PSYC 401
Fall 2019

MWF 10:50—11:50am
OLIN-RICE 370

# Directed Research in Psychology

## SOCIAL IDENTITIES EDITION

This is your chance to conduct your own psychological research! You will complete all phases of an empirical project: designing and running a study, analyzing the data, writing a journal-style manuscript, and presenting your project to other scientists. The course will be challenging. You will submit several drafts of your work, modify your writing in response to feedback, and carry out many different tasks in a short period of time. The course will also be highly fulfilling. This is the capstone of your education in psychology! You will synthesize your knowledge from previous psychology courses and execute a project of your own design. It will be an invaluable experience upon which to draw in your future endeavors, whether as a producer or consumer of research.

## YOUR INSTRUCTOR


**Cari Gillen-O'Neel**

Olin-Rice 322

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*You may call me Cari (pronounced like "carry"). If you prefer to be more formal, Dr. Gillen-O'Neel or Professor Gillen-O'Neel are also ok with me. For pronouns, I use she/her/hers. Please tell me your name and pronouns!*

## COURSE SCHEDULE

Although our class is officially scheduled to meet on Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays from 10:50-11:50, **we will only meet as a group on Mondays and Wednesdays**. During these group meetings, we will often spend time working, so always bring whatever materials you need to make good use of this time (e.g., laptops, articles, etc.). **On Fridays (unless noted otherwise), I will meet with each of you individually in my office.** See the last page of the syllabus for a full schedule, including assignment deadlines. Know, however, that this schedule is tentative and may be modified throughout the semester, depending on the needs of the class.

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## PRESENTATING A POSTER

Psychology research conferences and poster sessions are essentially "grown-up science fairs". You will stand next to a poster that conveys the main ideas of your research, and fellow scientists will talk to you and ask you questions about your work. This experience may sound stressful, but you will have several opportunities to practice your presentation and get feedback. Public presentation of research is an important aspect of scientific discovery, and it will be particularly rewarding to share your hard work and new knowledge in a public forum!

## SAVE THE DATES

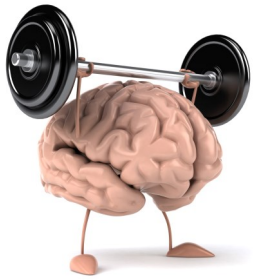
You will present a poster of your research twice:

- First, at the psychology capstone poster session, which will be held from in the **Smail Gallery from 4:30 - 6:00 on Wednesday December 11**.
- Second, at the Minnesota Undergraduate Psychology Conference (MUPC), which will be held at **Macalester College on Saturday May 2.**

These are essential components of the Psychology major, and they are required for graduation. Note that attendance at these sessions is required and cannot be replaced with forgiveness tokens (see page 4).

## GRADING PHILOSOPHY

I love helping students learn about psychology and develop as thinkers, researchers, and writers. Too often, however, grading gets in the way of these goals. In fact, grades can actually inhibit learning, particularly deep learning of material (Rust, 2002). For writing in particular, grades can shut down the process of development—students who earn low grades may give up out of frustration, and students who earn high grades may think that there is no room for improvement. Everyone can work to become a better thinker and writer (me too!), and grading along the way often limits our progress. At the same time, there is a place for grades in the college classroom. In this class, therefore, we will take a somewhat different approach to assessment and grades—a system called "Contract for B."

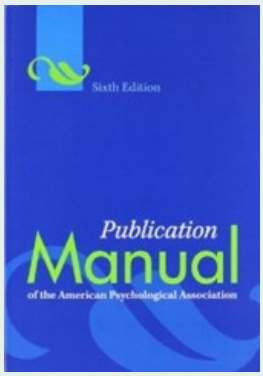


### REQUIRED READING

Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association, 6th edition

by: APA (2009)

ISBN: 978-1433805615




## CONTRACT FOR B

Throughout the term, I will assess your work and give you a lot of feedback. However, I will only grade your final paper. This will allow me to be your mentor without grades getting in the way. I do not expect your work to be perfect, but I do expect you to meet the basic requirements of each assignment and to work hard to improve. Staying on contract requires:

**Attendance**: Be present (and on time) for all class sessions and conferences. Arriving late or leaving early = $^1/_3$ of an absence.

