

PSY 303 – Research Methods in Psychology



Winter 2007
CRN: 24367 (4 credits)
Tuesday & Thursday 4:00pm - 5:20pm, 112 Lillis
01/08/07 – 03/23/07



Instructor:	Christina Sheppler	
Email:	sheppler@uoregon.edu	
Office:	Straub 325	
Office Hours:	Tuesday 11:00am-12:00pm, Wednesday 11:00am-12:00pm & By Appointment EXCEPTION: Finals Week (No Office Hours)	
Lab Instructors:	Deniz Tahiroglu	Cara Bohon
Email:	dtahirog@uoregon.edu	cbohon@uoregon.edu
Office:	Straub 329	Straub 329
Office Hours:	Tuesday 1:00-3:00pm & By Appointment	Thursday 10-11:00am & By Appointment
Lab Section(s):	Thursday 12:00-1:20pm	Thursday 8:30-9:50am
	Thursday 2:00-3:20pm	

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course is dedicated to exploring the research process. The primary aim is to provide you with the tools necessary for effectively evaluating and implementing empirical research. Over the course of the term, we will discuss different types of research designs and cover several fundamental concepts. For the lab section of this class, you will play an active role as a member of a small group in order to successfully complete a research project. For this project, groups will select a topic from a list of predetermined options. Once the topic has been selected, students will conduct a literature review, pose research questions, design, and then implement a study that is capable of answering the formulated hypotheses. In addition, students will collect, analyze and interpret data. To formally document this process, you will be required to turn in an APA style manuscript detailing each stage of the project.

COURSE EXPECTATIONS

During a 10-week course, it is expected that you spend approximately 3 hours per credit each week attending class and participating in course-related activities. For a standard 4-credit class, this translates into a total of 12 hours per week and 120 hours over the course of the term. The pace at which information is covered and the work required for the successful completion of this course reflects this expectation.

COURSE PREREQUISITES

In order to take this course, you **MUST** have successfully completed PSY201, PSY202, WR121, WR122 or WR123, MTH111 or MTH 243 (or equivalent), & PSY302. Any student that has not completed all of the courses listed above must have my permission to remain registered.

COURSE MATERIALS

Blackboard

A blackboard site has been created for this course. The site will contain announcements, general course information, lecture slides, lab materials, study guides, grades, etc. You should make yourself familiar with the course site immediately (be sure to ask me if you have any questions about accessing/using blackboard). It is your responsibility to monitor Blackboard *frequently* for new information and announcements (I would recommend that you check Blackboard on a daily basis). **YOU ARE RESPONSIBLE FOR READING ALL ANNOUNCEMENTS POSTED ON BLACKBOARD.**

Readings

The required texts for this course are available at the campus bookstore:

American Psychological Association (2001). *Publication manual of the American Psychological Association* (5th ed.). Washington, DC: American Psychological Association.

Zechmeister, J.S., Zechmeister, E.B., & Shaughnessy, J.J. (2001). *Essentials of research methods in psychology*. Boston: McGraw-Hill.

Both books have been placed on reserve in the Knight Library.

NOTE: The outlined reading for each day should be completed *before* you come to class.

Lectures

I will make my lectures slides available on blackboard each day *after* class. Note that these slides serve to outline the lecture and are by no means comprehensive. You should not rely on these slides for your course notes; rather, you should use them to organize the notes that *you* take during class.

COURSE EVALUATION

This course consists of two separate components: (1) lecture and (2) lab. You will earn a separate grade for each, and final grades will be awarded based on your overall performance in the two components.

Lecture Grade

1) *PsycINFO Workshop* (5 percent)

PsycINFO is an electronic bibliographic database that provides abstracts and citations to the scholarly literature in the behavioral sciences and mental health. The database includes material of relevance to psychologists and professionals in related fields such as psychiatry, management, business, education, social science, neuroscience, law, medicine, and social work. (Excerpt taken from <http://psycinfo.apa.org/>)

Efficient use of this database is necessary for conducting an adequate literature review of your research topic. For this reason, you must attend one of the three PsycINFO workshops that will be offered during the second week of the term (see below for times). Sign-up sheets will be distributed in class during the first week of class.

