**PSY6930 (1 credit option) BCN Professional Development: Research Presentations**

**Class no. 20092 Section 3482** **Spring 2026**

**Class meeting time:** Fridays 9:35 am – 10:25 pm (Period 3), Psychology Bldg. Rm 129.

**Instructor:** Marek Schwendt, PhD

**Instructor contact:** Office, Psychology Bldg. Rm 324; Phone: 352-294-3658, Email: schwendt@ufl.edu

**Instructor office hours:** Wednesday 12-2 pm

**Course goals:** This course is designed to establish a strong foundation and further develop students' skills in presenting research to an expert audience. Effective scientific communication is a critical professional competency, essential for disseminating research at conferences, workshops, seminars, and job talks. The Behavioral and Cognitive Neuroscience (BCN) Ph.D. students will take turns presenting their research throughout the semester. Both the pre-presentation structured guidance and post-presentation peer and faculty feedback will be provided.

**Topics to be covered:**

- Current research project of each student, assigned during the first week of the semester.
- These include preclinical (animal) and clinical (human) research, typically aligned with the ongoing projects of the faculty mentors in the BCN program (as posted on individual BCN faculty websites).

**Course structure and expectations:**

- At the beginning of the semester, the instructor will provide an overview of effective scientific presentation practices, including examples of preferred approaches and common mistakes to avoid.
- Student presentations will be scheduled at the start of the semester (after checking for professional conflicts) in descending order of seniority and posted on the course Canvas page. Senior students will present first, followed by junior students.
- Senior Students: Presentations should focus on advanced projects, including data analysis and interpretation of findings. Junior Students: Presentations should emphasize research design, methodology, and objectives, with limited discussion of collected data.
- Presentation Guidelines: Each presentation should be 10 – 30 minutes in length. Slides must be clear, well-organized, and easy to understand.
- All BCN faculty members are encouraged to attend student presentations.
- At the conclusion of each presentation, the presenting students will be provided with the Instructor/Faculty feedback and with the peer feedback from other students in the course.
- Each student is required to deliver one presentation during the semester. In addition, all students are expected to actively engage in the discussion/feedback process following each presentation. Student participation will be monitored by the instructor. Students should notify the instructor as soon as possible if they need to reschedule their presentation.
- Professional and constructive feedback is expected. 'Destructive' or inappropriate criticisms will be addressed by the instructor, and alternative feedback strategies will be provided as necessary.

**Grading:**

This course is graded using the US/S scale. US will be given if students a) do not attend 75% or more of class meetings, b) fail to present, or c) fail to engage in the discussion/feedback process (zero peer feedback provided).

**Please see this website for additional UF policies** (including accommodations for disabled students**,** absences, and resources)**:**

https://syllabus.ufl.edu/syllabus-policy/uf-syllabus-policy-links/

| Course schedule | | |
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| **Date** | **Topic** | **Optional Assignment** |
| **1/16** | Introduction to the course, guidance on effective scientific presentation, and Q&A from students. The final presentation schedule is published on the Canvas course page. | Ten simple rules for effective presentation slides: 10.1371/journal.pcbi.1009554<br>From Data to Story: Crafting Compelling Scientific Presentation:<br>https://youtu.be/YsyVTeSNyws?si=vy6EFW79unMswV5j<br>Dealing with presentation anxiety: https://www.science.org/content/article/presenting-science-anxiety-averse |
| **1/23** | Student presentations and faculty/peer feedback. | |
| **1/30** | Student presentations and faculty/peer feedback. | |
| **2/6** | Student presentations and faculty/peer feedback. | |
| **2/13** | Student presentations and faculty/peer feedback. | |
| ***2/20*** | *No class (Spring break)* | |
| **2/27** | Student presentations and faculty/peer feedback. | |
| **3/6** | Student presentations and faculty/peer feedback. | |
| **3/13** | Student presentations and faculty/peer feedback. | |
| **3/20** | Student presentations and faculty/peer feedback. | |
| **3/27** | Student presentations and faculty/peer feedback. | |
| **4/3** | Student presentations and faculty/peer feedback. | |
| **4/10** | Student presentations and faculty/peer feedback. | |
| **4/17** | Student presentations and faculty/peer feedback. | |
| ***4/24*** | *No class – semester ends on 4/22.* | |