

**PSY 495: Ethics & Professional Issues
Fall 2020**

Course Information

- Psy 495, Section 01
- MW 11:30 a.m.- 12:45 p.m.
- Remote meetings via Zoom:
 - <https://zoom.us/j/93790312228?pwd=L1h3ZUZQV1RTNC90NVFJaVNQYIBIdz09>
 - Meeting ID: 937 9031 2228
 - Passcode: PSY495

Professor Information

- Professor: Dr. Taryn A. Myers
- Office: Roop 3
- E-mail: tmyers@vwu.edu
 - E-mail is the best way to reach me. I check my e-mail multiple times per day and it is sent to my smartphone. However, if your e-mail requires more than a sentence or two to answer, I will usually ask that you come see me after class, stop by during office hours, or set up an appointment to discuss the topic in more detail.
- Office Hours
 - By appointment via Calendly for a Zoom or Hangouts meeting: <https://calendly.com/drtarynmyers>
- VWU number to call for class closings and delays due to inclement weather: (757) 455-5711
 - Or check the top of the page at www.vwu.edu – a banner will be displayed across the top with relevant information on closings and delays.

Required Texts

- Kuther, T. L., & Morgan, R. D. (2020). *Careers in Psychology: Opportunities in a Changing World*. Sage. ISBN: 978-1-5443-5973-1
- Fisher, C. B. (2017). *Decoding the Ethics Code: A Practical Guide for Psychologists*. Sage. ISBN: 978-1483369293
- American Psychological Association. (2020). *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association* (7th ed.). APA. ISBN: 978-1433832161
- Additional readings will be posted on Blackboard.

Orientation

This is a 400-level capstone course. You should take this course in your last semester at VWU if at all possible so that you can reflect on all of the coursework you have undertaken in psychology. This course assumes a high level of sophistication regarding psychology in general, scientific literacy in the field, and knowledge in each area of the major: Developmental, Applied, Biological Foundations, Social & Theoretical Foundations, and Diversity in Psychology.

Course Purpose and Objectives

This course will expect students to synthesize all of the information they have previously learned during the course of their Psychology Major to plan for their future careers as well as to carefully consider the ethical issues in the field.

Objectives for student learning are as follows:

1. Learn about the APA Ethics code and how it applies to psychologists working in various aspects of the field.
2. Plan for their lives post-graduation by considering career options, including whether additional, graduate-level training is necessary.
3. Exhibit teamwork skills by engaging in group discussions and successfully undertaking an applied group project.
4. Demonstrate professional-level writing skills in an APA-style paper reflecting on how the major has prepared each student for their career goals.

Blackboard

Throughout the semester, class assignments, handouts, and general guidance about various aspects of this course may be made available on Blackboard, Virginia Wesleyan University's on-line course management system. To log into Blackboard, you will need your VWU e-mail address and password - OR - your student number and password, depending upon your year of entry at VWU. Once in the system, you will find a course listing for Ethics & Professional Issues.

It is your responsibility to check Blackboard on a regular basis in order to download copies of materials you will need to participate fully in class discussions and activities. Particularly since our class is remote, keeping up to date with information on Blackboard will be even more critical. Further information about the use of Blackboard in this course will be provided in class.

Class Participation & Attendance

200 pts

Recording Classes

You are expected to attend all meetings of a class for which you are registered, whether in-person or virtual. For this course, I will record our Zoom classes and post them on Blackboard in recognition of the fact that we are in the midst of an unprecedented global pandemic and there may be times you cannot attend class at the scheduled time. However, you should not take these postings for a substitute for being in class, as it will be difficult to contribute to discussion if you are not in class. In addition, attending the Zoom class means you will be able to ask questions in real time.

Expectations for Participation in Scholarly Discussions

This course is structured to facilitate open and supportive interactions with your peers and your instructor. For these interactions to be successful, **everyone must come to each remote class meeting prepared to engage in that day's activities. I will expect you to bring your books with you to each Zoom class discussion and have the Blackboard readings open and ready to reference, having done the assigned reading before class, in order to fully participate in discussions.**

While in class, you are a member of a scholarly community. Please respect the work of that community by coming to our virtual class meetings on time, prepared to learn and to participate in class discussions and activities. This is a discussion-based course. I will sometimes flesh out core ideas in a mini-lecture, but much class time will be question and answer exchanges and discussion. Therefore, your contributions are both necessary and expected; students share responsibility for bringing the course's ideas to life in the classroom. You should also take thoughtful notes during our discussions on what all members of our class say to help you respond to class discussions in real time and to inform your answers on assignments and exams later.

