

See separate handout for detailed instructions. The ILP will bring together your work across the term and serve as a basis for future skill development. In it, you are to explain the psychological concepts that describe your learning disability, note your strengths and weaknesses, and outline how you use and plan to develop different strategies and accommodations to address your particular LD.

Oct 26: First draft of Section B – Individual Profile Section is due. You will receive detailed feedback on this section prior to submitting the final copy.

Dec 7: The final ILP should be given directly to the instructor in his office (118A MacKinnon) to be evaluated by him according to how well you have followed the requirements in the outline and reflected on your learning profile. *The ILP takes the place of a final exam for this course and must be submitted in order to pass the course.*

Assignment or Test	Due Date	Contribution to Final Mark (%)	Learning Outcomes Assessed
Modules	- Two modules are completed each week	20	Students will be able to apply a variety of effective learning strategies to improve their memory, reading, and writing skills, time management, organization, active learning skills, and oral presentation skills.
Written Assignments	- October 1 <sup>st</sup> Hypothetical - Advocacy E-mail - November 2 <sup>nd</sup> Mock Exam Questions - Nov 16 <sup>th</sup> In-class quiz	20	Students will develop self-advocacy skills and be able to conduct scholarly literature reviews.
Essay Research	- October 5 <sup>th</sup> Essay Backbone	20	Students will develop self-advocacy skills and be able to conduct scholarly literature reviews.
Presentations	- November 10 <sup>th</sup>	20	Students will be able

Assignment or Test	Due Date	Contribution to Final Mark (%)	Learning Outcomes Assessed
	Outline - November 17-26 <sup>th</sup> Presentations		to apply a variety of effective learning strategies to improve their memory, reading, and writing skills, time management, organization, active learning skills, and oral presentation skills.
Individual Learning Plan (ILP)	- October 26 <sup>th</sup> Part B - December 7 <sup>th</sup> Final ILP	20	By the end of this course, successful students will develop a rich understanding of the key concepts of learning disabilities, especially their own learning profile

**Final examination date and time:** The ILP takes the place of a final exam for this course and must be submitted in order to pass the course (See ILP section above)

**Final exam weighting: 20 %**

## Course Resources

### Required Texts:

1. Luckie, W.R., & Smethurst, W. (1998). *Study Power*. Cambridge, MA: Brookline.
2. Readings accessed through Ares Course Reserves System
3. Copy of your psychological report

### Online Resources:

Useful resources will be posted on *CourseLink*, including guides to the readings associated with some of the lectures, templates to assist with note taking in lectures, and course handouts. Some readings will also be found online through the University of Guelph library website or through the Ares Course Reserves System. See the course schedule for full details of where to access the readings for each lecture and module.

## **Course Policies**

### **IMPORTANT NOTICE REGARDING STUDENT RESPONSIBILITIES**

Students in all Psychology courses are required to read and adhere to the statements listed here on the [Psychology website](http://www.uoguelph.ca/psychology/page.cfm?id=745):

<http://www.uoguelph.ca/psychology/page.cfm?id=745>

Questions regarding those responsibilities should be directed to the course instructor.

### **Grading Policies**

See specific grading policies within each course assignment section. In general, you are required to contact your teaching assistant or course instructor if you are unable to complete the assignment at the required due date. Note, the ILP takes the place of a final exam for this course and must be submitted in order to pass the course

### **Course Policy regarding use of electronic devices and recording of lectures:**

***Electronic recording of classes is expressly forbidden without consent of the instructor. When recordings are permitted they are solely for the use of the authorized student and may not be reproduced, or transmitted to others, without the express written consent of the instructor.***

## **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:

<http://www.uoguelph.ca/registrar/calendars/undergraduate/current/c08/c08-amisconduct.shtml>

**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 the Centre for Students with Disabilities as soon as possible.

For more information, contact [CSD](#) at 519-824-4120 ext. 56208 or email [csd@uoguelph.ca](mailto:csd@uoguelph.ca) or see the website:

<http://www.csd.uoguelph.ca/csd/>

**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 6, 2015. For regulations and procedures for Dropping Courses, see the [Academic Calendar](#):

<https://www.uoguelph.ca/registrar/calendars/undergraduate/2015-2016/>