Psychology 492: Research Seminar, Fall 2017

Topic: “Brain Fitness Training”: Fact or Fad  MWF Rankin 207 10:40 – 12:00

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Course Description: In this course, students conduct systematic empirical research in the context of a seminar coordinated by a faculty member. Seminar discussion is focused upon a current topic and is largely confined to asking researchable questions, exploring the feasibility of student-generated research proposals, and evaluating student research reports (4 credits).

Prerequisites: PSY101, 205 and 307 or permission of the instructor.

Readings: Journal articles selected by instructor and students.
Jane Hart’s Technology Learning Tools http://c4lpt.co.uk/top100tools/

Course Objectives: By the end of this course you will:

1) demonstrate greater scientific literacy through primary literature discussion and research presentations.
2) have increased proficiency with data collection procedures and learning tools.
3) gain proficiency in experimental design and data analysis.
4) be better able to present research to different types of audiences.
5) have a better first-hand understanding of the research process and the writing of grant proposals.
6) have increased skills in all the areas mentioned in my base line pre-Day one Survey Monkey Survey https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/PSY492Fall17

Assessments:

I. Attendance and Participation (100 points). Students are expected to attend all classes prepared, to participate in all discussions, to complete all assignments in timely fashion, and to keep a journal which records their course-related activity. What have you learned? What would you like to learn more about? You might include in your research journal reactions to what has occurred in class, research ideas, suggestions for changes in the class that will improve learning, and thoughts engendered by readings or by interactions with classmates. I shall try to provide individualized written feedback at least every two weeks.
II. **Exams: (100 points)** There will be two examinations—one assessing your understanding of the methodological, statistical, and material pertinent to the course’s research topic and the other focusing on factual knowledge about memory and brain fitness training.

III. **Journal article Presentations and Discussion (100 points)** You will select, present, and lead a class discussion on a topic from the “Brain Power” Magazine I gave you or the Rabin 2017 Memory White Paper.

IV. **Research Dissemination Assignments: (300 points)** Working with classmates you will prepare three types of reports to disseminate your learning. This might be a blog piece using WordPress, a book using CreateSpace, a podcast or screencast, an electronic journal or newsletter or something created using and showcasing a Technology Learning Tool identified by Jane Hart. Alternatively, you may follow a more traditional format below:

A) A “news release” for a popular audience  
B) A scientific poster for an academic audience  
C) A scientific presentation systematically presenting all aspects of your research (e.g. a grant proposal)

**Course Grade: (Based on 600 Total Points)**

- A = 558 and above  
- AB = 540 to 557  
- B = 498 to 539  
- BC = 480 to 497  
- C = 420 to 479  
- D = 360 to 419  
- F = Below 360

**Accommodation for Disabilities** – Students with documented disabilities who may need accommodations, or any student considering obtaining documentation should make an appointment with Ms. Marty Bledsoe, Director of Services for Students with Disabilities, no later than the first week of class. She can be reached by calling 524-7335 or contacting her via e-mail at mbledsoe@carrollu.edu.

**Academic Support** – The Learning Commons, located in the bottom floor of the Library, offers tutoring, writing assistance, and study skills assistance as well as group study rooms and places to study. For more information, go to: http://www.carrollu.edu/Learningcommons/.
Writing Center – The Carroll University Writing Center, located in the library Learning Commons, is open Sunday through Friday. Writing Assistants are available either by appointment or on a drop in basis. Appointments are thirty minutes long, and are free to all students. To schedule an appointment, use LCOline, which is accessible through the student portal or by visiting the webpage:

http://www.carrollu.edu/learningcommons/writingcenter.asp?nav=5790

Modifications to the syllabus – The instructor and Carroll University reserve the right to modify, amend, or change the syllabus (course requirements, grading policy, etc.) as the curriculum and/or program require(s).

Statement on Academic Integrity – The Carroll University Academic Integrity Policy is located in your student handbook. Please familiarize yourself with it. If a student is found in violation of the Carroll University Academic Integrity Policy, the instructor reserves the right to fail the student on the assignment/exam or even FAIL the student in the course.

Approximate Weekly Schedule

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week of</th>
<th>What do you know? What can you do? What have you forgotten? What can you contribute?</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>September 8</td>
<td>Introduction to Technology Learning Tools</td>
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<tr>
<td>September 11</td>
<td>How to Read Deeply Published Journal Articles</td>
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<tr>
<td>September 18</td>
<td>Review of Statistics and Experimental Design</td>
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<tr>
<td>September 25</td>
<td>Do “Brain Fitness Programs Work?”</td>
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<td>September 29</td>
<td>Visit by Dr. Michelle Braun, author of The High Octane Brain</td>
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<tr>
<td>October 2</td>
<td>Top Technology Tools Revisited</td>
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<tr>
<td>October 9</td>
<td>Formalized Research Assignments Made</td>
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<tr>
<td>October 16</td>
<td>No Class Monday: Fall Break</td>
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<tr>
<td>Friday, October 27:</td>
<td>Proof of Mastery of Statistics and Experimental Design</td>
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<tr>
<td>Friday November 10:</td>
<td>Proof of Mastery of Knowledge about Memory and Brain Fitness Training</td>
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December 04: Show and Tell: Presentations

Wednesday, December 13: All written work due

If there is a need, we shall meet during the scheduled final exam period to wrap things up, celebrate, or ruminate.