

## **Proposal for Independent Research (PSCH 399): Project for Highest Departmental Distinction in Psychology**

All students planning to graduate with Highest Departmental Distinction in Psychology must complete PSCH 399: Independent Research, under the supervision of a faculty advisor. See the college catalog for specific requirements for graduating with Highest Distinction. This document serves as the proposal for the PSCH 399 project and the resulting paper. This proposal must be approved by the Faculty Advisor, and submitted to the Office of Undergraduate Advising to be approved by the Director of Undergraduate Studies. The student's final paper for the independent research must be reviewed and accepted by the Departmental Reading Committee that consists of the Faculty Advisor, the Director of Undergraduate Studies, and an additional faculty reader.

PSCH 399: Independent Research is a highly intensive, independent research project. The project may take a number of forms, including the following: (a) conducting new analyses on data previously collected by the Faculty Advisor\*; (b) crafting a comprehensive critical review of the literature on a chosen topic; (c) designing a new study and collecting your own data\*. The final paper must include a rationale for the study or review of the literature; description of research methods (or methodology of the literature review), presentation of the results, and a discussion of interpretation of the findings and implications for future research. This paper must be completed in APA style.. Beyond filling catalog prerequisites for the course, students often choose one of three specific paths to completion of PSCH 399:

- 1) Many students enroll in at least one semester of \*\*PSCH 396: Directed Research in preparation for PSCH 399. The faculty member who supervises your work for PSCH 396 would in this case be an ideal option for your Faculty Advisor for completion of PSCH 399. The Faculty Advisor may have data available to you that you may want to use and conduct additional analyses for your PSCH 399 project. Most students following this path elect PSCH 399 only in their final semester.
- 2) Some student may choose to enroll in \*\*PSCH 397: Readings in Psychology in preparation for PSCH 399. The faculty member with whom you enroll in PSCH 397 would in this case be an ideal option for your Faculty Advisor for completion of PSCH 399. PSCH 397 provides an opportunity to conduct readings or a review of the literature with guidance of a faculty member on a topic of interest to you. These readings can be excellent preparation for your PSCH 399 project. Most students following this path elect PSCH 399 only in their final semester.
- 3) Some students choose to elect PSCH 399 without PSCH 396 or 397 as preparation Because the scope necessary to complete a project that will earn credit in PSCH 399, some students may wish to elect \*\*PSCH 399 for each of their last two semesters. Students who are able to complete the project in only one semester would enroll in PSCH 399 only during their final semester.

It is highly recommended that students set a timeline for completion of said paper that allows for revisions. In order to be read by all members of your reading committee in time for grades to be updated, the FINAL paper should be submitted to each reader no later than the last Friday of classes in the final semester in which PSCH 399 is elected.

\*Please note that conducting analyses or collecting new data involving human subjects must go through appropriate IRB protocols before any data are collected or analyses performed. This can be a time-consuming process, so it is recommended that students be proactive in working with their Faculty Advisor to learn how to ensure that their research activities are covered by new or existing IRB protocols. Students are strongly encouraged to complete online IRB training prior to enrolling in PSCH 399.

\*\*Note that students are limited to 8 credits maximum for research in PSCH 396, 397, and 399 combined.

Please complete and submit the application on the back of this page.

**Student Name:** \_\_\_\_\_ **UIN:** \_\_\_\_\_

**UIC E-mail address:** \_\_\_\_\_

Student Consent: *I have read the front of this application, and understand the requirements for successful completion of PSCH 399.*

**Student Signature:** \_\_\_\_\_

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Reading Committee (note - The faculty advisor should be affiliated with the Department of Psychology.):

**Faculty Advisor (print):** \_\_\_\_\_

**Additional Faculty Reader (print):** \_\_\_\_\_

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Proposal Summary:

**\*\* Please attach a brief (1 page) summary of the project that will be completed. \*\***

The proposal should include the following:

- Project Title
- Background – a brief summary of the general topic and significance of the proposed project
- Approach – including brief descriptions of the methods and/or scope of literature
- Description of the final paper to be independently produced by the student

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Faculty Consent: *I have read the front of this application, and understand the requirements for my student advisee to successfully complete PSCH 399. I have furthermore read and approved the attached proposal for PSCH 399 credit.*

**Faculty Advisor Signature:** \_\_\_\_\_

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Undergraduate Psychology Advisor and Director of Undergraduate Studies Consent: *I have read and approved the attached proposal for PSCH 399 credit.*

**Undergraduate Psychology Advisor Signature:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Director of Undergraduate Studies Signature:** \_\_\_\_\_

S. Bibiana Adames, Ph.D.

**This proposal is due to a PSCH Advisor in 1070/1074 BSB  
by Wednesday, September 6<sup>th</sup> at 4:00PM.**