Being in class means more than filling a space on the screen; it means listening and contributing to the discussion and sharing of ideas. You are expected to participate in class discussion aloud. If you have privacy or technology issues, you can still participate actively via the chat function on Zoom.

Discussing Potentially Controversial Topics

Some of the texts and ideas that we will cover in class may be uncomfortable or disturbing. Our discussions may address these and other topics that are potentially disturbing to some individuals. When this information is presented, successful students take time to evaluate information and questions before speaking. Be sure that responses to statements are academic responses to academic issues, rather than dogmatically charged responses to personal issues. Insults and petty bickering are counterproductive to academic growth, debates and discussion that are well informed and thoughtful produce new and exciting ideas for us to consider.

Please also be aware that some of the topics we discuss will relate to personal issues and may foster strong opinions in each of us. **Despite this personal connection, I challenge you to engage in this material from an academic perspective, citing references from either the texts or other scholarly material to support any and all points you make.** We will strive to keep communication in the classroom civil and respectful. Also be aware that some of the terminology and topics discussed in the context of certain topics may be uncomfortable, offensive, and/or objectionable to some. We will discuss these issues because of their relevance to the material that are central to this class and to our knowledge in this area. In addition, **please know that VWU policy requires me to report any potential incident of sexual assault that occurs on campus. If such an incident is mentioned, I will speak to VWU's Title IX coordinators.**

I would strongly recommend getting the contact information of a fellow student in case you miss a class and need the notes. I will not provide anyone with a copy of my personal class notes.

Attendance Responsibilities and the Reality of the Time of COVID-19

I fully recognize that there will be times where you cannot attend class due to illness, responsibilities for other family members, caretaking for sick friends or relatives, work at an essential job, etc. Therefore, I am not taking points off for missed classes as I would during a traditional semester. However, I will take attendance each day as recommended by the Office of Academic Affairs.

That being said, ***if you are healthy and have the time, yet choose not to come to class, you are still responsible for all material covered in class.*** In addition, you are also responsible for any announcements made in class, which may include, but are not limited to, changes regarding the syllabus, exam dates, and assignments.

In the case that your instructor has tested positive for COVID-19, you can expect to be notified by your instructor or the office of Academic Affairs. This notification will include instructions about how the course will proceed.

Personal Struggles with Issues

Dr. Myers encourages you to share your questions, opinions, and comments to the extent that you feel comfortable. However, this class is NOT the appropriate forum for discussing personal issues relating to the class material (i.e., your, your friend's, or your family members' struggles, etc.). If you are experiencing these difficulties, or know someone else who is, proper referral information can be provided, but please note that Dr. Myers will NOT be able to serve as your therapist or provide advice beyond this referral information because of ethical guidelines set forth by the American Psychological Association. Information for the VWU Counseling Center is provided later in this syllabus.

Camera Usage

Students attending class meetings remotely may, at their discretion, keep their cameras turned off. Students whose cameras are turned off are expected to be active participants in class, either by speaking aloud or typing in the chat box in Zoom. Students who will be around others (roommates, family members, etc.) and want to maintain privacy are encouraged to use earbuds or headsets during class discussion. Students who do not feel comfortable or safe discussing a topic aloud should make use of the chat to make their class contributions. Students who keep their cameras turned off and who fail to respond when addressed will be considered absent for that day.

Self-Evaluation

Note that **200 points** will be earned through a combination of your attendance record and the instructor's evaluation of the quality of your contributions to the total classroom experience. You will be asked to complete a self-evaluation of your participation in class discussions using the rubric below at both the midterm and final points of the class. Dr. Myers will then assign your participation grade based on her reflection on your responses and her own observations.

