

# Research Methods in Psychology

**Instructor:** David Polson, PhD

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**Office Hours:** Available online during class times and other times by appointment.

**Course Website:** Accessible through BrightSpace <<https://bright.uvic.ca/d2l/home/54377>>

**Teaching Assistant:** Alejandra Contreras <[ale@solorzanoc.com](mailto:ale@solorzanoc.com)>

**Designated Class Days, Times:** M & Th, 10:00-11:20am

**Lab Instructor:** Connor Guillet <[cguillet@uvic.ca](mailto:cguillet@uvic.ca)>

**Designated Lab Days, Times:** **B01:** T, 8:30-9:20am | **B02:** T, 9:30-10:20am

**B03:** W, 8:30-9:20am | **B04:** W, 9:30-10:20am

## Course Content

This course deals with psychology as a science. You will be introduced to basic research techniques, with an emphasis on their conceptual rather than statistical rationale. You will be taken through all the stages of psychological research, from choosing the problem to publishing the results. Along the way you will be exposed to a wide variety of interesting topics in the psychological literature. I hope to convey to you the idea that designing and conducting research is an exercise in problem solving that can be exciting and creative.

## Course Materials

- (1) White, T. L. & McBurney, D. H. (2013). *Research methods* (9<sup>th</sup> ed.). Belmont, CA: Cengage Learning. [purchase hardcopy; or rent eTextbook version]
- (2) *Mastering the Basics of Visual Data Analysis* tutorial [\$9 online; details provided in Lab Assignment F]
- (3) *Study Guide* (available at course website)
- (4) Narrated PowerPoint presentations (available at course website)
- (5) Skeletal PowerPoint slides (available at course website)
- (6) *THINK FAST* computer program (optional; available at course website)

## Course Overview

This course is divided into 6 units, comprised of certain chapters in the White and McBurney textbook, 13 chapters in total. Generally, by a certain date and time (our designated class period), you should have completed the assigned chapter reading and have viewed the corresponding PowerPoint presentation. The presentations are narrated videos, functioning like lectures. Skeletal PowerPoint slides will be provided to help with your notetaking while viewing the presentation. You should also have completed the corresponding Chapter Quiz, presumably after doing the reading, watching the presentation, taking notes, and studying that material.

Brightspace limits how I can structure things online. It is very important always to be looking ahead. Note the wording in the paragraph above: “completed by.” Typically, there will not be enough time to do everything during a class period for which an agenda is listed, so you will need to do a fair bit of the work (or ideally all of it) BEFORE that class. Textbooks on how to do well in university recommend putting in two hours outside of class for every hour in class. So, if you were to follow this rule, that would entail an additional six hours per week devoted to this course, on top of the three hours per week of designated class time. Those additional hours factor into the agenda (workload) for any given class. (That is also true for the lab—yet two more hours per week devoted to this course, on top of the one hour per week of designated lab time.)

A test is scheduled after every unit, so there are six tests in total. Unlike the Chapter Quizzes, which can be written at any time prior to their deadlines, you must write the tests during our designated class period. Bottom line: you need be available during our designated class period only on the six test days. Feedback will be provided on the Chapter Quizzes (as well as on almost all other course components), but NOT on the tests themselves.

There is a lab each week. You must be registered for one of the four lab sections (**B01 or B02 or B03 or B04**) for this section (**A01**) of PSYC 201. There is a separate lab outline, detailing the various lab activities and requirements. With one exception, you need not be available during your designated lab section time slot.

Should you have any questions during the semester, there are several alternatives: post your question(s) at the Q & A forum; email me directly; email your TA (Alejandra) directly for concerns related to the grading of quizzes and tests; and email your lab instructor (Connor) directly for concerns related to the lab component. Interacting with your peers via Q&A forum at the course website is strongly encouraged, and thus typically should be your first choice; while not required, bonus points can be earned for doing so.

## Course Components

**Study Guide.** The *Study Guide* lists pertinent study questions for each textbook chapter in this course. The study questions are important because they are the focus of the PowerPoint presentations, and thus many of the quiz and test items are based on them. Be sure to use the study questions to direct your reading of the textbook, ideally writing out the answers to them. The *Study Guide* also recommends specific end-of-chapter exercises to complete to best prepare for the quizzes and tests; and it includes links to useful resources.