**Preparation and Engagement**: Be fully prepared for all class sessions and conferences, and be actively and appropriately engaged. In general, be a productive member of our community.

**Completing Work**: Submit all assignments, on time and complete. For work submitted online, "on time" is determined by Moodle's time-stamps; for work submitted in person, "on time" is the start of the meeting time. Late work will not be accepted unless accompanied by a forgiveness token. "Complete" is defined by assignment checklists; be sure your work meets all of the criteria described in the checklist.

**Statistics**: Perform the statistical test(s) that are appropriate for your data and research questions, and report them accurately.

**Editing**: When completing second drafts and the final paper, your work will be free from mistakes and errors. It is a good idea to get editing help from fellow writers and the MAX center.

**APA Style**: It is important to be able to follow a style guide and match the requirements for different situations. In our case, final drafts of papers are expected to follow APA -style (6th edition).

**Rewriting**: Good writing requires substantial rewriting—adding and deleting information and reorganizing and restructuring sentences and paragraphs within your paper. Each draft of your writing should show progress in making the paper stronger.

**Peer Editing**: You will help your classmates improve their writing by participating actively in workshop days and by making clear and helpful comments on your peers' writing.

**Presentations**: Attend and present your poster at both MUPC and our department's poster session.

**Final Paper**: At the end of the semester, you will submit your final paper with careful revisions and "finished writing." We will have a conference about your paper at the end of the semester (see next page).

**Awareness**: Keep track of your progress in the course and whether you are staying on contract for B. We will do self-evaluations in weeks 5 and 10. If you are unsure of your progress, schedule a meeting with me.

## REQUIRED ASSIGNMENTS

You will receive detailed information about the expectations for each assignment as we go. For most of these assignments, you will submit several drafts and be offered the opportunity to revise your work before the final version is due.

- library session
- conceptual outline
- PRB proposal
- full APA-style manuscript of your study (first drafts submitted in parts):
  - introduction
  - method
  - results
  - discussion
- poster

## STAYING ON CONTRACT & FORGIVENESS

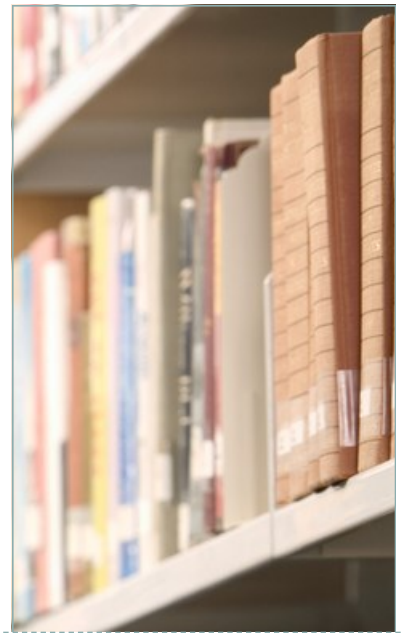
As you can see, to stay on the Contract for B, you must: work hard, be prepared, incorporate feedback to improve the quality of your work, and be an active member of our class community. Staying on contract also requires punctual attendance and meeting deadlines. Because I recognize that life sometimes interferes with attendance and deadlines, I offer three "forgiveness tokens" that allow you to stay on contract despite small infractions. One token may be redeemed for: one class or conference absence or one 24-hour extension. Your three tokens may be used in any combination. For example, you may miss three classes OR you may miss two classes and submit one assignment 24-hours late. In both of these examples, your three tokens would cover the infractions, and you would still be on contract. Once your three tokens are gone, additional absences or extensions will only be granted in extreme circumstances. If you have one additional small infraction beyond your three tokens, we may be able to work on a plan to get you back on contract. If this is your situation, please schedule a meeting with me. However, two additional small infractions or a major infraction (e.g., plagiarism or failure to revise between drafts) will take you off contract.

