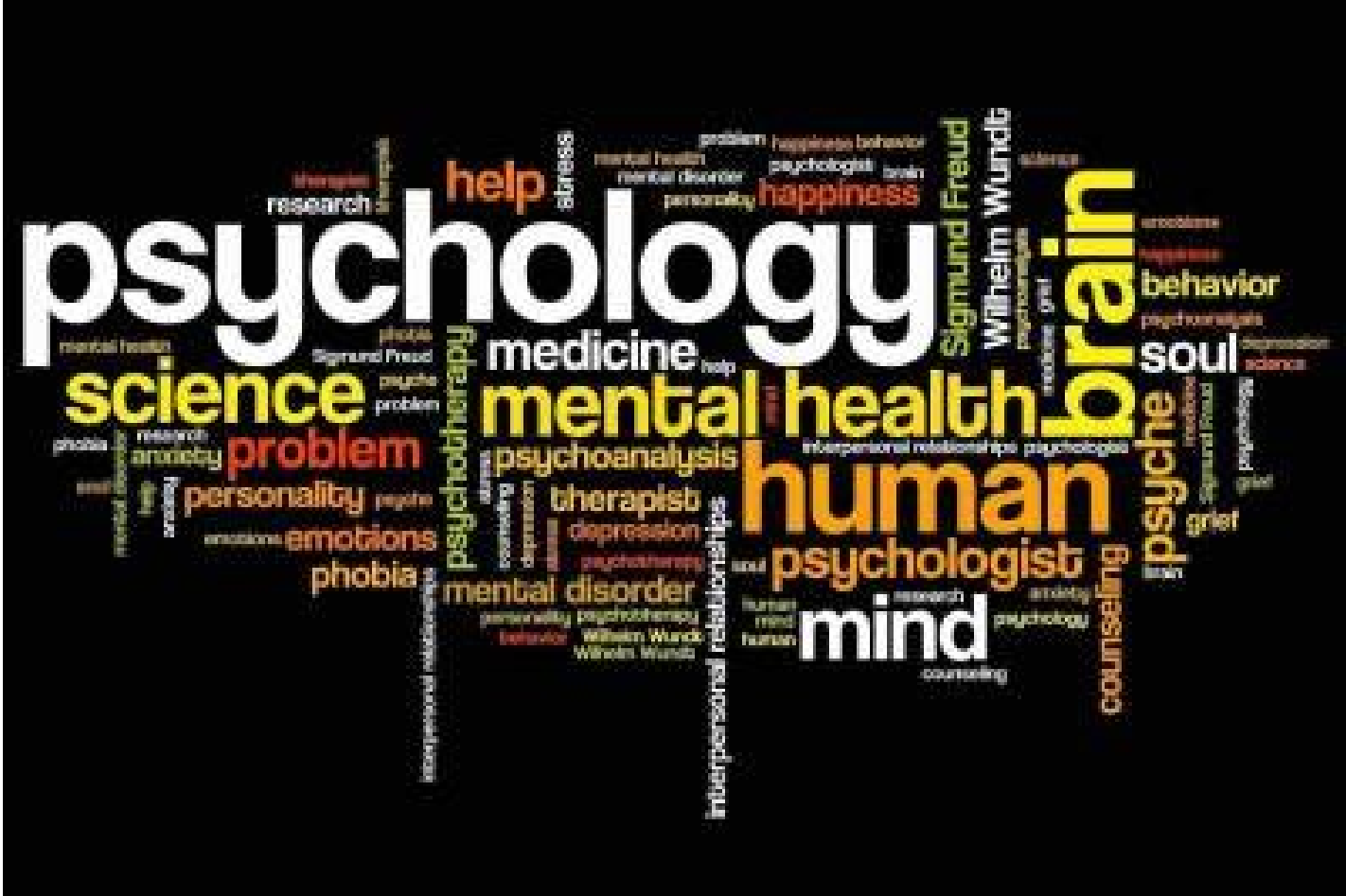


Psychology Dissertations 2018-2019



Year 4 – Important Contacts

Course Organiser:

