

**Senior Integrative Seminar
PSYC 4884-E01
University of West Georgia
Distance Learning (Online version)
Fall 2019**

Instructor:

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Course Summary:

This course is designed to provide you with an integrative “capstone” to complement the courses you have taken as a psychology major. The basic aim of this course is to have you reflect passionately and critically on your central learning(s) while in the department, and to then direct such reflection into the creation of various personal/Psychological, academic, and professional documents (listed below).

This is a D2L course taught fully online. It is thus 100% your responsibility to familiarize yourself with all of the technological requirements to complete an online course. If you have questions about anything technology related, please contact Distance Education (<http://www.westga.edu/~distance/>) or call 678-839-6248. You will need Microsoft Office for this course, which is provided free by UWG at Student ITS.

Readings:

Palmer, P. (2000). *Let your life speak: Listening to the voice of vocation*. San Francisco, CA. Jossey-Bass.

** Please order this book as soon as possible; the bookstore has it for our class, but it is also widely available both new and used (on Amazon) and as an e-book or through Kindle.*

Blaxter, L., Hughes, C. & Tight, M. (2006). *How to research*. Open University Press.

** Available as a PDF on our course den site. You do not have to buy this.*

Course Objectives:

Students will:

- Obtain greater knowledge of self, personal and professional values and vocational aspirations.
- Gain a firmer sense of career directions in Psychology.
- Take concrete steps in preparing for a career in Psychology.

Learning Outcomes:

Students will:

- Develop a clear vocational vision

- Prepare a professional resume
- Conduct a scholarly interview and prepare a self-reflection
- Demonstrate knowledge of the variety of research methods typically used in psychology
- Develop scholarly writing that integrates learning to date and reflects vocational vision and next steps.
- Demonstrate professional behavior with peers and instructor.

Assignments:

There are five basic assignments. Do them in the order they are listed below. You will turn in each of them according to the due dates specified on the course schedule. Each assignment builds on the ones before it, and is meant to be *creative* in nature. By the end of this course, you will have produced 5 documents that will hopefully be personally meaningful and professionally useful.

1. Five Central Learnings

Your first assignment is to reflect on your coursework within the Psychology department. Of all the courses you've taken, choose 5 BIG ideas or assignments that you learned or did that were memorable, inspirational, profound, transformational, etc. Write about each of them *in detail*. Be sure to say what class/professor it was in, what it was you learned, and (most importantly) how it inspired or changed you. How did it transform you? Write at least 1 page (double-spaced) for each learning.

2. Life Plan Vision Statement

You'll do this assignment as you read portions from the Parker Palmer book. Try as best you can to also integrate your Five Central Learnings. This is the biggest of the 5 assignments. It will take you several weeks. The life plan vision statement is both a document and a process that connects our daily activities with our deeper understanding of what gives meaning to our lives, and how being a student in the Psychology department shaped this process. Creating a life plan helps us define our personal goals and aspirations: what we want to create of ourselves and in the world around us. **WHY CREATE A LIFE PLAN?** There is a great deal of power in having both a personal vision and a clear picture of your current reality. Having this perspective will generate a force within you that will move you toward your vision, and the production of tangible results. **WHEREVER YOU ARE, START THERE.** People often hesitate to take the first step in developing a life plan. One reason is that many people believe that the document must be perfect and complete. Quite the opposite is intended. The life plan is a lifelong working document. Begin with an imperfect first version, knowing that you will enhance it over time. The key is to start.

There are 3 key sections to your Life Plan Vision statement:

Section 1. Significant Life Events (about 4-5 pages, double spaced)

Begin by writing about at least 2-3 significant life events. A significant life event is a specific happening, a critical incident, a key episode in your past, set in a particular time and place. It is a specific moment in your life that stands out to you for some reason. Describe 2-3 of the most critical incidents in your life to date. What was the impact of these events on the course of your life and who you are as a person? Feel free to write as much as you would like here (minimum of 4-5 double-spaced pages).

Section 2. Values and Principles (3-5 pages, double spaced)

After you have described 2-3 significant life events, take a step back and think about how those life events instilled in you certain Core Values. Core values need no rationale or external justification, nor do they sway with trends and fads of the day. They are deep and they are core to you. Core values are self-evident guidelines for human conduct, basic truths. What are your personal core values? Which principles are most important to you? What values and principles do you live by? Below is a list of some core values, just so you have an idea of what I'm talking about. Please identify at least 3-4 that are central to you and tie them to your significant life events. Tell me where they came from and how they influence you. Be specific and descriptive.

