

**City University of Hong Kong**

**Information on a Course  
offered by Department of Applied Social Sciences  
with effect from Semester A in 2014-2015**

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**Part I**

Course Title:	Psychology Research Paper
Course Code:	SS5790
Course Duration:	Two semesters (dissertation-type)
No. of Credit Units:	5
Level:	P5
Medium of Instruction:	English
Medium of Assessment:	English
Prerequisites:	18 credits in the program including SS5780 Research Design & Analysis in Psychology
Co-requisites:	SS5794 Psychological Testing or SS5797 Advanced Research Methods in Psychology or SS5814 Vocational Counselling and Assessment (for students who have not completed one of these courses). Students who completed the equivalents of SS5797, i.e. SS5795 or SS5796 prior to Semester A 2014-15 are considered to meet this co-requisite requirement.
Precursors:	Nil
Equivalent Courses:	Nil
Exclusive Courses:	Nil

**Part II**

**1. Course Aims**

The aim of this course is to enable students to demonstrate their ability to develop, plan and execute psychological research. It is designed to foster independent thinking and to encourage academic debate on significant issues and principles of psychological research via individual supervision.

**2. Course Intended Learning Outcomes (CILOs)**

*Upon successful completion of this course, students should be able to:*

No.	CILOs	Weighting
1.	Design and carry out psychological research under supervision;	30%

2.	Integrate knowledge of psychological theories and research skills into the planning, design and implementation of their research; and	40%
3.	Communicate effectively findings of psychological research in a scientific manner.	30%

### 3. Teaching and learning Activities (TLAs)

*(Indicative of likely activities and tasks designed to facilitate students' achievement of the CILOs. Final details will be provided to students in their first week of attendance in this course)*

CILO No.	TLA1:	TLA2:	TLA3:	Hours / week (if applicable)
CILO 1	✓	✓		
CILO 2	✓	✓	✓	
CILO 3	✓		✓	

Describe the TLAs:

#### TLA1: Supervision

Students learn to integrate knowledge in psychological theories and research to formulate their own research questions/hypotheses via individual supervision sessions. In addition, students conducting similar research will meet with their supervisor in a group to report progress of their research and discuss issues of common concern.

#### TLA2: Consultation sessions

Consultations on methodological, statistical and other technical issues will be provided by instructors/tutors. These sessions are expected to provide students with the guidance that enable them to process, analyze and interpret findings of their research in the most effective and accurate manner.

#### TLA3: Research seminars

Two 2-hour research seminars will be organized for all FYP students in each regular semester.

#### **Note:**

SS5790 and SS5790B are equivalent courses. The courses are designated for students in different modes of study. These courses cannot be repeated. Once started, switching between SS5790 and SS5790B is not allowed regardless of the changes in the mode of study.

#### SS5790

Students of the part-time/combined study mode are required to take SS5790. The normal duration of the course is 2 semesters (Semester A & Semester B). The maximum extension duration of the course is 3 semesters (Summer term, Semester A & Semester B). After which no further extension is permitted. Each semester is charged 2.5 credits and summer term is charged 1 credit.

#### SS5790B

Students of the full-time study mode are required to take SS5790B. The normal duration of the course is 2 semesters (Semester B & Summer). The maximum extension duration of the course is 1 semester (Semester A). After which no further extension is permitted. Each semester is charged 2.5 credits.

#### 4. Assessment Tasks/Activities

(Indicative of likely activities and tasks designed to assess how well the students achieve the CILOs. Final details will be provided to students in their first week of attendance in this course)

CILO No.	Type of assessment tasks/activities	Weighting
1-3	AT1: Research Report	100%

Further description of ATs:

##### AT1: Research Report (100%)

Each student is required to carry out an empirical research under the supervision of a faculty member and write up the findings of the research in the format of a scientific report. The report should be about 7000 words in length and consist of two major parts: a review of the literature most relevant to the phenomena or relationships under investigation and a report of the major findings of the empirical study. Originality is encouraged but not a part of the standard requirements. Students are to demonstrate the following attainments in their work:

1. A critical review of relevant literature; an understanding of the concepts/theories applicable to the questions chosen; appropriate formulation of research questions or hypotheses.
2. Appropriate methods and procedures were chosen to carry out the research; sensitivity to methodological issues is demonstrated.
3. The use of appropriate statistical methods to analyze data and evaluate research questions or hypotheses.
4. A clear understanding of the findings and an appreciation of the limitations of their own research; sensitivity to cross-cultural issues is demonstrated.

