

# PSYC\*4870, Course Outline: Fall 2024

## General Information

DUE to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic some courses are being offered virtually and some face to face. **Psychology 4870 and 4880 will be presented in the Face-to-Face format.** The course has a set day, time and location of class.

That means that for this class, lectures, exams, in-class exercises, and in-class quizzes are going to take place face-to-face in the assigned classroom at the designated time.

To prevent the spread of COVID-19, your classroom has been equipped with improved ventilation equipment. University of Guelph **strongly recommends** that you wear a protective mask in class to reduce the risk of catching or spreading COVID-19 and it also **strongly recommends** that all students, faculty, and staff be vaccinated against COVID-19. (These were the guidelines as of July 1<sup>st</sup>, 2022.) However, please see the website listed below for the most recent information on COVID-19 requirements at University of Guelph and what to do if you become ill.

If you develop a cough or any respiratory illness symptoms, according to university guidelines you must wear a properly fitted (medical) mask in all public settings (including in class) for 10 days after the start of your symptoms.

<https://news.uoguelph.ca/covid-19/safety-practices/>

**Course Title:** Honours Thesis I and Honours Thesis II

## **Course Description:**

Students develop their Honours Thesis project across two (normally successive) semesters by working closely with a faculty supervisor. Students take PSYC\*4870 (0.5 credits) in the Fall semester and PSYC\*4880 (1.0 credits) in the Winter semester. The 1.5 credit weighing for the two courses reflects the workload and the standards set for the Honours Thesis project.

The primary goal of PSYC\*4870 is to assist students in preparing a thesis proposal. Much of students' time will be spent doing independent reading, under the supervision of their faculty supervisors, to explore the relevant literature related to their thesis project.

Students will also work with their supervisors to plan their research study(s), which they will present during the fall semester in the form of an oral presentation to the class (these will be graded by the instructor and teaching assistant) and at the end of the semester in the form of a written proposal (graded by supervisor). Students will work at different speeds: some will not start data collection or analysis until January while some will be largely finished with data collection before December. Regardless, students should aim to submit ethics no later than early November as ethics must be submitted before the end of term (pass/fail). All students should be ready to begin data collection or analysis before the Winter semester begins.

Class time will also be devoted to other important topics such as: applying to graduate school, using Mass Testing and the SONA Participant Pool, conducting research ethically, completing an ethics protocol, and learning about helpful writing and presentation tools.

**This course is offered using the Face-to-Face format. The course has set day, time, and location of class.**

**Credit Weight:**

PSYC\*4870 (0.5 credits), PSYC\*4880 (1.0 credits)

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

**Semester Offering:** Fall 2024 and Winter 2025

**Class Schedule and Location:**

Fall: Mondays: 2:30 - 5:20PM

ALEX, 218

**Instructor Information**

Instructor Name: Dr. Shayna Skakoon-Sparling

Instructor Email: [s.sparling@uoguelph.ca](mailto:s.sparling@uoguelph.ca) (please include PSYC 4870 in subject of all emails).

*I will attempt to respond to emails within 48 hours, Monday through Friday. I may respond through an announcement in class or on CourseLink if the answer pertains to the whole class.*

Office location: MacKinnon Extension, room 4016

Office hours: By appointment (virtual or in person)

**GTA Information**

Name: Carson Rumble-Tricker

Email: [crumblet@uoguelph.ca](mailto:crumblet@uoguelph.ca)

Virtual office hours: By appointment

Name: Samantha Joubran

Email: [sjoubran@uoguelph.ca](mailto:sjoubran@uoguelph.ca)

Virtual office hours: By appointment

**Course Content**

**Specific Learning Outcomes:**

- 1) Depth and Breadth of Understanding: Demonstrates knowledge of key concepts in psychology, and integrates that knowledge across disciplinary and sub-disciplinary boundaries.

A successful student will be able to:

- Integrate and use knowledge gained in prior courses on study design, analysis, and content by designing and implementing their own independent research project.

