

Psy 603: Prosem (Professional Development Seminar in Psychology I)

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Student hours: By appointment

Course info: PSY 603, CRN 12237

Meeting times: Tuesdays, 2:50 - 3:45 p.m. in 134 PSYC
Fridays, 3:00 - 5:00 p.m. in 125 PSYC (on select dates), other times on ad hoc basis

Resources

There is no textbook, but PDF readings and other course materials are available on our course's [Canvas site](#).

Course overview

This course introduces new graduate students in our doctoral program to professional development activities and experiences designed to help them make the most of their graduate training. Professional development is life-long skill process for all psychologists, regardless of whether they are first-year graduate students or are 20-plus-year full professors and department chairs. That being said, professional development does not happen in a vacuum without conscientious and purposeful engagement, and it requires intentional self-awareness and self-assessment throughout one's career. Everyone's professional path is different (e.g., shaped by different goals, lived experiences, strengths and weaknesses, challenges and opportunities), and at its best, prosem should help to equip students with approaches, insights, and practices to navigate their own idiosyncratic path through graduate school and beyond.

PSY603 (fall semester) and PSY604 (spring semester) offers a two-semester sequence of structured engagement with professional development activities. Prosem has many goals, including:

- Learning about departmental and university cultures and how they facilitate one's professional development
- Reflecting on the value of mentorship and apprenticeship and learning how to align expectations and roles both as a mentee (with one's graduate advisors) and as a mentor (with peers and with undergraduates)
- Developing and refining one's career plans and identifying paths to accomplish professional goals
- Learning about job markets, academic and industry, and what features they share and how the might involve different orientations
- Becoming facile with explaining scholarly interests to a range of audiences (e.g., journals for peer reviewed papers, grant panels for obtaining extramural funding, fellow colleagues to foster collaborative projects, lay audiences to appreciate the importance of one's work and the value of science more broadly)
- Applying for extramural funding (e.g., National Science Foundation Graduate Research Fellowships) early in one's second year of graduate school (based on work developed during one's first year of graduate school)
- Appreciating and affirming the value of diversity, equity, inclusion, and belongingness into every facet of one's professional life (e.g., research, teaching, service, community engagement)
- Learning how to provide and how to receive constructive feedback in ways that support growth, development, and quality of work
- Wrestling with important value considerations (e.g., open science, research ethics)
- Building intellectual and social communities to provide support and celebrate for each other

Course evaluation

Source	Points per	Total points
Weekly attendance (Tuesday meetings, outside speakers)	1	20
Class participation in Tuesday meetings	2 x 14	28
On-line assignments and posts (by Sunday at 5 p.m.)	2 x 11	22
CV construction	10	10
Professional development plan	20	20
Total Points		100

Grades are based on the above scale, with students receiving either an overall “P” (passing) or “F” (failing) grade. In the end, grades are not the point of prosem (or frankly, of any graduate course), but rather, they provide a mechanism for accountability and to help students identify the appropriate amount of energy and effort to devote to various development activities.

Academic integrity

Both Miami University and the Department of Psychology are dedicated to providing a learning environment based not only on academic excellence but on academic integrity as well. In this course, it is expected that students will adhere to all Miami University guidelines regarding academic misconduct and academic integrity (<https://miamioh.edu/policy-library/students/undergraduate/academic-regulations/academic-integrity.html>).

Academic misconduct includes, but is not limited to:

- Submitting work (homework, papers, etc.) conducted for another course without professor approval
- Submitting the work of another individual or party (whether in part or in whole) as one’s own, including work from another student, a website, a book, or failing to provide appropriate citations for others’ ideas
- Allowing other students to submit one’s work as their own
- Providing or receiving assistance from another student without the professor’s permission

Engaging in academic misconduct can result in penalties ranging from a *minimum* of an F on the assignment to an F in the course, an “AD” signifying academic dishonesty on Miami transcripts, academic suspension, and expulsion from Miami University. Misunderstanding appropriate academic conduct will not be accepted as an excuse for academic misconduct (see *Miami Student Handbook*, Chapter 5). Please speak to the professor for clarification regarding any of the above policies.

Class policies

Activities: All work assignments or posts for any week are due before Sunday at 5 p.m. (US Eastern Time), which will give students time to read over and comment on their colleagues’ comments before the Tuesday afternoon class session. All assignments and discussion posts are uploaded on Canvas.

Special considerations: In situations where special, documented circumstances exist (e.g., official university obligations, religious observances), special arrangements can be made with the professor. However, students must make these arrangements before the end of the second week of the semester and provide documentation for them. Also, please note that assignments can be completed well in advance, thus the majority of conflicts with a due date do *not* require accommodation (e.g., a religious observance falling on a Saturday due date is not a problem because the work can simply be submitted before that due date).

Accommodations: Students with a disability who feel that they may need a reasonable accommodation to fulfill the essential functions of the course listed in this syllabus, or students with physical, medical or psychiatric disabilities, or students with AD(H)D or specific learning disabilities are encouraged to contact the Miller Center for Student Disability Services (<https://miamioh.edu/student-life/sds/>; 513.529.1541, V/TTY).