Dr Elena Gherri

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Teaching Coordinator:

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Room G10 (7GS)

Teaching Office:

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Year 4 – Single Honours

- **Three option** courses (20 credits each)
 - Some options assessed by exam in December or May
 - Some courses assessed in other ways
 - Automatic wait list (for everyone, not just single Hons)
- **Tutorial Course** (10 credits)
 - Small group teaching in blocks 2 and 3
 - Assessment through **1000-word written work OR PowerPoint presentation OR poster at end of each block**
- **General paper** (10 credits)
- **Dissertation** (40 credits)

Year 4 – Joint Honours

- 2 option courses (20 credits each)
- Joint honours students don't do general paper.
- Joint honours students usually choose to do dissertation in psychology (needed for BPS accreditation)
- For BPS accreditation, you need to make sure that your courses across years 3 and 4 cover the 5 BPS core areas:
 - Social, developmental, cognitive, differential, biological
 - also Honours level Methodology

The dissertation component

- A large piece of work (worth 40 credits)
- A piece of *original research*
- Students typically start in September of Y4 (sometimes before, sometimes a little after)
- Students usually work in pairs
- Dissertation (max 8,000 words) is submitted at the end of March

What does “original research” mean?

- A new contribution to knowledge
- Methods should be of professional level
- In many cases, revised versions of dissertation reports have been published, in collaboration with supervisor
- Students have presented findings at conferences

Need for realistic project

- The project needs to be do-able within the time constraints (i.e. 6 months, with all your other courses)
- Some types of project would be unrealistic even if we had expertise and equipment available (e.g. fMRI)
- Can be a component of a larger project

The role of the supervisor

- Your supervisor needs to have enough expertise in the topic and/or methods to be happy to supervise
- “Expertise” means:
 - They know the state of the field (e.g. what’s been done, what the new questions are)
 - They know the details of the method
 - They know what would be realistic

Resources available

- Labs, equipment, etc.
- The department doesn't have the resources to provide funding for every dissertation project
- Usually, no need for participant payment:
 - _ Year 1 subject pool
 - _ Friends
 - _ Each other...
- Occasionally, if funds are needed (e.g. special populations) – may come from supervisor's research funding

The nature of the topics

- The available topics inevitably reflect the expertise of the available supervisors
- Supervisors will be able to help you to produce a professional piece of work
- You can also propose your own topic, but you need to find a member of staff willing to supervise
- List of topics is in the “What’s New” section of the Year 3 online handbook (also in email from the Teaching office, March 20)

The selection system

- A fixed deadline to submit ranked list of supervisor choices: 4pm, Friday April 26
- You have approximately one month to contact potential supervisors
- No firm allocations will be made before deadline
- No first-come first-served system!!

In more detail

- Once you have contacted potential supervisors, you make a ranked list of 8 supervisors (1st choice – 8th choice)
- Each supervisor has a maximum number of possible students (usually 6-8)
- We try our best to allocate you to your preferred choices

In more detail (cont'd)

- If a supervisor has more than the max. number selecting him/her as 1st choice, then he/she can select the students he/she wants to work with
- This is to allow staff and students who have discussed good ideas for projects can work together
- This is why it's important to TALK to your preferred supervisor(s)!!!
- Do it now, at the event after this presentation
- Or contact them and arrange to meet/Skype

Joint projects

- Some topics are offered as joint projects supervised by two members of staff
- If you want to do a joint project, meet with both members of staff, and choose the person you want to be most involved with
- Rank that person as 1st on your list

How to submit the rankings

- Submit them via the web form by 4pm on April 26
- Link to online form in “What’s New” in the Year 3 online handbook (also in email from Kasia)
- The topic list is also in the online handbook
- At the event downstairs:
 - Talk to potential supervisors
 - Start with those you’d most prefer – not all can stay for the whole thing!!

Any questions?