**Narrated PowerPoint Presentations.** In these presentations I highlight what I believe to be the most important questions from the *Study Guide* and then go about answering them, in many cases elaborating well beyond what is in the textbook. There are the two major advantages of the PowerPoint presentations over lectures (live or online): (1) you can pause and rewind if something doesn't make sense the first time and (2) you can watch them whenever and how many times you want. Skeletal PowerPoint documents corresponding to the PowerPoint presentations are available at the course website. I recommend printing them and writing your notes on the printed pages while viewing the corresponding presentations (or doing so electronically by opening the documents in PowerPoint and typing your notes directly into them).

**Chapter Quizzes.** There is an online Chapter Quiz for each textbook chapter we will cover in the course. A Chapter Quiz is based on the required activities for that chapter (i.e., reading that chapter and viewing its corresponding PowerPoint presentation). Each Chapter Quiz consists of about 10 multiple choice items, and possibly an open-ended item or two. While there are 13 Chapter Quizzes, only your best 11 scores will count; in other words, your two lowest Chapter Quiz scores will be dropped. This course component counts **110 points** toward your final grade

It will not suffice to read the textbook chapter only or to view the corresponding PowerPoint presentation only. Given that both are required activities, the expectation is that you did both and studied material from both. For each Chapter Quiz (and for each test), unless otherwise noted, you are expected to know all pertinent material covered in the textbook chapter even if some of that material is not also covered in the corresponding PowerPoint presentation. And, you are expected to know all pertinent material covered in the PowerPoint presentation even if some of that material is not also covered in the corresponding textbook chapter.

Most students should be able to complete a Chapter Quiz in 15 minutes or less. That is the amount of classroom time I would allot to writing a quiz of this sort under typical classroom conditions (i.e., invigilated, closed book). Obviously I can't prevent you from looking at your notes and your textbook when you are on your own, but don't expect to be able to do everything all at once (e.g., read the chapter and view the PowerPoint presentation for the very first time while writing the quiz); in that case, even two hours would not be enough time to do well. The duration of each quiz is set at 30 minutes to accommodate all students, including those registered with CAL. There could be the odd exception in which quiz duration is longer.

An hour after a quiz deadline passes, the answers to the quiz items will be posted. That feedback might help you to prepare for the upcoming test. Because the answers become available to everyone then, under no circumstances can a quiz be written after its deadline

**Tests.** There are six tests, one for every unit, written online during our scheduled class time. Tests will consist of a combination of multiple-choice and open-ended items. Generally, tests will be more challenging than the Chapter Quizzes. Tests take place during our designated class period. Overall, this course component counts **620 points** toward your final grade, with each test weighted equally.

Unlike the Chapter Quizzes, on which feedback will be provided, feedback will NOT be provided on the tests. After writing a test, you will have no further access to the test items. The tests are for assessment purposes only. Upon request, though, the TA, who graded your test, would be willing to provide you with some general feedback (e.g., perhaps your answers to the open-ended items were too vague, perhaps you completely misunderstood a certain concept, etc.), as well as to checking the scoring of your test if you think that it might have been marked incorrectly or that there might be some other problem.

**Laboratory.** The labs are mostly focused on a self-research project you will be conducting over the course of one month. Most weeks there will be a lab assignment (worth **120 points** in total) and/or a self-research update assignment (worth **30 points** in total). At the end of the semester, you will submit an APA-styled report based on your self-research project (**120 points**). Details are provided in a separate lab outline.

## Bonus

**Q & A Forum.** Interacting with your fellow students in this course is encouraged, but it is not required. There is a Q & A forum at the course website set up for this purpose. As an alternative to emailing your questions to me (or to your TA or lab instructor), you can post your questions to this forum, hopefully to be answered by your peers. If you make a valuable contribution to this forum, you will earn 5 bonus points. That might entail answering your peers' questions, or perhaps taking the initiative and posting some valuable information of your own related to the course material. You can earn up to **20 bonus points** this way. You will earn credit for only one valuable contribution per week (even if you make more than one that week). At the end of the course, you will need to copy and paste your contributions (along with the dates) into a Word document and submit it at the course website for consideration. To encourage peer interaction, my contributions to this forum will be minimal, intervening only if need be.

