

PSY 1903 DIRECTED RESEARCH STUDENT GUIDELINES

University of Pittsburgh

Department of Psychology

Directed Research provides a hands-on opportunity for students to learn about psychological research. By working with faculty and graduate students in approved laboratories, students will gain exposure to various aspects of the research process, such as data collection, data entry, and poster presentations. This course is particularly valuable for students interested in graduate study in psychology, and it can also be an impressive entry on a job resume. The Psychology Department has an approved list of labs for PSY 1903: <http://www.psychology.pitt.edu/undergraduate/experiential-learning/directed-research/opportunities.php>. Students may register for PSY 1903 Directed Research in the labs listed on our website, or for a research project with a faculty member with a primary appointment in the Psychology Department.

Prerequisites: Students must complete the following prerequisites before the start of Directed Research: Minimum overall GPA of 3.0, 12 credits of psychology (including current term), completion of PSY 0035 Research Methods, completion of STAT 0200/1000/1100, and any additional requirements of the specific listing. **If you do not meet the prerequisites, the research supervisor can waive the prerequisites by completing the Prerequisite Waiver section of the Learning Agreement.*

IRB and clearance information:

In addition to the learning agreement paperwork, students are required to complete the IRB Undergraduate Student Researcher module through the Collaborative Institutional Training Initiative (CITI) site: www.citi.pitt.edu/. The instructions to create an account and complete the module can be found here: <https://www.hsconnect.pitt.edu/HSC/home/index.do>. Students should expect to spend approximately 2 -3 hours completing the basic courses depending upon reading speed and prior research knowledge. Any questions about in regard to the IRB modules should be directed to Pitt's IRB: <http://www.irb.pitt.edu/>.

Also, for any undergraduate student researcher who works in direct contact with children a lab, he/she must have the following valid clearances **BEFORE** direct contact with any children. If you are unsure, speak with your faculty supervisor as to the appropriate clearances, if necessary:

Act 33/34/73 clearances:

- Pennsylvania Child Abuse History Clearance (Act 33)
 - approx. 3 weeks
 - \$10 each
 - good for one year
- Pennsylvania State Police Request for Criminal Records Check (Act 34)
 - 4+ weeks. Most reports say approx. 5 weeks
 - \$10 each
 - good for one year
- FBI Criminal Background Check (Act 73)
 - approx. 2-3 weeks
 - \$27.50 each

Information for all three clearances for the state of Pennsylvania can be found on the PA Department of Public Welfare website: <http://www.dpw.state.pa.us/findaform/childabusehistoryclearanceforms/index.htm> .

Registering for PSY 1903: Complete the *PSY 1903 Directed Research Learning Agreement* with the faculty supervisor. Make **two** copies of the signed agreement form (one copy for your records, one copy for the site supervisor) and bring them to the Psychology Advising Office during walk-in hours, or by appointment. A psychology advisor will process the learning agreement and provide an enrollment permission number for this course. As a student, you will then need to **register yourself** using the permission number via your Student Service Center.

Students must be registered for PSY 1903 during the semester in which the Directed Research hours are completed. Hours completed prior to the registered term will be considered volunteer hours and are not to be counted in hours completed for credit.

Please Note: Students registering for a Directed Research opportunity that requires a 2-term commitment will have to complete a new Learning Agreement for the second term. If the terms are consecutive (e.g. fall/spring or spring/fall), students will receive an "I" for the first term, and once the second term is completed, the "I" will be changed to either an

“S” or “NC”(no credit). Summer terms do not have to be included in the consecutive policy unless it is agreed upon by the student and faculty member.

Credit Options: Students may take a maximum of 3 credits of PSY 1903 in one term and a maximum of 6 credits in any one lab at the discretion of the research supervisor and the Psychology Advising Office. Students may use 3 credits of PSY 1903 to fulfill one of the psychology degree course requirements. Please talk to your advisor to determine which requirement this may fulfill in regard to your own degree progress. The PSY 1903 experience must be non-paid in order to earn credit. If more than 3 credits of PSY 1903 are earned, these will count as elective credits. Credits are determined by the number of hours spent at the site over the term:

1 credit = 55 hours

2 credits = 85 hours

3 credits = 120 hours

Also note that only 12 credits of PSY 1900, PSY 1902, and PSY 1903 may be applied toward the B.S. degree, with a maximum of 9 credits under one course number. Arts & Sciences allows a maximum of 24 research/internship credits toward the degree; therefore, students can take 12 research/internships credits through A&S and/or other A&S departments in addition to the 12 credit maximum in psychology.

Receiving Credit: In order to earn credit, the student **MUST** submit (in addition to completing their required hours) *two evaluations* (one due at mid-term and one at the end-of-term) to Courseweb by the published due date AND complete an academic component. The required documents for each academic component are outlined below.

Academic component:

Students must complete at least one of the following academic components to earn credit in a PSY 1903 lab:

Assignments for Academic Component of PSY 1903, Psychology Directed Research:

Option 1: Writing assignment – **Students submit document to PSY 1903 courseweb**

- Research paper
- Contribution to conference presentation or proposal
- Manuscript submission or contribution under PSY 1903 faculty member’s supervision

Option 2: Poster presentation – **Students submit document or file (e.g., PowerPoint) to PSY 1903 courseweb**

- Psychology Department annual Student Research Poster Session (spring term event)
- Professional conference (validated by 1903 supervising faculty member)
- LRDC Research Community (validated by 1903 supervising faculty member)
- University Honors College Poster session (validated by 1903 supervising faculty member)

Option 3: Presentation (validated by 1903 supervising faculty member) – **Students submit notes, outline or summary of contribution to PSY 1903 courseweb**

- Lab meeting
- Contribution to conference presentation