PSY710Z: Brain, Cognitive, and
Developmental (BCD) Brown Bag

Fall 2016

# **Instructor:**

Matthew McMurray, PhD

Assistant Professor

Department of Psychology

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# **Meeting Location and Times**

Location: Psychology 244

Times: Tuesdays, 10:30-11:50

# **Instructor Office Hours**

Times: Mondays 3-5pm or by appointment

Location: Psychology 221

# **Course Description**

This seminar will serve as a place to discuss current research occurring within the department (and specifically within the BCD area), current scientific trends and methodologies in our fields, and professional development skills and strategies.

# **Objectives**

* Provide a forum for presenting and receiving feedback on new research ideas, ongoing projects, and completed thesis or dissertation research
* Provide a “practice field” for discussing our own research with intelligent, but non-expert audiences
* Discussing issues regarding professional development, including career planning, strategies for maximizing graduate school success, and work/life balance

# **Requirements**

This is a discussion forum, and requires attendance of all members to be successful. Attendance will be collected at the start of each meeting. In order for discussion to work well, everyone must also come prepared to engage with other students and faculty (already read and thought about assigned material, etc). Additionally, a respectful and patient attitude is required from all students and faculty attending this seminar. Differences in opinion are the foundation of our field, but we must strive to express (and hopefully resolve) those differences in a productive and respectful way.

# **Discussion Topics:**

During the course of the semester, we will discuss a number of topics (see below). During the first class meeting, we will also discuss what other topics you would like to include.

1. Professional Development: To achieve your career goals, you need to be successful in more than just research. You need to demonstrate excellence in countless other domains, including leadership, communication, teamwork, and even your ability to successfully balance your work with your other life goals. It is not the purpose of this seminar to give you these other skills, but this seminar is an excellent opportunity to make sure you’re all thinking about them and seeking out the training you need to be successful. To accomplish this, we will discuss Individual Development Plans and Mentorship Trees, which are two ways to help make sure you do not lose track of these important goals.
2. Finding funding: For students interested in academic careers, obtaining grant funding early and often is one of the keys to success. Last semester, Dr Thomas led us in a discussion of NSF funding opportunities; however, many of us have research interests that do not fall under NSF’s domain. This semester, I want to build on our earlier discussion to bring in non-NSF opportunities, from both here at Miami and from other organizations (Federal, private, etc). The goal of this discussion will be to generate a list of opportunities, their requirements, and deadlines, which I will then share with everyone in the class. Your own experiences will be key to this discussion.
3. Presentation Skills: At some point in your graduate training, you will all be asked to present your research, whether it be a poster presentation at the Graduate Research Forum, an oral presentation at a major conference, or even to pitch your idea to a potential collaborator or funder at a social. Your ability to effectively and concisely discuss your research is one of the most important skills you can learn as a graduate student. To facilitate this, we will discuss strategies for presenting in a number of formats, from large groups of scientists, to small groups of non-scientists. Additionally, we will discuss how to effectively use social media to advance your research and career.
4. Student Presentations: To hone your presentation skills, all students will be required to present at one of our weekly sessions. Students are expected to present on their own research, regardless of how far along the project is (even presenting the background and study idea is acceptable). It is beneficial for everyone to hear about projects at different stages, from the initial idea, to developing an appropriate experimental design, to finalizing data analysis and publication. First through 4th year students should prepare presentations no longer than 30 minutes in length. Fifth year students and above should prepare an hour-long presentation. At the end of every student presentation, all audience members will be asked to complete a Feedback Form to provide the presenter with critical, professional feedback about their presentation.
5. Overview of BCD Research Programs: First year students will be required to conduct visits to the lab of a BCD faculty member that is not their primary mentor. During the final session, each first year student will give a short presentation on the laboratory that they visited during the semester.

# **Course Schedule (subject to change):**

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| Week | Date | Topic/Presenter |
| 1 | 30-Aug | Overview and Presentation Slot Sign-ups |
| 2 | 6-Sept | Individual Development Plans and Mentorship Trees |
| 3 | 13-Sept | How to give a presentation (Powerpoint, Posters, and Elevators) |
| 4 | 20-Sept | Finding funding at the NIH and non-federal agencies |
| 5 | 27-Sept | Student Presentations |
| 6 | 4-Oct | Student Presentations |
| 7 | 11-Oct | Student Presentations |
| 8 | 18-Oct | Advancing your research and career with social media |
| 9 | 25-Oct | Student Presentations |
| 10 | 1-Nov | Student Presentations |
| 11 | 8-Nov | Student Presentations |
| 12 | 15-Nov | Student Presentations |
| 13 | 22-Nov | Student Presentations |
| 14 | 29-Nov | Student Presentations |
| 15 | 6-Dec | First Year Lab Presentations, End of Semester Celebration |