

# Texas A&M University - Central Texas

## PSYC 5198.125 – Thesis

---

### INSTRUCTOR AND CONTACT INFORMATION

**Instructor:** Daniel A. Clark, Ph.D.

**Office:** Warrior Hall 318 I

**Email:** Daniel-Clark@tamuct.edu

**Office Hours:** Monday: 8:30 - 9:15am, 11:00 am - 1 pm.

Tuesday: 8:30 - 10:45am, 12:30pm - 1:00 pm

Wednesday: 8:30 - 9:15am, 11:00 am - 1 pm.

Thursday: 8:30 - 10:45am, 12:30pm - 1:00 pm

Friday: Online by Appointment

To set up an appointment, go to: <https://clark-psychologytamuct.youcanbook.me>

### 911 Cellular:

**Emergency Warning System for Texas A&M University – Central Texas**

911Cellular is an emergency notification service that gives Texas A&M University-Central Texas the ability to communicate health and safety emergency information quickly via email, text message, and social media. All students are automatically enrolled in 911 Cellular through their myCT email account.

Connect at [911Cellular](https://portal.publicsafetycloud.net/Texas-AM-Central/alert-management) [https://portal.publicsafetycloud.net/Texas-AM-Central/alert-management] to change where you receive your alerts or to opt out. By staying enrolled in 911Cellular, university officials can quickly pass on safety-related information, regardless of your location.

### Mode of Instruction and Course Access:

This course uses TAMUCT's Canvas Course Management system

(<https://tamuct.instructure.com>). Students will use their Canvas username and password (communicated separately) to logon to this system.

### Student-Instructor Interaction:

The professor will logon to the course in Canvas daily during the work week (Monday through Friday) and will reply to email within two business days.

Students are expected to logon to the course in Canvas daily to review announcements and resources or to message the professor with updates on their work.

The professor will provide feedback on written work by posting comments as needed in the Submission box or on documents attached to messages. Students should review all message replies in course Messages when feedback is posted to examine and apply the information on subsequent portions of the project.

Students should message the professor to schedule an appointment to talk via Collaborate

as needed.

## COURSE INFORMATION

### Course Overview and Description:

This course is designed to provide students with the opportunity to use systematic research methods and appropriate tools of inquiry to thoroughly investigate a psychological problem or issue. Students must follow the *Thesis Manual* provided by the Office of Graduate Studies.

**Course Description:** An independent research course in which a student proposes and completes an original, quantitative research project in conjunction with three graduate faculty members who serve on the thesis committee. Scheduled when the student is ready to begin thesis. No credit until proposal and thesis are approved, respectively. Six hours of thesis credit is required.

**Prerequisites:** PSYK 500 and PSYK 501 and successful completion of 12 additional credit hours in the degree plan and approval of the Chair of the thesis committee, or Department Chair approval.

### Course Objectives (Student Learning Outcomes):

Course objectives will be addressed through the creation of an original research project that will be completed in two phases (i.e., proposal and thesis). The student, under the guidance of a faculty advisor, will utilize sound research methods for the social sciences. In this course, students will:

- 1) Demonstrate specific skills, competencies, and points of view needed by professionals in the field most closely related to this course. To achieve this objective, the student will:
  - a. craft, in conjunction with a faculty mentor, an original research idea.
  - b. research information related to the thesis project using online tools including the TAMUCT library's databases.
  - c. summarize existing peer-reviewed research on the topic and note where more information is needed.
  - d. write an original research proposal in APA style and defend it during an oral presentation to the thesis committee.
  - e. submit defended research plans through the Institutional Review Board process (for human subjects).
  - f. engage in data collection according to the approved plan.
  - g. use statistical computing software (e.g., SPSS) to analyze quantitative data collected through research and interpret it.
  - h. propose directions for future research.
  - i. write the final thesis to conform to the guidelines stated in the TAMUCT *Thesis Manual* and defend it during an oral presentation to the thesis committee and interested others.
- 2) Demonstrate skill in expressing oneself orally or in writing. To achieve this objective, the student will
  - a. write summaries of existing research articles and base the justification for the thesis proposal on existing research.
  - b. write a proposal for the thesis research and revise it based on committee feedback.
  - c. write a final report of the thesis research and revise it based on committee feedback.
- 3) Find and use resources for answering questions or solving problems. To achieve this objective, the student will:

