

Psychology 303: Research Methods in Psychology

--Fall 2011--

Monday/Wednesday 8:30-9:50, 101 JAQ

Instructor:

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Lab Instructors:

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Texts:

Required: Cozby, P.C. (2009). *Methods in Behavioral Research*. Boston: McGraw/Hill.

The publisher of the text maintains an online learning center for students with self-quizzes and additional resources. You are encouraged to use the site for studying for your exams. The website can be found at http://highered.mcgraw-hill.com/sites/0072523425/student_view0/index.html.

Required: i>Clicker classroom response system

The i>clicker is a classroom response device that allows you to respond to instructor's questions electronically in class. It will be used to assess reading comprehension, explore class opinions, demonstrate concepts, and monitor participation in class activities. You must bring your i>clicker to each class.

Recommended: American Psychological Association (2009). *Publication manual of the American Psychological Association* (6th ed.). Washington, D.C.

- ∞ Recommended for psychology majors, especially those who plan to go to graduate school
- ∞ Make sure to get the second printing of the 6th edition

Course Description:

In this course you will learn critical skills to evaluate and even conduct your own scientific research in psychology. However, most of what you will learn is important beyond psychology and the university context—it will sharpen your ability to think critically and logically about any topic and in any domain. The research skills you learn in this course are essential for becoming a wise consumer of the often overwhelming and confusing mass of information provided by the media, corporations, sales people, the government, and other various sources. Moreover, good command of the material presented in this class is a "must" should you choose to complete an honor's thesis in your junior or senior year or go on to graduate study in psychology.

Course Prerequisites:

- ∞ *Psy 201 and/or 202*: Lecture examples and readings draw on basic psychological concepts introduced in Psy 201 and 202, and you are expected to have some degree of familiarity with them.
- ∞ *WR 122 or 123*: Because learning APA style is critical in the lab sections, we expect that you have passed the introductory writing requirement.
- ∞ *Psy 302*: Successful completion of Psychology 302 (Statistics) is an absolute pre-requisite for this course. We assume you have a working knowledge of basic statistics. We will review important statistical concepts as they apply to conducting, analyzing, interpreting, and reporting research results, but this should not be new material for you.

Course Philosophy and Expectations:

Attendance and Attention: The course includes traditional lecture meetings and a weekly lab meeting. Attendance in lectures will be an essential part of your success in this course, as topics will be covered in class that are not in the textbook. Small group discussions will be a component of class lectures, along with several in-class activities that make up part of your grade. Attendance will occasionally be recorded and contribute to your participation grade. In addition, short, semi-graded reading checks will be given in class to assess comprehension. You are responsible for all material, (e.g., exams will cover all material from readings, lecture, group discussions, etc). If you must miss a class, get notes from a classmate and/or speak to your class instructor or lab instructor.

Work: Doing well in this class requires an active involvement with the course content; merely reading the material and showing up for class is not enough. It is important to *think* about what you are reading, watching, and discussing, and *relate* it to experiences in your own life, rather than just remembering facts. As a 4-credit class, you are expected to spend 12 hours per week *outside of class* working on relevant material.

Preparation: It is also expected that you will come prepared to class. This means keeping up with the readings, as well as having spent some time reflecting on them. You will not do well on reading checks, exams, and writing exercises if you do not keep up with the reading. We also require that you check your UO email and the Blackboard website often (a minimum of once a day during the week), as we will post important class information. This course has been designed to comply with the psychology department's guidelines for teaching and learning. Please review these guidelines at <http://psychweb.uoregon.edu/undergraduates/guidelines>.

Organization and communication: Your success in this course will rely in large part on your ability to stay organized and on top of due dates. Check the syllabus often for important due dates. You will receive numerous handouts that you will have to keep track of, so create a system to organize lab and lecture materials. You should expect to be in frequent communication with your class and lecture instructors, as well as with your classmates. If you are not already in the habit of checking e-mail every day, start now!

Course Components and Requirements

Lecture: The lecture sessions will include review of selected textbook material, information relevant to the research projects and papers, elaboration of some topics with information not provided in the textbook, and in-class small group activities. You are expected to take responsibility for what is covered in class. The most important way to do this is to show up and be an active participant in lecture.

Lecture slides will be posted on Blackboard. 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.

