



How to Survive Your PhD

ANUx Course Syllabus, 2015

About this Course

You need to be smart to begin a PhD - but you need to be resilient to finish one. The PhD is an emotional journey as much as it is an intellectual one. What kinds of emotions does the research degree process provoke? What strategies can help students deal with the emotional highs and lows? How can academic advisors, family and friends help research students cope with these stresses - and celebrate the successes?

This course is primarily designed for masters, PhD, and research students and the academics who are tasked with helping them, but you may also be a family member or friend of a PhD student who is seeking to better understand what your loved one is going through.

By directly addressing the emotional issues, and by helping us see the connections between emotional resilience and success, this course aims to help us all create a more supportive academic environment, where students can do their best research work.

Learning Objectives

- Understand the common emotional experiences of research students and why they tend to have emotional issues in common.
- Discuss and create strategies and approaches to help research students cope with the emotional challenges of research study.
- Help academics and prospective academics become more effective research supervisors.

Time Required

We anticipate each week will require roughly 2-3 hours of time to complete. This includes time to do the 4 components of each module:

1. Watch a short video
2. Read the module content
3. Engage in discussion (either in the forums or on social media)
4. Checked out the live chat or its summary, and the social media page

Participation and Assessment Requirements

The course is designed around participation, engagement, and discussion. We'd like it to be a positive experience for everyone, and encourage you to post in the forums and on social media sites like Twitter using the hashtag #survivephd15. Outstanding contributions to the course will be recognised with a digital badge that you can display on social media sites and portfolios.

The course requirements are as follows:

1. Module Completion, weighted 50%

Each week you will need to complete the 4 components listed above. There is a checklist at the end of each module for you to tick off what you have completed. The top 8 out of 10 modules will be counted.

2. Final Activity, weighted 50%

At the end of the course there will be a peer-evaluated activity, where you will need to design a workshop or event to help PhD students in your local area. You will be asked to evaluate the work of your peers as part of this assessment.

To earn your course certificate, you will need to achieve a passing grade of at least 50% in the course. You can check your progress at any time by clicking the **Progress** tab. A digital badge will also be delivered to all participants who complete the course.

Course Schedule

The course will run from 25 August – 1 December 2015 inclusive. The modules will open at 22:00 GMT/UTC on Tuesdays (or 8:00 AEST on Wednesdays for Australia). There are 10 modules, with one each week beginning 25 August. A live streaming event will also be held at the end of each module.

25 Aug	Module 1: Setting the Scene
01 Sept	Module 2: A Quick History of the Doctorate
08 Sept	Module 3: Confidence
15 Sept	Module 4: Frustration
22 Sept	Module 5: Loneliness
29 Sept	Module 6: Fear
06 Oct	Module 7: Curiosity
13 Oct	Module 8: Confusion
20 Oct	Module 9: Boredom
27 Oct	Module 10: Love
11 Nov	Final activity due
18 Nov	Peer evaluations due
25 Nov	Results available

More information

For further details, including discussion etiquette, live chat information, and help using the edX platform please access the course and visit the **About this Course** section. Any changes to the schedule or requirements will be communicated through the edX platform and in email to all participants.