Spring 2011 University of Oregon

Research Methods

Psychology 303

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Office Hours (in Straub 390): Tuesday 2:30-4:30PM and by appointment
Lecture: Monday and Wednesday 10:00-11:20AM in HEDCO Education Building (HED) 220

Lab Instructors

Devdeep Aikath, M.S.
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Lab Sections:
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Tuesday 10:00-11:20AM in Straub 180

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Lab Sections:
Monday 2:00-3:20PM and
Monday 4:00-5:20PM in Straub 180

Course Description

Welcome to Research Methods! This course provides you with a unique opportunity to learn new skills in conducting and evaluating scientific research in psychology. The material you learn in this class will sharpen your ability to think critically and logically about important topics, both inside and outside of psychology. This class will help you understand psychological research, whether you decide to continue with a career in psychology or not. 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. In addition, these skills will provide a basic foundation in scientific methodology if you choose to complete an honor's thesis in your junior or senior year or go on to graduate study in psychology.

Course Pre-Requisites

In addition to WR 122 or 123 and PSY 201 or 202, successful completion of Psychology 302 (Statistics) is an absolute pre-requisite for this course. We will review important statistical concepts as they apply to conducting, analyzing, interpreting, and reporting research results, but this should not be 'new' material to you.

Required and Recommended Books

Required Book (1)

McBride, D. M. (2010). *The Process of Research in Psychology*. California: SAGE Publications.

A copy of this textbook is on reserve at the Knight Library.

The publisher of the textbook maintains an on-line learning center for students with quizzes, flashcards, chapter outlines, exercises, and additional links for relevant concepts. You are encouraged to use the site for supplemental material, studying, and exam preparation. The website can be found at: www.sagepub.com/mcbridestudysite

Recommended books (2)

American Psychological Association. (2009*). Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association* (6th ed.). Washington, DC: Author.

(Make sure to get a copy of the second printing of this book.)

Strunk, W., Jr., & White, E. B. (2000). *The elements of style* (4th ed.). New York: Longman.

(This book is a standard reference book for most writers. It may be useful to you as you write your paper sections.)

Course Components

Course Philosophy, Expectations, and Overview

The course includes traditional lecture meetings and a weekly lab meeting. Attendance and participation in lectures and labs will be an essential part of your success in this course. Small group discussions will be a component of class lectures, along with several class activities that make up part of your grade. In addition, lecture will often cover material from outside of the readings. You are responsible for all material.

The course blackboard site (http://blackboard.uoregon.edu) will be a critical source of information throughout the term. Any changes to the lecture or lab schedule will be posted on this site as well. In addition, lecture slides, grades, handouts, and other materials and information will be posted there. Note that lecture 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. Please make sure you are able to view slides created in Powerpoint and .pdf documents. You may need to download a Powerpoint viewer, available free from many sites including: www.microsoft.com/downloads. Adobe Acrobat provides a free downloadable reader that will allow you to open and view .pdfs. Alternatively, slides and .pdf documents can be downloaded and printed using public computers at the university. You can also reformat the slides to make them smaller (to fit on fewer #s of pages) before printing them. 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 your lab instructor or Alison during the first week of class.

Doing well in this class requires an active involvement with the course content; merely reading the material and showing up for class are 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.

It is expected that you will come prepared to class. This means having done the readings for the day *prior* to coming to class, as well as having spent some time reflecting on them. You will not do well on exams if you do not keep up with the reading and other assignments.

The lab sections and lab assignments are primarily aimed at helping you successfully conduct and write about the results of your research project. A lab schedule will be passed out during your first lab section. Be sure to bring paper, writing utensils, and some method of saving electronic work to each lab. See more info about the lab component of this course below and on your lab syllabus.

If you find yourself not doing as well as you would like in this class, contact Alison and/or your lab instructor ***earlier*** rather than later. We can help you solve many problems, but if you wait until the end of term, it is usually too late for us to be of much help.