Short reading checks and participation (10% of final grade):

- ∞ Each lecture is associated with a reading assignment- usually one chapter of the textbook. You are expected to complete this reading before coming to class. Several times throughout the term, short pop-quizzes will be given to assess your reading comprehension. Each of these activities will be assessed using the i>clicker. Reading checks cannot be made up, however, your lowest reading check will be dropped, so you may miss one without penalty, or drop a low score.
- ∞ Several times during each lecture I will present clicker-answered multiple-choice questions on the material covered in class. These require no preparation, just active attendance. They help both you and me to see how well new concepts have been understood. Also, they are excellent practice for the scheduled exams—some of the questions may even reappear in a more or less disguised manner. Your answers to these questions will NOT be graded. However, I use your answers to determine the attendance. To get a 100% attendance grade you cannot miss more than 3 lectures. For each missed lecture of this component I will deduct 2% point (up to 10). Forgotten clickers, illness etc. count towards the 3 allowed missed lectures.

In-class scheduled exams (50% of final grade): Exams will be used to assess your mastery of the lecture and reading material. Exam format will be a mixture of multiple-choice, short answer, and short essay questions. There will be 3 mandatory exams in the course. In addition, there will be an optional comprehensive final exam during finals week. If you take the final exam, your lowest grade of all four exams will be dropped. There will be no makeup exams in case of illness or travel. If you are sick or out of town and miss one of the exams, you *must* take the final exam to make up for the missed exam. If you are traveling on a university-sanctioned trip (e.g., for athletics), documentation will be required for alternative arrangements.

Laboratory sessions and homework (10% of final grade): In addition to the traditional lecture meetings, this course also includes weekly lab meetings. The lab sessions will be conducted by a graduate student serving as a teaching assistant for this course, not your class instructor—that is, you will have different instructors for lecture and lab. In addition, a different Blackboard site will be maintained for lab. Attendance at all labs is **mandatory** and will be an essential part of your success in this course. You cannot make up missed labs for credit, and you must attend the lab session you are registered for each week. If an emergency prevents you from attending your scheduled lab, talk to your TA as soon as you can.

Lab sessions will serve two purposes: 1) to reinforce the ideas presented in lecture that week, and 2) to help you develop practical skills you will need in upper-level psychology classes (and beyond). On weeks when papers are not due, you will have homework assignments designed to assist you in formulating your paper or to reinforce ideas from lecture. Unless otherwise stated, all assignments are due at the *beginning* of lab. Late lab assignments will be penalized 10% every school day past due. Assignments four days past their due date will not be graded. *Please see the lab syllabus for more detailed information about lab schedule and assignments.*

Research Papers (30% of final grade): Each student will complete three short APA-style papers: one literature review, one correlational study, and one experimental study. These papers are designed to help you learn APA-style and to introduce you to hands-on empirical research. As a class, you and

your lab-mates will 1) search for articles that address a particular question, 2) conduct a correlational questionnaire study on a topic of the lab's choice, and 3) conduct an experimental study on a topic of the lab's choice. On your own, you will write each of these projects up into an APA-style manuscript. Because you will be learning as you go, the weight of each paper increases as the term goes on: Paper 1 will be worth 5% of the final grade; Paper 2 will be worth 10%, and Paper 3 will be worth 15%. Late papers will be penalized 10% the earned grade per day past due. Late papers will not be accepted for grading 4 days past the due date. More detailed information will be provided by your lab instructor.

Grading

Your overall course grade will be based on the following components:

50% in-class scheduled exams (if you take the final, the lowest grade will be dropped)
10% class activities, in-class reading checks, and participation
30% lab papers
10% lab homework, attendance and participation

The final grade assigned for the course should reflect the student's overall performance in the course, as described by the following guidelines:

A *excellent* work, complete mastery of course material
 B *good* work, grasps most of the important concepts
 C *average* work, grasps many but not all aspects of course material
 D *poor* work, insufficient understanding of material
 F failing

A+ 98-100	B+ 87-89	C+ 77-79	D+ 67-69	F 59 or below
A 93-97	B 83-86	C 73-76	D 63-66	
A- 90-92	B- 80-82	C- 70-72	D- 60-62	

Posting of Grades: Scores for lab activities and exams will be posted on blackboard throughout the course. Please do not wait until after final grades are submitted to dispute a grade; keep track of your scores as they are posted, and alert me **in writing** (email is fine) as soon as possible if you think that there has been a mistake in grading. If the dispute involves a grade for a lab activity, please try to resolve this first with your lab instructor.

Course Policies

Email Communication: All emails from your instructors will be made to your @uoregon.edu web-mail account, so make sure to check this email account often (once a day on weekdays). You are encouraged to communicate with your instructors via email. Please communicate respectfully, as if you were speaking in person to the person whom you are contacting, and allow a reasonable period before expecting a response. Instructors may not respond to emails between the hours of 9 PM and 9 AM.

