PSY 303: RESEARCH METHODS IN PSYCHOLOGY: General Psych
University of Oregon
Spring 2017
http://canvas.uoregon.edu

Instructor: Jenn Lewis, M.S.
Email: jlewis5@uoregon.edu
Office: Straub 217
Office Hours: Thursdays 10-12; or by appointment

Course Meeting Times
Monday (Lecture) – 8:30-10am Straub 151
Thursday (Lab) – 8:30-10am Straub 006 – in the basement

Course Materials

(1) PDF files on Canvas (required)
All required course materials (handouts, assignments) will be posted on the Canvas site.

(2) Helpful resources (recommended)

- Clark, H.H. Everyone can write better (and you are no exception). Advice to students of psychology. http://www.psychology.stonybrook.edu/sbrennan-/psy384/papers/hc_write.html
- American Psychological Association (2009). *Publication manual of the American Psychological Association* (6th ed.). Washington, DC: APA. (Available at Duckstore)
- Strunk, W., Jr., & White, E. B. (2000). *The elements of style* (4th ed.). New York: Longman. (Available at Duckstore)

Course Description

This course will focus on building your skills as a *producer* of high quality original research, although in the process, you will also improve your skills as a consumer. The course emphasizes hands-on practice for building the skills you need to conduct your own research and evaluate the research of others. You and your classmates will be working together to design, analyze, and discuss your research. In addition, you will be individually writing up your research throughout the term in separate writing assignments. You will receive feedback on your writing, and throughout the term, you will revise your writing assignments and synthesize them into two main research papers based on a correlational research study, and a related experimental research study. You will also present your research projects to the class to gain practice communicating research effectively.

This course is the final course in the 301-303 series. You will be building on the critical thinking skills that you practiced in PSY 301 and the data analysis skills that you gained in PSY 302 in order to design, implement, analyze, draw conclusions from, write up, and present scientific research in psychology.

This course may be repeated for credit a maximum of one time provided there is a change in topic.

Topics Description – General Psychology

Each topics course will focus on research production skills, but the nature of the research and the specific tools that are used will differ by topic.

For example, Research Methods in Psychology: Cognitive Psychology will emphasize asking research questions that are unique to cognitive psychology (e.g., How do we search information in short-term memory?), finding literature in cognitive psychology journals, using research designs that are common in cognitive psychology (e.g., repeated-measures designs), collecting data typical of cognitive psychology experiments (e.g., reaction time or accuracy), and conducting appropriate statistical procedures (e.g., related-samples t-tests, repeated-measures ANOVAs).

As this is the General Psychology topic we will be focusing on broader topics in psychology that may fit into one, multiple, or none of the other topic areas (developmental, clinical, cognitive and social). We will talk about each of these topic areas more briefly than is covered in the specific topic area, but you will get a chance to learn a little about each. Additionally, our topic will include many different research topic options so if one of those areas does interest you, you can shape your specific topic to relate more directly to your topic of interest. We will emphasize asking research questions, finding relevant literature, common research designs, date collection, ethics, analysis, and interpreting and sharing scientific findings.

General Psychology Research Topic:
The Life and Well-Being of College Students
The topic we will be focusing on during this course is variables related to college students, their daily lives, functioning, performance, and well-being. This is a broad topic, which will allow students to focus on different variables and research questions related to their own interests. This topic will be used for both the *Correlational* assignment and the *Experimental* assignment, although you may change your topic between assignments. Variables that may be examined for this topic include: sleep behaviors, GPA, exercise and fitness behaviors, study habits, weight, perceived life satisfaction, mood, alcohol and substance use, sexual and dating behaviors, and/or stress. We will talk about these variables in class but during the course if a particular variable or topic is of interest to you that is not discussed, please talk to me about it.

Learning Objectives

♦ Review existing psychological literature: perform effective literature searches, identify key research questions and hypotheses in scientific articles, and critically evaluate the research design and quality of evidence presented

♦ Conduct your own original research: generate research questions and hypotheses, evaluate ethical considerations, design materials to measure variables, and collect data

♦ Analyze, interpret, and communicate your findings: choose appropriate basic statistical analysis techniques for specific research questions and specific data sets, perform basic data analyses, and summarize the results in an APA-style report and an oral presentation.

Student Workload

When you complete this course, you will earn 4 credits toward your degree. Four credits is the equivalent of 120 hours of work across the term, or 12 hours per week for 10 weeks. You will spend 3 hours in class

each week. The other 9 hours will be spent completing assignments. The bulk of the work for this course will come from 7 homework assignments (about 3 hours each), six writing assignments (about 45 hours total), and the two presentations (about 20 hours). The workload will be less at the beginning of the term, increase as we tackle lengthier writing assignments, and then peak towards the end of the term when you are conducting, analyzing, writing up, and presenting your own research studies.