- Conduct a literature review on the topic of the proposed research project by reading and reporting on critical empirical and theoretical work.
  - Identify and delineate major theories and empirical evidence related to the proposed research topic.
- 2) Inquiry and Analysis: A systematic process of exploring issues, objects and works in psychology through the collection and analysis of evidence that result in informed conclusions or judgments.  
A successful student will be able to:
- Integrate and synthesize the existing research literature in order to provide a clear justification/rationale of their own study objectives, methods, and analyses.
- 3) Creativity: The ability to adapt to situations of change, to initiate change and to take on intellectual risks.  
A successful student will be able to:
- Generate and evaluate creative approaches to the study of their own and their colleagues' proposed research topic.
  - Adapt to different situations and emergent challenges in the process of research by generating and evaluating creative solutions to problems and creative ways of investigating topics.
- 4) Information Literacy: The ability to know when there is a need for information, where to locate it and the ability to identify the value and differences of potential resources in a variety of formats.  
A successful student will be able to:
- Locate relevant information and use it to identify gaps in the existing knowledge base and design research questions and hypotheses to address these gaps in a written research proposal and thesis.
- 5) Methodological Literacy: The ability to understand, evaluate, and design appropriate methodologies for rigorous psychological science.  
A successful student will be able to:
- Design a methodology to answer their proposed research questions and test their hypotheses, taking into account the available research populations and contextual circumstances.
- 6) Quantitative Literacy: Includes numeracy, and competence in working with numerical data.  
A successful student will be able to:
- Conduct data collection and analyze data using appropriate quantitative or qualitative methods.
  - Interpret their study's findings; write the results and discussion sections with logical and evidence-based arguments.
- 7) Oral Communication: Includes interpersonal skills, oral (speaking), and active listening as they apply to psychology.  
A successful student will be able to:

- Deliver an oral presentation that integrates and summarizes their research proposal.
- Communicate effectively with other academics in a professional context using a poster presentation of their honours thesis.
- Present information in ways that are readily understandable to people from a variety of psychology backgrounds.
- Actively listen, reflect upon, and respond to questions while acknowledging limitations to one's own knowledge.

8) **Written Communication:** The ability to express one's ideas and summarize theory and research through a variety of writing styles (e.g., American Psychological Association [APA] style, papers, posters).

A successful student will be able to:

- Communicate constructive feedback to peers on the content and delivery of their oral presentations.
- Write a research proposal that includes proposed methodology using APA style (or another, if required by the field of study).
- Write a thesis document using APA style (or another, if required by the field of study).
- Write in a sophisticated scientific manner, clearly conveying the key messages to a target audience.
- Include a breadth of vocabulary appropriate to the discipline of psychology.
- Avoid grammar, spelling, and functional errors.

9) **Ethical Issues in Research:** Includes the understanding and application of how human and animal rights and cultural relativism applies to ethical decision making in the context of research.

A successful student will be able to:

- Design and prepare research ethics forms and obtain ethics approval for their project.
- Understand potential ethical issues with their own research.

10) **Professional Behaviour:** An ability to interact with others in a respectful manner, manage several tasks at once, and prioritize.

A successful student will be able to:

- Negotiate and plan with supervisor for draft submissions and final deadlines.
- Communicate with supervisor and instructor about expectations, research activities, performance, and feedback. Reflect meaningfully on feedback and enact positive change.
- Clearly delineate roles and expectations with other lab members.
- Submit early drafts of the work to supervisor in order manage the work progression.
- Deliver final versions of all assignments according to deadlines and expected quality to supervisor, instructor, and teaching assistant.
- Be respectful of others' points of view and their time in class, meetings, and other professional settings.

**Lecture Content:**

<b>Date</b>	<b>Topics and Activities</b>
Sept 9	Introductions & Discussion of Assigned Reading
Sept 16	Grad School and Alt-Ac Career Options <i>Guest speaker: Jana McDonald, UGuelph Experiential Learning Hub</i>
Sept 23	Applying to Grad School & Scholarships <i>Guest speakers: Emma Truffyn, UGuelph Grad Student Donnelle DiMarco, UGuelph Grad Student Anastasia Mekhael, UGuelph Grad Student Addie Stone, UGuelph Grad Student</i>
Sept 30	Research Ethics <i>Guest speaker: Katelyn Wadleigh, UGuelph REB</i>
Oct 7	How to Deliver Effective Oral Presentations & How to give Constructive Feedback <i>Guest speaker: Nancy Birch, UGuelph Library</i>
Oct 14	<i>No Class – This is a Holiday</i>
Oct 21	How to use the Participant Pool & Writing A Thesis Proposal <i>Guest speakers: Psychology Participant Pool Admin</i>
Oct 28	Oral Presentations
Nov 4	Oral Presentations
Nov 11	Oral Presentations
Nov 18	Oral Presentations
Nov 25	Oral Presentations

**Labs:** none**Seminars:** none**Course Assignments and Tests:**

PSYC\*4870 is Pass/Fail.

