

## Research Methods and Ethics in Psychology and Counseling

ANTH/PSYC 3500 (3 credits)

### Jordan: Psychology, Wellbeing, and Mental Health

*This syllabus is representative of a typical semester. Because courses develop and change over time to take advantage of unique learning opportunities, actual course content varies from semester to semester.*

#### Description

The Research Methods and Ethics in Psychology and Counseling course (RME) introduces students to ethical dilemmas, the scientific, conceptual, practical methods and tools for conducting psychological research and gathering data, and the knowledge and skills that are essential for writing an Independent Study Project (ISP) or Internship proposal in psychology, mental health, and counseling in conflict and post-conflict environments and the cultural context of Jordan. In particular, the course enhances students' skills at building rapport and constructive relationships with organizations and/or individuals; gathering, recording, and analyzing primary data; and writing a scholarly academic research paper or internship paper. The course also pays particular attention to US higher education ethical considerations that guide primary data collection and how these could be translated within the field of psychology, mental health, counseling in conflict and post-conflict contexts and the local cultural context of Jordan. Broadly, the course introduces students to both qualitative and quantitative approaches of social science field research.

#### Learning Outcomes

Upon completion of this course, students will be able to:

- Show an acute sense of positionality and perspective and operating independently, using cultural sensitivity, language skills, and local networks of trust built over the course of the semester;
- Apply appropriate methods and ethical tools to conduct field research or do an internship in psychology, mental health, and counseling;
- Analyze and process primary data gathered in the field and draw valid and ethical interpretations, conclusions, and inferences;
- Develop intercultural competence in psychological research during the program excursion to Turkey through experiential learning, comprehending cross cultural ethical standards, and practice observation and material culture in Turkey in relation to research in the field of psychology.

- Synthesize research methods and ethics in the field of psychology and counseling to produce an Independent Study Project or Internship proposal that is in strict observance of ethical academic and contextual standards.

### **Language of Instruction**

This course is taught in English. Students are exposed to vocabulary related to course content through in-country expert lectures and field visits.

### **Course Schedule**

Please be aware that topics and excursions may vary to take advantage of any emerging events, to accommodate changes in our lecturers' availability, and to respect any changes that would affect student safety. Students will be notified if this occurs.

### **Module 1: Experiential Learning and Positionality in Field-Based Research**

This Module provides an overview of Experiential Learning and its key concepts. The Module will also introduce students to field-based research in a study abroad context. Students learn how to relate to local communities and individuals. Most particularly, this module allows students to discover the power of experiential learning and use it as a tool to connect to local communities and individuals and develop into reflexive researchers who are attentive to their own positionality in relation to the local communities in which they engage for their research or internship.

#### Session 1: Cultural Adjustment, Ethics, and Development of Intercultural Competence

This session will discuss intercultural competence development, ways of involvement, and reflections on intercultural experiences. The session also discusses the potential of using homestay as a cultural experience and site of learning.

#### *Required Readings:*

Jackson, J. (2005). Assessing intercultural learning through introspective accounts. *Frontiers: The Interdisciplinary Journal of Study Abroad*, 11, 165-186.

Schmidt-Rinehart, B. C., & Knight, S. M. (2004). The homestay component of study abroad: Three perspectives. *Foreign Language Annals*, 37, 254-262.

#### Session 2: Experiential Learning Model and Ethical Considerations in the Jordanian Context

This session provides an overview of experiential learning model and its key concept to maximize students' learning and development.

#### *Required Readings:*

- Peat, G., Rodriguez, A., & Smith, J. (2019). Interpretive phenomenological analysis applied to healthcare research, *Evidence Based Nursing*, 22; 1. 10.1136/ebnurs-2018-103017
- Kolb, A.Y and Kolb, D.A. (2005). Learning styles and learning spaces: Enhancing experiential learning in higher education. *Academy of Management Learning and Education*, 4(2), 193-212.
- Hesser, G. (Ed.). (2013). Strengthening experiential education: A new era. Mt. Royal, NJ: National Society of Experiential Education.