Other ways of earning bonus points may be announced later in the course.

## Optional

**THINK FAST.** In order to think critically about research methods in psychology, you need to be fluent with the basic facts and concepts. *THINK FAST* is a computerized flashcard program designed to help you in this regard. It includes six decks of cards, one deck per unit. Deck size varies from about 20 to 40 cards. In *THINK FAST*, after you select a deck, a session begins: the program presents the cards one at a time and gives you two minutes to provide the answers to as many cards as possible. While there are several response options for learning the cards, I recommend working in the Type Keyword mode. In this mode, flashcards are presented that are missing either the answer or a keyword or phrase, and you are required to type in the missing word(s). For more detailed information about *THINK FAST*, see the document called “Using *THINK FAST*,” available at the course website.

Research indicates that, relative to students who are traditionally taught, students who are exposed to Precision Teaching—with an emphasis on developing fluency (high rate correct) with basic terms and facts—write more succinct and accurate essays (even though they are not specifically trained to do so), participate in more class discussions, and have better concentration and long-term retention. Students in my classes have reported that developing fluency also helped them better understand the course readings. Thus, working with *THINK FAST* will likely have positive benefits for you beyond merely memorizing the definitions.

## Evaluation

Chapter Quizzes (best 11 of 13)	110
Tests (6)	620
Lab Assignments (6 or 7)	120
Self-Research Updates (6)	30
Self-Research Report	120
<b>TOTAL</b>	1000
Bonus up to...	30

## N grades

Students who have completed the following elements will be considered to have completed the course and will be assigned a final grade:

- 3 or more tests attempted
- 3 or more lab assignments submitted
- self-research report submitted

Failure to complete any one or more of these elements will result in a grade of "N" regardless of the cumulative percentage on other elements of the course. An N is a failing grade, and it factors into a student's GPA as 0. The maximum percentage that can accompany an N on a transcript is 49.

## Notes

- The answers to the quiz items will be revealed (to help you prepare for the tests), but the answers to the test items will not be revealed.
- Final grades that end with a decimal point of 0.5 or above will be rounded to the next higher whole number, and grades that end with a decimal point below 0.5 will be rounded to the next lower whole number. For example, if a final percentage grade is 89.5 – 89.9, the grade will be rounded to 90. The rounding criteria will only be used on the final assignment of the letter grade.
- Assignments are due, and tests must be taken, on the date indicated in the Class Schedule. It is not fair for some students to do work later than others, unless there is a valid excuse. Therefore, except in cases meeting the criteria for an academic concession (see below), there will be zero credit and no make-up for any assignments or quizzes not turned in on time. ***Travel plans will not be accepted as an excuse.***
- Students who do not complete requirements on schedule due to extenuating circumstances (i.e., personal illness or accident, family affliction, official university activities) must contact me immediately upon their return to arrange for substitute work. Late contact (e.g., after the tentative final grades are posted) is unacceptable. Typically, I will require documentation.
- **If you miss a Chapter Quiz for whatever reason, it will count as one of the two (of the 13) quiz scores that you will be dropping.**

## CLASS SCHEDULE

Complete by: Jan 11 (M), 11:30am	<b>Introduction</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Read Course Outline</li> <li>• View Course Outline presentation</li> </ul>
Complete by: Jan 14 (Th), 11:30am	<b>Chapter 1: Psychology &amp; Science</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Read Chapter 1</li> <li>• View Chapter 1 PowerPoint presentation</li> <li>★ Write Chapter 1 Quiz</li> </ul>
Complete by: Jan 18 (M), 11:30am	<b>Chapter 3: Ethics in Research</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Read Chapter 3</li> <li>• Watch video — Research Methods in Psychology</li> <li>★ Write Chapter 3 + Video Quiz</li> </ul>
Complete by: Jan 21 (Th), 11:30am	<b>Chapter 5: Variables</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Read Chapter 5</li> <li>• View Chapter 5 PowerPoint presentation</li> <li>★ Write Chapter 5 Quiz</li> </ul>
Jan 25 (M), 10:00-11:30am	★ Write Test 1 (covers Chapters 1, 3, 5)
Complete by: Jan 28 (Th), 11:30am	<b>Chapter 6: Validity</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Read Chapter 6</li> <li>• View Chapter 6 PowerPoint presentation</li> <li>★ Write Chapter 6 Quiz</li> </ul>
Complete by: Feb 1 (M), 11:30am	<b>Chapter 7: Control</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Read Chapter 7</li> <li>• View Chapter 7 PowerPoint presentation</li> <li>★ Write Chapter 7 Quiz</li> </ul>
Feb 4 (Th), 10:00-11:30am	★ Write Test 2 (covers Chapters 6, 7)