## FINAL GRADE

Although I will give you feedback throughout the term, your final paper is the only thing that I will *grade*. During our final conference, I will examine your paper; based on the improvements that you have made and the quality of your work, I will assign a cursory grade. If you are satisfied with that grade, you are done. If you are not satisfied, you may continue to revise your paper until the final deadline. At that point, I will take a closer look at your paper and assign a final grade. Your final grade will be no lower than the one assigned at the conference, but it is not guaranteed to be higher.

The grade that you earn on your paper will be your course grade. However, if you stayed on contract during the semester, the lowest grade you could possibly receive in the course is a B. In other words, the contract provides you with a grade safety-net; even if the quality of your final paper is below a B, your behavior in the course (e.g., punctuality, hard work, and improvement) would be enough to warrant a B in the course. Grades above B require excellence in writing. Throughout the semester, I will give you a lot of feedback and many examples of excellent writing to help you see the quality of work that I am looking for.

## WHAT IF I BREAK CONTRACT?



If you choose to go off contract, you will move to a more traditional grading scheme in which your grade will be determined as follows:

- Attendance & Participation: 30%
- Poster: 10%
- Final Paper: 60%

If you are "off contact," forgiveness tokens no longer apply. Late work will be subject to a grade penalty of 5% for each 24-hour period that it is late. Please note that, by definition, being "off contract" means that your behavior in the course (e.g., missing class, missing deadlines, failing to contribute to the class community, or not completing work) makes it very unlikely that you will be able to earn a grade above B-.

*"The grade that you earn on your paper will be your course grade. However, if you stayed on contract during the semester, the lowest grade you could possibly receive in the course is a B."*

## OTHER COURSE POLICIES

### Incompletes

Macalester College strongly discourages assigning incomplete grades. Unless a majority of assigned work has already been submitted, an incomplete will not be given. If extenuating circumstances arise, I will direct you to the Dean of Students, and I will consider the Dean's advice when making decisions about incompletes.

### Plagiarism

Plagiarism is the presentation of others' thoughts, ideas, or words as your own. Plagiarism can be blatant, such as copying sections of another's paper, or it can be subtle, such as failing to properly cite another's ideas. Either way, plagiarism constitutes a break in the Contract for B. If you are unsure about citations, wording, or similarity of structure, please discuss this with me, and I can help you make sure that you are citing and paraphrasing appropriately. If I have any reason to suspect your integrity in this class, I will contact you. After that meeting, I will determine what further steps are appropriate. I may refer you to the Director of Academic Programs, who will determine the consequences. If you have questions, please contact me or visit Macalester's academic integrity webpage:

www.macalester.edu/academicprograms/academicpolicies/academicintegrity/

### Technology Etiquette

I welcome laptops and tablets when they are used as learning aids (e.g., for note-taking). "Multitasking" (e.g., checking email or social media during class) can impede your learning, be a distraction to those around you, and feels disrespectful to me. Please set your phones to silent before class, and if you must take a call or text during class time, please discretely step outside.

*I reserve the right to ban technology that becomes detrimental to our classroom culture.*

## YOUR HEALTH AND WELL-BEING

I encourage you to make your well-being a priority throughout this semester (and throughout your career at Macalester). Beyond being a student, you are a human being carrying your own experiences, thoughts, emotions, and identities with you. Investing time into taking care of yourself will help you engage more fully in your academics. It is important to acknowledge any stressors you may be facing, which can be mental, emotional, physical, cultural, financial, etc., and how they can have an impact on you and your academic experience. I encourage you to remember that you have a body with needs. In the classroom, eat when you are hungry, drink water, use the restroom, and step out if you are upset or need some air. Please do what is necessary so long as it does not impede your or others' ability to be mentally and emotionally present in the course. Outside of the classroom, sleeping, moving your body, and connecting with others can be strategies to help you be resilient. If you are having difficulties maintaining your well-being, please contact me and/or find support from other sources (see Moodle for a list of resources).

## ACCESSIBILITY COMMITMENT

I am committed to creating an accessible and inclusive class where every student can participate fully in course activities and benefit from course materials. I would be happy to talk to you about how you learn best and how I can help maximize your experience in this class. Please don't hesitate to be in touch with your requests and suggestions.

