

Fontbonne University Course Syllabus  
**Senior Research Seminar II**  
PSY 497 — Spring 2019 — 3 credit hours

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**Professor:** Dr. Jason Finley

*email:* [jfinley@fontbonne.edu](mailto:jfinley@fontbonne.edu)

*phone:* (314)-719-3610 (office), 949-433-4216 (cell)

*office:* East Building 310A

*office hours:* Mon, Tues, Wed 2-3pm

Also by appointment (just email me and we'll schedule a time to meet)

**Class time and location:**

Tues 3:30pm – 4:45pm (we won't meet as a group every week; see schedule below)

**Class Room: East 105**

**Psychology Lab: East Building 325**

Important Dates:

Jan 18: Last day to add/drop course, change from credit to audit

March 15: Last day to withdraw from course, change between credit and pass/fail

**Website:** [fontbonne.schoology.com](http://fontbonne.schoology.com)

Powerpoints, readings, assignments, handouts, etc. will be posted on here.

**Prerequisites:** PSY 100, PSY 320, PSY 330, PSY486 and senior class standing or permission of instructor

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**Required course text:**

American Psychological Association. (2010). *Publication manual of the American Psychological Association*, 6th ed.

**Recommended text:**

Strunk, W., & White, E. B. (1999). *The Elements of Style*, 4<sup>th</sup> ed.

**Course Description:**

Official version: Second semester of the capstone experience for psychology seniors planning to apply to graduate programs. Students will organize and run their own and one another's studies in the psychology laboratory. They will collect data, manage the participant pool, analyze data, and complete an independent empirical research thesis. Research results will be submitted in an APA-format thesis and summarized in an oral presentation at the end of the semester.

Finley's version: This is the second half of the senior capstone course for psychology majors! Here you will continue to bring together the knowledge and skills you have developed throughout your undergraduate education. Last semester you shaped your curiosity and creativity into an empirical research project, and this semester you will

conduct that project, analyze your data, write up the results and discussion, and give a final presentation.

Just wait and see how exciting it is once you get your hands on BRAND NEW empirical data on a topic of personal interest to you, in a research study that you designed! SCIENCE!!!

### **Goals and Objectives:**

The learning activities, assignments, and exams in this course (PSY 496 and 497 combined) assess your mastery of these learning outcomes:

- **Critical and Creative Thinking**  
You will improve your skills at thinking like a scientist about mind and behavior, transforming your curiosity into testable questions, and critically evaluating evidence. My approach to doing research is this: unbounded creative curiosity first. Then rigor. Finally practicality.
- **Research Skills**  
You will improve your skills as you conduct every stage of an empirical research project on a topic that is of personal interest to you. That includes: generating ideas and forming them into empirically testable hypotheses; searching, reading, critically evaluating, and synthesizing published research; specifying the variables of interest; choosing an appropriate research method (descriptive/observational, correlational, experimental); designing your study; finding and/or creating materials and measurements; maintaining high ethical standards and obtaining Institutional Review Board approval; running your study to collect data; using appropriate statistics to analyze your data; and clearly communicating your results to colleagues verbally and with visual aids.
- **Writing Skills**  
You will improve your writing skills, particularly using APA (American Psychological Association) style, which is a formulaic, technical writing style that is the standard for research publications in psychology.

### **Course Format:**

The semester is divided into two phases. We will spend most of the first phase (January 14 – March 15) in the laboratory gathering data. This part of human research is generally the most labor intensive and time-consuming. However, operating a psychological research lab can be a rewarding, positive experience when everyone works together as a team. We will periodically meet together in the laboratory or the classroom on an as-needed basis to discuss any problems that might arise during the data collection phase. See the “Meeting Date” column of the schedule.

The second phase (March 18 – May 3) will be devoted to statistically analyzing your results, writing the results and discussion section, polishing your final senior research paper, and presenting your research. Note the due dates in the schedule, which are all stacked toward the end of the semester.

**Classroom Etiquette/Logistics:**

- If you have a laptop computer, please do bring it to class. It will be useful to have your computer with you as I help you throughout the various stages of your project. But don't use it for goofing off. SRSLY! (No, really, I'm serious.)
- Silence your cell phone, no texting.
- No antimatter in class; trust me on this.
- This will be interactive and less formal than a typical class. Speak up whenever you have questions, answers, ideas, etc. We will all benefit from a dynamic dialogue. Also remember to be courteous to each other.
- Research is a creative, collaborative process that relies on frequent and open communication. Please check your email regularly, stay in touch, and come to see me any time you have a concern with the class or with your project.

