COURSE DESCRIPTION: Our overall goal this semester is to identify a relevant and novel question in the field of clinical psychology that can be completed during a 1-2 semester capstone. Each week, we will become increasingly focused on identifying and designing your capstone project. Seminar is an opportunity for you to discuss your ideas with your peers, and to enhance your project development.

COURSE OBJECTIVES:

1) To identify a topic of interest for experimentation within the scientific literature
2) To mold this topic into an original, interesting, and manageable capstone thesis question/project
3) To critically review and evaluate the scientific literature relevant to our project on an ongoing basis
4) To identify supplies and materials needed for the completion of your project
5) To formulate a testable hypothesis with appropriate controls
6) If necessary, to design and complete pilot testing that will be useful toward establishing the feasibility of your planned study
7) To refine your topic based on the literature, peer and advisor input, and pilot testing
8) To be able to assess and provide critical, scientifically-informed, and beneficial feedback to your classmates on their capstone projects

COURSE MATERIALS: These will be generated over the course of the class and mainly involve scientific articles. I will present articles for discussion that are relevant to designing a project overall, but also to your specific projects. I will expect you to do the same. Some of these articles will be discussed in one-on-one meetings; others will be discussed in a group setting. You will also be responsible for compiling articles of your own that are relevant to your research project (5 per week throughout the term).

COURSE GRADING: The grading will be based on your preparation for, and participation in, the seminar meetings as well as the quality of your verbal and written presentations of your selected paper and proposal during and at the end of the semester. Specifically, grades will be based on the following:
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignment</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Reference List Evaluation</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>Reference Summary</td>
<td>10</td>
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<tr>
<td>Article Presentation</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>Project Idea Presentation</td>
<td>30</td>
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<tr>
<td>Feedback for your peers</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>Seminar Attendance &amp; Participation</td>
<td>130</td>
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<tr>
<td>Final Paper</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>Final Presentation</td>
<td>50</td>
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<td>Paper for Consideration</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>Three Possible Topics</td>
<td>10</td>
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<tr>
<td>Working Thesis Statement</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>Outline of Introduction</td>
<td>10</td>
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<td>Draft of Introduction</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>Draft of Design</td>
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<td>Draft of Methods</td>
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<td>Supplies List and Budget</td>
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<td>Real or Mock Data</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>Draft of Proposal</td>
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**COURSE EVALUATION:** Your total points out of 500 will be converted to a percentage, which corresponds to a letter grade as follows:

- A 93-100
- B- 83-86
- C 73-76
- D 63-66
- A- 90-92
- B 80-82
- C- 70-72
- D- 60-62
- B+ 87-89
- C+ 77-79
- D+ 67-69
- F Below 60

**COURSE ASSIGNMENTS:**

1) **Reference List Evaluation:** At a random point in the semester, I will check your reference list. You should add five articles per week and track which articles were generated on a given week in a word document or PDF. This should be brought to every meeting. I should not be able to easily find references that are relevant to your topic that are not on your list.

2) **Reference Summary:** To ensure that you are reading your references and not simply adding them to your list, I will ask you to give a brief summary of a randomly selected reference on your list. You will have two chances. This means that you can ask me to select a second article if you are not comfortable summarizing the first one I chose.

3) **Article Presentation:** Provide an article relevant to your capstone project to the class and give an 8-10-minute summary of that article to the group, including how it is relevant to your project, and answer questions.

4) **Project Idea Presentation:** Provide a PowerPoint presentation with a summary of the research that forms the basis of your question, with details regarding your current experimental plans and design. This should be 8-10 minutes.

5) **Feedback for your peers:** You must provide feedback to your peers throughout the semester. This includes feedback on project ideas, paper presentations, proposal outline and presentation, etc.

6) **Seminar Attendance Participation:** Attendance and contributions throughout the semester will be monitored. There are 13 group and 13 one-on-one meetings, so each meeting will be worth 5 points. If you need to miss a meeting, you need to have a valid
reason and inform me in advance. If we MUTUALLY agree that your time would be better spent on pilot testing, revisions, etc., then I am open to not meeting.

7) **Final Paper and Presentation:** The end goal of the semester is to have a polished proposal in written form using APA format with a clear goal and plan for your project, that will also be presented to the group. Your paper MUST include a supplies list to be ordered for the fall.

