

Dissertation in Psychology (PSYC7308)

Students of the Master of Social Sciences (Psychology) programme are required to write a dissertation in their final year of study to complete their programme.

Course Description

PSYC7308 Dissertation in Psychology (12 credits)

A student should conduct an independent empirical investigation of a psychological problem under the supervision of a faculty member. A successful dissertation should represent the result of the candidate's research which displays some originality and demonstrates a sound understanding of the field of study and the appropriate research methods. The dissertation should not exceed 15,000 words in length (excluding tables, figures, bibliographies, and appendices).

Overview

The dissertation will be an integration of everything the students have learned regarding psychological research. Each dissertation project will be supervised individually by a faculty member. The dissertation should include Title Page, Table of Contents, Abstract, Acknowledgement (if needed), Introduction, Methodology, Results, Discussion, Conclusion and Reference. The grading criteria will be based on: Knowledge of the research topic, Critical analysis, Novelty and significance, Design of study, Data analysis and presentation, Writing and organization.

Students should enrol this course at the beginning of their final year of study. They should fill out a Supervisor Preference Form in around mid-September, which will be sent to the faculty members for consideration in order of their preferences. Students will be informed of the results by email in November.

Ethics Application

All dissertation projects are required to undergo ethics review by reviewers assigned by the Departmental Research Ethics Committee. Applications should be submitted by 15th January. For a dissertation project that starts in the second semester, the application deadline is 15th June. Late submission will be penalized. Students can fail the course for not submitting an ethics application. Please see details of the ethics application on the departmental webpage:

http://www.psychology.hku.hk/~main/?page_id=1814

Presentation on Research Proposal

Around the end of January, each student has to present his/her research proposal to a small group of fellow students and two faculty members. Each presentation and discussion will last about 20 minutes. This offers each student an opportunity to receive more inputs on his/her project before finalizing the research design for data collection.

Submission of Dissertation

1. The deadline of submission is 30th June. For a dissertation project that starts in the second semester, the submission deadline is 30th November. If the submission day is a holiday, it will be postponed to the following working day.
2. TWO hard copies of your dissertation should be submitted to the General Office of the Department of Psychology by the deadline. The submitted copies will not be returned to students.
3. All borrowed theses or ARM /IS projects must be returned to the General Office on the same day.
4. No specific format is required for binding a dissertation.
5. One mark will be deducted for any late submission per day except Saturdays, Sundays and Public Holidays.
6. Extension of dissertation submission deadline can only be granted on medical reasons. All the following are strictly required: a letter from certified medical practitioners, prior approval from the Programme Director, and supervisor's consent.
7. Students should give due acknowledgement when quoting from the literature, and retain all raw data and research materials.
8. The Department may require an oral examination in addition to the submission.

Guidelines for submitting soft copy

1. Students should submit one single file in PDF format including all chapters to Moodle (course: PSYC7308 Dissertation in Psychology) by the deadline (30th June).
2. Covering page, pictures, tables and charts must be included in appropriate position of the PDF file. Please do not submit the data file(s), e.g. SPSS or excel, separately.