

Research Opportunities for Psychology Undergraduates

Why Do Research?

- To learn more about psychology
- To enhance your chances of getting into graduate school or getting a job
- To get a taste of what graduate school or a future job might be like
- To establish a working relationship with faculty who can advise you on graduate schools, careers in psychology, write letters of reference for you, or provide job referrals
- It's interesting

Further Possible Outcomes:

- Presentation of the research at the College of Arts and Sciences annual Undergraduate Symposium
- Presentation with a faculty member at an annual professional conference, such as Behavior Analysis Association of Michigan (BAAM) or the Midwestern Psychological Association (MPA) Conference
- Publication with a faculty member in a professional journal
- Academic credit: see below

Academic Credit

- Individual Reading involves doing literature review. PSY 397, 398, 399 are for 1, 2, 3 credit hours, respectively. You will do the reading and meet on a regular basis with the faculty member. Further requirements may vary depending on the area of interest and the faculty member.
- Individual Research involves helping to design or execute a study, or do data analysis. On occasion it may involve library research. PSY 497, 498, 499 are for 1, 2, or 3 credit hours, respectively.
- You must obtain permission from a faculty member in order to register for these courses. They can help you determine which course to sign up for

How to get started

- Think about your classes, your own interest, and think about an area you want to learn more about. If this area is covered by a class, take it. If this area is not covered in a class, or you want to study it in more detail than is done in class, go to the professor who works in the area and talk with him or her. If you do not know who works in the area, consult the *Faculty Areas of Interest* handout, or ask a faculty member. Then go see the person, and ask whether he or she will take you on to do Individual Reading, or whether he or she is doing a research project you can join. If there is a research project which you would like to do, mention it.
- If there is a research project which you would like to do, seek out a faculty member or graduate student with similar interests. You do not need to have a big plan or a finished project to talk to a faculty member. If you know your area of interest, and you are motivated to learn and apply yourself, you're ready to see the faculty member.
- Do not get frustrated and stop if you do not immediately locate an opportunity. Sometimes it takes a bit of checking around. Time of year also is important. More people are starting projects and looking for help in the Fall than in the Spring or Summer term. So think ahead, or ask the faculty what they are planning for the next term or year.
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Opportunities to Participate in Research

Participate in a research study. There are many graduate students who need participants for their thesis or dissertation and you can earn extra credit in some psychology courses for participating. Check the SONA site for an ongoing list of projects and studies that are available for you to participate in.