All workshops will be held in **Room 144 of the Knight Library (Edmiston Room)**.

January 17 (Wednesday) – 10:00am-10:50am

January 17 (Wednesday) – 4:00pm-4:50pm

January 18 (Thursday) – 9:00am-9:50am

*Note: If you are registered for the 8:30am-9:50am lab section, you must attend a Wednesday session.

2) *Participation* (20 percent)

Participation points may be earned in a variety of ways. You may be asked to participate in class discussions and/or activities, seek the answer to a question posed during lecture, write short reactions to the material presented in class, etc. Participation opportunities are *not* predetermined, so it is important that you attend class and monitor Blackboard announcements to learn about these opportunities as they arise.

3) *Examinations* (65 percent)

There will be two midterms and a final examination in this course. The first midterm will address the material (readings, lectures, lab, videos, etc.) covered between January 9 and February 1, and the second midterm will address the material covered between February 8 and March 1. The midterms are *not* cumulative, and each will be worth 20 percent of your lecture grade. The final exam *will be* comprehensive and will cover material

presented over the course of the entire term. The final exam will be worth 25 percent of your final lecture grade. All exams may be composed of multiple-choice, matching, true-false, and/or short-answer questions.

4) *Group Presentation* (10 percent)

During weeks 9 and 10, each group will present their research project to the class. While the presentation will be graded, the main goal of this requirement is to provide an opportunity for each group to receive constructive feedback from other students in the class; this feedback will be useful during the final stages of writing up the research project. Presentation guidelines will be discussed in class and posted on Blackboard.

Lab Grade

1) *Attendance* (15 percent)

As mentioned previously, the lab section of this course is devoted to the *group* research project. Because you will be working as a member of a team, attendance is critical; the presence of every group member each week is essential for the successful progress of the project. While it is expected that groups will meet outside of designated class times, lab section is the one time each week that every student *already* has set aside for the project. It is also the one time each week that you have guaranteed access to your lab instructor. Because individual contribution to the group process is extremely important, **students that miss more than three lab sessions will fail this course.**

Missed labs *cannot* be made-up for credit. If you are unable to attend lab for some reason, you should inform your TA, as well as your group members, in advance. It is your responsibility to contact your group members to find out what you missed during lab section if you are absent.

2) *Paper Drafts* (15 percent)

As this is most likely your first time writing an APA style manuscript, feedback is a key component of the learning process. For this reason, you will be required to submit rough drafts of the different sections that will be included in the final draft of your research paper. Your lab instructor will read the drafts and provide you with feedback. All paper drafts will be graded on an acceptable/unacceptable basis, and the point value assigned to each draft will vary. Grading guidelines and expectations will be made available to you before drafts are due.

3) *Data Collection* (10 percent)

Each group member must participate in the data collection process. The way that data is collected, along with the amount of data your group will need, will vary depending on your research design. Direction and assistance in preparing for this task will be provided in lab. Your group must collect all the data necessary for analysis by February 15.

4) *Final Paper* (50 percent)

Each student will turn in an APA style manuscript at the end of the term that documents each phase of the research project. Note that although you will be working in small groups over the course of the term on project development, implementation and analysis, each student must write his/her *own* final paper. While there will be parts of your paper that are similar to that of other group members (e.g. method and results section), under no circumstances should the sections of any two papers be identical, be similar in format and flow with only slight modifications, or contain excerpts that match another person's paper. **Participation in any activity that constitutes academic dishonesty is grounds for failure in this course.**

Final drafts of the paper are due by 3pm on March 19. Papers must be turned in to the Psychology Department Main Office (Straub 131), and your lab instructor's name must be written on the front page. **NO LATE PAPERS WILL BE ACCEPTED.**

5) Group Evaluations (10 percent)

At the end of the term, you will have the opportunity to evaluate each member of your group, including yourself. Your lab instructor will review all group member evaluations, and points will be awarded based on your contribution to the group project.

