Sample Syllabus

PSY 491

Coordinator:

Office:
Phone:
Email:
Office Hours:

Class Information: The Field Experience requirement of the psychology major is an experiential learning opportunity allowing students to observe and apply psychology in the workplace. General objectives of the course include learning and using the skills pertinent to the chosen site, interacting with professionals in the field, becoming familiar with the language, concepts and specific tools that are relevant to the field site, and connecting your on-site experiences with the content of your psychology coursework. The psychology major requires 3 credits of field experience; a maximum of 6 credits may be taken. Students may enroll in 1-6 credits in any one semester. Forty-five hours at the field experience site are required for each credit hour earned.

Disability Statement:
Any student requesting disability accommodation for this class must inform the instructor by giving appropriate notice. Students are encouraged to contact Disability Support Services at (970) 351-2289 to certify documentation of disability and to ensure appropriate accommodations are implemented in a timely manner.

Prerequisites: Majors only; junior or senior standing; permission of Field Experience Coordinator

Because of the wide variety of experiences students might have, depending on their placement, it’s possible for students to achieve a number of the following learning goals:

Knowledge
1. Have a critical understanding of the major theoretical perspectives in psychology.
2. Understand the effects of the interaction between the person and the situation in influencing human behavior and subjective experience.
3. Understand the physiological bases of behavior.
4. Understand the basic principles explaining adaptive and maladaptive behaviors.
5. Be aware of multicultural perspectives on human behavior.
6. Understand the scientific basis of psychology and the relationship between theory and research.
7. Understand the different scientific methodologies employed by psychologists.
8. Be knowledgeable of descriptive and inferential statistics.
9. Be knowledgeable of the ethical issues related to the practice of psychology.
10. Be aware of the potential applications of psychology.

Skills
1. Use the terminology of the discipline.
2. Use library and internet resources to conduct literature searches.
3. Understand and critically evaluate research articles in psychology.
4. Understand and critically evaluate psychological theories.
5. Design, conduct, and write up a research study.
6. Summarize and analyze data.
7. Write in American Psychological Association (APA) style.

Communication: It is very important for you to communicate effectively with me. The best method is email (address above). All email communications about the field experience must include “PSY 491” in the subject line. This will assist me in efficiently responding. Please contact me right away with any questions, problems, or concerns. Because my communications to the class are most likely to be through Black Board, it is important that you regularly check the email address that is “registered” with Black Board and not, for instance, the email address you supplied me on the PSY 491 agreement form.
It is also important that you communicate effectively with your supervisor in the field. You should contact him or her immediately with concerns related to your responsibilities at the site. It is necessary that you contact your supervisor immediately if you will be late to work or if you must alter your schedule in any way.

**Decorum:** Remember that you are a guest at your field site and a representative of UNC. It is important that you conduct yourself accordingly. You need to dress, behave, and speak professionally. Follow whatever guidelines are in place at your site. If you have any questions, speak to your site supervisor.

**Requirements:**

1. **Students must obtain from me the FIELD EXPERIENCE AGREEMENT FORM before registration.** I will discuss with the students their interests and goals before referring them to one or more sites. (Students may also contact me with a placement already in mind). Students are responsible for contacting the placement and setting up an appointment. Students should bring the Agreement Form with them to this meeting. When the Agreement Form is completed and signed by both the student and the site supervisor, I will review it for quality of the experience, connection to psychology coursework, and relevance to the student’s interest in psychology. Once approved, the student will be released for registration. **PLEASE NOTE:** I do not register students for Field Experience; registration is the students’ responsibility. Also, note that PSY 491 is a variable credit class and students may enroll for 1-6 credit hours at a time. In registering, you must follow the special instructions for variable credits.

2. **PROGRESS REPORTS/TIME LOGS:** You need to keep careful track of your work hours. At the class Black Board site you will find a time log to help with this. You should fill it out weekly but have to turn in the logs only twice along with a progress report on your experiences, learning, and applications. The form for progress reports is also available on Black Board. Please only use forms downloaded from Black Board or received from me. Submit to me your progress reports and time logs **on or before September 30 and October 31.** IT IS IMPORTANT THAT YOU KEEP COPIES OF THESE REPORTS AND TIME LOGS. There should be no reason for you to contact me to find out how many hours you have worked.

3. **VERIFICATION OF HOURS AND SUPERVISOR EVALUATION:** Your supervisor must submit the Field Experience Verification of Hours and Student Evaluation form; I must RECEIVE them by Friday, December 12. You must provide this form to your supervisor. It is also among the course materials at our Blackboard site. Prepaid and addressed envelopes are available in the psychology office. You may pick one up any time and give to your supervisor. If your supervisor allows you to deliver this form to me, rather than place it in the mail, it must be in a sealed envelope with the supervisor’s signature across the flap.

4. **REACTION/APPLICATION PAPER:** An application/reaction paper is **due by Friday, December 11.** In this paper you must comment on skills you have learned, critique the experience (strengths and weaknesses), and make suggestions for improving or building on your experience. Did your experiences match the expectations you had at the outset? Please be thoughtful and reflective. **Important:** in your paper you must also attempt to connect your psychology coursework with your field experience. That is, what principles, concepts or information from any of your psychology courses were relevant to your field experience? Did your experiences contradict, confirm, or extend information from your classes? You may also comment on whether or not you would like to do further work, or get further training, in this area. Did the experience affect your professional goals? The paper should be approximately 6-8 pages in length, double spaced with one-inch margins and 12-point font. It should reflect your best writing. The papers of students registered for more than 3 credits should be closer to the maximum length. A hard copy may be turned in to the Coordinator’s mail box in the psychology office (retain a copy for your records) or you may send it to me as a Word attachment to an email: mark.alcorn@unco.edu.

**EXIT SURVEY:** Near the end of the semester an exit survey will be made available on blackboard. Your feedback regarding Field Experience would be greatly appreciated.
**EVALUATION:** this course is graded “S” (satisfactory) or “U” (unsatisfactory). An “S” will be assigned if all the above requirements of the class are met, and the required/contracted on-site hours are completed. Your site supervisor must verify the hours you have contributed at the site and provide a short evaluation of your performance. This form MUST be returned to me BEFORE a grade can be given. A “U” may be awarded for any of the following: I do not receive your supervisor’s evaluation and verification of your contracted hours by the due date indicated above; your paper is incomplete or poorly written; you do not submit the required progress reports; you receive an unsatisfactory evaluation from your supervisor.