8) **Additional Assignments:** There are additional 10-point assignments that you should bring to class including: a paper related to a possible area of interest, 3 possible capstone topics, a working thesis statement, an outline of your Introduction, a draft of your Introduction, a draft of your experimental design, a draft of your Methods, a supplies list and budget, real or mock data, and a draft of your proposal. The details for these will be discussed in class.

**COURSE POLICIES:**

**Attendance:** Attendance in this course is incredibly important given that it will be highly interactive and rely heavily on your input. We will devote a great deal of class time to updates on projects, working through design, literature, and paper and presentation format together, and will review paper drafts and presentation practice. As such, attendance with be tracked and will impact your grade.

**Late Policy for Assignments:** Assignments are due by the end of each class period noted in the syllabus. I will accept assignments late, however there will be a penalty. For every 24 hours after the time an assignment is due, you will lose 20% of your grade. This begins with the end of each class period.

**Academic Integrity:** You are expected to comply with Westminster College’s policy on Academic Integrity (see your Student Handbook). If you are suspected of violating this obligation on any assignment, draft, or presentation, you will receive a zero for that assignment. If you are suspected of plagiarizing any portion of your thesis or fabricating data, you will fail this course. NO second chances, NO exceptions. Ignorance is NOT an excuse – It is YOUR responsibility to become informed of these regulations. Be sure you know what plagiarism is and how to avoid it.

**Accessibility Statement:** Westminster College actively strives for the full inclusion of all of our students. Students with disabilities who require access solutions for environmental or curricular barriers should contact Faith Craig, Director of Disability Support Services, located in 209 Thompson-Clark Hall. Phone: 724-946-7192.

**Email:** I will be communicating with the class via email. You should ensure access to your Westminster College email account regularly; **this is the only email address that I will use to communicate with you.**
| ALL WEEKS | Topics always open for discussion:  
- Training and equipment needs  
- Reference list  
- Pilot data, interpreting results  
- Requesting help with project idea | Standing Assignment Due Each Week:  
- Add 5 references to your reference list (eliminate irrelevant sources as you go)  
- Update on progress |
|-----------|---------------------------------------------------------------|
| Week 1 (1/22) | Review syllabus  
Feasibility: ideas and what’s available  
Finalize meeting times  
Finding and reading scientific literature  
Peer review | (Seminar) Bring a paper that you have read that you are considering (10pts) |
| Week 2 (1/29) | Possible topics and paradigms | (Seminar) Bring 3 possible research questions relevant to your topic that could serve as projects for peer review (10pts) |
| Week 3 (2/5) | Finalizing topics | (Seminar) Bring a working thesis statement (10pts) |
| Week 4 (2/12) | Thesis Statement | (Seminar) Bring a working thesis statement (10pts) |
| Week 5 (2/19) | Introductions | (Individual) Bring an outline of your Introduction (10pts)  
(Seminar) Paper Presentation 1 (provide to class by Friday 2/16, 20pts) |
| Week 6 (2/26) | Peer Review of Introductions | (Seminar) Draft of Introduction (4-6 pages, please provide to class by Friday 2/23, 10pts) |
| Week 7 (3/12) | Experimental design: feasibility, control, confounds, etc. | (Individual) Bring ideas for your experimental design (10pts)  
(Seminar) Paper Presentation 2 (provide to class by 3/9, 20pts) |
| Week 8 (3/19) | Project idea presentations | |
| Week 9 (3/26) | Peer review of methods | (Seminar) Bring a draft of Methods (10pts) |
| Week 10 (4/3) | Logistics | (Seminar) Bring a detailed supplies list and budget (10pts) |
| Week 11 (4/9) | Catch-Up: Progress, documents | |
| Week 12 (4/16) | Peer review of data analysis: Results, graphs, tables, figures | (Seminar) Bring print-outs of mock dataset with a draft of results, sample figures and figure legends to seminar (10pts) |
| Week 13 (4/23) | Peer review of proposals | (Seminar) Proposal (provide draft to the class by 4/18) |
| Week 14 (4/30) | Presentations  
Prep for summer break | Final Proposal due to Dr. Rhodes |

Note: This is a suggested schedule. While we need to address each of these topics, the class’ needs will be appropriately weighed in determining how much time we spend on each.