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/guidelines/index.htm

Course Points and Components

3 Quizzes (60 points each): 180 points
6 Activity Assignments (2 points each, one will be dropped): 10 points
Lab Homework: 20 points
APA paper drafts: 60 points
Final APA paper: 100 points

Total Possible Points: 370

Quizzes

Quizzes will be used to assess your mastery of the lecture, reading, and lab material. These quizzes may combine multiple-choice, fill-in-the-blanks, true/false (with justification), short answer, and short essay questions. There will be 3 quizzes in the course (worth 60 points each).

Make-up Quizzes: During Finals week, students who want to improve a quiz (or more than one quiz) grade will have the opportunity to take a make-up for any of the quizzes. The make-up quizzes will be different from the original quizzes and may include short answer/essay style questions. If a student takes a quiz on the originally scheduled date and also completes the make-up quiz, the higher of the two scores will be used for the course grade. If you have to miss any quizzes due to illness, a trip, a family emergency, etc., you will be able to take the make-up quizzes to replace the missing quiz score(s). The make-up quizzes will be given at the time listed in the university's final exam schedule (**Friday, June 10, 10:15-12:15 in HED 220**). Students will **NOT** be able to schedule the make-up quizzes for any other time - the only make-ups for quizzes will be given at the time of the final exam. You are **NOT** required to take the make-up quizzes and there will **NOT** be a final exam.

Activity Assignments

Six times throughout the term, an in-class activity will be assigned for you to complete. No preparation is required, and each Activity Assignment is due at the end of class that day and will be worth 2 points each. To get credit, you must actively participate, turn in relevant work, and be present in class the day of the activity. Activity Assignments cannot be made up. Five of these Activity Assignments will count toward your final grade - this means that you may miss one Activity Assignment without penalty.

Lab Homework and APA Term Paper (drafts and final paper)

The lab component of the course will give you hands-on experience in conducting your own research study. There will be several in-class lab activities and homework assignments for you to complete throughout the term, but the largest portion of your work in lab (and your lab grade) will consist of working on your research study and APA paper. Early in the term in lab, you will form small groups of 3-5 people and a research topic will be agreed upon. You must find peer-reviewed journal articles on your topic and formulate a research hypothesis. You will then create or obtain measures of your variables and administer them to the students from class during Data Collection Day, **Monday, May 2nd during lecture.** Attendance will be taken on Data Collection Day, which will be worth 5 points of your final APA paper grade. You must then analyze your data and write an APA style paper of your study (further instructions and guidelines will be provided in lab). The final paper must be formatted correctly in APA style (see the lab handouts, APA Publication manual, and your textbook). The term paper must be completed and submitted to SafeAssign on Blackboard by **Monday, June 6th, 2011 at 11:59PM.** Please see the lab syllabus for more information about the requirements for the lab portion of this course.

Grading

All written work in this class will be graded based on form (e.g., proper APA formatting, spelling, grammar, sentence structure), use of guidelines and feedback (e.g., following the guidelines for what content should be included in each section of the paper, revising APA drafts based on your lab instructor's comments and corrections), and critical thinking (i.e., how well you display knowledge of the material, how well you have analyzed and evaluated the material, and how well you effectively communicate the information). If you have questions about how a specific assignment will be graded, do not hesitate to ask your lab instructor and/or Alison.

Grades will be assigned based on your total percentage points in the course. A curve may be used on the final grades, depending on the class average (individual assignments and quizzes will NOT be curved). Final grades will be based on the following:

A+ = 99-100%	**B+ = 87-89%**	**C+ = 77-79%**	**D+ = 67-69%**
A = 93-98%	**B = 83-86%**	**C = 73-76%**	**D = 63-66%**
A- = 90-92%	**B- = 80-82%**	**C- = 70-72%**	**D- = 60-62%**
			F = 59% and Below

Tips for Success

Your success in this course will rely in large part on your ability to stay organized and on top of due dates. You should expect to be in frequent communication with your group-mates from lab, your lab instructor, and Alison to make sure that you are on top of responsibilities. If you are not already in the habit of checking your UO e-mail every day, start now! It is highly recommended that you use your UO account instead of another email account (e.g., gmail, yahoo) for the purposes of this class.