Extra Credit

- 1) Human Subject Pool Participation – You can earn up to 2% extra credit by participating in studies that are being conducted in the UO Psychology Department. Each hour of participation will be worth 1% extra credit (up to 2 hours). Half-hour participation will count as one-half percent extra credit.
- 2) Additional Opportunities – Additional extra credit opportunities may be made available throughout the course of the term. These opportunities are *not* predetermined, so it is important that you attend class and monitor Blackboard announcements to learn about these opportunities as they arise.

NOTE – Extra credit will automatically be applied to the course component (lecture or lab) that has the lower percentage at the end of the term. However, if you would prefer that the extra credit be applied to a specific component—or that it be split between the two in a specific way—you must inform me of your preference via email by Thursday, March 22.

Final Grade

The grading system for this course is structured differently than most courses you have taken. As mentioned previously, you will earn a separate grade for lecture and lab. At the end of the term, overall performance in both components will be considered when awarding final grades (the grade cutoffs are listed below).

C To earn a “C” in this course, you must earn at least (a) 65% in lecture, AND (b) 65% in lab.

B To earn a “B” in this course, you must earn at least (a) 75% in lecture, AND (b) 75% in lab.

A To earn an “A” in this course, you must earn at least (a) 85% in lecture, AND (b) 85% in lab.

+ / - Only “whole” grades can be *earned*. However, I do reserve the right to *award* pluses and minuses on a case-by-case basis if there is a discrepancy in student performance across the two components of the course. A plus/minus will only be awarded if it will benefit the student.

NOTE – If you have any questions regarding the grading system, do not hesitate to ask! I am always available and willing to (a) discuss your performance in the course, (b) discuss different strategies that may help to improve your grade, and/or (c) assist you in calculating your current grade.

EMAIL POLICY

Make sure that the email address listed for you on duckweb/blackboard is correct. You will need to check this account frequently because your instructors or your group members may need to communicate with you outside of class. If the email address that is listed on duckweb/blackboard is not the account that you regularly use, you can change your primary email address by going to <duckweb.uoregon.edu>, selecting <personal information>, selecting <change email address> and then following the instructions. **YOU WILL BE RESPONSIBLE FOR ALL INFORMATION THAT IS SENT TO YOU VIA EMAIL.**

POLICY ON CLARIFICATION OF INFORMATION

It is your responsibility as a student in this course to ask questions and clarify any points that you find confusing. “I did not know that...” or “I was not sure about...” will not excuse you from completing any of the course requirements.

OTHER IMPORTANT INFORMATION

Academic Dishonesty

Students are responsible for reading and understanding the University's policies on academic dishonesty. This information is available at the following web site: <http://darkwing.uoregon.edu/~conduct/sai.htm>.

Guidelines for Teaching & Learning at the UO, Psychology Department

The Undergraduate Education Committee (UEC) has drafted a set of guidelines that outlines the responsibilities of (1) the psychology department, (2) undergraduate psychology students and (3) course instructors. This information includes sections on (a) the mission of the undergraduate program in psychology, (b) best practices for students, (c) best practices for instructors, (d) special student concerns, and (e) where to get help and additional information. All of this information is available at <http://psychweb.uoregon.edu/guidelines/>.

Students with Disabilities

If you have a documented disability and need any accommodations, please make arrangements to meet with me during the first week of the course.

READING, ASSIGNMENT & EXAM SCHEDULE

NOTE: While the exam dates and paper draft due dates will *not* change, it is possible that the list of topics may need to be adjusted as we proceed throughout the course. Any changes to the syllabus regarding topic coverage and/or reading assignment modifications will be announced in class and posted on blackboard.