### Session 3: Positionality, Reflexivity, and Ethical Research

This session introduces the concept of positionality in field research and how it contributes the quality of research design and conduction.

#### *Required Readings:*

- Lazard, L., & McAvoy, M. (2020). Doing reflexivity in psychological research: What's the point. *What's the practice? Qualitative Research in Psychology*, 17:2, 159-177, DOI: 10.1080/14780887.2017.1400144
- Myers, L. P. (2019). Insider Research: Ethics, Professionalism, and Positionality. Published Conference Paper. University of Exeter.
- Clift, B., Hatchard, J., and Gore, J. (eds.). (2018). How Do We Belong? Researcher Positionality within Qualitative Inquiry: Proceedings of 4th Annual Qualitative Research Symposium. University of Bath, University of Bath.

## **Module 2: The Scientific Method and Ethics in Psychological Research**

This module focuses on the scientific methods of conducting quantitative and qualitative field research addressing value systems of local community and ethical considerations in field research in psychology, mental health, counseling, and conflict and post-conflict contexts.

### Session 1: The Scientific Method of Research in Psychology

This session introduces qualitative research and the specific features differentiating qualitative and quantitative research uses and methods. The session also discusses in more detail the major qualitative research genres and mixed methods and the process of identifying research interest and topic.

#### *Required Readings:*

- Haig, B. (2018). The importance of scientific method for psychological science. *Psychology, Crime & Law*. 25. 1-28. 10.1080/1068316X.2018.1557181.
- Rajiv J., I-Chant C., Carrie C., and Dana L. (2019). *Research Methods in Psychology*, 4<sup>th</sup> Ed. Independently Published. (Chapter 2: *Overview of the Scientific Method.*)

### Session 2: Ethics in Psychological Research

This session addresses ethical issues faced by psychological researchers and ways of addressing these ethical issues, rights of research participants, ethical research design, and other ethical considerations when conducting research in the field of psychology.

*Required Readings:*

- Rajiv J., I-Chant C., Carrie C., and Dana L. (2019). *Research Methods in Psychology*, 4<sup>th</sup> Ed. Independently Published. (Chapter 3: *Research Ethics*.)
- Paul N and Russel S. (2019). *Research Methods in Psychology: Investigating Human Behavior*, 3<sup>rd</sup> Ed. SAGE Publications, Inc. Chapter 4: *Ethics in Behavioral Research*.

Session 3: Ethical Considerations in Psychological Research with Vulnerable Populations

This session addresses ethical challenges and considerations in psychology and health research on vulnerable populations. The session discusses the rationale for and objectives of conducting research on vulnerable populations, the challenges faced by researchers, and viable approaches to reduce and contain potential emotional harm to participants.

*Required Readings:*

- Bracken-Roche, D., Bell, E., Macdonald, M.E., and Racine, E. (2017). The concept of 'vulnerability' in research ethics: An in-depth analysis of policies and guidelines. *Health Research Policy and Systems*. 15. 10.1186/s12961-016-0164-6.
- González-Duarte, A., Zambrano-González, E., Medina-Franco, H., Alberú-Gómez, J., Durand-Carbajal, M., Hinojosa, C. A., ... & Kaufer-Horwitz, M. (2019). II. The research ethics involving vulnerable groups. *Revista de Investigación Clínica*, 71(4), 217-225.
- American Psychological Association (APA). (2018). *Ethical Principles of Psychologists and Code of Conduct*. (Section 8, Research and Publication).  
<https://www.apa.org/ethics/code/>

**Module 3: Data Collection and Management in Psychological Research**

This module focuses on the tools and methods required for conducting quantitative and qualitative field research in the social sciences in observance of the ethics and value systems of the local community.

Session 1: Interviews and Observations in Psychological Research

This session teaches students culturally appropriate and ethically sound observation and data collection techniques and interview styles in the context of Jordan.

