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Psych 395—Independent Research Syllabus

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Course Description:

Students must first apply to the PRIDE internship program by the specified date. Once selected to the internship program, students will register for the course under either Dr. Starks or Dr. Rendina, depending on the student's research interests. Intern program staff will work with students during the application and enrollment process to match them with the faculty member who is best fitted to their intended research project.

Requirements:

All students must have completed the online course in the protection of Human Subjects (www.citiprogram.org) before beginning the intern experience. Students who previously completed this online training for other courses simply must provide PRIDE with a copy of their completion certificate.

Grading:

Grades for Psych 395 will be based on the following: 25% each for Part A and Part B; and 50% for Part C. Completing your Research Hours and Essay Paper are NOT sufficient for a grade of A for the course. You will also be graded on the quality of your work and attendance.

A. Attendance and Hours (25% of your final grade)

- Students are required to work 112 hours (8-10 hours a week for 14 weeks, breaks not included, shift minimum length 3 hours) at PRIDE for the course of the semester. Students will set their schedules with the Intern Coordinator. Students will be given an INCOMPLETE if the required hours are not completed by the last day of classes.
- Conduct that is in conflict with the stated policies and procedures (e.g., excessive breaks, disturbing others, improper use of cell phones, doing personal work on PRIDE time, etc.) as outlined in the PRIDE Policy and Procedure Manual, as well as lack of progress in accomplishing tasks, will negatively impact your final grade.
- In line with PRIDE policies and procedures, non-adherence to expectations regarding tardiness and attendance will negatively impact your grade. *Students who are excessively late or who do not show up for their shifts without letting their appropriate supervisors know will have their final grade significantly impacted.*
- There will be several mandatory trainings (held once a month in the evenings), including your Orientation. Each of them will be relevant to research, professional skills and/or the area of HIV.

- All students will be given a copy of the PRIDE's Policy and Procedure Manual before their first scheduled day of interning and must return to the Intern Coordinator the signed form on the last page stating that they have read and agreed to these policies.
- The internship experience is professional development. Students are expected to approach the internship as such. Therefore students' conduct is part of their evaluation for this part of their grade, which will be determined through input from the Intern Coordinator and other PRIDE staff with whom you work.

B. Quality of Work (25% of your final grade)

- Throughout the semester, the student will receive project-related tasks from PRIDE staff. Students will be expected to be available for task assignments from any staff member (e.g. Project Coordinators, Research Assistants, etc.), and perform their duties ably and thoughtfully. At the end of the semester, PRIDE staff will send the intern coordinator evaluations for each student, based on their experiences working with said student, as well as general observations regarding their quality of work performed. *Final grades will be based on these evaluations, as well as experiences that the student's mentor, task supervisor, and intern coordinator have had with the student.*

C. Writing Assignment (50% of your final grade)

- Due to the nature of the work at PRIDE, this assignment asks you to become an expert in a specific area of HIV research. Adherence to APA style, proper grammar, punctuation, and spelling will be considered in grading, as will the quality of the paper. It is suggested that you speak to the Intern Coordinator about your ideas for this paper prior to beginning the writing process. For this assignment you will:
 - Describe the population in question and why they are at risk. You *may* need some additional references for this. (*Minimum 3 pages*)
 - Review at least 5 psychology articles from research journals that focus on HIV-related *risk taking (drug use or unsafe sex)* in this group and *why* researchers think it occurs (specific factors/variables). You must discuss each research article fully (e.g., sample and methods) in at least one page and discuss the findings, highlighting the strengths and weaknesses of the research. (*Minimum 3 pages*)
 - Discuss what the 5 articles had in common and what was different about them (e.g., sampling, methods used, etc.). (*Minimum 2 pages*)
 - Write a short discussion advising other psychologists what we need to be doing in the future (overlooked factors, recommendations for improving future research) based upon what you have learned from the five research articles. (*Minimum 3 pages*)
 - *Final product should be 11-15 pages (not including cover page or references, etc.). Citations and references should be in APA format.*
- **Students are expected to turn in their paper by the LAST DAY OF CLASSES for the semester. Failure to do so will result in loss of 50% of your final grade, at the discretion of your research mentor. Submit your final paper to Dr. Starks, or Dr. Rendina by email.**