The psychology department supports psychology majors who intend to write an undergraduate psychology thesis by offering a Psychology undergraduate thesis option.

The option to write an undergraduate psychology thesis is offered only to qualified psychology students who are in the final year of their undergraduate psychology studies (senior year) and who have a very good grade record in their psychology courses (see prerequisites for students).

The option to write an undergraduate psychology thesis is voluntary both on the side of the psychology student and on the side of the psychology faculty. It is the responsibility of the student to find a faculty member willing to supervise a thesis project.

Process

1. Choosing a research topic:
   a. The student determines a possible topic for the thesis, based on his/her interests and prior background reading in coordination with the research fields of the Psychology Department faculty.
   b. The student finds a Thesis Supervisor. Usually, this is a member of the psychology research faculty. However, if approved by the psychology Thesis Coordinator, the Thesis Supervisor can be any member of the psychology research or adjunct faculty or an off-campus researcher, who has a MA/Mag. or PhD and is qualified in the area of the chosen topic and willing to supervise the thesis process.
   c. The student discusses his/her plans for the thesis with the possible Thesis Supervisor to see if their chosen Thesis Supervisor is actually willing to supervise the thesis. If necessary, the student may have to change and adjust his/her thesis topic and/or Thesis Supervisor. If a student finds no Thesis Supervisor who is willing to supervise the thesis (e.g., lack of Supervisor’s time or interest, student not qualified enough to write a thesis), then writing a psychology undergraduate thesis may not be possible.
   d. The student receives a thesis approval form from the Thesis Coordinator (Mag. Krista Rothschild) or online.

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2. Completing the thesis approval form:
   a. Required format:
      i. APA, 12-point font on A4 single sided pages, double spacing, with margins of 2.54 cm (top and bottom) and 3.17 cm (left and right).
      ii. There should be a very brief review of the relevant literature – enough to establish the context for the research, but not in the detailed format as required in the thesis itself (2 pages would be sufficient for the brief review).
      iii. Arising from that review should be a set of clearly stated aims. The hypotheses that the research addresses should be clear to the reader (approximately ½ to 1 page).
      iv. There should be a simple statement on the design of the study in conventional terminology (e.g., a 2 x 2 factorial design, or development and psychometric evaluation of a questionnaire; survey on *** etc.)
      v. The method (approximately 3 – 5 pages, depending upon the complexity of the design) should be described in adequate detail, including the likely number and source of participants, participant inclusion and exclusion criteria, the consent form and information to be given to participants about the research (if relevant) (as appendices), measures to be used, any equipment or special conditions, randomization methods (if relevant), and the overall procedure such as the sequence of steps in the research.
      vi. There needs to be a clear statement of the anticipated data analysis that is consistent with the hypotheses. It is not sufficient to state that a “correlational analysis will be performed”. Students must state which variables will be correlated with one another, what type of correlational analysis will be performed, and so forth in accordance with the type of data to be collected and requirement meeting the various statistical methods. The same point applies to other analytical methods.
      vii. Finally, the proposal should include a reference list (APA format) to the works cited in the text.
      viii. Copies of all questionnaires (copies of the testing material as it applies), the consent form and the demographics form must accompany this form. English translations will need to be attached.
   b. The student completes the thesis approval form and signs it.
   c. The Thesis Supervisor checks the completed thesis approval form for quality and practicability, and requires changes, clarifications, improvements where necessary. If the completed form is approved and the Thesis Supervisor is willing to supervise the thesis project as described, the Supervisor signs the thesis approval form.
The thesis approval form is checked for quality by the Thesis Coordinator, including the choice of appropriate Thesis Supervisor.

The thesis approval form is signed by the Department Head.

When the thesis proposal is approved, the Thesis Coordinator begins the search for an appropriate Thesis Reader and organizes their contract.

3. Webster IRB Ethics Committee:
   a. The final approval to commence data collection will be contingent upon submission to Webster University’s IRB ethics committee and their approval. It is necessary to send the IRB their application one term before starting the thesis (i.e. end of Fall I after the changes are made according to the Thesis Review Panel, as noted above, for a Spring graduation). Whether or not the WUV IRB ethics committee extensively examines the proposal will depend upon a number of factors: the involvement of other collaborating institutions and the identification by the panel of potentially intrusive, risky, harmful, or otherwise ethically and socially contentious procedures. The IRB requires a statement about Austrian/European ethics, which will be available from the Thesis Coordinator. The IRB will decide, if the thesis will need an Exempt Review, an Expedited Review or a Full Board Review. The Exempt and Expedited Reviews can take up to two weeks. The Full Board Review can take up to four weeks. For more information, please see www.webster.edu/irb/policy/. It is common that the IRB requests more information or changes in the design, thus beginning the process in a timely manner is critical.
   b. All BA theses must go through an ethics committee. If another collaborating institution wishes that the proposal be submitted through their own research ethics committee, Webster University will accept the outcome of that committee’s deliberations as final.
   c. Once the approval of the IRB or another collaborating institute’s ethics committee is received, the BA student may add a statement to the consent form stating that the research project has been approved by the given ethics committee, and only then may s/he begin with the experiment.

