



PSYC303 Fall 2018

Professional Development for Psychology Majors
(1 credit)

Instructor: Kevin McGann, Ph.D.

Department: Psychology; University of Maryland, College Park

Course Format: Online and Experiential

Course Website: <http://www.elms.umd.edu>

Office Hours: Mondays and Fridays, 10am-12pm (or by appt.)

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Course Description:

This 1-credit online course provides an investigation of various career and graduate school opportunities available to psychology majors. We will cover options specific to psychology, but we will also consider how psychology is a good background for related fields of study and work. Students will investigate a wide range of career fields, will learn how to utilize available resources to pursue career goals, and will take steps to advance their professional identity and development.

Course Objectives:

- To familiarize you with graduate school and career options available for psychology majors
- To introduce you to resources and people available to help make your search for a graduate school or career more successful
- To assist you in developing professional competencies and skills which are needed to be successful in graduate school and in the world of work
- To help you identify professional research, clinical, and/or consultation interests, and to integrate these into your professional identity
- To whet your appetite for additional exploration and professional development!

Required Materials:

There are no required materials for purchase in this course. However, you will be required to access and utilize the computer, word processing programs, and various other internet sources and programs for the purposes of this course.

Course Website:

Our class is listed at <http://www.elms.umd.edu>. Course materials, including the syllabus, modules, quizzes, assignments, and supplemental materials will be posted there. I will also use this website to post your grades electronically. Please be sure to check our ELMS course site regularly.

Course-Related University Policies:

It is your responsibility as a student to familiarize yourself with the university's course-related policies, which this course abides by: <http://www.ugst.umd.edu/courselatedpolicies.html>



Course Format and Expectations:

This is an online class that guides you through topics, assignments, and experiential activities. The primary purpose of this course is to help you. I hope that this 1-credit professional development course can exist to supplement the content learning and activities you do in your other classes, and assist you through topics that are not typically covered but which may serve to help you advance along your career journey. That said, you must do your part to make this a useful course for you, and I will hold you to the guidelines, due dates, and expectations set forth in our shared syllabus.

Our course is organized around 4 main modules, which are each further divided into weekly online lecture sections or “parts.” These modules are PDF documents available for download on ELMS, and each one has weekly associated content and assignments. Please see the list of major assignments below, as well as the course schedule which has important due dates.

For our course, I will utilize an email listserv that includes your email address and sends email communications to the entire class. It is your responsibility to make sure that you have an accurate email address registered with the university, and that you check your email regularly and prevent your inbox from becoming full. It is also your responsibility to check your “spam” folder regularly.

Learning Outcomes:

This course shares the learning outcomes of the Department of Psychology, and applies them to the area of professional development in psychology and related fields:

1. *Knowledge Base in Psychology:* Develop a working knowledge of the differences between subfields of psychology and career applications of our field and related fields.
2. *Critical Thinking:* Use creative and critical thinking to solve any problems in professional development related to behavior and mental processes.
3. *Ethics:* Understand the concepts and practice of ethical principles and behavior in a broad range of professional contexts.
4. *Multiculturalism and Diversity:* Understand the socio-cultural influences on human development and behavior, particularly as they affect your own career development and opportunities.
5. *Communication:* Practice and develop your ability to communicate effectively in a variety of formats for the purpose of improving professional skills.
6. *Professional Development:* Apply course content and skills to career goals and develop meaningful professional direction for life after graduation.

Academic Dishonesty:

The University’s Code of Academic Integrity (www.shc.umd.edu/) prohibits students from cheating on exams/quizzes, plagiarizing papers, submitting the same paper for credit in two courses without authorization, buying papers, submitting fraudulent documents, and forging signatures. All instances of academic dishonesty will result in an automatic F for your course grade, and will be reported to the Honor Council of the Office of Student Conduct for further action. If you are found responsible for academic dishonesty, your F will become an XF on your academic transcript, which will clearly state “Failure Due to Academic Dishonesty”.



Religious Observances:

You will not be penalized when a due date for an assignment falls on an observance of a recognized religious holiday that you personally observe. Please notify me in writing or by email within the first two weeks of the semester if there are any anticipated instances in this regard. As approved by me, you will be given an opportunity to make up academic assignments within a reasonable time frame.

Names/Pronouns and Self Identifications:

The University of Maryland recognizes the importance of a diverse student body, and we are committed to fostering equitable classroom environments. I invite you, if you wish, to tell us how you want to be referred to both in terms of your name and your pronouns (he/him, she/her, ze/zir, they/them, etc.). The pronouns someone indicates are not necessarily indicative of their gender identity. Visit <http://trans.umd.edu> to learn more.

Additionally, how you identify in terms of your gender, race, class, sexuality, religion, and dis/ability, among all aspects of your identity, is your choice whether to disclose (e.g., should it come up in course conversation about our experiences and perspectives) and should be self-identified, not presumed or imposed. I will do my best to address and refer to all students accordingly, and I ask you to do the same for all of your fellow Terps.