*Required Readings:*

- Mellish, L., Morris, S., & Do, M. (2013). *Psychology Interviewing Skills*. The University of New South Wales.

Ciesielska, M., Boström, K. W., & Öhlander, M. (2018). Observation methods. In *Qualitative Methodologies in Organization Studies* (pp. 33-52). Palgrave Macmillan, Cham.10.1007/978-3-319-65442-3\_2.

### Session 2: Questionnaires and Material Culture

This session teaches students culturally appropriate and ethically sound questionnaire designs and material culture techniques in the context of Jordan.

#### *Required Readings:*

McLeod, S. A. (2018). Questionnaire. <https://www.simplypsychology.org/questionnaires.html>

Yin K, R. (2011). *Qualitative Research: From Start to Finish*. Page 147-154. Guilford Press.

Retrieved from: <https://teddykw2.files.wordpress.com/2012/05/qualitativeresearch-from-start-to-finish.pdf>

Mason J. (2002). *Qualitative Researching*. SAGE Publications. (Part II: Generating Qualitative Data, 103-120.)

### Session 3: Data Analysis, Evaluation, and Interpretation

In This session, students learn how to read their research data, encode their research data, classify their research data, and how to evaluate and interpret data they collected through different types of data collection.

#### *Required Readings:*

Bernard, R. (2013). *Social Science Research: Qualitative and Quantitative Approaches* (Second Edition). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage (Chapter 17: Analyzing Qualitative Data I: Applying Logic to Text).

Yin K, R. (2011). *Qualitative Research: From Start to Finish*. Chapters 8 and 9. Guilford Press.

Retrieved from: <https://teddykw2.files.wordpress.com/2012/05/qualitativeresearch-from-start-to-finish.pdf>

## **Module 4: Introduction to the Independent Research Project (ISP) and Internship in the Field of Psychology**

This module will describe the ISP and internship processes and help students brainstorm ideas and set goals for their ISP or internship. The module will also walk the students through the Local Review Board (LRB) and Institutional Review Board (IRB) process, and the application for Human Subjects Review (HSR application).

### Session 1: ISP/Internship Proposal format, Structure, and Related Forms

In this session, students learn about the appropriate research proposal format and structures. All proposal components will be introduced and discussed with the students in this session for their research topics or Internship placements.

### Session 2: Identifying an ISP Advisor and Securing an Internship Placement

This session introduces to the students to best ways to identify and contact ISP advisors, and best ways to secure an Internship placement.

#### *Required Reading:*

Sweitzer, F. and King, M. (2014). *The Successful Internship*. 4th Ed. Belmont, CA: Brooks/Cole Cengage Learning. Chapter One.

### Session 3: One-on-one Meetings with the Academic Director to Discuss Preliminary ISP or Internship Ideas

In this session, students will meet one-on-one with the AD about ISP topic ideas, research plans or discuss their Internship placement ideas.

## **Module 5: ISP/Internship Project Proposal Development**

Based on learning and engagement in the preceding course modules, this module focuses on ISP and internship proposal development and guiding students through the development of the Human Subjects Review (HSR) application for review by the Local Review Board (LRB). This critical phase in the course involves both large student group meetings and individual student meetings with the academic director and the ISP advisor or internship supervisor.

### Session 1: Writing an ISP or Internship Proposal

This session discusses with students their ISP or their Internship proposals to ensure feasibility of proposals and how to secure final drafts.

### Session 2: Meeting with ISP/Internship Advisor

In this session, students meet with their ISP advisors or Internship placement to finalize proposals and have a clear plan on how to proceed during the ISP or Internship period.

### Session 3: Peer review of ISP or Internship Proposal Drafts

Students finalize their ISP or Internship proposals and turn them in for LRB/IRB processing.

***After completing Modules 1-4, students will split into groups by ISP or internship. ISP students will take Module 6a, and internship students will take Module 6b.***

## **Module 6a: ISP in the Context of Jordan**

This module prepares the student for the ISP experience. It examines work-based norms and practices related to conducting research in Jordan. The module highlights the importance of applied methodology in the ISP experience and the expectations and responsibilities of the student.

