

Individual Studies Courses (Psyco 600)

It is sometimes possible to fulfill departmental degree requirements by taking an individually designed independent studies course (designated as Psyco 600). The goal of Psyco 600 is to allow students some flexibility in fulfilling their course requirements. Because the number of graduate courses offered in the Department is limited, an independent study allows the student to conduct readings or a research project in an area that is of interest but unlikely to be formally available as a course. Psyco 600 should not normally be taken under the direction of a student's supervisor. The assumption is that the training required for a student to conduct research in the "normal course of events" in his/her supervisor's laboratory is already entailed in the apprenticeship model of graduate training. (See [Research Apprenticeship Model of Graduate Training](#)) . For example, in order to conduct research some students need to learn how to program computers, others need to acquire surgical techniques, still others need to learn particulars of data collation and analysis, and so on. Similarly, it is assumed that as a matter of course, students and their supervisors have common research interests that will lead to their reading and discussion of articles in one or more areas of the discipline and to collaborative research. It is not envisioned that any of these endeavors would lead to course credit for students or to teaching credit for supervisors (beyond noting that the supervisors had one or more supervisees).

Graduate courses, including Psyco 600, are normally taught by tenured and tenurable members of academic staff in the Department. Psyco 600 may be "co-taught" with personnel from outside the Department, but in such cases, the instructor of record should be a member of the Department, and he or she should be substantively involved with the conduct of the course.

Prior to enrolling in Psyco 600, the student and the proposed instructor should prepare a course syllabus and submit it to the Associate Chair for Graduate Studies for approval. A course syllabus would typically include a list of topics to be covered or description of the project, a reading list (if applicable), and assignments or written work to be completed by the student. Care should be taken to insure that the amount of work to be undertaken is commensurate with a single-term graduate course. If Psyco 600 is intended to fulfill a methods requirement, it must be approved by the Graduate Curriculum Committee in addition to the Associate Chair. It should be clear from the syllabus that the course provides training in the broad application of a technique or set of techniques. For example, the methods requirement could not normally be fulfilled by conducting a specific research project.

Psyco 600 may be used only once to fulfill either the requirement for a course in a student's research focus or for one of the two required courses in related areas. See [Calendar Description](#) and [Requirements for Graduate Degrees](#).

Revision History

Created from March 2002 motion, August, 2003 (P. Dixon)

Revised December 2003

Amended October 10, 2008 on basis of motions in Council