WEEK 1

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|------|---|
| 1/09 | Introduction |
| 1/11 | Psychology as a Science
Reading: Zechmeister – Chapter 1 |
| LAB | Introduction & Group Formation/Topic Selection |

WEEK 2

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|------|--|
| 1/16 | The Research Process
Reading: Zechmeister – Chapter 2 |
| 1/18 | The Research Process (continued) |
| LAB | Project Design
Reading: APA Manual – Preface & Introduction (pgs xix-xxviii)
Content/Organization: Intro & Sections 1.01-1.05 (pgs 3-10) |

WEEK 3

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| 1/23 | Ethics in Psychological Research
Reading: Zechmeister – Chapter 3 |
| 1/25 | Ethics (continued) |
| LAB | Method Section & Project Design (continued)
Reading: APA Manual – Method: Section 1.09 (pgs 17-20)
Ethics of Publication: Section 8.05 (pgs 348-355) |

WEEK 4

1/30 Observational Research
Reading: Zechmeister – Chapter 4

1/31 ***METHOD Section Draft – Due by 3pm**

2/01 Correlational Research
Reading: Zechmeister – Chapter 5

LAB Introduction Section & Data Collection Preparation
Reading: APA Manual – Introduction: Section 1.08 (pgs 15-17)
Writing Style: Intro & Sections 2.01-2.05 (pgs 31-40)

WEEK 5

2/05 EXAM REVIEW SESSION – Time & Location TBA

2/06 **MIDTERM EXAM - 1**

2/08 Experimental Designs
Reading: Zechmeister – Chapter 6

LAB Data Collection Preparation (continued)
Reading: APA Manual – Grammar: Intro & Sections 2.06-2.12 (pgs 40-61)

WEEK 6

2/13 Experimental Designs (continued)

2/14 ***INTRODUCTION Section Draft – Due by 3pm**

2/15 Complex Designs
Reading: Zechmeister – Chapter 7

LAB Stats Review & Data Organization/Analysis
Reading: APA Manual – Results: Section 1.10 (pgs 20-26)

***DUE – Collected DATA**

WEEK 7

2/20 Complex Designs

2/22 Case Studies
Reading: Zechmeister – Chapter 8

LAB Results Section & Data Analysis (continued)
Reading: APA Manual – Title Page: 1.06 (pgs 10-12)
Tables/Figures: Sections 3.62-3.86 – **AS NEEDED**

WEEK 8

2/27 Quasi-Experimental Designs
Reading: Zechmeister – Chapter 9

2/28 *RESULTS Section (1 Table or Figure Required) & TITLE PAGE – Due by 3pm

3/01 On Being an Intelligent Consumer
Reading: Zechmeister – Chapter 10

LAB Discussion Section & Group Presentation Preparation
 Reading: APA Manual – Discussion: Section 1.11 (pgs 26-27)
 References: Sections 1.13 (pg 28) & 4.01-4.04 (pgs 215-222)
 Sections 4.05-4.16 – **AS NEEDED**

WEEK 9

3/05 EXAM REVIEW SESSION – Time & Location TBA

3/06 MIDTERM EXAM - 2

3/07 ***DISCUSSION Section & REFERENCES Draft – Due by 3pm**

3/08 Group Presentations

LAB Writing an Abstract & Group Presentation Preparation (continued)
Reading: APA Manual – Abstract: Section 1.07 (pgs 12-15)

WEEK 10

3/13 Group Presentations

3/15 Group Presentations

LAB Project Wrap-Up

3/16 ***GROUP EVALUATIONS** – Due by 3pm

FINALS WEEK

3/19 ***FINAL PAPER** – Due by 3:00pm

3/20 EXAM REVIEW SESSION – Time & Location TBA

3/21 **FINAL EXAMINATION – 1:00pm**