Components	Failing (F)	Inadequate (D)	Below expectations (C)	Meets Expectations (B)	Exemplary (A)
Frequency of participation	I do not contribute –OR– I dominate discussion without regard to others	I participate very rarely – maybe once or twice so far this semester	I participate sporadically – maybe once per week or once every-other week	I participate at least once per week or class	I initiate questions and comments every class
Relevance & value	My contributions are off-topic or distract class from the discussion; I never refer to the readings; or I do not speak	My contributions are sometimes off-topic or distracting, only about personal experiences	My contributions are sometimes relevant but often only about personal experiences	My contributions are always relevant to the readings but may not always refer to them	My contributions refer back to the readings and promote deeper analysis of the topic
Inclusion	I do not pay attention to what others in class say	I may listen to what others say but I do not include it in my discussions	I may include what others have said but base my arguments mostly on my own previous contributions	I sometimes build upon what others in the class have said	I build on and relate to points made by others in the class by summarizing, contrasting, etc.
Receptive	It is unclear whether I ignore others' comments or not because I never speak	I ignore others' comments, talk over them, or disregard feedback	I am respectful and listen, but I don't apply feedback	I attempt to incorporate feedback from others but I don't always do so accurately	I accurately listen and consider feedback from others
Critical Thinking	I do not display my understanding because I do not speak	I display little understanding of the topic under discussion	I display some of my understanding of the topic under discussion, but my responses may be vague	I display an understanding of the topic under discussion, but I may be unclear at times	I display a clear understanding of the topic under discussion through my class contributions

Class Facilitation

100 pts

Students will be asked to lead discussion on one day of class. This means that students should prepare handouts, discussion questions, relevant YouTube videos, etc., in order to facilitate discussion. Your goal is to get your classmates to have meaningful discussions about the readings, NOT to talk the entire time yourself. Dr. Myers will be your “back up,” but you should be fully prepared to lead the class for the entire hour and 15 minute class period. At the end of each class, your fellow students will rate your discussion, which will become part of your grade. A total of **100 points** are possible for this assignment. Class facilitation will be scored according to the following rubric:

- 1) Leader comes prepared, has clearly read the material, and shows a clear understanding (**25 pts**)
- 2) Leader goes beyond the text to engage the class in discussion by using videos, activities, etc. (**25 pts**)
- 3) Leader poses questions or points that encourage other students to actively engage in discussion (**25 pts**)
- 4) Other students rate the leader’s class favorably. (**25 pts**)

Exams

200 pts

Exams will consist of take-home questions and will include information from the text as well as material from class discussions. There will be two take-home exams – a midterm and a final. The final will *not* be cumulative. **Each exam will be worth 100 points for 200 points total.** Students will be expected to work independently on these exams. These papers will be uploaded via SafeAssignment, which detects plagiarism both from online sources and from the papers of other students in the course. *Students caught collaborating or cheating on exams will be dealt with severely according to the Honor Code.*

Meeting with the Professor

10 pts

Each student will be required to set up a brief (10-15 minute) meeting with the professor by the midterm point of the semester: **Monday, 10/12.** This meeting will be an opportunity for you to get to know each other, be aware of where the professor’s office is, and ask any questions you have about the work for the semester. In addition, the professor can answer any questions you have about your career goals, graduate school, etc. You do not have to prepare anything for this meeting, and you will receive **10 points** simply for attending your scheduled meeting. Points will be deducted if you are late without contacting the professor or if you do not show up to your scheduled meeting.

Meeting with Career Services

10 pts

Each student will be required to schedule an appointment with Jessica Harrington, Director of Career Development, to discuss career goals, graduate school applications, etc. This appointment can be scheduled via her Calendly (<https://calendly.com/jharrington-3>). Students will write a brief reflection on their experience (less than 1 page double spaced) and submit it via Blackboard. This reflection is worth **10 points** and will be due by the midterm point of the semester, **Monday, 10/12.**

Weekly Blogs

80 pts

Over the course of the semester, you will be asked to complete 8 blogs reflecting on the ideas discussed in class and in the readings, each worth **10 points for 80 points total.** Note that there are 10 blog post assignments but only 8 required. This means that you get 2 “freebies” where you do not have to turn in the blogs.

I especially encourage you to use the ideas that we consider in class to reflect upon larger society by taking note of how ethical issues or the field of psychology in general influences individuals in the larger world. What are you seeing on TV, in commercials, in print advertisements, in the news, on the internet, or in the course of daily life that connects to something that we have discussed in class? How does something that we have discussed in class make you consider something differently? Make sure you include class discussion and not just the readings in your blogs.

