

**PSY 303 - Research Methods  
Winter 1996  
Tues/Thurs 2-3:20, Straub Hall 154**

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**COURSE OBJECTIVES/CONTENT:**

This course serves a theoretical and practical introduction to doing research in psychology. We will cover the major issues in conducting psychological research, discussing how to:

- 1) formulate a research question
- 2) design a study
- 3) conduct the study
- 4) analyze data and interpret findings
- 5) communicate the results

These topics will be covered in the text and in the lectures. In addition, you will engage in activities that will require the practical application of what you have learned, including research projects that you will conduct in small groups and individually.

Although the course is specifically designed to teach research methods in psychology, the course has been designed with an eye to teaching general research skills that can be used in other fields (e.g. data analysis, program evaluation). An even more general goal is to teach logic and critical analysis skills that will allow you to be an informed consumer of other people's research findings and claims.

**COURSE PREREQUISITES:**

PSY302 (Statistical Methods) or its equivalent is a prerequisite for this course. You must have a working knowledge of statistics for this course.

**COURSE READINGS:**

The required text for this course is Research Methods in Psychology, by John Shaughnessy and Eugene Zechmeister (3rd edition). In addition, there is an optional study guide to accompany the text, A Practical Introduction to Research Methods in Psychology, by the same authors (2nd edition). One final optional resource that you will find highly useful, particularly if you intend to take more psychology courses and especially if you are considering graduate school in psychology, is the Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association (4th

edition). The manual is a helpful and complete guide to writing papers outside of psychology as well. **Even if you do not purchase this book, you are responsible for following the guidelines within it for your assignments in this class.** A copy of the manual is also available at the reference table in the Knight Library.

In addition to the text, there are three articles that you will be required to read early on in the quarter. Copies are on reserve at the Knight Library. You may also read these articles in the bound journals in the Knight Library.

## **COURSE REQUIREMENTS:**

### **1) Class participation:**

There is no substitute for attending class in this course. Most of the topics covered are understood only via a combination of background knowledge (that you will get from reading the text) and demonstration and discussion that will occur in class. However, more importantly, you will participate in several activities in class that will allow you to practice and master research skills--this practical training aspect of the class cannot be achieved without your attendance. Furthermore, because one important aspect of learning research methods is to learn how to critique research design and execution, part of your job as a member of this class is to provide suggestions and feedback to your other classmates.

I strongly recommend planning to attend EVERY class. If you miss a quiz or an in-class assignment, you cannot make it up. If you miss more than two classes, I will not use office hours to go over what you missed. (I reserve the right to grant exceptions to the two previous statements under dire circumstances, but don't count on being an exception.) If you know you must miss a class, I would appreciate you telling me in advance.

Your attendance at the scheduled exam period is mandatory. If you do not attend, you will fail the course.

If you don't already have an e-mail account, please get one, as there may be additional class information that I will distribute via e-mail. If you need help getting an account, go to the University Computing Center. **Once you have your account, or if you already have one, send me an E-mail message (sdhodes@darkwing.uoregon.edu)** so I will know you are on-line. If you send me E-mail questions about the class, I will try to answer them as soon as I can; however, if they are long or complicated, it is possible (but unlikely) that you will have to wait until my next office hours for an answer.

2) All papers in this class will be typed in a readable font, double-spaced, left justified only, and with margins of one inch at the top, bottom, left side and right side (these are all consistent with the APA Publication Manual). If you foresee problems meeting these qualifications, please discuss them with me.

3) Reading assignments should be completed before lecture on the day they are listed on the syllabus. Homework assignments are due at the **beginning** of class on the day they are due. Assignments turned in after the start of class are half a day late, with a 5% penalty, up until 5 pm of the due date; papers turned in after 5 are 1 day late with a 10% penalty. Each subsequent day rolls over at 5 pm, with an additional 10% penalty. If you do not turn your paper in class, turn it into the Psychology office (\*\* Straub) and get the time stamped on it. The office closes AT 5 pm, so it is your best interest to bring your papers by at least 15 minutes before 5:00 in order for the

staff to have time to stamp your paper. Do not plan to skip class to finish your paper--your paper will be penalized anyway, and you will miss class and get behind.

Each student gets one "bonus day late" credit that can be used on any homework during the quarter (not on the final project). The bonus allows you to turn in the assignment up until 5 pm the day after the due date without penalty.

Some assignments in the course are ongoing, and are not listed specifically on the syllabus (for example, collecting data for your observational study and final project). You will be reminded about these activities in class periodically, but it will be your responsibility to pace yourself.