Complete by: Feb 8 (M), 11:30am	<b>Chapter 14: Graphic and Descriptive Techniques</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Read Chapter 14 (only parts covered in PowerPoint presentation below)</li> <li>• View Chapters 14 PowerPoint presentation</li> <li>★ Complete Chapter 14 Quiz (Exercise Sheet)</li> </ul>
Complete by: Feb 11 (Th), 11:30am	<b>Chapter 15: Inferential Statistics</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Read Chapter 15 (only parts covered in PowerPoint presentation below)</li> <li>• View Chapter 15 PowerPoint presentation</li> </ul>
Feb 15-19	READING BREAK
Complete by: Feb 22 (M), 11:30am	<b>Chapter 15: Inferential Statistics -- continued</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>★ Write Chapters 14/15 Quiz</li> </ul>
Feb 25 (Th), 10:00-11:30am	★ Write Test 3 (covers Chapters 14, 15; only parts covered in PowerPoint presentations)
Complete by: Mar 1 (M), 11:30am	<b>Chapter 8: Nonexperimental Research (Part 1)</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Read Chapter 8</li> <li>• View Chapter 8 PowerPoint presentation</li> <li>★ Write Chapter 8 Quiz</li> </ul>
Complete by: Mar 4 (Th), 11:30am	<b>Chapter 9: Nonexperimental Research (Part 2)</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Read Chapter 9</li> <li>• View Chapter 9 PowerPoint presentation</li> </ul>
Complete by: Mar 8 (M), 11:30am	<b>Chapter 9: Nonexperimental Research (Part 2) – continued</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>★ Write Chapter 9 Quiz</li> </ul>
Mar 11 (Th), 10:00-11:30am	★ Write Test 4 (covers Chapters 8, 9)
Complete by: Mar 15 (M), 11:30am	<b>Chapter 10: True Experiments (Part 1)</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Read Chapter 10</li> <li>• View Chapter 10 PowerPoint presentation</li> <li>★ Write Chapter 10 Quiz</li> </ul>
Complete by: Mar 18 (Th), 11:30am	<b>Chapter 11: True Experiments (Part 2)</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Read Chapter 11</li> <li>• View Chapter 11 PowerPoint presentation</li> <li>★ Write Chapter 11 Quiz</li> </ul>

Mar 22 (M), 10:00-11:30am	★ Write Test 5 (covers Chapters 10, 11)
Complete by: Mar 25 (Th), 11:30am	<b>Chapter 12: Single-Subject Experiments</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● Read Chapter 12</li><li>● View Chapter 12 PowerPoint presentation</li></ul>
Complete by: Mar 29 (M), 11:30am	<b>Chapter 12: Single-Subject Experiments – continued</b> ★ Write Chapter 12 Quiz
Complete by: Apr 1 (Th), 11:30am	<b>Chapter 13: Quasi Experiments</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● Read Chapter 13</li><li>● View Chapter 13 PowerPoint presentation</li></ul> ★ Write Chapter 13 Quiz
Apr 5 (M)	EASTER MONDAY
Apr 8 (Th), 10:00-11:30am	★ Write Test 6 (covers Chapters 12, 13)

**UNIVERSITY OF VICTORIA**  
**Department of Psychology**

**Important Course Policy Information**  
**Spring 2021**

***Prerequisites***

Students who remain in courses for which they do not have the prerequisites do so at their own risk. Students who complete courses without prerequisites ARE NOT exempt from having to complete the prerequisite course(s) if such courses are required for the degree program.

