PSY 622: Independent Study in Psychology

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An independent study is based on a faculty and student’s mutual interest in an area of psychological inquiry as well as an engaging opportunity to collaborate on a specific research project in this area. The course outcomes for an independent study in psychology are consistent with the 2013 APA Guidelines for the Undergraduate Psychology Major: Version 2.0 (http://www.apa.org/ed/precollege/about/psymajor-guidelines.pdf) as stated below:

Goal 1: Knowledge Base in Psychology
Students should demonstrate fundamental knowledge and comprehension of the major concepts, theoretical perspectives, historical trends, and empirical findings to discuss how psychological principles apply to behavioral problems. (In PSY 622, students will review and discuss the relevant academic literature during weekly meetings.)

Goal 2: Scientific Inquiry and Critical Thinking
The skills in this domain involve the development of scientific reasoning and problem solving, including effective research methods. (In PSY 622, students will engage in empirical quantitative and/or qualitative research.)

Goal 3: Ethical and Social Responsibility in a Diverse World.
The skills in this domain involve the development of ethically and socially responsible behaviors for professional and personal settings in a landscape that involves increasing diversity. (In PSY 622, students will demonstrate an understanding of the ethical issues related to a particular domain(s) of psychological research.)

Goal 4: Communication
Students should demonstrate competence in writing and in oral and interpersonal communication skills. (In PSY 622, students will participate in team research meetings, discuss their findings, and write a final paper.)

Goal 5: Professional Development
The emphasis in this goal is on application of psychology-specific content and skills, effective self-reflection, project-management skills, teamwork skills, and career preparation. (In PSY 622, students will work as a research team and gain experience conducting cross-cultural research with faculty and students from Israel.)

Specifically, students will do the following:

- Meet weekly to discuss research.
- Review the academic literature and develop an annotated bibliography.
- Write and submit an IRB proposal for ethical review as needed to conduct research.
- Develop expertise in both quantitative and qualitative research.
- Acquire hands-on experience conducting cross-cultural research.
- Demonstrate an understanding of Consensual Qualitative Research (CQR).
- Engage in an active research project.
- Participate in a research team comprised of faculty and students in the U.S. and Israel.

The final grade is based on the following: 1) active participation and contribution to the research team (40%), 2) annotated bibliography and journal (20%), 3) data collection and analysis of findings (20%), and 4) a final reflection paper (20%).