### Session 1: Preparing for the ISP

This introductory session prepares the student for the ISP. The session covers a range of areas that include how to approach and develop rapport with research participants, how to work collaboratively with the ISP advisor, and logistics of the ISP period, including travel, materials, and timelines. Students will also review the ISP assessment rubric.

### Session 2: Work-based Norms and Practices in Jordan

This session explores work-based norms and practices related to research in Jordan, exploring such issues as how best to describe the ISP to potential research participants and others, gender norms, issues of language, and expectations for behavior while conducting research.

#### *Required Readings:*

Silverman, H., Edwards, H., Shamoo, A., & Matar, A. (2013). Enhancing research ethics capacity in the Middle East: Experience and challenges of a Fogarty-sponsored training program. *Journal of Empirical Research on Human Research Ethics*, 8(5), 40-51.

### Session 3: ISP Applied Methodology

This session covers strategies of time management, networking strategies, and problem-solving research challenges.

#### *Required Reading:*

Bell, J. (2014). *Doing Your Research Project: A Guide for First-Time Researchers*. McGraw-Hill Education (UK).

## **Module 6b: Internship in the Context of Jordan**

This module prepares the student for the internship experience. It examines work-based norms and practices related to internships in Jordan. The module highlights the importance of ethics in the internship experience and the expectations and responsibilities of the student, the host institution, and the program.

### Session 1: Preparing for the Internship

This introductory session prepares the students for their internship in country. The session covers a range of areas that include résumé preparation and cover letter, dress, student objectives for the internship, and stages of student growth in the internship. Students will review the internship rubric.

#### *Required Reading:*

AlNasser H. (2016). *New Social Enterprises in Jordan: Redefining the Meaning of Civil Society*. Chatham House, Sep. 2016.

Recommended Reading: Switzer, F. and King, M. (2013). *The Successful Internship: Personal, Professional and Civic development in Experiential Learning* (4th Edition). Belmont, CA: Brooks/Cole, Chapters 2 and 3.

### Session 2: Work-based Norms and Practices in Jordan

This session explores work-based norms and practices related to internships and work in Jordan, exploring such issues as how best to describe the internship experience and purpose to potential internship hosts and others, gender norms, issues of language, and workplace expectations.

#### *Required Reading:*

Creative Associates International. (2014). Employer Perspective on the Jordanian Labor Force.

<http://www.amcham.jo/Portal1/Upload/Block/Image/Creative%20Associates%20International%20Report.pdf>

### Session 3: The Ethics of Participating in an Internship in Jordan

This session outlines the responsibilities of the student and the host organization for a productive and significant experience that can serve the objectives of both. The session also reviews best practices for a successful internship and exposes the student's positionality in relation to the organization.

#### *Recommended Reading:*

McDonald, F. (2011). Ethical Use of Interns. Retrieved from:

<http://www.prsa.org/aboutprsa/ethics/ethicalstandardsadvisories/documents/psa17.pdf>

## **Evaluation and Grading Criteria**

### Description of Assignments:

#### Practice Interview (15%)

Students are asked to conduct a practice interview with one of the members of their host family. They are asked to write a small reflection paper (2-3 pages) about their role and attitude towards their research subjects and the skills they brought to the interview to establish an ethical and safe environment for the interviewee. Students are also encouraged to explore how their own positionality along the lines of gender, sexuality, race, and class affected the set-up and wording of their questionnaire and consequently the outcome of the interview.

#### Topic Identification and Data Collection Design (20%)

Students are required to turn in a paper identifying a research topic of their interest, write why it is important and significant to study this topic, develop research question/hypotheses, who will the participants be, how data is going to be collected from the participants, design a



sample interview, design a sample questionnaire, design and sample observation sheet, and suggest how are they going to conduct material culture.

