

## Psychology 207: Research Methods

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Fall 2015  
TR 3:30-4:45pm  
061 McKinly Lab

Instructor:	Lisa Jaremka, PhD	Peer-Advising TA: Navika Gangrade
Email:	ljaremka@psych.udel.edu	Email: navikag@udel.edu
Office Hrs:	Tuesday 1-3pm	Office Hrs: Tuesday 9:30-11am
Location:	105 McKinly Lab	Location: 175J McKinly Lab

**Website:** <http://sakai.udel.edu/portal>

**Textbook:** Morling, B. (2015). *Research methods in psychology: Evaluating a world of information*. New York: W.W. Norton.

**Clickers:** We will use iClickers in the class. It is your responsibility to register your clicker and bring it to class. You will not get credit for clicker questions if you do not bring it to class. See me if you are unfamiliar with iClickers.

### **Goals of the Course:**

How can we understand human behavior, satisfy our curiosity about ourselves and other people, and better understand research reported in the media? The purpose of this class is to introduce you to research methodology, a critical thinking skills subject matter that builds your skills as a producer and consumer of research. This course will focus on the major research methods used in *psychological research*, although these same methods are used in many other fields, including sociology, political science, and communications. Psychological research is based on scientific evidence, and it relies on many tools developed to help us answer research questions and refute misunderstandings and myths along the way. This course is about understanding and employing those tools to make us better producers of behavioral research and also become a better consumer of research in your daily life.

All assignments and in-class exercises are designed to maximize your achievement of the following learning goals. By engaging fully in these activities, by the end of the semester you will be able to:

- Understand the scientific method
- Properly evaluate original psychological research reports and statements from the media
- Identify research claims from both original and media sources and classify them as Frequency, Association, or Causal claims
- Effectively design a basic study to answer a question you are interested in, including constructing a research hypothesis and selecting participants for a study
- Discriminate between experimental, quasi-experimental, and non-experimental studies, and explain which claims (Frequency, Association, or Causal) each kind of study can support
- Understand validity (specifically construct, internal, external, and statistical validity)
- Describe the basic ethical guidelines that apply to research in psychology

## Elements of Your Grade:

Grades in this course will be based on your performance on exams, in-class activities, HW assignments, and a final project. Good performance on each assignment and exam is important to your overall success in this course. **Final grades** are non-negotiable and are based on your total (non-rounded) percentage points in the class. Grade changes will be made only to correct clerical errors. Make sure you calculate your grade in the class early to avoid any surprises. Your *total points* will be based on the following components:

Exam #1	25%	} Best 3 out of 4 grades will be used
Exam #2	25%	
Exam #3	25%	
Exam #4 - Final	25%	
In-class activities	5%	
HW assignments	10%	
Final Project	10%	

## **Grading cutoffs:**

A	93%	C	73%
A-	90%	C-	70% (Note: You need at least a C- for the major)
B+	88%	D+	68%
B	83%	D	63%
B-	80%	D-	60%
C+	78%		

## Exams:

There will be four closed-book, closed-note exams. The top three of your exam scores count for your grade (you can drop your lowest score). The last exam will occur during finals week. It is your responsibility to check the date of the final exam and make sure you can attend; no alternative dates will be scheduled.

All exams will be multiple-choice with a few short answer questions. The first three exams will, for the most part, not be cumulative. However, the final exam will cover the entire course. Questions will be based on both the lectures and readings - ANY material covered in the lectures or reading may appear on the exam. Some of the material in the reading will not be covered in the lecture and vice versa. You are responsible for both!

Contesting your grade on an exam: You will have a separate sheet of paper at each exam to write down and explain anything you feel is ambiguous on the exam (for example, you think two answers are accurate but you can only choose one), or if you want to justify your answer for any reason. You must turn this sheet in at the end of the exam. You will only be able to contest the answer for the specific questions that you discussed on this sheet.

**Makeup Exams:** Makeup exams will only be provided in the case of a university approved excused absence. Makeup exams will not be provided for any other reason. Before we can schedule a makeup exam, you must provide a *written approval from the university excusing your absence*. These can be obtained by working with Undergraduate Academic Services. Makeup exams may take an alternative form to that taken by the rest of the class (e.g., essay exam).

### **In-Class Activities**

5% of your grade will be based on in-class activities, either via short written responses or iClicker questions. The dates of these activities are not listed on the syllabus - it is your responsibility to attend class and complete the activities. If you miss a class due to a personal emergency, you should inform the instructor *prior to, or within one day*, of the missed class and you must provide a *university approved excused absence*. Failure to notify the instructor about a missed class will result in a failed grade on that activity. The in-class activities will be graded using a 0 (did not complete) and 1 (complete, regardless of response) scale. Your in-class activities will be turned in during class.

### **HW Assignments**

10% percent of your grade will be based on homework assignments that will be completed outside of class, some on your own and others with a partner. The dates of these assignments are not listed on the syllabus - it is your responsibility to attend class and check Sakai to learn about the dates for each assignment. Late homework will not be accepted under any circumstances, so prepare ahead of time. Multiple choice HW assignments will be auto-graded by Sakai. Short answer HW assignments will be graded using a 0 (did not complete), 1 (poor), 2 (adequate), 3 (good), 4 (excellent) scale. All HW assignments will be submitted via Sakai.