Blackboard and Document Availability:

The course Blackboard site will be a critical source of information throughout the term. Any changes to the lecture or reading schedule will be posted on this site. In addition, slides to accompany lectures,

scores on assignments, and non-textbook readings will be posted there. You should already have a login ID and password through your university email account to access Blackboard. If you are unfamiliar with Blackboard or do not know your password, contact me as soon as possible.

Academic Honesty: Group activities will be a big part of lab, and discussion outside of class is encouraged. However, all written work submitted in this course must be your own and produced exclusively for this course. Although some aspects of the research projects require group work (in-lab exercises, design, data collection and analysis), *group collaboration on the worksheets and research papers is absolutely prohibited—the work you turn in on homework and drafts must be solely your own.* Otherwise, you will not adequately learn the material.

We take academic integrity seriously, and will not tolerate any instance of cheating or plagiarism. Cheating is defined as providing information to, or receiving information from, another person on an exam or other assignment. Plagiarism is defined as passing off the work of another as your own, without properly giving credit. This includes, but is not limited to, directly copying others' writing (in whole or in part) or paraphrasing others' writing or ideas without citing properly. In these cases "others" can include other students in the class, other students or non-students not in the class, and authors of scholarly or mass media work (journal articles, chapters, newspaper articles, blogs, Wikipedia). Rely mostly on your own ideas and words, and support them with properly cited scholarly sources (journal articles, textbooks, book chapters) or popular press media (websites, newspapers). If you are unsure about what is appropriate or allowed, please ask! The UO library website has a helpful page that describes when you need to give credit: <http://libweb.uoregon.edu/guides/plagiarism/students>

All instances of cheating and plagiarism will have serious consequences. At a minimum, you will receive a zero on the assignment and be reported to the university's student conduct coordinator, even if it is your first offense. If the offense is serious, you may also receive an "F" in the course. Repeat offenders will fail the course. Turning in work that is not your own—unless it is specifically described as a group activity—is not acceptable.

Students with Disabilities:

If you have a documented disability and will need accommodations in this course, please make arrangements with your instructors as soon as possible. Please request that the counselor for students with disabilities send a letter indicating what accommodations you will need. Further information is available online at <http://ds.uoregon.edu>.

Students for Whom English is Not Their Native Language:

Foreign language dictionaries are permitted during exams. Exams will be designed to take approximately one hour to complete within an hour and twenty-minute class period; therefore, it is unlikely that you will need additional time. However, if you find that you do need additional time to complete the exam, please make arrangements with your instructor ahead of time to stay after class so that you can finish.

Tentative Schedule (subject to change)

Week	Mon. Lecture	Wed. Lecture	Lab Topic	Lab Homework
1: 9/26	Scientific method Ch. 1	Hypotheses Reading: Ch. 2	Literature searches	3 article summaries
2:10/3	Research design Reading: Ch. 4	Measuring Variables Reading: Ch. 5	Citations, references, literature reviews Reading: Ch. 8	Write Paper 1
3:10/10	Measuring Variables Reading: Ch. 5	Ethics Reading: Ch. 3	Writing APA style papers Choose Paper 2 topic	*Paper 1 due Wednesday at midnight
4:10/17	*Exam 1*	Sampling Reading: Ch. 7	Designing questionnaires, writing method sections	Readings for Paper 2
5:10/24	Survey research 1 Reading: Ch. 7	Statistics 1 Reading: Ch. 12	Data analysis, writing results and discussions Reading: Appendix A	Data collection, introduction and method
6: 10/31	Statistics 2 Reading: Ch. 13	*Exam 2*	Measurement activity Choose Paper 3 topic	Write Paper 2
7: 11/7	Experiments 1 Ch. 9	Experiments 2 Reading: Ch. 9	Designing experiments, writing method sections	*Paper 2 Fri- day midnight* Readings for Paper 3
8:11/14	Experiments 3 Reading: Ch. 10	Quasi-experiments Reading: Ch. 11	Data analysis, writing re- sults and discussions	Data collection, introduction and method
9:11/21	Experimental De- sign Review & Wrap-up	Meta-Analytic Re- search	Thanksgiving	Write Paper 3
10:11/28	How to Present Re- sults	* Exam 3*	Last-minute help with pa- per (attendance optional)	*Paper 3 due Friday mid- night*
Finals	Final Exam: Monday, 12/7, 10:15 AM			

* Note: "Ch." refers to chapters in the Cozby textbook.