

Honors Contract for PSY 308
"Research Experience in Cognitive Psychology"

1. What is your project and how does it differ from the regular work of the class?

I will complete several activities (see question 3) to gain experience in research in cognitive psychology. I will be assisting with a research project conducted by Prof. Kershaw and Lyubomir Kolev, a graduate student in the Research Psychology MA program. This project is about the possible benefits of taking a break when solving difficult insight problems. What individuals do during the break, such as mindfulness meditation or mind-wandering about positive events, may have an effect on the solution rate for these problems. This project has IRB approval (IRB #15.019, "Solving Creative Problems through the Facilitation of Incubation"). This project is different than the regular work of the class because of the hands-on research experience I will have. In PSY 308, I will be learning about how research is conducted in cognitive psychology, including reading research articles and making connections between data and theory, but learning about how research is conducted is different than actually helping to conduct research.

2. Provide a justification for your project in terms of why it is important to your Honors learning experience.

This project is challenging me beyond what the other students in the course are experiencing and is providing me with practical experience in the application of cognitive psychological research. Through the unique, individualized and intimate nature of this project, my learning experience will be enhanced beyond the context of this course. This experience will foster my love for learning psychology and allow me to gain exposure to a new facet of psychology that I have yet to be exposed to. Lastly, I will be introduced to what it's like to conduct creative work within my discipline, a prominent goal of the Honors Program.

3. How will you complete your project and what will be the final outcome?

I will complete several activities to gain research experience in cognitive psychology. I will read and summarize 4 research articles that are related to the project. I will be trained in data collection procedures by Prof. Kershaw and Lyubo Kolev. I will complete the CITI human subjects ethics training so that I can assist with data collection for the project (2 hours/week of data collection). I will help to put together a poster for the Psi Chi research conference, and present this poster along with the research team at the conference.

4. Provide a timetable, including meetings with the instructor, deadlines for components or drafts of the project, and due date of final project.

Week of February 8: Meet with Dr. Kershaw and Lyubo Kolev to discuss project. Begin work on summary of first research article (Wiley, J., & Jarosz, A.F. (2012). How working memory capacity affects problem solving. In B.H. Ross (Ed.), *The psychology of learning and motivation*, Vol. 56 (pp. 185-228). Academic Press. [read pp. 185-189; 204-219]).

Week of February 15: Complete CITI training. Work on summary of Wiley & Jarosz.

Week of February 22: Complete Wiley & Jarosz summary and discuss with Dr. Kershaw. Shadow Lyubo Kolev during data collection.

Week of February 29: Begin work on second summary (Ostafin, B. D. & Kassman, K. T. (2012). Stepping out of history: Mindfulness improves insight problem solving. *Consciousness and Cognition*, 21, 1031–1036). Collect data under supervision of Lyubo Kolev.

Week of March 7: Complete Ostafin & Kassman summary and discuss with Dr. Kershaw. Collect data under supervision of Lyubo Kolev.

Week of March 14: spring break

Week of March 21: Collect data independently. Begin work on third summary (Mooneyham, B. W., & Schooler, J. W. (2013). The costs and benefits of mind-wandering: A review. *Canadian Journal of Experimental Psychology*, 67, 11-18).

Week of March 28: Complete Mooneyham & Schooler summary and discuss with Dr. Kershaw. Collect data independently.

Week of April 4: Collect data independently. Begin work on fourth summary (Sio, U. N., & Omerod, T. C. (2009). Does incubation enhance problem solving? A meta-analytic review. *Psychological Bulletin*, 135, 94-120).

Week of April 11: Complete Sio & Ormerod summary and discuss with Dr. Kershaw. Collect data independently.

Week of April 18: Collect data independently.

Week of April 25: Meet with research group to produce poster for Psi Chi conference.

Week of May 2: Present findings in poster, along with research group, at Psi Chi conference poster session (5:30-7pm, Thursday May 5).

5. What are the criteria that will be used to evaluate the project? Will it be graded? If so, what percent of the course grade will the project constitute? If not, what are the minimum requirements that the project must meet in order to be judged acceptable?

My performance will be evaluated based on satisfactory performance on the activities listed in questions 3 and 4, including answering the guiding questions for the summaries fully and correctly, completing work on time, following proper data collection procedures for the project, and assisting with the development and presentation of the poster. I will be supervised primarily by Dr. Kershaw, but Lyubo Kolev will also train and supervise me on proper data collection procedures. I will not receive any grades for the activities listed in questions 3 and 4, and my performance on these activities will not be part of the course grade for PSY 308.

6. If the project is deemed unsatisfactory, will it result in a lower grade for the course?

No. The work completed for this honors contract is not part of the course grade. If the project is deemed unsatisfactory, an Honors designation will not be received for the class and will not appear on my transcript.