### **Final Project**

You will complete a final project that involves designing a study, answering a series of questions, and writing a final report. You will regularly work on this project throughout the semester in groups of 2 as part of your HW assignments. The final written report will be completed on your own. The final written report will be worth 10% of your final grade. Your final project will be submitted via Sakai, and grading details will be posted later this semester.

### **Submissions on Sakai**

Anytime you submit an assignment on Sakai, you should double check to make sure the assignment is showing as "submitted" on your account. I do not accept late submissions, so you need to be 100% positive that your assignment submitted properly.

### **Re-grading Policy for HW Assignments, Exams, and Final Project**

If you wish to contest a grade, the only option is to have the *entire* assignment re-graded. This can result in either improving or reducing your grade. You will receive the new grade, even if it is lower than the original grade. You have a maximum of 2 weeks to contest your grade for any assignment or exam. It is your responsibility to request re-grading if you are interested.

### **How to Succeed in this Class**

I want everyone to succeed in this class! My goal is to help everyone earn the best grade possible, but I need your commitment to work hard as well. If you attend lectures, take notes during class, and read the book, you are setting yourself up for success. If you are struggling with the material, it is your responsibility to see me early on. I can only help you improve if you let me know that you want help!

### **Email Policy**

I will respond to emails from students once per day, so you may not hear back from me for up to 24 hours. All emails regarding exam-related questions must be sent by 5pm the night prior to each exam. Any emails sent after 5pm the night prior to the exam will be disregarded. I will only respond to very specific questions regarding course content. Any broader questions are best addressed in-person, either during office hours or in class. There is also a section on Sakai to post anonymous questions that I will address in the next class.

### **Academic Integrity:**

Academic dishonesty is unacceptable under all circumstances. All exam work in this class is to be your own. All written work is to be your own. You are responsible for keeping drafts, references, and backup copies of all of your written assignments, to turn in upon my request until final grades are completed. If I discover that you have copied all or part of an exam or written assignment from another source (including another student, a web page, a textbook, or other published source), you will be reported to the Office of Student Conduct for disciplinary action (I usually recommend an F grade in the course). To avoid plagiarizing, you must educate yourself about appropriate citation procedures and follow them carefully. When in doubt, ask. Please do not put your college career at risk!

### **Social Justice Statement and Students with Disabilities:**

The University of Delaware is committed to social justice. I agree with that commitment and expect to maintain a positive learning environment based upon open communication, mutual respect, and non-discrimination. Our University does not discriminate on the basis of race, sex, age, disability, veterans status, religion, sexual orientation, or national origin. Any suggestions as to how to further such a positive and open environment in this class will be appreciated and given serious consideration.

If you need special academic accommodations due to a documented physical or sensory disability, please contact the Office of Disability Support Services at [www.udel.edu/DSS/](http://www.udel.edu/DSS/) during the first two weeks of class. The office provides academic support services to eligible students with temporary and permanent disabilities.

## Lecture Schedule and Reading Assignments

Class	Day	Date	Topic	Reading
1	T	9/1	Class overview and introductions	N/A
2	R	9/3	The Science of Psychology - Part 1	Pages 8-13, 23-38
3	T	9/8	The Science of Psychology - Part 2	Pages 39-46
4	R	9/10	The Science of Psychology - Part 3	Chapter 3 – all
5	T	9/15	Variable Measurement	Pages 122-130, 136-146
6	R	9/17	Participant Selection	Chapter 7 - all
7	T	9/22	Ethics in Psychological Research	Chapter 4 - all
8	R	9/24	Overview of Research Designs	N/A
9	T	9/29	Review for Exam #1	N/A
10	R	10/1	EXAM #1	N/A
11	T	10/6	Review for Exam #1 Round 2	
12	R	10/8	EXAM #1 Round 2	
13	T	10/13	Non-experimental Designs - Part 1	Chapter 8 - all, Pages 242-246 (top)
14	R	10/15	Experimental Designs - Part 1	Pages 271-284 (top)
15	T	10/20	Experimental Designs - Part 2	Pages 307 – 323, 284-294
16	R	10/22	Experimental Designs - Part 3	Pages 295-302

17	T	10/27	Experimental Designs - Part 4	Chapter 12 - all
18	R	10/29	Non-Experimental and Experimental Designs - 4 Study Validities	N/A
19	T	11/3	Review for Exam #2	N/A
20	R	11/5	EXAM #2	N/A
21	T	11/10	Quasi-experiments and Developmental Designs - Part 1	Pages 382-408
22	R	11/12	Quasi-experiments and Developmental Designs - Part 2	Pages 237-241
23	T	11/17	Quasi-experiments and Developmental Designs - Part 3	
24	R	11/19	Moderation versus Mediation	Pages 227-230, 257-259
25	T	11/24	University Holiday - No Class	N/A
26	R	11/26	University Holiday - No Class	N/A
27	T	12/1	Psychological Statistics	Pages 263-286 (optional)
28	R	12/4	Review for Exam #3	N/A
29	T	12/8	EXAM #3	N/A
30	R	12/10	Review for final	
		12/15	FINAL PROJECT DUE	
			EXAM #4 - FINAL EXAM DURING FINALS WEEK	

\*Schedule and readings subject to change