You are also required to comment on your classmates’ blogs to facilitate the exchange of ideas outside of class. You need to make a minimum of one insightful comment a week. Blogs should be approximately 200-300 words. Quality is more important than quantity. Comments can add to someone else’s idea, ask questions, or challenge a point. Whichever they do, they need to do so respectfully. Merely stating that you agree with someone is not a substantive comment. Your comment should add to the discussion of ideas. If you fail to post at least one substantive comment to another post in a week, I will deduct 1 point from that week’s blog grade. I encourage you to make more comments and to develop a good discourse on the board. You can build off of class discussion, but don’t merely repeat what is being said. **Blogs for each week need to be posted by 11:59 p.m. on Wednesday. Comments on the previous week’s blogs will be due by the start of class on the following Monday. Late blogs will not be accepted. Any blog submitted after 11:59 p.m. on Wednesday will automatically receive a score of 0.**

Interview Paper

50 pts

Students will be asked to interview an individual working in the subfield or career in psychology they plan to go into (a clinical psychologist, a human resources professional, a social worker, a research psychologist studying the topic that most interests the student, a psychologist who specializes in advocacy work, etc.). They will then write a brief (3-4 page) paper summarizing the information they gained from conducting their interview. The paper will be due

Wednesday, 10/14, and it will be scored using the following rubric:

- Introduction of the career path you hope to take at this point in your academic career (10 pts)
- Introduction of your interviewee and their career (10 pts)
- How their background in psychology helps with their career, including what training they needed for this job (10 pts)
- Concluding paragraph that summarizes how what your interviewee discussed has shaped your ideas about what that job entails. (10 pts)
- Proper spelling/grammar/citations (10 pts)

Paper

150 pts

You will be asked to write a 10-15 page paper (excluding title page and reference list) summarizing your experiences as a psychology major, explaining how this course helped you to reflect on your previous college experience, and explaining how your experiences relate to your future career goals. The reference list needs to include at least 5 scholarly references. (Wikipedia is *not* a scholarly reference!) This paper will be written in APA format and will be worth 150 points. Papers will be scored using the following rubric:

- Summary of experiences as a psychology major (30 pts)
- Explain how this course helped you reflect on your experiences (30 pts)
- How experiences relate to future career goals (30 pts)
- Incorporation of Scholarly Literature throughout the paper (30 pts)
- APA Formatting (10 pts)
- Scholarly References – at least 5 (10 pts)
- Spelling/Grammar (10 pts)

The paper will be due at the time of our scheduled final exam, **Friday, 12/11 at 11:30 a.m.**

Presentation

50 pts

You will also be asked to give a presentation of up to 10 minutes about your experiences based on your paper. This presentation will be given to your classmates and professor. In addition, the larger campus community may be invited to view your work. The presentation is worth **50 points** and will be scored according to the following rubric:

- Summary of experiences as a psychology major (10 pts)
- Explain how this course helped you reflect on your experiences (10 pts)
- How experiences relate to future career goals (10 pts)
- Recommendations for future psychology majors (10 pts)
- Presenter is engaging and clear-spoken (**5 pts**)
- Slides are interesting, easy to follow, and not too text heavy (**5 pts**)

These presentations, unless otherwise indicated, will be given during our final exam time, **Friday, 12/11 at 11:30 a.m.**

Group Project: Ethics in Action

150 pts

Working with a group of 4-5 people, you will choose 1 of 2 options for your presentation:

Option 1

Choose a scenario with an ethical quandary – either based on a real-life situation or a fictional narrative – and present information on this scenario to the entire class. Any format can be used for this presentation (PowerPoint, acting out the scenario, short film, etc.). The members of the group will research the ethical issue and integrate the information from a variety of scholarly sources pertaining to how that issue should best be handled.

Option 2

Create a Code of Ethics for the Psychology Department at Virginia Wesleyan University. Based on all we have learned over the course of the semester, draft a concise, easily understood code of ethics for our department. The members of the group will take into account guidelines that will be appropriate for both students and faculty members, incorporating information from a variety of scholarly sources. Group members may also choose to research similar codes for other departments at VWU (MBE and Education, for example) and at other institutions. Group members will present this information to the entire class in whatever format they chose (PowerPoint, short film, dramatic reading, etc.).