Inclusive Learning Environment:

Students will be invited to share their thoughts through course activities and assignments, and a diversity of opinions are welcome. Respectful communication is expected, even when expressing differing perspectives. Supporting one's statements with research findings is encouraged. In accordance with free speech statutes, speech that contains threats of violence is prohibited.

Students with Documented Disabilities:

The University of Maryland, College Park is committed to equal access for students with disabilities. If you have a documented disability and wish to discuss academic accommodations, please notify me in writing within the first two weeks of the semester. We will arrange a meeting to discuss accommodations, and you must provide documentation from Accessibility and Disability Service (ADS) which describes the accommodations needed.

University Support Services:

These are just a few of the helpful support services and resources available for students at the University of Maryland, College Park:

Accessibility and Disability Service:

0106 Shoemaker Building

<https://www.counseling.umd.edu/ads/>

Phone: 301-314-7682

The Career Center:

3100 Hornbake Library, South Wing

<https://careers.umd.edu/>

Phone: 301-314-7225



The Writing Center:

1205 Tawes Hall

<http://www.english.umd.edu/writingcenter>

Phone: 301-405-3785

The Counseling Center:

Main lobby, Shoemaker Building

<http://www.counseling.umd.edu/CS/>

Phone: 301-314-7651

Inclement Weather or Campus Emergency:

You will be able to find out if the university is closed due to inclement weather or a campus emergency by checking the university homepage (www.umd.edu) or the snow phone line (301-405-SNOW). If the university is closed on a date that an assignment for our course is due, that assignment will become due on the very next business day that the university is open again. If needed, I will be in touch with the class regarding any important course changes/announcements.

Course Evaluations:

As a member of our academic community, one of your important responsibilities is to submit your online course evaluations near the end of each term through CourseEvalUM, in order to help faculty and administrators improve teaching and learning at the University of Maryland. You can use this internet link to access the submission system: www.courseevalum.umd.edu. Please remember to submit your evaluation. I care about making this course better!

Assignment Policies:

All assignments are due by **3:00pm EST** on the Fridays which are listed in the course schedule at the end of this syllabus. *With the exception of quizzes (see below), ten percentage points will be deducted for each business day that any assignment is late, starting immediately after 3:00pm on the Friday that it is due.* All assignments must be typed and submitted to me **through ELMS** as **PDF documents** (unless otherwise noted below), with one-inch margins on all sides. Assignments must be double-spaced using sized 11 or 12 Arial or Times New Roman font. There will be deductions for assignments that do not adhere to these guidelines, and I may ask you to resubmit the assignment if you want credit.

Assignments and Point Allocations:

Reflection Assignments (30 points; 30% of final grade)

You will complete three (3) out-of-class reflection assignments, each graded out of 10 points (based on the quality/completeness of your work) and each one comprising 10% of your final grade. These assignments require you to take steps to explore professional development opportunities and to write about your experiences. For example, you will be asked to complete an inventory of your career interests, to practice interviewing, and to research some potential graduate program offerings of interest to you. The length of these reflections is expected to be 1.5-2 pages, double spaced. The due dates for these activities and reflections are included in the course schedule below. Reflection assignments are posted in the “Reflection Assignments” folder under the “Files” section on ELMS.



Module Quizzes (30 points; 30% of final grade)

There will be three (3) online quizzes on ELMS which will test your knowledge of content from readings and/or information provided to you through our course modules. Each quiz is open book, and will be worth 10 points (each comprising 10% of your final grade). The modules guide your learning, and are available for download under the “Modules” section on ELMS. Complete quizzes by the due dates in the course schedule below. Note: Quizzes are allowed to be submitted one business day late (for 10% deduction) but cannot be submitted after that (e.g., 0 points earned).

Psychology Resume and Networking Email (10 points; 10% of final grade)

The process of writing a resume can be more difficult than it seems, but is very important to your professional development. A great resume takes time to develop, and should be tailored to fit each position or opportunity that you are pursuing. I realize that there is a good chance that you have already developed a resume for a previous class or opportunity. Therefore, this resume assignment is meant to be helpful in allowing you to dust off and tailor your current version to a more psychology-specific and “advanced” resume status. You will also write and submit a networking email, similar to a cover letter, along with your resume. Module 2 will cover this topic and provide examples of resumes, cover letters, and networking emails. You will submit your resume and networking email as PDF documents to ELMS by 9/28.

