PSYC3023 Special Topics
and
PSYC3030 Psychology Undergraduate Research Experience (PURE)
2016

Background

Special Topics and PURE courses are small, research-intensive courses that allow you to extend yourself in a particular area of Psychology.

The PURE courses are only available to B(Psyc) students, and are typically research-only courses in which you will work with a Psychology staff member on a research project. Some examples of this include; working to collect additional data for a project nearing completion, working to pilot a methodology or procedure to be used in a larger project, working with a PhD student to help them collect data, or working to collect ‘baseline’ or ‘control’ data for a larger project. Typically you would work on projects that are already developed. This is very much like a research internship, and is excellent practice for honours.

The Special Topics courses can run in the same way as the PURE courses, but there is also greater flexibility in the design. So, for example, in addition having research-intensive options, Special Topics courses can also be journal-club style with a small number of students, it can also run like a ‘normal’ undergraduate course. We might decide to run a Special Topics course in this way if we are piloting a new undergraduate course to see how it will be received by students, or we have a visiting scholar who would like to do some teaching while they are with us.

In short, the options will change every year, and be dependent on the requirements and objectives of staff in the school.

How do you find out about courses?

Courses will be listed here – refer to the bottom of this information sheet. In this case, just contact the person who is the main contact for the research project.

However, it is also possible for you to initiate a research project yourself, if you would particularly like to work with a specific staff member, or work on a particular project, or even a develop project of your own. In this case, contact the relevant staff member (i.e, the one who is closest to your interests) directly and simply ask if there is a research project that you could work on with them.

How do you enrol in a course?

For small courses, enrolment will be on a first-come-first-in basis, and will also be depended on your background, in that some courses may require that you have taken specific subjects.

Larger courses will be unlikely to have a limited intake

Once you have agreed on a research project, you enrol through ISIS, but you may need to contact Psychology information enquiries.psychology@anu.edu.au for a permission code.
Can you do more than one PSYC3030 or PSYC3023 course?

Yes, but the course content must be different. It is even possible to do a research project with the same supervisor, as long as they are different projects. A postscript will be made on your transcript to differentiate between the two courses.

When can you do a course through the year?

You can do a course at any time that is convenient for you and the supervisor. So it can be run as an intensive at any time through the year, or as a ‘normal’ course through semester 1 or 2.

However, your results will still have to be ‘tagged’ to a standard ANU semester. So, for example, if you negotiate a research course with a supervisor to be conducted through the first 2 weeks of December, you will enrol in an ANU Summer Session, and not receive your grades until the ANU summer session has completed at the end of January. The important thing here is to enrol in the ANU semester that is closest to the time that you want to actually run the project.

What would be a typical assessment?

This is negotiated with the supervisor. For a research-intensive course, a typical assessment would consist of a project report, and a presentation.