PSYC\*4880 is for grade. The components of this final grade involve both work done in the first term (PSYC\*4870) and work done in the second term (PSYC\*4880).

Assignments to be aware of for PSYC\*4870:

- Weekly activity log  
(worth 10% of final grade – evaluated by Supervisor for PSYC\*4880)**

Students will be required to keep a log of all thesis-related activities across both semesters (4879 and 4889). Log entries should record the nature and duration of each activity, as well as important knowledge and skills learned during each activity. Substantive comments about the research process is required. Each entry should not exceed one-page in length. Please discuss expectations with

your supervisor ASAP. Advisors are required to give students feedback about their progress regularly throughout the term and may find it helpful to structure this feedback in relation to the weekly activity log.

**2. 10-min Oral Proposal Presentation  
(worth 15% of final grade - evaluated by Instructor & GTA).**

Starting in October, each student will be required to give an oral proposal presentation to the class, summarizing their planned research project. The purpose of the oral presentations is (a) to help students learn how to present research to an audience of non-specialists and handle a Q&A session, (b) to provide a forum for inquiry and constructive feedback; which is intended to facilitate and enhance the development of their own research project, and (c) for students to develop an appreciation of the diversity of topics being investigated and to foster interests in the broad spectrum of psychological inquiry.

The presentation should include background context for the study, a description of the problem to be investigated, and an account of the research methodology to be employed. A five-minute question period will follow each presentation. All students will be expected to engage in constructive critical discussion around the presentations.

We will hold a class session to prepare students for their presentations. Be sure to upload your PowerPoint presentation to **PEAR** by 1:00pm the day before your presentation (20% of your oral proposal grade is based on evaluation of these slides so ensure timely submission or you will be docked half this grade). Do not submit multiple copies – only the first copy will be accepted.

**\*\*STUDENTS ARE RESPONSIBLE FOR FACILITATING THE ATTENDANCE OF THEIR FACULTY SUPERVISOR\*\***

**3. Constructive Review of Other Presentations  
(worth 3% of final grade – evaluated by Instructor and/or GTA)**

Students will act as co-reviewers of the in-class oral presenters and will provide a constructive feedback review for the students who presented during each oral presentation class. This assignment is designed to give you experience with a critical aspect of the scientific process: peer review and constructive feedback. Students will learn how to provide constructive feedback and how to fill out and submit the constructive feedback reviews.

Constructive feedback reviews of each presenter will be submitted through

**PEAR** (<http://www.uoguelph.ca/peartool/>) within 24 hours following the presentation session. The reviews will be confidential, allowing the reviewers to be blind to the presenters. Once all the blind reviews are submitted, presenters will be able to access the reviews. Students will submit timely, constructive, and complete feedback reviews for each presenter from at least 4 of the 5/6 sessions.

Please note that recordings of oral presentations will NOT be posted online, so students must attend class to observe the presentations and provide meaningful feedback for each presenter. Students are not required to submit reviews for the session in which they present (although they are welcome to do so).

After your own presentation, you will be provided with feedback from your peers.

#### **4. Written Research Proposal (worth 12% of final grade – evaluated by Supervisor)**

Students will submit their written research proposals (to their supervisor) by 4:00pm Friday November 29. Supervisors should submit their grades to the course instructor and TA by 4:00pm Monday December 9.

The proposal should clearly define the research problem and present an appropriate research design and plan for analyses to investigate it. The proposal should clearly show how the proposed research relates to the questions drawn from the critical review of the literature.

Proposals are typically 10-12 pages long (not counting references and appendices); however, the length of your proposal will depend on your specific topic and type of research. Your advisor, the one supervising and grading your thesis and proposal, is the best person to ask about expectations in terms of length.