“Interview a Professional” Paper (15 points; 15% of final grade)

Guidelines for this paper will be posted in a folder under “Files” on ELMS. This 4-5 page paper will help you develop multiple professional competencies, and the work involved will constitute an important component of the course. As you learn more about yourself and options in the field of psychology, I want you to practice leaving your comfort zone more and more. One of the most important skills you can develop is the ability to introduce yourself to others you do not know, tell them about yourself, and ask them questions which are of interest to you. This is one of the best ways to find out if you will like a certain career path or not. You will be guided by me to learn steps and strategies to reach out to a new contact. Then you will identify a working professional who is in a career field of interest to you, and you will conduct a brief (20-30 minute) in-person, informational interview with this professional, at a time that works for both of you. I will provide some suggested questions to ask, but you will tailor these to your own interests and needs at this time. After your interview, you will write a paper about your experience. **Note well:** You must take the steps to identify who you will interview and arrange this meeting well in advance of the due date for this paper. Also, you must choose a professional with whom you do not already have a personal or professional relationship. In other words, this should be an entirely new person to you. I am happy to assist with advice and strategies, if you have any questions. The due date for this paper is 11/16.

“My Developing Career” Portfolio (15 points; 15% of final grade)

Guidelines for this portfolio will be posted under “Files” on ELMS. You will draw on the information you are gathering and on the various competencies which you are fostering through this course to put together an online portfolio regarding the state of your developing professional self. This portfolio will contain things such as your updated final resume, a statement of your goals/aspirations, copies of job and/or graduate school postings that are the most appealing options for you, and your answers to common interview questions that psychology employers and graduate schools tend to ask. Your portfolio will also contain a personalized action plan for what you want to do after graduation from Maryland. The portfolio is due on the last Friday of the semester (12/7).



Evaluation Summary:

I believe in demystifying the grading process. If it is not clear to you how your final grade is determined, please ask me and I will show you. The percentage you receive for a course component (e.g., 85% for Interview Paper) gets multiplied by the weighted portion of that specific component (e.g., 15% for Interview Paper) to determine the weighted portion of your final grade. Therefore, $.85 * 15 = 12.75$, which is the number of points that this assignment will contribute to your final grade of 100 points for the course. This is automatically calculated on ELMS. Course grades will be assigned as follows, and posted on Elms for each course component:

| | | | |
|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| 94-100: A | 84-86: B | 74-76: C | 64-66: D |
| 90-93: A- | 80-83: B- | 70-73: C- | 60-63: D- |
| 87-89: B+ | 77-79: C+ | 67-69: D+ | 0-59: F |

Provision of Changes to the Syllabus:

If absolutely necessary, I reserve the right to adapt or modify aspects of this syllabus. Some potential reasons could be inclement weather, class activity conflicts, technology malfunctions, university emergencies, or instructor illness. I will make every effort to keep you aware of any needed changes, the reasons these changes are needed, and any potential impact on you regarding rescheduling, due dates, time allocation, etc.

(Please see the next page for the Course Schedule of topics and due dates)



Course Schedule:

| Due Date | Weekly Module Reading/Topic Covered | Assignment/Extra Reading Due Today |
|-----------------|---|--|
| Friday 8/31 | <i>Module 1: Knowing PSYC Options, Introduction</i> | N/A |
| Friday 9/7 | <i>Module 1 (continued), Part 2</i> | -Reading (<i>Careers in Psychology</i>) |
| Friday 9/14 | <i>Module 1 (continued), Part 3</i> | - <u>Reflection 1: A Good Match</u> (upload with Student Questionnaire attached) |
| Friday 9/21 | <i>Module 1 (continued), Part 4</i> | -Reading (<i>Hiring Trends and Alumni Outcomes</i>) - <u>Quiz 1: Careers in Psychology</u> |
| Friday 9/28 | <i>Module 2: Advancing My PSYC Self, Part 1</i> | - <u>Resume and Networking Email</u> |
| Friday 10/5 | <i>Module 2 (continued), Part 2</i> | -Begin Working on Reflection 2 -Ongoing: Contact Professional (for Paper) |
| Friday 10/12 | <i>Module 2 (continued), Part 3</i> | - <u>Reflection 2: Interview Skills</u> -Ongoing: Contact Professional (for Paper) |
| Friday 10/19 | <i>Module 2 (continued), Part 4</i> | - <u>Quiz 2: The Mistakes We Make</u> -Ongoing: Contact Professional (for Paper) |
| Friday 10/26 | <i>Module 3: Graduate Options, Part 1</i> | -Reading (<i>Before You Apply</i>) -Ongoing: Contact Professional (for Paper) |
| Friday 11/2 | <i>Module 3 (continued), Part 2</i> | - <u>Reflection 3: Grad School Exploration</u> -Hold your meeting with professional (soon) |
| Friday 11/9 | <i>Module 3 (continued), Part 3</i> | - <u>Quiz 3: Graduate Options</u> -Work on your paper! |
| Friday 11/16 | <i>Module 3 (continued), Part 4</i> | - <u>“Interview a Professional” Paper</u> |
| Friday 11/23 | No Topics This Week – Thanksgiving Break | Happy Thanksgiving! |
| Friday 11/30 | <i>Module 4: My Plan for What’s Next, Part 1</i> | -Begin Working on Portfolio |
| Friday 12/7 | <i>Module 4, Part 2</i> Course Wrap-Up | - <u>“My Developing Career” Portfolio</u> |