

PSY 490: Practicum
Course Syllabus
1 to 6 credits, pre-arranged
Fall 2025
Wednesdays from 10-11:50am in HON 236E
Meeting dates: 9/3, 9/17, 10/1, 10/15, 10/29, 11/12, 12/3

Instructor: Mikhila Wildey, PhD

Office Hours: Mondays 10:30-11:30am, Thursdays 12-1pm

Please make an appointment here: <https://calendly.com/wildeymi>

*If these times do not work, email me with your available times M-F 9am-4pm

*You do NOT need to let me know you want to meet with me before scheduling a time online – just schedule it

Office: 2126 Au Sable Hall

Phone: (616) 331-3881

Email: wildeymi@gvsu.edu *Email is the best way to get in touch with me.*

Course Objective:

This course is designed to provide students with opportunities to expand their awareness and understanding of the various fields of work and study that are impacted by the psychology discipline and in which students with bachelor's degrees in psychology often develop careers. Students will engage in supervised work within the field of psychology at a professional site of their choosing. They will coordinate their work with the practicum coordinator and worksite supervisor. Students will spend approximately 3 hours per week per registered credit hour at their worksite (or approximately 45 hours per credit hour per semester). Students will also attend a bi-weekly, two-hour group meeting with the practicum coordinator and other students enrolled in the course. This course is aimed at students who may not know what they would like to pursue in terms of a career or possible graduate education, because it offers an opportunity to get real-world experience in the broad field of psychology in addition to developing skills that will help them in their future career.

Prerequisites: PSY 101 and permission of the instructor

Course Objectives:

1. Use strategies they developed for networking, communicating, and managing conflict with professionals in the field and within the workplace.
2. Identify the role that diversity, ethics, and their own self-care plays in their relationships with others in the workplace.
3. Assess their professional skills and competencies.
4. Plan future steps for their career goals.
5. Relate the knowledge gained in psychology courses to specific professional contexts, agencies, and/or organizations.

Classroom Process:

1. **Format and Attendance:** This course is a discussion-based course, and students will meet bi-weekly in a small group. Attendance is mandatory, and only excused absences per the GVSU attendance policy will be permitted (i.e., intercollegiate events, religious holidays, military duty, documented medical conditions, birth/adoption of child, attendance at an academic or professional conference). **More than one unexcused absence will result in an automatic grade reduction. More than two unexcused absences will result in failure of the course.**
2. **Classroom Etiquette:** First, I prefer to be addressed as Dr. Wildey or Professor Wildey by students. I use this same title in other professional capacities, including in my clinical work. If you have graduated and are no longer a student, you are welcome to call me by my first name. Second, I expect active participation in class, as it is the best way for me to get to know you and for you to build connections with your classmates. Please be mindful of the language you use when you choose to speak up and the impact you may have on others through your comments. Even if your intent is not to create harm, words are still powerful and can impact others.
3. **Course Communication:**
 - Communication regarding the course will occur through Blackboard and GVSU email. You are expected to **regularly (i.e., every day)** check your GVSU email and Blackboard account for important course materials, information, and updates.
 - My policy is to try to respond to your email within **2 business days**, which means within 48 hours on weekdays and by 5pm on Tuesday if you send me an email on Friday or over the weekend. I generally will not check or respond to emails after 5pm or on weekends.
 - For questions best answered face to face, I will ask you to attend my office hours.
 - Please draft emails to me in a formal capacity. Formal means that you should begin the email by addressing me by my preferred title (Dr. Wildey or Professor Wildey), type a response that has been proofread and is not written in text short-hand, and sign with your name. I believe these exchanges are important for professional development and should be how you communicate in all professional capacities unless the person you are communicating with tells you otherwise.