Some good ideas for staying productive and in touch with your class are:

1. Check the syllabi (for lecture and lab) often to see when assignments are due.

2. Participate in lecture AND lab every week.

3. Turn in your lab assignments, participate in Activity Assignments, and take the quizzes. Skipping lecture and/or lab and not turning in lab assignments (homeworks and drafts) are the easiest ways to fall behind in this class!

4. Save your work frequently - computer problems will not be considered a valid excuse for late work. Saving your work will also allow you to avoid that horrible feeling of loss and despair when your computer freezes, depriving you of hours worth of writing. Save copies of sent e-mails, and be on the lookout for notices of "failed delivery." Do NOT assume that your email was received until you hear a response from the person to whom you sent the email (this is especially relevant when emailing instructors regarding important matters). It is also a good idea to double check SafeAssign after you submit assignments to make sure they were submitted properly. If you ever have trouble with SafeAssign (e.g., there is an error message, your assignment will not upload, etc.), you should email your assignment to your lab instructor.

5. Use blackboard as a means to communicate. On the left hand side of the class site, you will see an option for "Course Tools"; under that you can click "Send E-mail", which will allow you to select single recipients from the class list. You will also have a group page on Blackboard where you will easily be able to stay in contact with your group mates.

6. Be an active and respectful group mate. When you arrange meeting times out of class, make your best effort to be on time or to contact your group mates as soon as possible if a conflict arises. Avoid "social loafing"!

7. Speak up if you think a group member is not contributing his or her fair share. If you see a problem developing, respectfully bring your concerns to the awareness of your group mates. Dialogue with your group mates should be the first option for a solution, but if this fails, do not hesitate to bring your concerns to your lab instructor and to Alison.

8. If you encounter situations that affect your ability to complete work on time or that affects your success in this class (e.g., illness, personal issues, family emergency, learning or medical disability, travel for a University sport or other reason, non-native speaker of English, etc.), it is important to discuss it with your lab instructor and Alison when the situation is occurring (i.e., within 2 days). We can help you determine what you need to do to make up work or succeed in the class. Do NOT wait until the end of the term! If you wait until the end of term, it will be too late for us to be of much help.

Academic Honesty

Group discussion outside of class is encouraged. However, all work submitted in this course must be your own and produced exclusively for this course. Copying or paraphrasing information or ideas from any source, print or electronic, without citation, is plagiarism. The use of sources (ideas, quotations, paraphrases) must therefore be properly acknowledged and documented. Although some aspects of the research project require group work (in-lab exercises, design, study materials, data collection, and data analysis), ***group collaboration on written assignments (e.g., lab homework, drafts, final paper) is absolutely prohibited—the work you turn in must be solely your own.*** If we receive papers that have substantial portions matching in text, if one paper appears to have text from another paper with only minor modifications, or if your paper has portions of text that have been taken from published or public sources without proper acknowledgment, you will be in danger of failing the assignment and the course and being reported to Office of Student Conduct and Community Standards. We will be reading your papers very closely because it is our goal to note content and formatting details and responsiveness to draft suggestions; therefore, this is definitely not the class where you would want to take the risk of turning in work that is not your own!

You will be required to submit all of your individual written work to SafeAssign. This technology will be used to prevent plagiarism, protect the originality of student work, ensure a level playing field, and make you more aware of and knowledgeable about plagiarism. When you submit papers, they are checked against SafeAssign's comprehensive databases of source material (which includes published sources, websites, other students' papers, etc.). The papers are then delivered to us, along with reports about how original the papers statistically appear to be.