4. Course Registration:
   a. The student takes the thesis approval form (which is now signed by the student, the Thesis Supervisor, the Thesis Coordinator and Department Head) to the Academic Advisor to enroll in PSYC 4825 Senior Thesis and PSYC 4875 Advanced Psychology Lab.
   b. Unless approved otherwise by the Department Head, the thesis is conducted as a 4-credit semester course (2 terms) including Senior Thesis (3-credit course offered by Thesis Supervisor) and Advanced Psychology Lab (1-credit course offered by instructor and faculty).
5. PSYC 4875 Advanced Psychology Lab:
   a. The Advanced Psychology Lab is offered every term and takes place three times a term for two hours. The Advanced Psychology Lab is frequented by thesis students as well as faculty members.
   b. Students are required to attend all meetings within two terms and to give two 45-minute presentations about their thesis project. The first proposal presentation is due at the beginning of the first term; the second result presentation is due at the end of the second term.
   c. Students will receive critical comments and advice about their thesis project from faculty and student colleagues and to deepen their presentation and discussion skills by actively attending faculty and other students’ research presentations.
   d. Students are asked to prepare for each session by reading the suggested literature.
   e. Depending on needs and questions, the instructor offers out of class meetings with the students.
   f. The student will receive a pass or fail (credit/no credit) grade. Passing the Advanced Psychology Lab course is a basic prerequisite for passing the Senior Thesis course.

6. Supervision and Running the Research:
   a. During the semester-long thesis project, the student receives regular supervision from the Thesis Supervisor as established between student and Thesis Supervisor.

7. Final Thesis and Submission
   a. The thesis is written in compliance with APA citation guidelines.
   b. One good source, in addition to WUV’s Writing Center, is the Purdue University OWL website: https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/. There are copies of APA handbooks in the campus library.
   c. The text of the thesis can vary in length (excluding references, table of contents and other preliminary pages), depending on the nature of the thesis, numbers of tables, and other aspects. Typically it is 40-60 pages long. The thesis should be written in conformity to APA style in its entirety. The print must be in 12-point font on A4 single sided pages, double spacing, with margins of 2.54 cm (top and bottom) and 3.17 cm (left and right). It is to be considered a “print read” research report for a professional journal, with the tables and figures in the text.
   d. The following sections are expected in the thesis and each begins on a new page:
      Title Page (required)
      Title, author, Webster Vienna Private University, date and following text:
      “Bachelor’s thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Bachelor of Arts in Psychology.”
      Dedication (optional)
Acknowledgements (optional)
Preface (optional)
Table of Contents (required)
List of Tables (required if tables are used)
List of Figures (required if figures are used)
Abstract (required) with the Running Head starting here
Chapter 1: Introduction (Review of Literature)
Chapter 2: Methods
Chapter 3: Results
Chapter 4: Discussion and Conclusions
List of References (required)
Appendices (optional)

e. At the end of the thesis project, the student submits an electronic copy of the finished thesis to the Thesis Supervisor and to the Thesis Coordinator in Week 7 of the final term.
f. The Thesis Coordinator will forward the e-copy to the Thesis Reader.
g. In addition, the Supervisor is required to set up a Turn-It-In link in Canvas for the student to upload their thesis on the due date in Week 7 of the final term.

8. Thesis Grading:
a. The Thesis Reader will be assigned to the student by the Thesis Coordinator.
b. The Supervisor will grade the thesis in coordination with the Thesis Reader. The Thesis Supervisor sends the thesis evaluation to the Thesis Reader. The Thesis Reader checks that quality standards are maintained in the thesis and the thesis evaluation.
c. The Thesis Supervisor receives confirmation from the Thesis Reader.
d. The student will receive feedback and be informed of all necessary changes in Week 8.
e. The Thesis Supervisor provides a type-written one-page verbal thesis evaluation, including a grade (A-F) for the thesis.
f. The Thesis Supervisor formally provides the student with the written thesis evaluation and finalizes the thesis project by entering the thesis grade for the course PSYC 4825 Senior Thesis.
g. The Thesis Coordinator receives a copy of the written evaluation.

9. Printing:
a. After any/all necessary changes were made, the Supervisor will grant the permission to print. The student will then have three hard-bound copies made and submitted in the following week (break week).
b. The copies must be in a hard-bound cover (no spiral binding) with the name of the student printed on the spine.

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10. Extensions:
   a. In the case that the student cannot complete his/her work by the set
deadline, requests for extension should be made in writing to the Thesis
Coordinator, stating the circumstances and the reasons why the work
cannot be completed by the due date. The Department Head must give
their approval. Extensions should be requested at least three weeks prior to
the due date to adjust all WUV contracts made in connection with the
student’s thesis.

11. Final Steps:
   a. The IRB needs to be notified of the end of the project via their form on
their website.
   b. Webster Vienna is beginning the process of uploading all theses to the St.
Louis Library. Students will be contacted regarding these uploads.

For the Psychology Department
Mag. Krista Rothschild, Thesis Coordinator