#### Applying Data Collection Tools (15%)

Students are asked to practice data collection tools in reality. Students are asked to practice two interviews and make observations of two different sites and turn in a paper reflecting on their experience.

#### Research/Internship Proposal (40%)

All students must develop a research or internship proposal. The research proposal should address a theme related to the program, include research question and objectives, theoretical framework, methodology, and comply with the ethical standards learned throughout the course.

The internship proposal should include the objectives to be achieved during the internship period, a justification of the work and the organization selected, skills or areas in which the student can contribute to the work of the host organization, and an outline of the work plan to be carried out.

#### Participation (10%)

All students are expected to prepare for classes, attend and participate in all lectures, class discussions, field activities, and carry out all assignments and other activities prepared in the context of the Research Methods and Ethics course.

#### Assessment:

Practice Interview	15%	
Topic Identification and Data Collection Design		20%
Applying Data Collection Tools	15%	
Research/Internship Proposal	40%	
Participation	10%	

#### Grading Scale:

94-100%	A
90-93%	A-
87-89%	B+
84-86%	B
80-83%	B-
77-79%	C+
74-76%	C
70-73%	C-
67-69%	D+
64-66%	D
Below 64%	F

#### **Program Expectations**

- Show up prepared. Be on time, have your readings completed and points in mind for discussion or clarification. Complying with these elements raises the level of class discussion for everyone.
- Have assignments completed on schedule, printed, and done accordingly to the specified requirements. This will help ensure that your assignments are returned in a timely manner.
- Ask questions in class. Engage the lecturer. These are often very busy professionals who are doing us an honor by coming to speak.
- Comply with academic integrity policies (no plagiarism or cheating, nothing unethical).
- Respect differences of opinion (classmates', lecturers, local constituents engaged with on the visits). You are not expected to agree with everything you hear, but you are expected to listen across difference and consider other perspectives with respect.
- Storing Your Work: Keep several copies of your work as back up and keep one copy accessible to you through an online forum, such as an attachment in your email, the course learning management system, or cloud-based storage. This way your work will always be available to despite technical issues. Lost files, deleted drives, or computer crashes are not excuses for late, missing work.
- Personal Technology Use: Cell phones and other personal electronics can be used for taking notes and other class activities. Off-task usage is not acceptable. You may be marked as absent for habitually using them for something other than classroom activities.
- Course Communication: Course documents and assignments will be posted on the learning management system, Canvas. Although the course calendar provides a broad overview and the general sequence of work and assignments for the course, what we accomplish in class will vary, and revisions to the calendar will be posted at the course site. You will need to check the course site regularly. You are responsible for letting me know about any network-related problems that prevent you from accessing or submitting assignments.
- Content Considerations: Some texts and activities you will encounter in this course delve into sensitive topics that may be emotionally and intellectually challenging. Our classroom is a space where we can engage with challenging ideas, question assumptions, and navigate difficult topics with respect and maturity. As possible, I will flag content and activities that are especially graphic or intense, so we are prepared to address them soberly and sensitively. If you are struggling to keep up with the work or participate in the course because of the nature of the content and activities, you should speak with me and/or seek help from counseling services.
- Classroom recording policy: To ensure the free and open discussion of ideas, students may not record classroom lectures, discussion and/or activities without the advance written permission of the instructor, and any such recording properly approved in advance can be used solely for the student's own private use.

### **SIT Policies and Resources**

Please refer to the [SIT Study Abroad Handbook](#) and the [Policies](#) section of the SIT website for all academic and student affairs policies. Students are accountable for complying with all

published policies. Of particular relevance to this course are the policies regarding: academic integrity, Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), research and ethics in field study and internships, late assignments, academic status, academic appeals, diversity and disability, sexual harassment and misconduct, and the student code of conduct.

Please refer to the SIT Study Abroad Handbook and SIT website for information on important resources and services provided through our central administration in Vermont, such as [Library resources and research support](#), [Disability Services](#), [Counseling Services](#), [Title IX information](#), and [Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion](#) resources.