Assignments/Methods of Evaluation:

Assignment:	Total Possible Points:	Percentage of Grade:
Supervisor/Student Evaluations	100	20%
Journal Reflections	150	30%
Log of Hours	100	20%
Resume/CV	25	5%
Feedback Meeting with Dr. Wildey	25	5%
Final Paper	75	15%
Submission to Experience Matters	25	5%
Total	500	

1. **Supervisor/Student Evaluations (25 points each, 100 points total):** At the mid-semester, students are required to complete an evaluation of their practicum experience and they must obtain an evaluation of their work by their worksite supervisor. These evaluations will be obtained again at the end of the semester. Each evaluation is worth 25 points each.
2. **Journal Reflections (25 points each, 150 points total):** For each bi-weekly meeting, students will be required to submit a 250-300 word journal reflection discussing their experience at their practicum site during the prior two weeks. Students can write about anything regarding their experience, including but not limited to the functioning of the office (e.g., work-supervisor relations, leadership and management practices, interactions with outside agencies), what they have learned in the field or about themselves, what they have found either easy and/or challenging, what they have liked/disliked at their site, their feelings about the work they are doing, how the work has made them think about future careers). Students can also integrate course readings into their journal reflections. Entries should be typed and include a word count.
3. **Log of Hours (100 points):** Students must turn in a log of all the hours they completed at their practicum, including a total number of hours, at the end of the semester. The total hours must be greater than the number of hours required based on the number of credits signed up for.
4. **Resume/CV (25 points):** Students will be required to integrate their practicum experience into a resume or curriculum vitae that also includes their professional objective(s), educational information, and other relevant experience.
5. **Feedback Meeting w/ Dr. Wildey (25 points):** Students must meet one-on-one with Dr. Wildey in the middle of the semester to go over their mid-semester feedback and their resume/CV.
6. **Final Paper (75 points):** At the end of the semester, students will be required to write one final paper (500-750 words) that discusses their professional strengths and weaknesses. Students should use examples of scenarios they encountered at their worksite that are evidence for the strengths they listed. For weaknesses, students should comment on active steps they are taking to improve these weaknesses, including citing specific examples from their worksite experience or classes that have helped them grow in the areas they list as weaknesses. The goal of this paper is for students to self-reflect on areas that come more easily to them and areas that they may need to continue working on, to help them better prepare for a future career. They can also use these examples when they are on future interviews, in applications, etc. This paper should be typed, double-spaced, and must include a word count at the end.
7. **Submission to Experience Matters (25 points):** Students will be required to post their experience with their internship to the GVSU "Experience Matters" webpage. This process involves filling out a form at the end of the semester reflecting on their position so that other students can learn about different positions available to them.

Grading Scale:

	PASS		FAIL
93% and above	A	70-72%	C-
90-92%	A-	67-69%	D+
87-89%	B+	60-66%	D
83-86%	B	59% or below	F
80-82%	B-		
77-79%	C+		
73-76%	C		

The final grade for the course will be calculated by dividing the total points obtained by the total points possible in the class (500 points). Given this course is pass/fail, students must obtain at least a C (73%, or 365 points) across all graded assignments to pass the course.

Course Policies:

1. Assignments with due-dates listed in the course schedule will be subject to a 10% penalty per day they are received late. More than three days late will result in a zero for that assignment.
2. Termination from the practicum site is automatic grounds for failing the course. Failing to complete your agreed upon hours in your contract can also be grounds for failing the course.
3. This course is subject to all standard GVSU course policies which can be found at <https://www.gvsu.edu/coursepolicies/>

Course Schedule – Note that this is subject to change**September 3:**

- Topic:
 - Introduction/Goals for the class
 - Ethics
 - Careers in the field of psychology
- Assignments due before class: None
- Readings to complete before class:
 - <https://www.verywellmind.com/apa-ethical-code-guidelines-4687465>
 - Not required but full APA ethical code: <https://www.apa.org/ethics/code>
 - Explore and read about different career options & take notes: <https://www.gvsu.edu/psychology/employment-options-for-psychology-majors-228.htm>
 - Explore: <https://www.bls.gov/ooh/home.htm>
 - Explore “What can I do with a psychology degree?”: <https://www.gvsu.edu/psychology/what-can-i-do-with-a-psychology-degree-410.htm>