Just a few examples of Core Values and Principles are: *A Comfortable Life, Equality, An Exciting Life, Family Security, Freedom, Health, Inner Harmony, Mature Love, Pleasure, Salvation, Self Respect, Accomplishment, Social Recognition, Deep Friendship, Wisdom, A World at Peace, Beauty, Broad mindedness, Being capable, Cleanliness, Courage, Irreverence, Playfulness, Imagination, Helpfulness, Intellectual depth, Affection, Loyalty, Obedience, Politeness, Being responsible, Self-control...*

Section 3. Vision Statement (about 6-8 pages, double spaced)

After you have written about your significant life events and core values/principles, you are ready to write your vision statement. This part consists of four general areas containing thought-provoking questions. Please respond to the following guiding questions. Feel free to ignore or add to these questions as you see fit. Remember, this is a creative and dynamic document, so make it your own, and try to integrate what you wrote in sections 1 and 2.

1. Conceptual image of yourself, both personal and professional

- Who are you?
 - What do you do? Who do you do it with? What value do you add to your world?
 - How do you introduce yourself? Who do you say you are to others?
- What are your personal strengths? Why? What are you good at? What are your technical and professional competencies?
- What are your weaknesses? Why?
- What do you have passion for? What gives you joy?
- Who do you learn from? What are you learning from them? Are you a mentor to anyone? If so, to whom, and concerning what area?
- How well do you manage the agreements you make with others and yourself? How do you manage trust with others? How trustworthy are you?
- What results are you producing? Why? How do you achieve results? What is your approach when results are not forthcoming?

2. Purpose, personal, and professional vision

- What is your life's purpose? Why are you here? What are you here to accomplish?
- If your life were on tape, and you fast-forwarded the tape so that you were at the end looking back, what do you see? How do you feel?
- What in your past would you change?

3. Goals and objectives (2–5 years), both personal and professional

- What are your goals and objectives?
- What areas in your life do these goals and objectives encompass? What areas are not addressed?
- How would you know if these goals and objectives were accomplished?

4. Near-term actions (3–6 months)

- What actions will you take to improve yourself personally and professionally? What results do you expect to create in the next 3–6 months?
- What will you experiment with? What risks will you take?
- What will you read, do, study, experience to make this happen?
- What feedback will you seek?
- What relationships will you create, mend, or improve?
- How will you build agreements and trust?

3. Research Prospectus

Now that you have written about what you have learned in your Psychology courses and what your vocation vision is, I want you to integrate the two. Here's how: think of a Psychological topic or issue that you really care passionately about. It should be one that reflects your passions and values, as well as your intellectual curiosities. As you think about it, begin to read the assigned sections of the Blaxter book. They will help you write this assignment up. Your job is to write a short Research Prospectus describing how and why you would research this topic. You will not actually carry out the research. You will simply describe what your research question is, provide an introduction justifying why this is an important area to research, and then describe what procedural methodology you would use to answer the question and analyze the data. You will turn in a short research prospectus that includes the following three sections.

Section 1: Research question (1 paragraph).

Please explain what your research question is. Be clear and crisp and to the point.

Section 2: Introduction (~2 pages, double spaced)

Give an introduction to the literature that you feel is relevant given your research question. For this you will need to go to the library and look up relevant research articles, read them, and cite them using APA format (cite the references within the text using the correct APA format and provide a Reference section at the end that is APA format. I expect you to know APA format from your previous Psychology courses. Since I am only asking for about 2 pages, please only choose the more relevant background literature to discuss.

Section 3: Methodology (~1 page, double spaced)

Please describe what kind of methods you would use to collect the relevant data for this project (surveys, questionnaires, interviews, focus groups, natural observation, etc). Read about what methods others have used for similar questions and make the case for why you think the question you are asking would best be answered using whatever method you suggest. Describe how you would collect the data and say a bit about how you might analyze it.

The total length of this Research Prospectus should be between 4-5 pages, double spaced.

4. Professional Interview

Find somebody that has a vocation that you would love to have. THINK BIG! Contact that person. You can do this in person, over the phone, or via email, etc. You are to set up a time to interview them. The interview should last *at least* 30 minutes. Audio-record it for your own purposes so you can listen back to it later (you will not turn in the audio-recording).

The purpose of the interview is two-fold: 1) to find out how they got to where they are (i.e., what educational/professional steps did they take to arrive at the vocational place they are, and 2) what kind of person are they (values, drives, loves, etc) and how did who they are as a person lead them to have the kind of vocational life they have. Notice that I am talking about "vocation" and not a "job". Lots of people have "jobs", but only the lucky ones have a true "vocation".