Expectations and Grading

Homework

There will be eight homework assignments in this course. Homework assignments will include choosing a research topic, finding relevant scientific articles, creating tables and figures, answering questions about research designs or ethics, and preparing questionnaires and experimental materials. Each homework assignment is worth approximately 3% of your course grade. Homework assignments are due at the start of class. Late homework assignments will be penalized by 50% regardless of when they are submitted, and because homework assignments build on each other, no homework assignments will be accepted more than 1 week late. Some of these homework assignments will be collaborative and will involve working with a small group of your classmates, and some of the homework assignments will be completed independently. Specific instructions and expectations will be provided for each assignment.

Writing Assignments

The writing assignments in this course are scaffolded, such that by the time you are writing your final paper, you will have practiced and received feedback on each of the components of an APA-style research report. There will be six writing assignments in this course, culminating in two major papers. These writing assignments include a conceptual introduction or literature review, a description of methods, a description of results, and a discussion section, each of which is a main component in an empirical research report. In addition to getting feedback on your writing from your instructor, you will exchange your writing with peer reviewers (classmates), who will provide you with written feedback. Each of the smaller writing assignments is worth 5% of your grade, with the exception of the complete papers, which are each worth 15% (correlational) and 20% (experimental) of your course grade. Writing assignments are due at the start of class (with the exception of the final paper). Late writing assignments will be penalized by 50% regardless of when they are submitted unless late submission is approved in advance due to special circumstances. All writing assignments must be completed independently, however, receiving feedback on drafts from group members, friends, tutors, and instructors in encouraged and completely appropriate. In all cases you must not have the writing done for you.

Class Presentations

In this course, you will be conducting research with a small group of your classmates. During the first part of the course, you will be presenting a review of background literature for the correlational paper. During the last week of classes, your group will present a research summary and future directions poster based on the results of the experimental paper.

Literature review presentation: Your presentation should include background information from four articles relating to the correlational topic. It should emphasize the specific findings from the background literature and show how they may relate to the specific hypotheses of the correlational study.

Future Directions Poster Presentation: Your presentation should include relevant background information, details about the methods, your results, a discussion of the significance of the results, and ideas for future research or improving upon your research study including hypotheses, proposed methods, and predictions. The first presentation is worth 7% of your grade, the poster presentation is worth 8%.

Class Attendance and Participation

Regular attendance is essential for doing well in this course. Much of what you learn in this course will come from hands-on experiences and activities in the classroom. I will often ask you to complete short exercises in class, and your participation and engagement in these exercises will be recorded as your class participation grade.

Final grades in this course will be determined by the following:

- Homework: 25%
- Writing assignments: 55%
- Class presentations: 15%
- Participation: 5%

Grades will be distributed as follows:

A+	97-100%	B+	87-89%	C+	77-79%	D+	67-69%	F	0-59%
A	93-96%	B	83-86%	C	73-76%	D	63-66%		
A-	90-92%	B-	80-82%	C-	70-72%	D-	60-62%		

Please see the psychology department guidelines for a description of the type of achievement that each grade signifies: http://psychology.uoregon.edu/courses/department-grading-standards/

Academic Honesty

All work submitted in this course must be your own. Violations will be taken very seriously and are noted on student disciplinary records. If you have any questions about what constitutes academic dishonesty, please ask me. For more information, see the UO website regarding academic honesty at: http://uodos.uoregon.edu/StudentConductandCommunityStandards/AcademicMisconduct.aspx

Special Accommodations

Accessible Education Center (AEC)

If you have a documented disability and anticipate needing accommodations in this course, please make arrangements to meet with the instructor as soon as possible. Also, please request that a counselor at the Accessible Education Center (uoaec@uoregon.edu, tel. 541-346-1155) send a letter verifying your disability. For a list of resources provided by the Accessible Education Center, please see http://aec.uoregon.edu.

Students for Whom English is a Second Language

If you are a non-native English speaker and think you may have trouble in this course due to language difficulties, please see the instructor as soon as possible to make any necessary special arrangements.

