1. **Title of project**  
Discourse Comprehension Research

2. **Contact person(s) name, phone number and e-mail**  
David J. Therriault, Ph. D.  
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3. **Number of credits**  
Two credits (six hours per week)

4. **Requirement of applicant**  
Cognitive Psychology (EXP 3604) is preferred but not required. There will also be a weekly one-hour lab meeting.

5. **Description of research topic/area**  
This research investigates the relationship between discourse comprehension and representation and would be classified as cognitive research. There are two major lines of research. The first line explores the extent to which readers represent the nature of time, space, protagonist, causality, and characters’ goals when building their “story world”. The purpose of this research is to add to our knowledge about the relative contributions of time, space, and characters information in higher-level text representation.  

The second line of research explores perceptual symbols (i.e., sensory representations: looking, smelling, feeling, tasting, etc…) in language comprehension. The purpose of this line of research is to show that representations formed when understanding language are not transformed into an arbitrary code, but are more akin to the perceptual symbols of real world referents they denote (i.e., we are gathering evidence that language is grounded in perception).

6. **Description of the assistants' duties**  
Research assistants will gain experience in several areas, including but not limited to: brainstorming topics, literature searches, stimuli generation, helping to collect data, and instruction in writing up experimental results.

7. **Please indicate whether a student may pursue a senior thesis as part of the work or as a future possibility.**  
Yes, students may elect to complete a senior thesis with the following stipulation. Students must work in the lab for two-semesters before proposing their senior thesis.