***Program Requirements***

For more information see the UVic Calendar January 2021.

***Registration Status***

Students are responsible for verifying their registration status. Registration status may be verified using My Page, View Schedule. Course adds and drops will not be processed after the deadlines set out in the current UVic Calendar.

***Commitment to Inclusivity and Diversity***

The University of Victoria is committed to promoting, providing and protecting a positive and supportive and safe learning and working environment for all its members.

***In the Event of Illness, Accident or Family Affliction***

- ***What to do if you miss the final exam scheduled during the formal exam period***

Apply at Records Services for a "Request for Academic Concession", normally within 10 working days of the date of the exam. Records Services will forward the form to the instructor. If the concession is granted, the instructor will determine how to deal with the situation (for example, a deferred exam). Where a concession is not applied for or where such application is denied, an N grade will be entered on the student's academic record.

OR, you can download the Request for Academic Concession form here:  
<http://www.uvic.ca/registrar/assets/docs/record-forms/rac.pdf>

- ***What to do if you miss an exam other than one scheduled during the formal exam period***

Do not apply at Records Services for a "Request for Academic Concession". Instead submit documentation of the illness, accident or family affliction directly to your course instructor (or designated teaching assistant).

- ***What to do if you require additional time to complete course requirements***

Apply at Records Services for a "Request for Academic Concession", normally within 10 working days of the end of the course. Records Services will forward the form to the instructor. If the concession is granted, the instructor will determine how to deal with the situation (for example, a deferred exam). Where a concession is not applied for or where such application is denied, an N grade will be entered on the student's academic record.

OR, you can download the Request for Academic Concession form here:  
<http://www.uvic.ca/registrar/assets/docs/record-forms/rac.pdf>

## ***Policy on Academic Integrity including Plagiarism and Cheating***

The Department of Psychology fully endorses and intends to enforce rigorously the Senate Policy on Academic integrity

[https://www.uvic.ca/calendar/future/undergrad/#/policy/Sk\\_0xsM\\_V?bc=true&bcCurrent=08%20-%20Policy%20on%20Academic%20Integrity&bcGroup=Undergraduate%20Academic%20Regulations&bcItemType=policies](https://www.uvic.ca/calendar/future/undergrad/#/policy/Sk_0xsM_V?bc=true&bcCurrent=08%20-%20Policy%20on%20Academic%20Integrity&bcGroup=Undergraduate%20Academic%20Regulations&bcItemType=policies). It is of utmost importance that students who do their work honestly be protected from those who do not. Because this policy is in place to ensure that students carry out and benefit from the learning activities assigned in each course, it is expected that students will cooperate in its implementation.

The offences defined by the policy can be summarized briefly as follows:

1. **Plagiarism.** You must make sure that the work you submit is your work and not someone else's. There are proper procedures for citing the works of others. The student is responsible for being aware of and using these procedures.
2. **Unauthorized Use of an Editor.** The use of an editor is prohibited unless the instructor grants explicit written authorization.
3. **Multiple Submission.** Only under exceptional circumstances may a work submitted to fulfill an academic requirement be used to satisfy another similar requirement. The student is responsible for clarifying this with the instructor(s) involved.
4. **Falsifying Materials Subject to Academic Evaluation.** This includes falsification of data, use of commercially prepared essays, using information from the Internet without proper citation, citing sources from which material is not actually obtained, etc.
5. **Cheating on Assignments, Tests, and Examinations.** You may not copy the work of others in or out of class; you may not give your work to others for the purpose of copying; you may not use unauthorized material or equipment during examinations or tests; and you may not impersonate or allow yourself to be impersonated by another at an examination. The Department of Psychology has a policy of not making old examinations available for study purposes. Therefore, use of old exams without the express written permission of the instructor constitutes cheating by the user, and abetting of cheating by the person who provided the exam.
6. **Aiding Others to Cheat.** It is a violation to help others or attempt to help others to engage in any of the conduct described above.

