

## Psychology 207: Research Methods

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Fall 2016

TR 2:00-3:15pm in 061 McKinly Lab

TR 3:30-4:45pm in 002 McKinly Lab

Instructor:	Lisa Jaremka, PhD	Graduate Student TA:	Noel Shadowen
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Office Hrs:	Tuesday 11:45-1:45pm	Office Hrs:	Thurs 1-2pm and 3:15-4:15pm
Location:	105 McKinly Lab	Location:	Wolf 129

Peer-Advising TA 2pm:	Navika Gangrade	Peer-Advising TA 3:30pm:	Leana Bugglin-Borer
Email:	<a href="mailto:navikag@udel.edu">navikag@udel.edu</a>	Email:	lborer@udel.edu
Office Hrs:	Thurs 5-6pm	Office Hrs:	Thurs 2-3pm
Location:	McKinly 175J	Location:	McKinly 175J

**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 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%		

**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. Every student is allowed 1 missed in-class activity with no penalty. Otherwise, if you miss a class due to a personal emergency, you must inform me *prior to, or within one day*, of the missed class and provide a *university approved excused absence*. Failure to notify me about a missed class will result in a failed grade on that activity. The in-class activities will be turned in during class and graded using a 0 (did not complete) and 1 (complete, regardless of response) scale.

**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. I will answer specific questions about your HW assignments, but I will not read entire drafts. You are always responsible for submitting your own HW assignment, regardless of whether it was completed with your partner or by yourself. All HW assignments will be graded using a 0 (did not complete or

completely wrong), 5 (50% correct), 10 (100% correct) scale. All HW assignments will be submitted via Sakai. Late assignments will be graded (up to 3 days late), and then the grade will be reduced by 10% for every day it was late (e.g., a 10 will be reduced to a 9) → submitting any time after the deadline automatically counts as at least a single day late. Late assignments should be sent via email directly to the instructor (since Sakai will not allow late submissions).

### **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.

**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 scheduling a makeup exam, you must provide *written approval from the university excusing your absence*, obtained from Undergraduate Academic Services. Makeup exams may take an alternative form to that taken by the rest of the class (e.g., essay exam).

### **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 also be completed in your groups and 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. I will answer specific questions about your final project, but I will not read entire sections or drafts.

### **Submissions on Sakai**

You are responsible for submitting your own assignments, even if they were completed with a partner. Anytime you submit an assignment on Sakai, you should double check to make sure the assignment is showing as “submitted” on your account; you need to be 100% positive that your assignment submitted properly.

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

You have a maximum of 2 weeks after receiving your grade to contest your grade for any assignment or exam. It is your responsibility to request re-grading if you are interested. All re-grading requests must be in writing and must be accompanied by a justification of why you want your assignment re-graded and why you deserve a different grade. Be specific, because your justification really matters. Note that re-grading can result in either improving or reducing your grade. You will receive the new grade, even if it is lower than the original grade.

Additional information for exams: 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.

### **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. Memorization of the material is not enough to get an A! You must be able to apply what you learned to real study examples. If you are struggling with the material or if you are not sure how to apply what you are learning, it is your responsibility to see me early on. I have some great study tips, but I can only help you improve if you let me know that you want help!

### **Attendance and Email Policy**

I am teaching multiple sections of this class, but you can only attend the one you are enrolled in. Your class activities will only be counted if turned in during your enrolled times.

I will respond to emails from students once per day, so you may not hear back from me for up to 24 hours. Emails about exam preparation must be sent by 5pm the night before each exam. Emails sent after that deadline will be disregarded. I will only respond to very specific questions about course content; broader questions are best addressed in-person. 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 work in this class is to be your own (except assignments related to the final project, which will be completed in groups of 2). You are responsible for keeping drafts and backup copies 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:**

Our University does not discriminate on the basis of race, sex, age, disability, veterans status, religion, sexual orientation, or national origin. I agree with that commitment and expect to maintain a positive learning environment based upon open communication, mutual respect, and non-discrimination. I truly want everyone to feel comfortable, so let me know if you have any suggestions as to how to create a positive and open environment in this class.

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, Reading Assignments, HW Assignments

Class	Day	Date	Topic	Reading	Homework
1	T	8/30	Class overview and introductions	N/A	
2	R	9/1	The Science of Psychology - Part 1	Pages 8-13, 23-38	HW 1 assigned (Due 9/5)
3	T	9/6	The Science of Psychology - Part 2	Pages 39-46	
4	R	9/8	The Science of Psychology - Part 3	Chapter 3 – all	HW 2 assigned (Due 9/15)
5	T	9/13	Variable Measurement	Pages 122-130, 136-146	
6	R	9/15	Participant Selection	Chapter 7 - all	HW 3 assigned (Due 9/20)
7	T	9/20	Ethics in Psychological Research	Chapter 4 - all	HW 4 assigned (Due 9/27)
8	R	9/22	Threats to Validity and Understanding Confounds	N/A	Extra credit assigned (Due 9/26)
9	T	9/27	Review for Exam #1	N/A	
10	R	9/29	EXAM #1	N/A	
11	T	10/4	CLASS CANCELED	N/A	
12	R	10/6	Overview of Research Designs	N/A	

13	T	10/11	Experimental Designs - Part 1	Pages 271-284 (top)	HW 5 assigned (due 10/21)
14	R	10/13	Experimental Designs - Part 2	Pages 307 – 323, 284-294	HW 6 assigned (due 10/20)
15	T	10/18	Experimental Designs - Part 3	Pages 295-302	
16	R	10/20	Experimental Designs - Part 4	Chapter 12 - all	HW 7 assigned (canceled)
17	T	10/25	Experimental Designs - 4 Study Validities and Practice	N/A	Extra credit assigned (due 10/27)
18	R	10/27	Review for Exam #2	N/A	
19	T	11/1	EXAM #2	N/A	
20	R	11/3	Non-experimental Designs	Chapter 8 - all, Pages 242-246 (top)	HW 8 assigned (Due 11/10)
21	T	11/8	CLASS CANCELED - Don't forget to vote!!!	N/A	
22	R	11/10	Quasi-experiments and Developmental Designs - Part 1	Pages 382-408	
23	T	11/15	Quasi-experiments and Developmental Designs - Part 2	Pages 237-241	HW 9 assigned (due 11/18)
24	R	11/17	Non-experiments, Quasi-experiments, and Developmental Designs - 4 Study Validities and Practice	N/A	
25	T	11/22	University Holiday - No Class	N/A	

26	R	11/24	University Holiday - No Class	N/A	
27	T	11/29	Moderation versus Mediation	Pages 227-230, 257-259	Extra credit assigned (due 12/2)
28	R	12/1	Psychological Statistics	Pages 263-286 (optional)	HW 10 assigned (due 12/6)
29	T	12/6	Review for Exam #3	N/A	
30	R	12/8	EXAM #3	N/A	
		12/18	FINAL PROJECT DUE		
			EXAM #4 - FINAL EXAM DURING FINALS WEEK		

\*Schedule and readings subject to change

\*Chapter 14 is not officially assigned, but we will learn material from that chapter throughout the semester. This chapter is a good resource for extra learning about different topics, so keep it on your radar.