- a. use the online TAMUCT library databases to locate peer-reviewed research on the variables of interest in the thesis.
  - b. use relevant online resources to locate information for thesis projects (e.g., websites for professional organizations).
  - c. use statistical computing software (e.g., SPSS) for data analysis.
  - d. use plagiarism detection tools (e.g., TurnItIn) for manuscript review and revision.
  - e. use the TAMUCT *Thesis Manual* for manuscript formatting.
- 4) Analyze and critically evaluate ideas, arguments, and points of view. To achieve this objective, the student will:
- a. read and summarize in writing the development of research on the variables of interest
  - b. read multiple research studies on the variables targeted in the thesis and integrate the information in writing to support the position.
  - c. acknowledge in writing research information that contradicts or is otherwise inconsistent with the arguments in the thesis.
  - d. write a justification for the proposed thesis research that is based on limitations, shortcomings, and/or gaps in existing research.

**Required Readings and Required Training:**

**Readings:**

American Psychological Association. (2010). *Publication manual of the American Psychological Association* (6<sup>th</sup> ed.). Washington, DC: Author. (ISBN: 978-1433805615)

Texas A&M University – Central Texas, Institutional Review Board (2015). *Institutional Review Board (IRB): Guidelines and procedures handbook*. Retrieved from <https://www.tamuct.edu/departments/research/irb.php>

Texas A&M University-Central Texas, Office of Graduate Studies (n.d.). *Thesis manual*. Retrieved from <https://www.tamuct.edu/departments/graduatestudies/formsgraduatestudies.php>

Texas A&M University-Central Texas, Master of Science in Educational Psychology Program (April 2016). *Procedures for preparing a thesis*. Department of Psychology and Counseling.

**Training:**

National Institutes of Health, Office of Extramural Research. (2015). Protecting Human Research Participants. Retrieved from <https://phrp.nihtraining.com/users/login.php>

**OR**

Collaborative Institutional Training Initiative (2015). Human Subjects Research. Retrieved from <https://www.citiprogram.org/>

Students are required to read peer-reviewed journal articles related to the variables under examination in their research. Journal articles may be accessed through our online TAMUCT library site either as a direct download or via Interlibrary Loan.

## **COURSE REQUIREMENTS**

### **Course Requirements:**

Students will complete the thesis courses through independent study with meetings with the professor scheduled on a regular basis throughout the semester. All components of the research project will be submitted according to the course calendar. The following assignments are required for successful completion of the course.

#### Semester 1

Article Summaries –Rubric in Thesis course.

\*Final Written Proposal –Rubric in Thesis course.

Oral Proposal Defense –Rubric in Thesis course.

IRB Submission – Pass/Fail

#### Semester 2

Data Collection – Pass/Fail

Data Analysis – Pass/Fail

\*Final Written Thesis –Rubric in Thesis course.

Oral Thesis Defense –Rubric in Thesis course.

Thesis Submission to Office of Graduate Studies and Research – Pass/Fail

\*May be submitted to TurnItIn and revised prior to submission to the Thesis committee.

### **Grading Criteria Rubric and Conversion:**

All requirements for the Semester 1 or Semester 2 Thesis courses must be completed successfully before the student can be awarded credit for the Thesis courses. Until all assignments for each semester are completed successfully, students will be assigned “In Progress” status for the course(s). Students will be required to remain enrolled in a Thesis course until all assignments are completed, and no guarantee is implied that the thesis can be completed in two semesters though students should work diligently to meet this expectation.

Rubrics for all assignments are located in the Thesis course in Canvas. Awarding final credit for the thesis courses will be based on a pass/fail grading system in accordance with the policies and procedures outlined in the Office of Graduate Studies *Thesis Manual*.