The assignment will be worth 150 points and will be graded as a group project: 100 points will come from an overall grade given the professor, and 50 points will be based on group participation and contribution to the assignment as graded by your group members. Therefore, your full and equal participation in the group will be important, as will noting the participation level of your fellow group members throughout the semester. These presentations should be 15 minutes in length and will be presented during the last week of class and during the final exam time, if necessary.

The following rubric will be used to score this project:

____/20	Content of presentation relevant to Psy 495
____/10	Appropriately complex scenario or code of ethics
____/ 20	Scholarly sources incorporated throughout the presentation
____/10	Process of Group Collaboration as Witnessed by professor
____/10	All Group Members Contributed to Presentation
____/10	Presentation Skills
____/10	Adequate Length
____/10	Creativity/Entertainment
____/50	Individual Score as Rated by Group Members (Average of Group Members' Ratings)
____/150	TOTAL; Letter Grade: _____

Grading

Your final grade will be determined by your performance on assignments for the course as detailed above:

Attendance & Participation	200
Class Facilitation	100
Exams (2 at 100 points each)	200
Meeting with Dr. Myers	10
Meeting with Career Services	10
Blogs (8 at 10 points each)	80
Interview Paper	50
Individual Paper	150
Individual Presentation	50
Group Project	150
Total	1000

Grades will be based on the following distribution:

<u>Points</u>	<u>Percentages</u>	<u>Grade</u>	<u>Points</u>	<u>Percentages</u>	<u>Grade</u>
940-1000	94-100%	A	740-769	74-76%	C
900-939	90-93%	A-	700-739	70-73%	C-
870-899	87-89%	B+	670-699	67-69%	D+
840-869	84-86%	B	640-669	64-66%	D
800-839	80-83%	B-	600-639	60-63%	D-
770-799	77-79%	C+	0-599	< 60%	F

Incompletes

Incompletes will be arranged for severe emergencies only. Arrangements for incompletes MUST be made with me before prior to the end of the semester. A formal contract must be agreed upon and signed.

Extra Credit

Throughout the semester, we will be discussing many findings from psychological research. But what might not be obvious is the fact that much of this research was conducted at colleges and universities like Virginia Wesleyan College, with participants much like yourself. The descriptions of psychological research that appear in textbooks necessarily omit a great deal of information about what participants actually do in these studies, and what the experience is really like.

Serving as a research participant gives you a unique, behind-the-scenes look at how research is conducted. Accordingly, I am giving you the option to earn extra credit points in this course from research experience. Research experience points may be earned either through participation in research studies (conducted by student and faculty researchers in the Department of Psychology) or by writing brief reviews of research articles. Regardless of which option you choose, the goal is to supplement the broad coverage of many topics in class with experiences that will deepen your understanding of psychological research.

Option 1

You may participate in research studies. You will do so by signing up for an account at <https://vwu.sona-systems.com/>. After signing up for your account, you can sign up for studies via the website, which will keep track of your Sona credits for you and for your professors. Extra credit points will be awarded based on the number of Sona credits applied to each study. Therefore, participation in in-person or longer studies will result in more online credits and thus more extra credit points.

If you choose to participate in research studies, note that these are REAL studies that are being conducted by REAL researchers (for example, faculty projects and graduate student dissertation research). You should take your participation seriously – you are helping to promote a better understanding of human thought, emotion, and behavior. (Who knows – you may even participate in a study that gets published in a psychology journal and discussed in the next generation of textbooks.) Opportunities for participation will be announced as they arise.

Option 2

If you would like to earn extra credit but do not wish to participate in research, you can write a short paper (no longer than 4 pages typed, double-spaced) which reviews, connects, and draws conclusions about three recent research articles on one topic about which you have a particular interest which is covered in class or in the text. “Recent” will be arbitrarily defined as since 2000. The articles should be empirical in nature and revolve around the same topic. Topics should be approved in advance by Dr. Myers.

Accommodations for Students with Disabilities

Virginia Wesleyan University is committed to giving all students the opportunity of academic success. If you are a student who is requesting accommodations based on the academic impact of a disability, speak to me about your accommodations letter and your specific needs. If you do not have an accommodations letter for this course, you will need to visit or call for an appointment with Disability Support Specialist Crit Muniz at (757) 233-8898 to coordinate reasonable accommodations. He is located in the Learning Center, Clarke Hall, 2nd floor.