Instructors are expected to make every effort to prevent cheating and plagiarism. This may include the assignment of seating for examinations, asking students to move during examinations, requests to see student identification cards, and other measures as appropriate. Instructors also have available to them a variety of tools and procedures to check for Internet and electronic media-based cheating. In instances of suspected or actual plagiarism or cheating, instructors, following prescribed procedures, are authorized to take steps consistent with the degree of the offence. These measures will range from a zero on the test or assignment or a failing grade for the course, probation within a program to temporary or even permanent suspension from the University.

Rights of Appeal are described in the Policy on Academic Integrity in the University calendar January 2021.

**The definitive source** for information on Academic Integrity is the University Calendar

**Other useful resources on Plagiarism and Cheating include:**

1. The Ombudsperson's office: <https://uvicombudsperson.ca/tips/plagiarism/>  
The [Office of the Ombudsperson](#) is an independent and impartial resource to assist with the fair resolution of student issues. A confidential consultation can help you understand your rights and responsibilities. The Ombudsperson can also clarify information, help navigate procedures, assist with problem-solving, facilitate communication, provide feedback on an appeal, investigate and make recommendations. Phone: 250-721-8357; Email: [ombuddy@uvic.ca](mailto:ombuddy@uvic.ca); Web: uvicombudsperson.ca.
2. UVic Library Resources: <http://www.uvic.ca/library/research/citation/plagiarism/>
3. [https://www.uvic.ca/library/research/citation/documents/avoiding%20plagiarism%20guideUpdate\\_Sep\\_2013.pdf](https://www.uvic.ca/library/research/citation/documents/avoiding%20plagiarism%20guideUpdate_Sep_2013.pdf)

# BE WELL



A note to remind you to take care of yourself. Do your best to maintain a healthy lifestyle this semester by eating well, exercising, getting enough sleep and taking some time to relax. This will help you achieve your goals and cope with stress. All of us benefit from support during times of struggle. You are not alone.

## ***Social Life, Friends, & Community at UVic:***

Having a social network is an extremely important foundation for positive mental health. There are lots of benefits to joining clubs, course unions, intramurals and teams on campus.

<https://www.uvic.ca/mentalhealth/undergraduate/connecting/index.php>

## ***Counselling Services:***

Counselling Services can help you make the most of your university experience. They offer free professional, confidential, inclusive support to currently registered UVic students. [www.uvic.ca/services/counselling/](http://www.uvic.ca/services/counselling/)

## ***Health Services:***

University Health Services (UHS) provides a full service primary health clinic for students, and coordinates healthy student and campus initiatives.

[www.uvic.ca/services/health/](http://www.uvic.ca/services/health/)

## ***Centre for Accessible Learning:***

The CAL staff are available by appointment to assess specific needs, provide referrals and arrange appropriate accommodations [www.uvic.ca/services/cal/](http://www.uvic.ca/services/cal/). The sooner you let us know your needs, the quicker we can assist you in achieving your learning goals in this course.

## ***Elders' Voices:***

The Office of Indigenous Academic and Community Engagement (IACE) has the privilege of assembling a group of Elders from local communities to guide students, staff, faculty and administration in Indigenous ways of knowing and being.

[www.uvic.ca/services/indigenous/students/programming/elders/](http://www.uvic.ca/services/indigenous/students/programming/elders/)

## ***Mental Health Supports and Services:***

Mental health supports and services are available to students from all areas of the UVic community: [www.uvic.ca/mentalhealth/undergraduate/](https://www.uvic.ca/mentalhealth/undergraduate/)

## Sexualized Violence Prevention and Response at UVic

UVic takes sexualized violence seriously, and has raised the bar for what is considered acceptable behaviour. We encourage students to learn more about how the university defines sexualized violence and its overall approach by visiting [www.uvic.ca/svp](http://www.uvic.ca/svp). If you or someone you know has been impacted by sexualized violence and needs information, advice, and/or support please contact the sexualized violence resource office in Equity and Human Rights (EQHR). Whether or not you have been directly impacted, if you want to take part in the important prevention work taking place on campus, you can also reach out:

Where: Sexualized violence resource office in EQHR, Sedgewick C119

Phone: 250.721.8021

Email: [svpcoordinator@uvic.ca](mailto:svpcoordinator@uvic.ca)

Web: [www.uvic.ca/svp](http://www.uvic.ca/svp)