When you interview them, feel free to ask anything you feel is important...some suggestions might be: Ask them what advice they would give to someone who wanted to follow in their footsteps. Ask them what regrets they have. Ask them what, if anything, they would do differently. Ask them what has surprised them about their work. Ask them how they learned to love what they do. What they don't like. Ask them if their vocation in any way relates to Psychology and, if so, how. Ask them how their vocation has changed them as a person, as a friend, or as a lover. Ask them if they have a vocational vision and if so, what is it.

After you conduct the interview, listen to it a few times. What did you hear? What did they say? What didn't they say. Listen as carefully as you can and then write up a summary of it. Don't just repeat what they said. Put it into your own words. Also tell me how the interview affected you. Did it inspire you? Scare you? Your write-up should be *at least* 4-5 double spaced pages.

5. Resume

Prepare a resume for the job that you are seeking after graduation. Maybe you are going after a professional position somewhere, or maybe you are going to apply to graduate school. Whatever it is, you'll need a resume. There is no one right way to write up a resume (but there are plenty of wrong ways). If you go online, you'll find countless templates for how resumes should look. I want you to go and find one that you feel looks professional and clean and informative and create your own using it as a template. Make it look good. Really good. I want a polished and clean and informative resume that has everything that you feel is important for getting your ideal post-graduation job. Trust me, you'll be very glad I made you do this. Do your best not to just list things, but to also integrate some of your Life Plan Vision statement into it if you feel that is appropriate. Make it truly your own. Make it stand out.

6. Senior Survey

This is simply a simple and short survey (about 20 minutes) you will take that assesses your experience as a student of Psychology at UWG. It is required that you complete this. If you complete it, you get the full points. If you do not complete, you receive a zero. It's that simple. I will send post a link to the survey at some point during the semester in Course Announcements.

All assignments are due at the times specified. There is a 3-day window where assignments will be accepted with a 10pt penalty per 24 hrs that they are late. After 3 days, if your assignment is still not turned in, you will receive an automatic zero.

Grades:

Five Central Learnings	= 100 pts
Life Plan Vision Statement	= 200 pts
Research Prospectus	= 100 pts
Professional Interview	= 50 pts
Resume	= 50 pts
Senior Survey	= 25 pts

TOTAL POINTS POSSIBLE = 525 pts

Grading Scale:

Course grade is determined entirely by the total points a student earns:

<u>Percentage</u>	<u>Grade</u>
90-100%	A
80-89%	B
70-79%	C
60-69%	D
Below 60%	F

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

All individual written work is expected to be your own, and plagiarism is highly unacceptable. Proper documentation and citation is required when attributing ideas/information. Please see the honor code in the student handbook me if you have questions, or come see me. If you are caught cheating in any way, you will receive zero points for that assignment and it will be reported to the Dean's Office for possible probation or suspension from the University.

Important information:

Please follow the following link for information regarding student rights and general university policy:
http://www.westga.edu/assets/Dept/vpaa/Common_Language_for_Course_Syllabi.pdf

Course Schedule

Week of Aug 14:	Familiarize yourself with the class. Read Ch. 1 Palmer
Week of Aug 19:	Begin work on Five Central Learnings; Read Ch 2 Palmer
Week of Aug 26:	Five Central Learnings Due Aug 28 by 5pm ; Read Ch 3 Palmer
Week of Sept 2:	Work on Life Plan Vision Statement; Read Ch 4 Palmer
Week of Sept 9:	Work on Life Plan Vision Statement; Read Ch 5 Palmer
Week of Sept 16:	Work on Life Plan Vision Statement; Read Ch 6 Palmer
Week of Sept 23:	Life Plan Vision Statement Due Sept 25 by 5pm ; Read Blaxter Ch. 1
Week of Sept 30	Work on Research Prospectus; Read Blaxter Chs 2-3
Week of Oct 7	Work on Research Prospectus; Read Blaxter Ch 4
Week of Oct 14	Work on Research Prospectus; Read Blaxter Ch 6-7
Week of Oct 21	Research Prospectus Due Oct 23 by 5pm
Week of Oct 28	Work on Professional Interview
Week of Nov 4	Work on Professional Interview
Week of Nov 11	Professional Interview Paper due Nov 13 by 5pm
Week of Nov 18	Work on Resume
Thanksgiving Break	
Week of Dec 2	Resume and Senior Survey due on Dec 4 by 5pm