Psychology
Eugene Lang College
Guidelines for the Senior Work Project

The capstone experience for all students majoring in psychology is the completion of a Senior Work Project. All senior work projects in Psychology consist of a written document that is based on an empirical study. An empirical study is defined as a project that addresses a specific problem, question or issue through the collection and analysis of data. This includes but is not limited to case studies, surveys, and correlational, experimental and quasi-experimental designs. Starting in Fall 2008 all students majoring in psychology will be required to complete their Senior Work projects in the context of a Research Practicum. It will be possible complete the Senior Work project requirement in psychology in one of two ways:

Option 1: The completion of an independent project under the supervision of the Practicum Supervisor or a designee, or

Option 2: Active participation in an ongoing research project in the host laboratory of the Practicum under the supervision of the Practicum Supervisor or a designee. (Note: The Practicum/SW supervisor is responsible for determining exactly what constitutes an appropriate level of participation.)

Regardless of the option chosen, students are required to submit a project proposal to their Practicum Supervisor and the Chair of Undergraduate studies for approval in accordance with ELC's deadlines for Senior Work Projects. When the Senior Work project involves participation in an ongoing project (i.e. option 2) , the final written document should describe the details of the study, including the research question(s) and relevant literature, and a description of the student's involvement and contributions to the project (e.g., assisting with the data collection).

Psychology majors and prospective psychology majors are encouraged to begin as early as possible in preparing for their Senior Work projects. Ideally, students should take an **introductory statistics course** before the completion of their first semester of their junior year, and complete the **Methods of Inquiry** course no later than the second semester of the junior year (see recommended sequence below).

Research Practica are available only to declared majors in psychology. Students can register for up to 3 semesters of the Research Practicum and are permitted to take practica in different labs. Students in both Senior Work options are required to register for a Practicum course during the first semester of their senior year. Students are not required to take a second Research Practicum but might find it helpful to register for two semesters of the Research Practicum during the senior year. Please note that in addition to registering for the Research Practicum, students must also register for the Independent or Collaborative Senior Project. If selecting Option 1, students should register for the Independent Senior Project. If selecting Option, 2, students should register for the Collaborative Senior Project.

Recommended Sequence:

Introduction to Statistics	Spring semester of Sophomore Year or Fall semester of Junior Year
Methods of Inquiry:	Fall or Spring Semester of Junior Year
First Practicum:	Spring semester of Junior Year or Fall semester of Senior Year
Second Practicum:	Fall semester of Senior Year or Spring semester of Senior Year
Third Practicum:	Spring semester of Senior year

Process for selecting a Practicum/Senior Work advisor

Descriptions of the types of research conducted in all of the laboratories in the Psychology department are available online, and can also be obtained from the chair of the psychology program or Student Advising. Prior to registering for a practicum course students should arrange to meet with the contact person in the laboratory in which they have an interest. Once the lab director has agreed to accept a student into the lab, the lab director will inform the director of Student Advising of the student's acceptance and the number of credits for which the student will be registering (1-4). Students may be asked to complete a written agreement specifying their responsibilities, obligations, learning objectives, and their schedule/hours during the practicum. The lab director will be responsible for submitting the final grade for the practicum, which will also be the grade for the senior work project.

Format for the Senior Work Proposal

- **Title page with Project Title, Name of Student, Name of Advisor /Practicum supervisor**
- **Abstract** [Brief summary of proposed project – Include Research problem; question or issue; Hypotheses/Predictions; Method]
- **Introduction** [Statement of Problem, Question, or Issue and its broader implications]
- **Review of Relevant Literature** [Brief review of the history/evolution of the Problem, Question or Issue]
- **Method** [Brief summary of proposed methodology **– If part of a Research Practicum (option 2),** include a description of your proposed involvement in the execution of the research protocol]

Format for Final Senior Work Project Draft

- **Title page with Project Title, Name of Student, Name of Advisor /Practicum supervisor**
- **Abstract** [Brief summary of proposed project – Include Research problem; question or issue; Hypotheses/Predictions; Method; Results (Option 1); Progress to date and description of involvement (Option 2)]
- **Introduction** [Statement of Problem, Question, or Issue and its broader implications]
- **Review of Relevant Literature** [An expanded and elaborated restatement of the history/evolution of the Problem, Question or Issue from the proposal]
- **Hypotheses/Predictions**
- **Method** [Description of methodology – If part of a Research Practicum (option 2), include a description of your proposed involvement in the execution of the research protocol]
- **Results** (Option 1) [Data Analysis]
- **Progress to date/Description of Participation** (Option 2)

Discussion and Conclusions (Options 1 and 2)

All senior work proposals should developed in collaboration with the Senior Work advisor, who, in the case of Psychology, is as also the Practicum lab director or his/her designee.

Deadlines for the submission of Senior Work proposals and final drafts are determined by College-wide policy.