### What I will do for all students

- Post assignments at least two weeks before they are due
- Share PowerPoints and other materials used in class lectures
- Meet with you individually during office hours for extended study or discussion
- Facilitate your connection to the MAX Center or other sources of support on campus
- Submit an Early Academic Warning and/or contact the Dean of Students if your performance or attendance slips
- Be as flexible as possible in the event of a crisis or emergency (provided that you have also spoken to someone in the Dean of Students office)

### What you can do if your needs are not met by the above

If you know you have a disability that affects your learning process, I encourage you to meet with the Director of Disability Services—Melissa Fletcher. This will allow you to receive accommodations. Melissa will send me a confidential letter detailing your accommodation request. Meet with me after you've met with Melissa so we can work together to ensure that your needs are met.

### If you are not registered with Disability Services

If you wait to self-advocate until you are in trouble in this course, you may be out of luck. I cannot accommodate you retroactively. Without a letter from Disability Services, I cannot offer a flexible schedule of assignment deadlines or a flexible attendance policy

**Melissa Fletcher**
Director of Disability Services
disabilityservices@macalester.edu
Kagin Commons 125
651-696-6874

# COURSE SCHEDULE

| Monday | Wednesday | Friday |
|---|---|---|
| 9/2 labor day - no meeting - | 9/4 group: introductions | 9/6 individual meetings<br>→ find five articles, read two, discuss |
| 9/9 group: idea development | 9/11 group: peer feedback<br>→ be ready to discuss potential design | 9/13 individual meetings |
| 9/16 group: outline workshop | 9/18 group: peer feedback<br>→ be ready to discuss potential design | 9/20 individual meetings<br>→ complete library session 5pm |
| 9/23 group: intro workshop<br>→ conceptual outline due 5pm | 9/25 group: peer feedback<br>→ bring what you have for your intro | 9/27 individual meetings |
| 9/30 group: method workshop<br>→ introduction due 5pm | 10/2 group: peer feedback<br>→ bring what you have for your method | 10/4 individual meetings |
| 10/7 group: PRB workshop<br>→ method due 5pm | 10/9 group: peer feedback<br>→ bring what you have for your PRB | 10/11 individual meetings |
| 10/14 group: PRB workshop<br>→ PRB (1) due 5pm | 10/16 group: Qualtrics refresher | 10/18 individual meetings |
| 10/21 group: review PRBs<br>→ PRB (final) due 5pm | 10/23 group: review PRBs<br>→ start collecting data as soon as PRB is approved | 10/25 fall break - no meetings -<br>→ data collection |
| 10/28 group: review PRBs<br>→ data collection | 10/30 group: review PRBs<br>→ data collection | 11/1 individual meetings<br>→ data collection |
| 11/4 group: analysis workshop<br>→ download your data before class | 11/6 group: analysis workshop<br>→ bring your data | 11/8 individual meetings |
| 11/11 group: discussion workshop<br>→ results due 5pm | 11/13 group: peer feedback<br>→ bring whatever you need feedback on | 11/15 individual meetings |
| 11/18 group: poster workshop<br>→ discussion due 5pm | 11/20 group: peer feedback<br>→ bring what you have for your poster | 11/22 individual meetings<br>→ poster (1) due - bring to meeting |
| 11/25 group: work time | 11/27 thanksgiving - no group - | 11/29 thanksgiving - no meetings |
| 12/2 group: work time<br>→ poster (2) due 5pm | 12/4 group: work time<br>→ posters are sent to the printers | 12/6 individual meetings |
| 12/9 group: poster practice<br>→ prepare your 1-minute spiel<br>→ final conferences open | 12/11 optional office hours<br>→ POSTER SESSION at 4:30 pm!! | 12/13 study day - no meetings - |
| 12/16<br>→ final conferences due 5pm | 12/18<br>→ (optional) revised paper due 10 pm | **Saturday 5/2/20 MUPC!**<br>**→ present your poster** |