**Evaluation:**

Your grade in this course will be based on:

Laboratory Data Collection	30%
Results Section Draft	10%
Final Paper	35%
Presentation Draft	5%
Final Presentation	15%
Senior Exit Interview	5%
Total:	100%

Final letter grades will be based on the following scale:

92.5	≤	A	≤	100
89.5	≤	A-	<	92.5
87.5	≤	B+	<	89.5
82.5	≤	B	<	87.5
79.5	≤	B-	<	82.5
77.5	≤	C+	<	79.5
72.5	≤	C	<	77.5
69.5	≤	C-	<	72.5
59.5	≤	D	<	69.5
0	≤	F	<	59.5

**Laboratory Data Collection (30%):**

Accurate, reliable data collection is absolutely vital to completing your projects. The easiest way to ensure that everyone finishes is to work together as a team. Basic requirements for running the psychology laboratory are that: 1) everyone pitches in to run participants, 2) **everyone shows up on time when scheduled to run the lab**, 3) everyone makes arrangements for coverage if a shift must be missed, and 4) everyone promotes a climate of professionalism in the laboratory. Research within our discipline is built on the foundation of collaboration and communication among psychologists. Successfully operating a psychology research laboratory requires the collective effort of everyone on the lab team.

**Results Section Draft (10%):**

In which you will report the descriptive and inferential statistics, and include graphs and/or tables as appropriate.

**Final Paper (35%):**

Your crowning achievement! A complete APA style paper on your research project. Parts of this will be revised from your final proposal paper from last semester, and parts will be new once you have your data (Results and Discussion).

- Cover page
- Abstract
- Introduction
- Method
- Results
- Discussion
- References
- Appendix

**Presentation Draft (5%):**

First version of your presentation file (e.g., PowerPoint) that you will turn in so I can give you feedback before giving your final presentation.

**Final Presentation (15%):**

During the final exam period for the course, we will have a symposium in which you give an oral presentation of your research project to your classmates and other psychology students and faculty. Your presentation should be 10-12 minutes long, and will parallel the structure of your final proposal paper. We will cover presentation style and format in more detail when the time comes (see schedule). The purpose of this assignment is to:

1. Give you experience presenting research to a group of peers using oral communication skills

2. Give you practice in creating scientific presentations using Power Point presentation software
3. Learn how to use the library, read primary sources, and condense the information from these sources into a short talk.

**Senior Exit Interview (5%):**

A questionnaire for reflecting on your learning and for evaluating the psychology program at Fontbonne.

**Midwestern Psychological Association (MPA) Poster:**

Those of you who will be presenting at the MPA conference in Chicago (April 11-13) will make a poster summarizing your project.

**Kinkel Center for Academic Resources:** offers tutoring and writing help to all students!  
<http://www.fontbonne.edu/academics/academic-resources/>

**Accommodation of Students with Disabilities**

Fontbonne University offers accommodations to students with documented physical, visual, hearing, learning, or psychiatric disabilities. Any Fontbonne student is eligible for special services or accommodations if: 1. The student self-identifies that he or she has a disability and needs accommodation. 2. The student provides appropriate and verifiable documentation of the disability. 3. The student provides notification in a timely fashion. For academic accommodations, contact the Academic and Disabilities Resources Coordinator at (314) 719-3627.

## **Academic Honesty:**

Unwavering honesty is absolutely paramount in doing science and being a scholar. It is an essential value that every good scholar holds in his or her heart. My colleague, Dr. Rebecca Foushée, has written nicely about this importance: “The scientific enterprise is an organized framework for finding truths and understanding reality, and it works for many reasons. One primary reason it works is that research professionals place a great deal of faith and trust in the work of their colleagues, including any public statements/reports made by their fellow scientists. Whenever this trust is broken, the entire structure of scholarly inquiry – regardless of discipline – is placed at risk. Therefore, one main goal of scientific training is to foster and encourage ethical behavior, academic honesty, and original, creative thought among future generations of scholars.”