Likewise, cheating on quizzes will NOT be tolerated. If you cheat on a quiz, you will be in danger of failing the assignment and the course and being reported to Office of Student Conduct and Community Standards.

For more information about the University of Oregon's Student Conduct Code and the consequences of academic dishonesty, refer to the Schedule of Classes published quarterly and the following website: http://studentlife.uoregon.edu/Home/tabid/36/Default.aspx. Violations of the Student Conduct Code will be taken seriously and are noted on student disciplinary records. If you are in doubt regarding any aspect of these issues as they pertain to this course, please consult with the instructor **before** you complete any relevant requirements of the course.

Student Accommodations

You are strongly encouraged to contact Disability Services (164 Oregon Hall; 346-1155; disabsrv@uoregon.edu) if you have a non-documented condition that creates difficulty for you as a student. If one of the following applies to you, please see the instructor as soon as possible to make adjustments:

- Documented learning or medical disability
- Non-documented need for adjustments to help you learn
- Member of a sports team that travels this quarter
- Non-native speaker of English

With advanced planning, adjustments are relatively straightforward. Adjustments at the last minute can be problematic and sometimes are not possible.

Course Calendar for Lecture (subject to change)

Week	Date	Lecture Topic	Chapter Readings
1	**Monday (M) ~ March 28**	Introduction; Course Overview	**CH. 1 & 8**
	Wednesday (W) ~ March 30	Guest Lecture: Scott Reed The Scientific Method; Hypothesis Development (*skip pp. 40-51, but please read the top half of pg. 49, until 'Case Studies')	**CH. 2 & 3***
2	**M ~ April 4**	Studying Behavior; Variables (*skip from 'Regression Toward the Mean' on pp. 75-78)	**CH. 4* & 10**
	W ~ April 6	Conducting Surveys (*in addition to CH. 9, please read from pp. 42-top half of pg. 45)	**CH. 9***
3	**M ~ April 11**	Sampling; Reliability and Validity (*in addition to CH. 6, please review pp. 65-68, 71-75, 79-81, & 182-186)	**CH. 6***
	W ~ April 13	**QUIZ 1: Wednesday, 4/13**	
4	**M ~ April 18**	Ethical Research	**CH. 5**
	W ~ April 20	Experimental Design 1	**CH. 11**
5	**M ~ April 25**	Experimental Design 2	**CH. 11**
	W ~ April 27	Complex Experimental Designs	**CH. 11**
6	**M ~ May 2**	**Data Collection Day**	
	W ~ May 4	**QUIZ 2: Wednesday, 5/4**	
7	**M ~ May 9**	Results: Description and Correlation (in addition to Ch.7, please review Ch. 10 and pp. 52-54)	**CH. 7***
	W ~ May 11	Results: Statistical Inference	**CH. 14**
8	**M ~ May 16**	Statistics	**-**
	W ~ May 18	Observing Behavior; Case Studies	**pp. 40-41, 45-51, & 249-254**
9	**M ~ May 23**	Quasi-Experimental Designs and Developmental Research	**CH. 12 & pp. 75-78 & 243-248**
	W ~ May 25	Generalizing Results; Wrap-up	**-**
10	**M ~ May 30**	**Memorial Day – No School!**	
	W ~ June 1	**QUIZ 3: Wednesday, 6/1**	
Finals	**Monday ~ June 6**	**Final Paper and Group Evaluations due by 11:59PM on Monday, June 6th to SafeAssign on Blackboard.**	
	Friday ~ June 10 10:15	**Make-up Quizzes on Friday, June 10th at 10:15-12:15 in HED 220**	

*** Late assignments will be penalized 10% for every day they are late and will NOT be accepted for a grade after 4 days (including weekends) past their due date.**

*** NO WORK OF ANY KIND WILL BE ACCEPTED AFTER 4:00PM on FRIDAY OF FINALS WEEK (June 10th, 2011).**