If due to an underlying medical condition you feel it necessary, for your own safety, to take your courses in a remote learning environment, please contact Disability Services Specialist Crit Muniz at [\(757\) 233-8898](tel:757-233-8898) or by email at nmuniz@vwu.edu. Medical documentation may be required.

Counseling Center

The nature of psychology describes some very personal human experiences. Therefore, from time to time, the topics in this course may touch on personal issues for you, especially topics related to mental health, relationships, and/or stress-related experiences. In addition, college in general is an exciting but often challenging time for most students, and there can be lots of ups and downs. Please don't try to manage these problems and issues alone. I encourage you to seek confidential support from the counseling center when you need it. Contact: Bill Brown, 455-5730, bbrown@vwu.edu.

Academic Honesty

Honesty is one of the most valuable assets that a member of an academic community possesses. In recognition of this fact, Virginia Wesleyan has enacted an honor code which is available to you in your student handbook. I adhere to this code explicitly and follow its recommended procedures. If I discover you have plagiarized an assignment in any way, I reserve the right to give you a 0 on that assignment. If you repeat this offense or have previously plagiarized in a different class, I reserve the right to fail you for the entire course and/or take your case to the Honor Board.

Lecture and Reading Outline

This outline can be only a rough guide, since dates for particular lecture topics can only be approximate and since material may be added or deleted. The dates and material for the exams will be as listed, unless changes are absolutely necessary. If changes affecting exams are made, they will be announced in class as soon as possible

PSY 495 Ethics & Professional Issues

Lecture & Reading Outline

F = Fisher “Decoding the Ethics Code,” K&M = Kuther & Morgan “Careers in Psychology,” BB = Readings Posted on Blackboard

<u>Date</u>	<u>Due by 11:59 p.m.</u>	<u>Topic</u>	<u>Readings</u>
Mon 8/24		Class Introduction	Syllabus
Wed 8/26		Why this Course?	K&M 1 & 2; F1; BB
Mon 8/31		Clinical & Counseling	K&M 3; BB
Wed 9/2	Blog 1	Clinical & Counseling	F13; Skim F2, 4, 6, & 7; BB
Mon 9/7		School Psychology	K&M 4; BB
Wed 9/9	Blog 2	School Psychology	F7; BB
Mon 9/14		Legal & Forensic Psychology	K&M 5; BB
Wed 9/16	Blog 3	Legal & Forensic Psychology	F9&12; BB
Mon 9/21		Health Psychology	K&M 6; BB
Wed 9/23	Blog 4	Health Psychology	F6 & 10; BB
Mon 9/28		Sport Psychology	K&M 7; BB
Wed 9/30	Blog 5	Sport Psychology	F6; BB
Mon 10/5		Biopsychology & Neuropsychology	K&M 8; BB
Wed 10/7	Blog 6	Biopsychology & Neuropsychology	F5; BB
Mon 10/12	Meetings	I/O, Cognitive, & Human Factors	K&M 9; BB
Wed 10/14	Interview Paper	I/O, Cognitive, & Human Factors	F8; BB
Mon 10/19		Experimental & Quantitative	K&M 10; BB
Wed 10/21	Take-Home Exam 1	Experimental & Quantitative	F11; BB
Mon 10/26		Social & Consumer Psychology	K&M 11; BB
Wed 10/28	Blog 7	Social & Consumer Psychology	F4; BB
Mon 11/2		Developmental Psychology	K&M 12; BB
Wed 11/4	Blog 8	Developmental Psychology	F3; BB
Mon 11/9		Getting a Job	K&M 13; BB
Wed 11/11	Blog 9	Getting a Job	F2; BB
Mon 11/16		Graduate-Level Careers	K&M 14; BB
Wed 11/18	Blog 10	Graduate-Level Careers	F10; BB
Mon 11/23		NO CLASS – THANKSGIVING BREAK	
Wed 11/25		NO CLASS – THANKSGIVING BREAK	
Mon 11/30		ACAT Administration in class	
Wed 12/2	Paper	Ethics in Action – Group Presentations	
Fri 12/11	Take-Home Exam 2	Group & Individual Presentations 11:30a.m.-2:00p.m.	

** Note: The last day to drop a course without record is 8/29, and the last day to drop a course without receiving an automatic “WF” is 11/7.