I take academic honesty very seriously, and you should too. The Fontbonne University Catalog has a section on “Academic Integrity/Honesty” that you should read. I’ll excerpt from it here. Academic honesty is violated if you do any of the following:

- “Cheating is a purposeful deception in the preparation and/or submission of papers and assignments and the taking of exams, tests, or quizzes.”
- “Fabrication is the deliberate falsification or invention of any information or citation in any academic exercise, such as making up a source, giving an incorrect citation, misquoting a source.”
- “Plagiarism is the representation of the words and ideas of another as one’s own in any academic exercise. Plagiarism includes failing to give a citation for using work from another person or source. Modifications and rephrasing do not reduce the requirement for giving a citation. This also applies to information obtained electronically, such as from the Internet.”

Here are some guidelines to avoid plagiarism:

- DON’T COPY/PASTE unless you put quotes around the copied text (or block indent for long passages) and cite the source of the text.
- If you’ve paraphrased text from somewhere, cite the source.
- If you’re using ideas from somewhere, cite the source.
- If you’re ever unsure, just check with me.

So, seriously, don’t EVER do any of the above (cheating, fabrication, plagiarism). Engaging in any such academic dishonesty will result in the student receiving a score of zero on the assignment and being reported to the Office of Academic Affairs. More than one offense will result in an automatic F grade.

## **Nondiscrimination**

Fontbonne University does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, age, sex, gender identity, sexual orientation, national origin, disability, genetic information, or any other characteristic protected by applicable law. If you have concerns that you or someone else has been discriminated against, it is your right to bring those concerns to the attention of the University’s Title IX coordinator, Associate Vice President for Student Affairs, Medaille Hall 85-99, (314) 889-1416 or Vice President and

Chief Financial Officer, Ryan Hall 210, (314) 719- 8017. Other types of concerns (i.e., concerns of an academic nature) should be discussed directly with your instructor and can also be brought to the attention of your instructor's Department Chair. Additional information on Fontbonne's policy of nondiscrimination is available in the catalog, in *The Griffin Scratch Student Handbook*, and in Policy Manual II, Section 2.1.2.

### **Basic Wellness Needs**

Your physical, mental and emotional health is important and can affect your performance in this class. Fontbonne University provides many services to help students, including counseling, health services, food and housing assistance, and emergency funds. If a service is not available on our campus, you may benefit from a referral to a provider in the greater community. If you are facing such challenges and believe it may affect your performance in this course, I encourage you to seek assistance in the Student Affairs office on the first floor of Medaille Hall, adjacent to the AMC lobby, or you can call that office at (314) 889-1411. If you are comfortable doing so, you also may contact me. I will offer any assistance that I can and help you connect with the appropriate resource.

### **Subject-to-Change Clause:**

This syllabus is subject to change at the discretion of the instructor to accommodate instructional and/or student needs. It is the student's responsibility to keep informed of such changes.

**Schedule:**

Subject to change as needed. Conducting research can sometimes be unpredictable, and you may require fewer or more weeks of data collection than you expect.

Week #	Week of	Topic	Meeting Date	Due (11:59pm)
1	Jan 14 - 18	Scheduling, IRB discussion	Tues Jan 15	
2	Jan 21 - 25	Lab organization and set up, pilot testing	Tues Jan 22	
3	Jan 28 - Feb 1	Lab organization and set up, pilot testing	Tues Jan 29	
4	Feb 4 - 8	Data collection begins		
5	Feb 11 - 15	Data collection and entry		
6	Feb 18 - 22	Data collection and entry		
7	Feb 25 - Mar 1	Data collection and entry	<i>individual meetings as needed</i>	
8	Mar 4 - 8	Spring Break, NO CLASS		
9	Mar 11 - 15	Last week for data collection.		
10	Mar 18 - 22	Clean and prepare data; Analyze data <i>Discuss Poster Formats* (if MPA)</i>	Tues Mar 19	
11	Mar 25 - 29	Data Analysis, Posters, tables, figures	Tues Mar 26	<i>Draft MPA poster: Fri Mar 29</i>
12	Apr 1 - 5	Posters, data analysis	Tues Apr 2 (if MPA)	<i>Revised MPA poster: Fri Apr 5</i>
13	Apr 8 - 12	<i>Print MPA posters OfficeMax</i> <b>MPA Conference Apr 11-13</b>		
14	Apr 15 - 19	Presentation skills	Tues Apr 16	Results Draft: Tues Apr 16 Presentation Draft: Fri Apr 19
15	Apr 22 - 26	Writing the discussion section	<i>individual meetings as needed</i>	
16	Apr 29 - May 3	Final presentations	Thurs May 2 3:30 - 5:20pm Location TBD	Final Paper: Tues Apr 30 Senior Exit Interview: Fri May 3