#### 5. Grading of Student Achievement:

Refer to Grading of Courses in the Academic Regulations for Taught Postgraduate Degrees.

Letter Grade	Marks	Grade definitions
A+/A/A-	≥75	<p><b>Excellent</b></p> <p><u>Literature review:</u> Able to critically analyze and synthesize relevant literature; superior grasp of the research topic; research questions are clearly communicated; conceptual framework is critically argued; clear and logical formulation of research hypotheses; evidence of solid understanding of the literature.</p> <p><u>Method &amp; Results:</u> Use of the most appropriate research design and statistical methods; evidence of superior execution of research procedures and statistical analyses; clear report of research findings.</p> <p><u>Discussion:</u> Correct and critical interpretation/discussion of research findings in relation to prior data; sensitive to cross-cultural issues (if applicable); implications and limitations of study results are clearly spelled out.</p> <p><u>Other aspects:</u> Good organization; evidence of scholarly writing style; comply with research ethics; NO evidence of academic dishonesty.</p>
B+/B/B-	60-74	<p><b>Good</b></p> <p><u>Literature review:</u> Able to analyze relevant literature; evidence of grasp of the research topic; research questions and conceptual framework are clearly communicated; reasonable formulation of research hypotheses; evidence of familiarity with the literature.</p> <p><u>Method &amp; Results:</u> Use of appropriate research design and statistical methods; good</p>

			<p>execution of research procedures and statistical analyses; clear report of research findings.</p> <p><u>Discussion:</u> Correct and clear interpretation/discussion of research findings in relation to prior data; implications and limitations of study results are adequately discussed.</p> <p><u>Other aspects:</u> Reasonable organization; comply with research ethics.</p>
C+/C/C-	45-59	Adequate	<p><u>Literature review:</u> Able to identify relevant literature; adequate formulation of research hypotheses; research questions and conceptual framework are stated; fair understanding of the literature.</p> <p><u>Method &amp; Results:</u> Use of appropriate research design and/or statistical methods; fair execution of research procedures and statistical analyses; incomplete and/or unclear report of research findings.</p> <p><u>Discussion:</u> Fair interpretation/discussion of research findings; implications and limitation of study results are not adequately discussed.</p> <p><u>Other aspects:</u> Fair organization; comply with research ethics.</p>
D	40-44	Marginal	<p><u>Literature review:</u> Limited or irrelevant use of literature; poor formulation of research hypotheses; research questions and conceptual framework are poorly stated; poor understanding of the literature.</p> <p><u>Method &amp; Results:</u> Use of inappropriate research design and/or statistical methods; poor execution of research procedures and statistical analyses; incomplete and/or unclear report of research findings.</p> <p><u>Discussion:</u> Poor interpretation/discussion of research findings; implications and limitations of study not mentioned and discussed.</p> <p><u>Other aspects:</u> Poor organization; fail to comply with research ethics.</p>
F	≤39	Failure	<p>Limited or irrelevant use of literature; little evidence of familiarity with the research topic; weakness in critical and analytic skills; fail to comply with research ethics; evidence of academic dishonesty.</p>

### Part III

#### 1. Keyword Syllabus:

There is no formal syllabus but the procedure will involve:

- Determination of topic areas for research.
- Reading assignment, development and preparation of a research proposal on a topic in line with the research interest of a supervisor.
- Data gathering and analysis.
- Preparation and presentation of the research report.

#### 2. Recommended Readings:

Christensen, L. B. (2004). *Experimental methodology* (9<sup>th</sup> ed.). Boston, MA: Allyn & Bacon.

Cohen, B. H. (2001). *Explaining psychological statistics* (2<sup>nd</sup> ed.). New York: John Wiley & Sons.

Rosenthal, R., & Rosnow, R. L. (2008). *Essentials of behavioral research: Methods and data analysis* (3<sup>rd</sup> ed.). New York: McGraw-Hill.