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RESEARCH METHODS: PSYCHOLOGY 303

Course Description and Information

"What we know can be no better than how we know it." (Cognitius, of Goshen, c. 750 AD)

Why Research Methods?

Contrary to Straub Hall conventional wisdom (SHCW), Psych. 303, Research Methods (303), is not a creation of the faculty to cause potential psych majors grief! (We have other more effective courses for that purpose!) "303" is the second of two methods courses required of psychology majors. YOU MUST HAVE ALREADY TAKEN STATISTICS, PSYCH 302 to remain in this course.

303 offers you a unique look into modern psychology. This course also offers an opportunity to stretch yourself and to develop your thinking skills. You will learn how to develop testable research questions, the use scientific methods, and how to communicate your work in a finished research report. 303 is *the* foundation course for all other upper division psychology courses.

This course requires your active participation and involvement. There will be many assignments, in-class exercises, in-class quizzes, and a final research report (no final exam). In a step by step fashion you will progress toward your final research report. It is your responsibility to keep current on any procedural changes that may deviate from the announced syllabus. This is not the course you want to skip class meetings!

Textbook: *Research Methods in Psychology* (4th edition) by Gary Heiman
Optional, strongly recommended: *APA Publication Manual*

Note: These books are worth keeping in your personal library for use throughout your psychology major.

Purpose and goals:

- The purpose of this course is to provide the student with
- 1) an understanding of the process of research in psychology
 - 2) experience in conducting research, and
 - 3) tools for reading and evaluating the quality of research

Class Meetings:

Class meetings will feature lectures, class discussions, exercises, and quizzes. Lectures will generally follow the outline of the textbook but they will go beyond the textbook. Please use the Glossary in the text; learning new concepts and building your technical vocabulary are very important aspects of a methods course.

The text is an important reference resource. You are advised to do the assigned readings *before* class sessions. From time to time chapters may be reassigned; this is not an oversight! Be sure to review the material.

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Quizzes. There will be seven in-class short quizzes to help keep you current. **You may miss (or drop) one quiz, so there will be no make-up quizzes.** These will be multiple guess and short answers. Some will be announced beforehand, but some will just appear out of nowhere. Only six quizzes will count toward your grade.

In-class exercises: We will use short in-class exercises (5) to illustrate material and allow you to sharpen your critical thinking. These will be unannounced and will cover applications from readings and lectures up to that point.

Assignments.

Assignments will be handed out on Tuesdays, and are due at the beginning of class the following Tuesday. You will have one week to complete each assignment. Late assignments will be penalized 5 points per day past the deadline. Please keep copies of ALL work you hand in. All assignments and final project must be in printed form, double spaced *(e.g., computer printer, typewritten). Handwritten work will not be accepted.

Final Research Project. The final product for this course is your research project. As such, it is a demonstration of how you apply what you have learned. Obviously, this is very important, both as a product and as a process. How you get there is as important as what you get to!

Your project will involve: selecting a research topic, conducting a literature search, formulating your hypothesis (or hypotheses), developing the necessary materials (e.g., research instruments, questionnaires, etc.), collecting the data, analyzing the data with the appropriate statistics, and interpreting the results, all on a final written research report using APA style. To help you keep on track there are deadlines for the various stages (see syllabus). There is no way you can pass this course if you leave your project to the end of the term!

You may choose to do your project individually or collaboratively with one or two others in this class. However a single grade will be assigned to the research report, so that all authors receive the same grade.

Grading:	Points	Course Letter Grade
Quizzes (6 @ 10 points)	60	90% = A
Assignments (5 @ 30 points)	150	80% = B
In-class exercises (5 @ 10 points)	50	70% = C
Final Research Report	150	60% = D
TOTAL POSSIBLE	410	<60% = NP

SYLLABUS RESEARCH METHODS

Date	Class Topic	Reading	Quiz Assignments
9/26	Intro to Research Methods Constructs and such		
9/28	Scientific Methods Formulating Research Questions	Chaps 1-2	
10/3	Using Library Resources <i>Meeting at Library</i>	pp. 99-108	A 1
10/5	About variables Types of validity		Quiz
10/10	Statistical Review	Chapt 3 pp. 401-410	A 2
10/12	Experimental Design	Chapt 5	
10/17	Experimental Design	Chapt 5	
10/19	Behavioral measures	Chapt 6	Quiz
10/24	Behavioral measures	Chapt 6	A 3
10/26	Control	Chapt 7	
10/31	Factorial Designs	Chapt 8 pp. 414-424	
11/2	Fraud, Ethics, & Rights		Quiz
11/7	Survey & Correlational Design	Chapt 9 pp. 425-429	A 4
11/9	Field experiments	Chapt 10	
11/14	Quasi-Experimental Approaches	Chapt 11	A 5
11/16	Quasi-Experimental Approaches cont'd		
11/21	Reporting Research	Chapt 4 pp. 459-470	Quiz
11/23	**** THANKSGIVING *****		
11/28	Evaluating research	Chapt 12	
11/30	TBA		RESEARCH PAPER DUE!

Note -- Assignments (A) due on following Tuesday
 Not all Quizzes (Q) are listed/announced
 In-class exercises are unannounced