

# **The Honours Thesis**

**PSY4276 - PSY4676**

**School of Psychology**

**Hélène Plamondon**

**Coordinator**

**Université d'Ottawa – University of Ottawa**



---

**l' Université d' Ottawa / University of Ottawa**

# Plan

- ❑ Objectives of the program
- ❑ The coordination of PSY 4276
- ❑ The main events for the year
- ❑ How to find a supervisor
- ❑ The evaluation and the Prizes
- ❑ The conferences



# Objectives of the program

- **From the lectures in class to the lab:**
  - Learn to elaborate a research project in psychology (learning by doing)
  - Test your resources and your capacities
- **Preparation for graduate studies**
  - You are supervised by a researcher
  - You orally present your project & prepare a poster
  - You write a thesis on your research activities



# **The Honours BA/BSc without a thesis**

- **Why 2 options?**
  - **Better use of the School's resources**
  - **Better match with the needs of the students**
- **The option without a thesis:**
  - **2 more courses at the PSY 4000 level**





# Which one should I choose?

- The option ‘without a thesis’ may be for you if:
  - You have no interest for research in psychology
  - Your career choices do not involve research activities
  - You do not have the required average (minimum 8.0)
  - You do not wish to complete a postgraduate degree in psychology
- The option ‘with a thesis’ may be for you if:
  - Your career choice will require research skills
  - You want to complete a post-graduate degree (most of Canadian Universities require experience in research)
  - You meet all the requirements and you want to keep your options open



# **Some advantages of the thesis**

- Learn more about how to conduct research project in psychology**
- You will identify more clearly your research interests**
- Presentation at conferences and submission of a paper for publication**
- Your letter of references may more clearly reflect your skills and capacities**
- Meet an interesting challenge: Make a first contribution to science**



# **The coordination of PSY 4276**

- Services: consultation, information sessions on thesis, conflict management**
- Special events: information sessions on Scholarships, Graduate Studies, the Annual Honours Conference, the Annual Ontario Universities Conference**
- Evaluation of papers**
- Management of the course**



# Events: September to December

- Information sessions in September
  - Information session on scholarships (mid-September)
  - Meetings with the Program Directors (experimental and clinical)
  - Information session on ethics in research
  - Meeting with the graduate students
  
- Activity in October
  - Information session on progress report (mid-October)
  - Submission of a progress report and oral presentation (15 min) of your project (end of Oct.)



# Events: January to April

- ❑ Submission of a draft of Intro and Method sections (end of January)
- ❑ Submission of an abstract for the Honours conference (beginning of March)
- ❑ The Honours Thesis Conference: Oral presentation or poster presentation (end of March)
- ❑ Submission of your paper (early April)
- ❑ Review and evaluation of the paper (April and May)
- ❑ The Ontario Universities Honours Conference
- ❑ Final grades and the selection of the winners for the prizes





# How to find a supervisor

- **Who are they?**
  - Regular professors
  - Adjuncts professors
  - Clinical professors
  - Total: ([approx. 65] – Professors on academic leave)
- **How to choose a supervisor?**
  - What are your own interests? (in more than one domain)
  - Identify supervisors that match your interests
  - Look for information on supervisors
  - Contact the supervisors to find out what they are working on and if you can work with them



# **When should I look for a supervisor**

- [?] You can start your search for a supervisor at the beginning of May**
- [?] Official list of supervisors is available prior to when enrollment begins.**



# Things you should consider

- **The type of supervisor that suits you**
  - What are you expecting?
  - Supervisor style: Autonomy supportive, structured,...
- **Try to learn about the research laboratory**
- **Things to do**
  - Clarify your expectations
  - Establish a structure and clear deadlines
  - Keep your supervisor informed
- **When should the research begin?**





# **To do list: end of September**

- Choice of a supervisor**
- Choice of a research topic**
- The literature review**
- Understanding the theoretical framework and the hypotheses, the research method: design, measures, procedures and planification**
- Preparation of questionnaires, forms, ethics, recruitment etc.**
- Scholarships forms (if you apply for graduate studies - check for information sessions)**



# **The Annual Honors Thesis Conference**

- **This is the celebration of several months of work**
- **The 2 main activities:**
  - **Morning: Oral presentations (4) and guest speaker**
  - **Afternoon: Presentation of posters**
- **The activities are open to the public**



# **The review of the papers and Prizes**

- **Review and evaluation of your paper**
  - Your supervisor proposes a grade
  - A reviewer proposes a grade
  - The coordinator examines both and determines the grade
- **Two Prizes of \$500**
  - Best thesis in English PSY4276
  - Meilleure thèse en français PSY4676
  - Selected by a committee of professors



# **The Ontario Universities Honors Thesis Conference**

- First Friday of May**
- Location: Different university every year**
- Participants: Honours Students**
- Communication: English and French**



# What is Ethics?

## | Definition:

- the discipline dealing with what is good and bad and with moral duty and obligation
- the principles of conduct governing an individual or a group
- a set of moral issues or aspects (as rightness)

(Merriam Webster)





# What Needs to be Submitted

**Any research project involving human subjects/participants, including :**

- Individual and Group Interviews (in person, by phone)
- Surveys, questionnaires (in person, by mail, online)
- Experiments (for ex. participant observation, running on a treadmill, cognitive testing, reading tasks, brain scans, etc.)