### **Posting of Grades:**

All feedback will be sent via Canvas Messages after the assignment is received. The professor will read and provide comments within 5 business days of receiving the assignment. *The student should not hesitate to ask the professor about any concern or questions regarding assignment feedback.*

### COURSE OUTLINE AND CALENDAR

Assignments*	Due Dates
<b>Thesis Proposal (8-Week Semester 1)</b>	
Task 1: Thesis Concept Paper to Potential Committee Members	By week 2
Task 2: Committee Selection	By week 3
Task 3: Initial Draft (thesis statement, literature review, method section)	By week 5
Task 4: Multiple Revisions of Proposal Draft with Chair/Committee	Ongoing
Task 5: Final Proposal to Committee (thesis statement, literature review, method section with proposed statistical design)	By week 5
Task 6: Proposal Defense with Committee (Presentation with Q&A – 1 hour)	By week 6
Task 7: Final Thesis Proposal with Edits to Committee	By week 6
Task 8: Proposal Approval Form forwarded to Department Chair	By week 7
Task 9: IRB Protocol Completed, Revised, and Submitted to IRB	By week 8

**\*The professor reserves the right to amend this syllabus at any time.**

**\*\*A minimum of 4 weeks must be provided for IRB review of Exempt projects. If students propose an Expedited project, a minimum of 6 weeks must be provided for IRB review. If students propose a project that requires a full board review, a minimum of 8 weeks for IRB review must be provided. Students should not expect to complete a project that requires full board review by the IRB in only two semesters. Additional semesters of coursework using the variable credit hour option for thesis courses should be considered. Plan accordingly.**

### TECHNOLOGY REQUIREMENTS AND SUPPORT

This course will use the TAMUCT Canvas Learn learning management system for class communications, content distribution, and assessments.

Logon to <https://tamuct.Canvas.com> to access the course.

**Username:** Your MyCT username (i.e., everything before the "@" in your MyCT e-mail address)

**Initial password:** Your MyCT password

For this course, students will need reliable and frequent access to a computer and to the internet. Wired internet connections are highly recommended. Wireless internet connections are not stable enough to support web conferencing resources. Students will also need a headset with a microphone (or speakers and a microphone) to listen to online resources and conduct other activities in the course.

Check browser and computer compatibility by using the "Test Your Browser" button, found in the "Check Your Browser" module on your Canvas dashboard, once you have logged in.

**Technology Support.** For technology issues, students should contact Help Desk Central.

24 hours a day, 7 days a week:

Email: [helpdesk@tamu.edu](mailto:helpdesk@tamu.edu)  
Phone: (254) 519-5466  
Web Chat: <http://hdc.tamu.edu>

*When calling for support please let your support technician know you are a TAMUCT student.*

*Technology issues are not an excuse for missing a course requirement – make sure your computer is configured correctly and address issues well in advance of deadlines.*

For questions related to course content and requirements, contact the professor.

### **COURSE AND UNIVERSITY PROCEDURES AND POLICIES**

**Drop Policy.** If you discover that you need to drop this class, you must go to the Registrar's Office and complete a Drop Request Form. Professors **cannot** drop students; this is always the responsibility of the student. The Registrar's Office will provide a deadline on the University Calendar for which the form must be returned, completed and signed. Once you return the signed form to the Registrar's Office and wait 24 hours, you must go into Warrior Web and confirm that you are no longer enrolled. If you still show as enrolled, FOLLOW-UP with the Registrar's Office immediately. You are to attend class until the procedure is complete to avoid penalty for absence. Should you miss the deadline or fail to follow the procedure, you will receive an F in the course, which may affect your financial aid.

**Academic Integrity.** Texas A&M University -Central Texas values the integrity of the academic enterprise and strives for the highest standards of academic conduct. A&M-Central Texas expects its students, faculty, and staff to support the adherence to high standards of personal and scholarly conduct to preserve the honor and integrity of the creative community. Academic integrity is defined as a commitment to honesty, trust, fairness, respect, and responsibility. Any deviation by students from this expectation may result in a failing grade for the assignment and potentially a failing grade for the course. Academic misconduct is any act that improperly affects a true and honest evaluation of a student's academic performance and includes, but is not limited to, cheating on an examination or other academic work, plagiarism and improper citation of sources, using another student's work, collusion, and the abuse of resource materials. All academic misconduct concerns will be reported to the university's Office of Student Conduct. Ignorance of the university's standards and expectations is never an excuse to act with a lack of integrity. When in doubt on collaboration, citation, or any issue, please contact your instructor before taking a course of action.

