

**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 (SWP) 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.

Research practica are available only to declared majors in psychology. Students register for 2 semesters of the Research Practicum (Research Practicum 1 and Research Practicum 2). Students are permitted to take the practica in different labs, although this is not recommended. Rather, it is recommended that students take both semesters of the Research Practicum with the same faculty advisor.

**Sequence for Senior Work Project:**

**First semester senior year:**

Research Practicum 1: LPSY 4001 Senior Work Proposal.

This course is taken first semester of senior year by all psychology majors.

**Second semester senior year:**

Research Practicum 2: LPSY 4990 Independent Senior Work Project\*.

OR

Research Practicum 2: LPSY 4999 Collaborative Senior Work Project\*.

\*One of these courses is taken second semester of senior year by all psychology majors.

**Differences between Options for Second Semester:**

**Research Practicum 2: LPSY 4990 Independent Senior Work Project:** This involves completion of an independent project under the supervision of a Practicum Supervisor or a designee.

**Research Practicum 2: LPSY 4999 Collaborative Senior Work Project:** This involves active participation in an ongoing research project in the laboratory of the Practicum Supervisor or a designee (Note: The practicum/SWP supervisor is responsible for determining exactly what constitutes an appropriate level of participation to receive credit for the practicum).

Regardless of the option chosen, students are required to submit a project proposal to their Practicum Supervisor in accordance with Eugene Lang College deadlines for the SWP. When the SWP involves participation in an ongoing project (i.e., Research Practicum 2: LPSY 4999 Collaborative Senior Work Project), the final written document should describe the details of the study, including the research question(s) and relevant literature reviewed in designing the study, and a description of the student's involvement and contributions to the project (e.g., assisting with data collection, coding, etc).

### **Process for Selecting a Practicum/Senior Project Supervisor:**

The first step towards completing the SWP capstone is to select a faculty advisor. This is who you will be working with over the course of your senior year, and whose lab you are requesting permission to join in order to conduct your SWP. Descriptions of the types of research conducted in all psychology department laboratories are available online

(<http://www.newschool.edu/nssr/psychology/>), and can be obtained from the psychology student advisor (Martin Fagin: [fagin940@newschool.edu](mailto:fagin940@newschool.edu)). Lab descriptions will also be emailed to all psychology majors that are second semester juniors prior to the start of the summer in which their senior year begins.

**Prior to registering for a practicum course students must obtain permission from the lab director for the lab the student wishes to join.** To accomplish this, students should read through all lab descriptions and rank their top 3 desired choices for labs they would like to join. Next, students should email the lab directors for their desired choices and set up a time to meet and discuss their thoughts/options for their SWP. If the lab director has agreed to accept the student into their lab, the lab director will inform the Director of Student Advising of the student's acceptance into the lab and the number of credit hours for which the research practicum will be worth (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 proposal and project (respectively).

\*In some cases, lab directors will be unable to accommodate all students desiring to join their lab. In this case, students should continue contacting and interviewing with other desired lab choices. This happens commonly, as there are limited spaces available to students in each lab. Do not despair. If, for any reason, a student is unable to find a lab to accommodate them, please contact the psychology student advisor (Martin Fagin: [fagin940@newschool.edu](mailto:fagin940@newschool.edu)), who will work with the student in finding a faculty advisor.

### **Recommended Sequence of Research Related Courses:**

LMTH 2030 Statistics with SPSS (Spring semester of sophomore year or Fall semester of Junior year).

LPSY 3601 Methods of Inquiry (Fall or Spring semester of Junior year).

Research Practicum 1: LPSY 4001 Senior Work Proposal (Fall semester senior year).

Research Practicum 2: LPSY 4990 Independent Senior Work Project OR LPSY 4999 Collaborative Senior Work Project (Spring semester senior year).

### **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, hypothesis/predictions, Method)
- Introduction (statement of research problem, question(s), or issue and its applied value)
- Review of Relevant Literature (brief review of the history/evolution of the research problem, question, or issue)
- Method (brief summary of proposed methodology - **If you are planning on completing Research Practicum 2: LPSY 4999 Collaborative Senior Work Project**, include a description of your proposed involvement in the execution of the research protocol).

### **Format for Senior Work Project Thesis If Completing LPSY 4990 Independent Senior Work Project:**

- 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, hypothesis/predictions, Method, Results, and discussion)
- Introduction (statement of research problem, question(s), or issue and its applied value)
- Review of Relevant Literature (brief review of the history/evolution of the research problem, question, or issue)
- Hypotheses/Predictions
- Method (brief summary of proposed methodology).
- Results (data analysis)
- Discussion and Conclusions

\*All senior work projects should be developed in collaboration with the SWP faculty advisor/sponsor, who is also the practicum lab director or his/her designee.

\*Deadlines for submission of the SWP final thesis are determined by College-wide policy.

**Format for Senior Work Project Thesis**  
**If Completing LPSY 4999 Collaborative Senior Work Project:**

- 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, hypothesis/predictions, Method, progress to date and description of involvement, and discussion.
- Introduction (statement of research problem, question(s), or issue and its applied value)
- Review of Relevant Literature (brief review of the history/evolution of the research problem, question, or issue)
- Hypotheses/Predictions
- Method (brief summary of proposed methodology - include a description of your proposed involvement in the execution of the research protocol).
- Progress to date/Description of participation
- Discussion and Conclusions

\*All senior work projects should be developed in collaboration with the SWP faculty advisor/sponsor, who is also the practicum lab director or his/her designee.

\*Deadlines for submission of the SWP final thesis are determined by College-wide policy.