

Senior Requirement Orientation

Yarrow Dunham

DUS Psychology

Zach Silver

Graduate Assistant DUS

Advising information

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<https://psychology.yale.edu/undergraduate/advising-information>

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Senior Requirements

- Psychology majors must earn two credits from courses numbered PSYC 400-499
 - At least one of these courses must be taken during the senior year, and the student must write a substantial final paper (senior essay; minimum 5,000 words) and receive a letter grade.
 - PSYC 490-495 are graded pass/fail and cannot be used for the senior essay

Option #	Course that can be taken any year	Course that must be taken during the senior year and produce a senior essay
1	Senior Seminar	Senior Seminar
2	493	Senior Seminar
3	495, 495	Senior Seminar
4	Senior Seminar	499
5	493	499
6	495, 495	499
7		499, 499

Can I take any of these courses multiple times?

- Psyc 493, 495, and 499 can be repeated as many times as you wish. Though, only 3 credits from these courses can count towards psych credits.

Option #	Course that can be taken any year	Course that must be taken during the senior year and produce a senior essay
1	Senior Seminar	Senior Seminar
2	493	Senior Seminar
3	495, 495	Senior Seminar
4	Senior Seminar	499
5	493	499
6	495, 495	499
7		499, 499

Can I take PSYC 499 twice?

- Yes, this option (option 7) is recommended for those who want to go to graduate school in Psychology, would like to publish their senior essay, exc.
- The student must write two substantial papers (at least 5000 words each), one from each term.
- Example: introduction and methods section in the fall semester (at least 5000 words) + results and discussion section in the spring semester (at least 5000 **new** words)

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3	495, 495	Senior Seminar
4	Senior Seminar	499
5	493	499
6	495, 495	499
7		499, 499

Are there different requirements for the BA and BS degree?

- Students seeking a **BA degree** can choose from options 1-7, but most choose from options 1-3.
- Students seeking a **BS degree** must conduct empirical research through PSYC 499. Thus, those students can only choose from options 4-7.

Option #	Course that can be taken any year	Course that must be taken during the senior year and produce a senior essay
1	Senior Seminar	Senior Seminar
2	493	Senior Seminar
3	495, 495	Senior Seminar
4	Senior Seminar	499
5	493	499
6	495, 495	499
7		499, 499

Do the requirements differ for students on the neuroscience track?

- Students in the **neuroscience track** have the same requirements, **however both 400-level courses must have neuroscience content.**

Option #	Course that can be taken any year	Course that must be taken during the senior year and produce a senior essay
1	Senior Seminar	Senior Seminar
2	493	Senior Seminar
3	495, 495	Senior Seminar
4	Senior Seminar	499
5	493	499
6	495, 495	499
7		499, 499

How do I obtain distinction in the major?

- Students seeking **distinction** in the major have the same requirements except that their senior essays must be submitted 1 week before the last day of the class in the term they are taking the course for senior essay.
 - The senior essay will be graded by the student's advisor and a second reader
 - You must receive an A- or A to obtain distinction
- You will also need 75% A / A- grades in psychology courses to qualify
 - Cr/D/F classes do count in the denominator, excepting classes during the "Covid semester"

Senior requirement summary

- Psyc 493, 495, and 499 can be repeated as many times as you wish. Though, only 3 credits from these courses can count towards psych credits.
- Students seeking a **BS degree** must conduct empirical research through PSYC 499.
- Students seeking a **BA degree** are not required to take PSYC 499, and may choose any combination of 2 credits at the 400-level
- For students in the **neuroscience track** both 400-level courses must have neuroscience content.
- Students seeking **distinction** must submit their essays 1 week before the last day of the class in the term they are taking the course for senior essay.

Tutorial forms

- Tutorial forms must be submitted at the beginning of the semester to enroll in Directed Research (PSYC 493), Research Topics (PSYC 495), or Senior Essay (PSYC 499)
- Specific deadlines will be announced via email and the department webpage

Pre- registering for senior seminars

- All seniors are guaranteed registration in 1 senior seminar
- An email from Prof. Dunham in the next few weeks will have instructions for submitting your top choices


Choosing a senior essay topic



- Choose a topic that...
 - you are interested in and enjoy
 - may be useful for your career or graduate school applications
 - Fits with your advisors existing research topics

Choosing an advisor

- Learn about potential advisors by...
 - Taking their courses
 - Getting involved in their labs/research prior to senior year
 - Reading their publications on their website
 - Asking current seniors about their senior essay experience
- Important considerations
 - Contact your potential advisor substantially before the semester you plan to start your senior essay.
 - Be polite and courteous when asking a professor to advise your essay.
 - Be familiar with the relevant background needed to successfully carry out a project in their lab
 - If you are really interested in a particular lab often best to get involved as an RA *before* starting a senior essay

         
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Hello Professors,

I still need to find a senior essay advisor. Will one of you just agree to be my advisor because I can't find anybody else and the form is due tomorrow.

Thanks,



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Laurie R. Santos



Assistant Professor (Ph.D. 2003, Harvard University)

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Research Interests


My research explores the evolutionary origins of the human mind by comparing the cognitive abilities of human and non-human primates. It provides an interface between evolutionary biology, developmental psychology and cognitive neuroscience. My experiments focus on non-human primates (in captivity and in the field) incorporating methodologies from cognitive development, animal learning psychology, and cognitive neuroscience. My research examines the following broad questions: what domains of knowledge are unique to the human mind? Given that human infants and non-human primates both lack language, what similarities and

         
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To: laurie.santos@yale.edu 

Subject: senior essay advisor?

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Hi Professor Santos,

Would you agree to be my senior essay advisor?

I am really interested in the evolutionary origins of the human mind by comparing the cognitive abilities of human and non-human primates. I have always wanted to work with non-human primates (in captivity and in the field) incorporating methodologies from cognitive development, animal learning psychology, and cognitive neuroscience.

Let me know if you have senior essay slots available.

Thanks!

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Questions?