Peer advising: Drop-by **Straub 237A** for FREE PSY303 tutoring. Vinitha Gadiraju and Michael Morrison will be available for drop-in tutoring on the following days/times from Week 2-Week 10:

Monday: 11:30-1:00
Tuesday: 2:00-3:00
Thursday: 11:30-12:30

Students who cannot attend any of the drop-in hours may also email Vinitha (vinithag@uoregon.edu) or Michael (mmorris5@uoregon.edu) for appointments. Vinitha and Michael can only hold 1 office hour/week by appointment so I strongly encourage students seeking help to drop by their office hours.

Michael and Vinitha excelled in the old PSY303 and are observing current PSY303 lectures or labs. They are available to help students with conceptual understanding and specific questions but cannot pre-grade any assignments.

Course Schedule

HW = homework assignment; WR = writing assignment, PRES = presentation

Wk	Date	Topic	Skill Practice	DUE
1	Day 1 April 3	Course introduction, Statistics assessment, Choosing a research topic, Generating RQs	Generating a research question	**HW1: Choosing a research topic** **Due in class**
	Day 2 April 6	How to find research articles, Choose articles, meet with group **MEET IN LIBRARY** Knight Library Edmiston (Room 144) classroom	Using PsycINFO and Google Scholar, Interpreting Tables and Figs.	
	End of Week 1 April 9			**HW: 2 Finding research articles (list of 7, choose 1 to present)** **DUE Sunday by 11:59pm**
2	Day 1 April 10	How to write for psychological science	Quoting & paraphrasing, APA writing style and Citations	
	Day 2 April 13	Connecting Theory & Data: How data help us answer a research question	Identifying variables; descriptive data analysis & interpretation	
	End of Week 2 April 16			**WR1: Introduction based on at least 3 articles** **DUE Sunday by 11:59pm**
3	Day 1 April 17	**PRES1: Presentation of Literature**	Summarizing and communicating scientific findings	**WR2: Slides from presentation** **DUE Monday by 5pm**
	Day 2 April 20	Survey Design, Ethics of Research	Writing an IRB proposal, designing ethical research	
	End of Week 3			
4	Day 1 April 24	Design options*, Correlational Research, Ethics of Research and Data Handling	Designing studies to test hypotheses	
	Day 2 April 27	IRB role play	Evaluate ethical considerations, evaluate methods	**HW3: IRB proposal & Eval, inc. draft of questionnaire** **DUE Wednesday by 11:59pm**
	End of Week 4			
5	Day 1 May 1	Refining surveys, consent, and debrief	Iterative refinement of ideas and methods	
	Day 2 May 4	Method section workshop	APA style, writing methods	**HW4: Finalized Surveys** **DUE Thursday by 5pm**

	End of week 5 May 7	Surveys available online		**WR 3: Draft Intro, method for peer edit** **DUE Sunday by 11:59pm**
6	*Beginning of Week*	*Surveys available online*		**HM5: Study participation** **DUE Sunday by 11:59pm**
	Day 1 May 8th	Tables & Figs., Topic specialization*	Interpreting and generating appropriate figures.	
	Day 2 May 11th	Correlational data analysis	conducting statistical tests, working with SPSS	
	End of Week 6 May 14			**HW6: Peer edit due** **DUE Sunday by 11:59pm**
7	Day 1 May 15	Correlational data interpretation, how to write discussion sections	Interpreting data, APA discussions	
	Day 2 May 18	Fine-tuning figs and tables/ Intro to Experimental topic.	APA style figs and table generation	
	End of Week 7 May 21			**WR4: Correlational Paper (at least 5 refs)** **DUE Sunday by 11:59pm**
8	Day 1 May 22	Experimental Designs, How factorial data help us answer research questions	Exploring Experimental Design options	**HW7: Reference and abstracts for experimental paper** **DUE Wednesday by 11:59pm**
	Day 2 May 25	Experimental Research question and Writing Introduction	APA style introductions	
	End of week 8 May 28			**WR5: Intro and methods experimental paper** **DUE Sunday by 11:59pm**
9	Day 1 May 29	**MEMORIAL DAY –NO CLASS** ****Recommended meet with group before Thursday****		

	Day 2 June 1	Factorial Data Set analysis and interpretation, Future directions discussion	Interpreting interactions, planning follow-up studies	**HW8: Peer Edit Response to WR5** **DUE Thursday by 11:59pm**
	End of Week 9			
10	Day 1 June 6	**PRES2: Future directions poster session**	Presenting research in poster form, communication of science	**HW 8: Posters in electronic form turned in** **DUE Sunday by 11:59pm**
	Day 2 June 8	Writing Workshops for Individual Feedback		
	End of Week 10			
11	Finals Week June 13			**WR6: Final Paper due Monday of Finals Week** **DUE Monday by 11:59pm**