Before submitting the proposal, you should have delivered a minimum of one draft (typically more) to your supervisor (deadlines to be negotiated with your supervisor) for feedback to improve the final proposal.

Proposals should contain the following sections:

- Introduction
- Proposed research design and methods
- Plan for data analyses
- References
- All study materials in Appendices

**5. Evidence of Ethics Submission  
(required to pass PSYC\*4870 – evaluated by GTA)**

By the last day of Fall semester (before November 29), students must submit evidence of the submission of their study design to the university research ethics board (even if you were not involved in the production of the original protocol) to **dropbox**. A failure to submit ethics by the end of classes will result in a Fail for PSYC\*4870 (and an inability to register for PSYC\*4880). If for any reason, you believe that you will not meet this deadline, contact the course instructor during the month of November or earlier.

<u>Assignment of Test</u>	<u>Due Date</u>	<u>Contribution to Final Grade</u>	<u>Learning Outcomes Assessed</u>
Weekly Activity Log	Due to supervisor every week of semester.	10%	Written Communication, Critical and Creative Thinking, Professional and Ethical Behaviour
Oral Proposal Presentation	One of last 5 classes in the fall term	15%	Critical and Creative Thinking, Literacy, Oral Communication, Professional and Ethical Behaviour
Participation in class activities including providing feedback on presentations	Peer feedback due within 24 hours of presentation sessions	3%	Inquiry and Analysis, Literacy, Oral Communication, Professional and Ethical Behaviour
Written Research Proposal	Friday November 29, 4:00 pm	12%	All learning outcomes

**Additional Notes:**

\*The final reflection paper must be completed to pass the course.

PSYC\*4870 Honours Thesis I GRADE: You will receive a "Pass/Fail" at the end of the first semester. To obtain a passing grade for PSYC\*4870, students must have satisfactorily completed the thesis proposal, presented it in class, have an ethics protocol submitted, and contributed to class discussions of the various proposals. Furthermore, students must have attended scheduled classes, completed the constructive feedback reviews and contributed to class discussion in a meaningful way.



**Final examination date and time:** No final exam

## **Course Resources**

**Required Texts:** none

**Other Resources:**

Peer Evaluation, Assessment and Review (PEAR) Tool:  
<https://peartool.opened.uoguelph.ca/>

See CourseLink for all other course resources.

**Additional Costs:**

There are no additional costs.

## **Course Policies**

### **Grading Policies**

Marks will be docked for late or multiple submissions of the proposal presentation slides. See above for details.

### [Undergraduate Grading Procedures](#)

### **Technical Difficulties**

If we need to conduct presentations online (instead of face-to-face), in the case of technical difficulties during oral presentations, the presentation will take place as long as the class can hear the presenter (i.e., despite the absence of visible video or slides). If presentations need to be conducted online, students will be encouraged to practice using Zoom, especially how to present slides over Zoom, before their presentation. However, we do anticipate presenting in-person (which students should rehearse for).

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

Audio or video 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. Similarly, any material created by the course instructor is intended for those enrolled in this course solely. Under no circumstances are you allowed to disseminate course materials to external parties.

## **University Policies**

### **Disclaimer:**

Please note that the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic may necessitate a revision of the format of course offerings, changes in classroom protocols, and academic schedules.

Any such changes will be announced via CourseLink and/or class email. This includes on-campus scheduling during the semester, mid-terms and final examination schedules. All University-wide decisions will be posted on the COVID-19 website (<https://news.uoguelph.ca/2019-novel-coronavirus-information/>) and circulated by email.

### **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.

Instructors shall not determine if academic misconduct has occurred. This is up to the Associate Dean Academic's office. Instructors shall not assign a grade of zero even if they believe that the student has committed some form of academic misconduct (e.g., copied material from a website like CourseHero) on an assignment or exam.

Instructors can determine if a student has poorly paraphrased and/or improperly cited material and can provide a grade accordingly as long as this is clearly identified as part of the assessment criteria via a rubric or other assessment tools.

The Academic Misconduct Policy is detailed in the Undergraduate Calendar:

[Academic Misconduct Policy](#)

## **University Policy on the Use of AI Technologies**

Students' work must reflect their unique intellectual capacity and demonstrate the application of critical thinking and problem solving. Unauthorized use of AI to complete assessments violates the fundamental intellectual purposes of the University and does not demonstrate student achievement of course learning outcomes.