**Access & Inclusion.** At Texas A&M University – Central Texas, we value an inclusive learning environment where every student has an equal chance to succeed and has the right to an education that is barrier-free. The Office of Access & Inclusion is responsible for ensuring that students with a disability enjoy equal access to the University's programs, services and activities. Some aspects of this course or the way the course is taught may present barriers to learning due to a disability. If you feel this is the case, please contact Access & Inclusion at (254) 501-5831 in Warrior Hall, Ste. 212. For more information, please visit their website at <https://www.tamuct.edu/departments/disabilitysupport/index.php>  
Any information you provide is private and confidential and will be treated as such.

**Tutoring.** Tutoring is available to all TAMUCT students, both on-campus and online. Subjects tutored include Accounting, Finance, Statistics, Mathematics, and Study Skills. Tutors are available at the Tutoring Center in Warrior Hall, Suite 111.

If you have a question regarding tutor schedules, contact information, need to schedule a tutoring session, are interested in becoming a tutor, or any other question, contact Academic Support Programs at 254-519-5796, or by emailing Kim Wood at [k.wood@tamuct.edu](mailto:k.wood@tamuct.edu)

Chat live with a tutor 24/7 for almost any subject on your computer! Tutor.com is an online tutoring platform that enables TAMUCT students to log-in and receive FREE online tutoring and writing support. This tool provides tutoring in Mathematics, Chemistry, Physics, Biology, Spanish, Calculus, and Statistics. To access Tutor.com, click on

<https://www.tamuct.edu/departments/academicsupport/tutoring.php>

**University Writing Center.** The University Writing Center at Texas A&M University-Central Texas is a free workspace open to all TAMUCT students. The UWC is located in 416 Warrior Hall. Students may work independently in the UWC by checking out a laptop that runs Microsoft Office suite and connects to WIFI, or by consulting our resources on writing, including all of the relevant style guides. Students may also arrange a one-on-one session with a trained and experienced writing tutor. Tutorials can be arranged by visiting the UWC. Tutors are prepared to help writers of all levels and abilities at any stage of the writing process. Sessions typically last between 20-30 minutes. While tutors will not write, edit, or grade papers, they will help students develop more effective invention and revision strategies.

**University Library.** The University Library provides many services in support of research across campus and at a distance. We offer over 200 electronic databases containing approximately 250,000 eBooks and 82,000 journals, in addition to the 72,000 items in our print collection, which can be mailed to students who live more than 50 miles from campus. Research guides for each subject taught at TAMUCT are available through our website to help students navigate these resources. On-campus, the library offers technology including cameras, laptops, microphones, webcams, and digital sound recorders.

Research assistance from a librarian is also available twenty-four hours a day through our online chat service, and at the reference desk when the library is open. Research sessions can be scheduled for more comprehensive assistance, and may take place on Skype or in-person at the library. Assistance may cover many topics, including how to find articles in peer-reviewed journals, how to cite resources, and how to piece together research for written assignments.

Our 27,000-square-foot facility on the TAMUCT main campus includes student lounges, private study rooms, group work spaces, computer labs, family areas suitable for all ages, and many other features. Services such as interlibrary loan, TexShare, binding, and laminating are available. The library frequently offers workshops, tours, readings, and other events. For more information, please visit our homepage: <https://tamuct.libguides.com/>

## INSTRUCTOR POLICIES

**Student Created Content:** All content submitted to the course for credit must be the student's own creation. Students must write or paraphrase and properly cite all content submitted. No credit will be awarded for quoted material even if it is appropriately cited (i.e., students cannot receive credit



for submitting content that someone else wrote). Students should paraphrase all information and provide the appropriate citations.

**APA Style:** All text and citations submitted for course credit must follow the guidelines of the *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association (6<sup>th</sup> ed.)*.

**Copyright Information:** Students should assume that all course material is copyrighted by the respective author(s). Reproduction of course material is prohibited without consent by the author and/or course instructor. Violation of copyright is against the law and Texas A&M University-Central Texas' Code of Academic Honesty. All alleged violations will be reported to the Office of Student Conduct.

**Late Work:** No late work will accepted. No make-up work is offered in the course. If students are late for meeting the deadlines set by the Office of Graduate Studies, students must enroll in another semester of PSYK 588 Thesis.