September 17:

- Topics:
 - Finding, applying, and interviewing for a job or graduate school
- Assignments due before class:

- Journal Entry
- Readings to complete before class:
 - Appleby, D. C., & Appleby, K. M. (2006). Kisses of death in the graduate school application process. *Teaching of Psychology*, 33, 19-24.
 - Letter from GVSU Alumni – Mike Mead
 - “How to Interview for Graduate School” – Mitch Prinstein

October 1:

- Topics:
 - Writing resumes, CVs, and cover letters
- Assignments due before class:
 - Journal Entry
- Readings to complete before class:
 - <https://www.npr.org/sections/ed/2017/02/27/502445571/hey-students-5-things-that-are-wrong-with-your-cover-letter>
 - Explore GVSU's guide: <https://www.gvsu.edu/careers/resume-guide-178.htm>

October 15:

- Topics:
 - Diversity, inclusion, and cultural competency
- Assignments due before class:
 - Journal Entry
 - Mid-Semester Feedback
 - CV/Resume
 - Identity social wheel exercise (just go through and write in a response for each part of the wheel – will discuss in class and this will not be turned in)
- Readings to complete before class:
 - White Privilege: Unpacking the Invisible Knapsack Peggy McIntosh
 - “How are Your Person First Skills? A Self-assessment” – Carol Russell
 - <https://www.scientificamerican.com/article/how-diversity-makes-us-smarter/>
 - Hays, P. A. (2016). The new reality: Diversity and complexity. In P. A. Hays, *Addressing cultural complexities in practice: Assessment, diagnosis, and therapy* (pp. 3–18). American Psychological Association.

****Meetings with Dr. Wildey must be scheduled between October 27 and November 5 to discuss mid-semester feedback and CV/Resume feedback. ****

October 29:

- Topics:
 - Diversity, inclusion, and cultural competency
 - Professionalism in the workplace
- Assignments due before class:
 - Journal Entry

- Identity social wheel exercise (just go through and write in a response for each part of the wheel – will discuss in class and this will not be turned in)
- Readings to complete before class:
 - White Privilege: Unpacking the Invisible Knapsack Peggy McIntosh
 - “How are Your Person First Skills? A Self-assessment” – Carol Russell
 - <https://www.scientificamerican.com/article/how-diversity-makes-us-smarter/>
 - Hays, P. A. (2016). The new reality: Diversity and complexity. In P. A. Hays, *Addressing cultural complexities in practice: Assessment, diagnosis, and therapy* (pp. 3–18). American Psychological Association.

*****Feedback meeting with Dr. Wildey due November 5*****

November 12:

- Topics:
 - Managing conflict and effectively communicating in the workplace
- Assignments due before class:
 - Journal Entry
- Readings to complete before class:
 - <https://www.thebalancecareers.com/get-along-with-boss-1919375>
 - <https://www.helpguide.org/articles/relationships-communication/conflict-resolution-skills.htm>
 - Pipas, M. D., & Jaradat, M. (2010). Assertive communication skills. *Annales Universitatis Apulensis Series Oeconomica*, 12, 649-656.
 - Southard, S. G. (1990). Interacting successfully in corporate culture. *Journal of Business and Technical Communication*, 4, 79-90

December 3:

- Topics:
 - Self-Care
- Assignments due before class:
 - Journal Entry
 - Final Paper
- Readings to complete before class:
 - Myers, S. B., Sweeney, A. C., Popick, V., Wesley, K., Bordfeld, A., & Fingerhut, R. (2012). Self-care practices and perceived stress levels among psychology graduate students. *Training and Education in Professional Psychology*, 6, 55-66.

December 8 (Final Exam Week):

- Assignments due Wednesday December 10th by 10am:
 - End of Semester Feedback
 - Log of hours