Submission of materials completed by AI, without permission of the instructor and your supervisor, constitutes an offence under the University's academic misconduct policies, either as a form of plagiarism or the use of unauthorized aids.

Acceptable use of AI should be determined by the course instructor and your supervisor and may vary across disciplines, programs and types of assessments. In setting out course requirements and assessment criteria, the instructor should specify allowable uses of AI, if any, through the course outline and/or the learning management system (e.g., CourseLink). Clarity about the acceptable use of AI is critical for students and instructors. In cases where AI is permitted, students are responsible for appropriately referencing how and to what extent they have used AI in assessments in keeping with University and course requirements.

*\*Please note that the use of AI is not permitted for PSYC\*4870.*

## **Illness**

Medical notes will not normally be required for singular instances of academic consideration, although students may be required to provide supporting documentation for multiple missed assessments or when involving a large part of a course (e.g., final exam or major assignment).

## **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 [Student Accessibility Services](#) as soon as possible.

For more information, contact SAS at 519-824-4120 ext. 54335 or email [accessibility@uoguelph.ca](mailto:accessibility@uoguelph.ca) or the [Student Accessibility Services Website](#)

## **Student Feedback Questionnaire**

These questionnaires (formerly course evaluations) will be available to students during the last 2 weeks of the semester. Students will receive an email directly from the Student Feedback Administration system which will include a direct link to the questionnaire for this course. During this time, when a student goes to login to CourseLink, a reminder will pop-up when a task is available to complete.

## [Student Feedback Questionnaire](#)

### **Drop date**

The last date to drop one-semester courses, without academic penalty, is Friday November 29m 2024. For regulations and procedures for Dropping Courses, see the [Schedule of Dates in the Academic Calendar](#).

Instructors must provide [meaningful and constructive feedback, at minimum 20% of the final course grade, prior to the 40th class day](#). For courses which are of shorter duration, 20% of the final grade must be provided two-thirds of the way through the course.

## [Current Undergraduate Calendar](#)

### **Copies of Assignments**

Keep paper and/or other reliable back-up copies of all out-of-class assignments: you may be asked to resubmit work at any time. You should continually back-up your work to cloud storage or an external device (e.g., a memory key) to ensure your hard work is not lost if lose access to your computer for any reason.

## **Additional Course Information**

Course instructors are allowed to use software to help in detecting plagiarism or unauthorized copying of student assignments. Plagiarism is one of the most common types of academic misconduct on our campus. Plagiarism involves students using the work, ideas and/or the exact wording of other people or sources without giving proper credit to others for the work, ideas and/or words in their papers. Students can unintentionally commit misconduct because they do not know how to reference outside sources properly or because they don't check their work carefully enough before handing it in. 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.

In this course, your instructor may be using Turnitin.com to detect possible plagiarism, unauthorized collaboration or copying as part of the ongoing efforts to prevent plagiarism in the College of Social and Applied Human Sciences.

A major benefit of using Turnitin is that students will be able to educate and empower themselves in preventing misconduct. In this course, you may screen your own assignments through Turnitin as many times as you wish before the due date. You will be able to see and print reports that show you exactly where you have properly and improperly referenced the outside sources and materials in your assignment.

**A Note on The Grading of This Course:**

*Grades and other evaluations reflect your performance in a course. In other words, your mark is something that you earn based on your effort as well as the quality of your work; it is not something assigned to you at random by the instructor, your TA, or your supervisor. Sometimes you can work really hard on an assignment or test and still receive a grade lower than what you hoped for. Similarly, I could try really hard to knit a sweater and the result may still not fit the wearer the way I hoped it would, no matter the amount of time or effort I felt I had expended.*

*Your TA, your supervisor, and I will take time to carefully evaluate the performance of all our students throughout the course (as noted above). If you feel that an error has been made in the grading of an assignment, I encourage you to raise your concerns with us; however, I will ask that you be able to present strong evidence of a grading error if you do so. Importantly, if you are unclear about the value of an assignment or exam for any course, please take time to clarify with your instructor and/or your TAs well before the due date of an assignment and well before the end of the semester.*