Uploads and electronically-submitted assignments: For assignments that require uploading documents to Canvas, please note that these documents must in one of three formats: PDF (Acrobat's Portable Document Format), DOC (Microsoft Word's Document format), or RTF (Rich Text Format). Uploads in other formats (e.g., Mac Pages) will receive zeros (Canvas cannot process them). Comments on on-line discussion posts are simply typed in to a textbook using Canvas. The instructor will review responses either on Sunday or Monday, providing students with feedback (or integrating students' responses) into Tuesday's class

Incompletes: Except for cases of documented medical (see previous point) or family emergencies, incompletes will not be given. There is no need for students to do badly in this class: the professor will be available for student hours and will answer e-mail questions promptly. Points are earned in small, multiple increments rather than in a couple of monolithic assignments. There are 50 cushion points built into class, providing students with flexibility to handle adversity during the semester. Deadlines for dropping classes and withdrawals are provided by the Office of the Registrar. Students who miss these deadlines assume responsibility for the consequences. Please consult Miami's official publications regarding deadlines and university policies.

Classroom conduct, respecting others, and valuing diversity: Students are expected to conduct themselves in a respectful and civil manner in our course, and they are encouraged to express their opinions and beliefs. It is another thing, however, to be disrespectful or rude to students or to the professor. It is fine to disagree with others and to express non-politically-correct views. However, bigotry or disrespectful behavior is unacceptable.

The Miami Department of Psychology is strongly committed to diversity and inclusion (for details, visit <https://www.miamioh.edu/cas/academics/departments/psychology/about/diversity-inclusion/index.html>). Here is a statement adopted by the Department of Psychology on diversity and inclusion:

We, members of the Department of Psychology, value diversity and inclusion because the goal of psychology is to improve understanding and outcomes for all individuals. We value persons of all identities, including dimensions such as age, culture, national origin, ability, ethnicity, gender, gender identity, language, race, religion, sexual orientation, socioeconomic status, and others. As psychologists, we understand that diverse groups bring diverse perspectives; this diversity produces better outcomes in a variety of contexts, including learning and decision making, and our ability to work with one another. Consistent with these values, our department actively seeks opportunities to increase and improve understanding of diversity. These enduring efforts include conducting research with diverse populations on topics related to intergroup understanding and asking questions that are relevant to different groups. We promote the academic and professional development of students, faculty, and staff from different backgrounds and provide education to improve intercultural knowledge, skills, and attitudes for all members of our academic community. We endeavor to actively engage in positive behaviors in order to achieve these goals. In sum, we value diversity because multiple perspectives improve our ability to understand psychological processes and to understand and contribute to the communities we serve.

Semester schedule

Each week, we will have our weekly meetings on Tuesday, which often (though not always) will have readings to read before that class meeting (see “assignments” on Tuesday lines). In addition, there will often (though not always) be activities to complete (e.g., on-line post and commentary, reflection activities) on Canvas due before Sunday at 5 p.m. (see “assignments” on Sunday lines). The period between Sunday at 5 p.m. and class on Tuesday is available for students to reflect on others’ comments (and for reviewing professor feedback, when appropriate). Syllabus updated 21sep2021.

Date		Topic	Assignments
Week 1	Tu 8/24 Su 8/29	Organizational meeting	On-line post: Lingering questions?
Week 2	Tu 8/31 Sun 9/5	Departments, universities, and the field	On-line post: Questions about the field?
Week 3	Tu 9/7 Su 9/12	Fostering productive mindsets	Sensoy & DiAngelo (2014) On-line post: Challenges you see for yourself?
Week 4	Tu 9/14 Su 9/19	Effective mentorship	Hund et al. (2018); Maestre (2019) Activity: Discuss expectations with your advisor
Week 5	Tu 9/21 Su 9/26	Academic job market	Sternberg (2013) Activity: Study ads on Psych Job Wiki
Week 6	Tu 9/28 Su 10/3	Career paths	https://www.nature.com/articles/d41586-018-07111-8 On-line post: Values, aspirations, and fears
Week 7	Tu 10/5 Su 10/10	Developing your CV and tracking work	https://grad.ucla.edu/asis/agep/advcv.pdf On-line post: First draft of your CV
Week 8	Tu 10/12 Su 10/17	The structure of an academic job visit	Sternberg (2013) Final version of your CV
Week 9	Tu 10/19 Su 10/24	TBD (most likely, job talks)	
Week 10	Tu 10/26 Su 10/31	TBD (most likely, job talks)	
Week 11	Tu 11/2 Su 11/7	TBD (most likely, job talks)	
Week 12	Tu 11/9 Su 11/14	Engaging diversity	DiAngelo (2018) Activity: Reflection on diversity
Week 13	Tu 11/16 Su 11/21	Professional development plan	
Week 14	Tu 11/23 Su 11/28	No Class: Thanksgiving Week	
Week 15	Tu 11/30	Semester wrap-up	Submit your professional development plan