4) Grading will be broken down as follows:

5 quizzes, dropping the lowest one, leaving 4 quizzes @ 30 points each	= 120 points
Homework 1 (Introduction)	= 25 points
Homework 2 (Reference section and summary)	= 25 points
Homework 3 (Observational study)	= 75 points
Homework 4 (Midterm--Intro and methods for final project)	= 75 points
Homework 5 (Results and discussion for final project)	= 50 points
Final Project (Poster and presentation)	= 100 points**
Participation/Class exercises	= 30 points
<b>Total = 500 points</b>	

\*\*The project is worth 100 points. However, if you do not attend the final poster session (during the scheduled exam for this course), you will receive a failing grade for the course.

Final grades will be curved upwards if necessary. Extra credit options totaling no more than 5% of a student's grade (10 points) may be offered throughout the quarter. Detailed instructions for the homework assignments and the final project will be distributed in class. Quizzes will be short (approximately 15 minutes) and will cover class material and reading since the last quiz (i.e., they are not cumulative, although later concepts that build on earlier ones are fair game). In a sense, homework assignments relating to your final project (2, 4, & 5) ARE cumulative. You will need to turn in either the original or a copy of Homework 4 with Homework 5.

#### **STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES:**

If you have a documented disability and anticipate needing accommodations in this course, please make arrangements to meet with me soon. Please request that the Counselor for Students with Disabilities send a letter verifying your disability.

### **COURSE SCHEDULE:**

Note: Reading and Assignments Due are to be **completed** by the beginning of class on the date listed below.

This schedule will be adhered to as closely as possible. Should changes occur, you will be notified.

**S&Z** = Shaughnessy and Zechmeister, Research Methods in Psychology

<b>Date</b>	<b>Reading</b>	<b>Probable Class Topic</b>	<b>New Assignment</b>	<b>Assignment Due</b>
Tues Jan 9		Introduction to course		
Thurs Jan 11	S&Z Ch 1: Introduction Syllabus	Scientific method IV's & DV's	HM1-Writing an introduction	
Tues Jan 16	S&Z Ch 2: Ethical Issues (Also start reading inadmissible evid. articles for HM1)	Ethical issues Citations		
Thurs Jan 18	(Continue reading inadmissible evid. articles for HM1)	<b>Quiz 1</b> Library Trip	HM2-Reference section/Article summary	
Tues Jan 23	S&Z Ch 3: Observation	Observation Operational definitions Groups for obs. study	HM3-Observational study	HM1
Thurs Jan 25	S&Z Ch 5: Unobtrus. Measures	Unobtrusive measures Archival studies Writing methods sections	HM4 (midterm) Intro & methods for final project	HM2

\*\*\*Fri Jan 26, by 5pm -- Group observational study proposals due\*\*\*

<b>Date</b>	<b>Reading</b>	<b>Probable Class Topic</b>	<b>New Assignment</b>	<b>Assignment Due</b>
Tues Jan 30	S&Z Ch 4: Correl'l Res.	Correlational Research Surveys		
Thurs Feb 1		<b>Quiz 2</b> Correlation and causation Validity		
Tues Feb 6	S&Z Ch 6: Indep. Group Designs	Experiments		HM3
Thurs Feb 8		Experiments, cont. Confounds		Midterm (HM4)
Tues Feb 13	S&Z Ch 7: W/in Subjects Designs	W/in subjects designs Counterbalancing		
Thurs Feb 15	S&Z Ch 8: Complex Designs	<b>Quiz 3</b> Effects of independent variables		
Tues Feb 20		Which stat test to use		
Thurs Feb 22	S&Z Ch 9 Analysis of Experiments	Tentative trip to SSIL		
Tues Feb 27		Statistical power, Significance testing		
Thurs Feb 29	S&Z Ch 10 Single Case Designs	<b>Quiz 4</b> Writing results and discussion	HM5-Results and discussion	

<b>Date</b>	<b>Reading</b>	<b>Class</b>	<b>New Assignment</b>	<b>Assignment Due</b>
Tues Mar 5		Case studies		
Thurs Mar 7	S&Z Ch 11 Quasi-Expt'l Designs	Quasi expt'l designs Time series designs		
Tues Mar 12		How to prepare posters		HM5
Thurs Mar 14		<b>Quiz 5</b> Wrap-up		

\*\*Tues Mar 19-Results and discussions will have been graded--you can pick them up in order to use them in preparing your poster.

\*\* Fri Mar 22--Exam period: Presentations of final projects in the form of a poster session.