

EXPERIMENTAL METHODS IN PSYCHOLOGY
Psychology 212 L1
Spring 2006

Instructor:

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Clough 110
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Office hours: MWF 9:00-10:00am

Meeting Time and Place

Mon, Wed & Fri 10:00-10:50 am Clough 123
Lab: M 2:00-4:00pm Clough 123

Required Texts

Cozby, P. C. (2004). *Methods in behavioral research*. California: Mayfield Publishing Company.

Purpose

This course will help you learn the basic principles of experimental methodologies used in psychology and apply the methodologies in a real setting. You will be involved in hands-on research projects, learning how to critically evaluate studies and to utilize your knowledge to conduct a research experiment (run subjects, collect data and analyze results, etc.). This course will help develop your critical and scientific thinking.

Objectives

- 1) You will learn how to apply course material to improve thinking and problem solving (e.g., presentations, experimentation).
- 2) You will develop specific skills, competencies, and points of views needed by professionals in the field most closely related to this course.
 - a. You will acquire skills in working with others as member of a team
 - b. You will develop skill in expressing yourself orally and in writing

Exam

One exam will be given. The exam will consist of multiple-choice questions and short-answer questions. A typical test might have 40 multiple choice questions and 2-3 short answers. The exam will be approximately 1-hour long.

Team Work

You will conduct a psychology research project in collaboration with others. Thus, team work is a very important part of this class. Throughout the semester, you are expected to work cooperatively with your partners so that your contribution will be significantly made and the amount of work you do will be approximately as equal as that of work done by each group member. More specifically, you are expected to have contributions to every aspect of a research process (from generating ideas, formulating hypotheses to presenting research

findings). Periodically, I will ask your partners to evaluate your contributions. If problems arise (e.g., ask yourself if there is a social loafer in your group), inform me as early as possible and I will intervene and try to change the situation.

IRB Proposal

You and your partners will write an ethic's proposal on your project. At Rhodes, every research project must be approved by a college-wide committee (IRB).

Annotated Bibliography

You are responsible for finding 10 articles relevant to your research topic, and summarize and critique the 10 studies. The summary and critique of each article should be 1 page long and should be single-spaced. You also need to attach article abstracts (obtained from PsycInfo) to your summaries. All of the studies should be empirical. If you have difficulty locating empirical studies, please inform me early in the semester.

Individual presentations

You will have presentations. Each presentation should take approximately 10-15 minutes.

1. When you present a book chapter (chapter 3, 5, 6, 7, 8, or 9) from the textbook, "Methods in Behavioral Research", you are required to review the chapter you are assigned to. You also need to select an article that is relevant to the chapter and present it in relation to the chapter.

Book chapters for presentation

- 1) Chapter 3 ethical research
- 2) Chapter 5 measurement concepts
- 3) Chapter 6 observing behavior
- 4) Chapter 7 survey research
- 5) Chapter 8-9 experiments

When you select an article, you should find an article relevant to the main concepts of the chapter, and summarize and critique the findings of an article (e.g., strengths and weaknesses, future implications).

2. The next 2 presentations will be made on any empirical or theoretical articles relevant to your research topic.

3. The last presentation will be on a psychology conference. For this presentation, you will find information about a psychology conference online and will introduce the conference to class. Gathering information about conferences and deciding which conference is good for your study to be presented is an important skill to acquire for researchers.

Your article should come from a highly reliable source (i.e., a published article in academic journal). Please provide a handout for class.

You need to submit two hard copies of your article 3 days before presentation. I will leave one copy in a reading room (Clough 100) so that everyone can read it beforehand and be prepared to participate in discussion. The other copy will be kept by the instructor.

Group Presentations

You will be responsible for preparing 2 group presentations on your research project (approximately 40 min. each).

You should be able to demonstrate your background knowledge on your topic, summarize previous findings, discuss the relevance of previous research to your topic, and generate discussion. 10 points will be allocated to presentation materials (e.g., overhead or PowerPoint slides) and 20 points to execution of the presentation. You are required to turn in a copy of your PowerPoint (or overhead) slides to me by the time you give a presentation.

Poster Presentation

You and your partners will complete a poster presentation of your research project at a poster conference. Details about the conference will be discussed later in the semester. Each group should be prepared to give a brief talk to attendees (4-5 min.) This poster presentation will help you think more deeply about your study and the meaning of data -- as you prepare your arguments to others. Your presentation will be evaluated by me and other psychology professors.

Research Paper

You will write a research paper on your study. You are responsible for doing thorough background research on your topic and writing up a report in APA format. The paper should include abstract, introduction, method, results and discussion. The paper should be about 14-16 pages in length (excluding title, abstract, references, tables/figures, and appendices pages).

Grading

Test	50 points
Activities	20 points
Conference paper*	10 points
Research paper*	80 points
IRB proposal	30 points
Group Pres 1	30 points
Group Pres 2	30 points
Individual pres.	40 points (10 points each)
Team work & class participation	50 points
Bibliography*	50 points
Poster	30 points

Note: * Individual assignments

You can earn a total of 420 points and the percentage of the total points obtained will be used to determine your grade according to the following:

90% or above	= A
80-89%	= B
70-79%	= C
60-69%	= D
Below 59%	= F

Excuses

The exam should be taken on the day assigned. I will only allow make-up exams under highly unusual circumstances (e.g., sickness requiring doctor's visit). 10 points will be deducted each day for late paper.

Class Participation

This will regard from showing up for class, civility in the classroom, and participation in discussion to collaboration with your partners in your project. 5 points will be deducted for your absence in each lab session.

Plagiarism

Plagiarism is presenting someone else's thoughts, data, ideas or language as your own. You should not use other's work without giving the author credit. We treat plagiarism as a serious offense.

Honor Code

You must abide by the Honor Code outlined by your student handbook. It is a violation to consult old tests, papers, or handouts before doing assignments. It is also a violation to turn in a paper written for another course. The most essential consequences of this code for this course are: 1) all papers must represent your original thoughts and 2) all papers must represent original work unique to this course.

Class Schedule of Topics (TENTATIVE)

Week beginning	Topic & reading	Activity & Assignment
1/9	Review syllabus (Wed)	Meet with the instructor (Fri)
1/16	16 th - Martin Luther King Day Scientific understanding of research (ch.1) & Where to start (ch. 2)	Submit: Research idea due (Wed) Choose a research topic & form a group (Wed)
1/23	Writing research reports & IRB Ethical research (ch. 3)	
1/30	Studying behavior (ch. 4) Research designs (ch. 10)	Group presentation #1 (Wed) - 30 min.
2/6	Measurement concept (ch. 5)	Submit: IRB proposal (Wed)
2/13	Observing behavior (ch.6)	
2/20	Survey (ch. 7)	Test covering ch. 1 ~ 10 (Wed)
2/27	Experimental designs (ch. 8-10)	
3/6	Understanding research results	
3/13	Spring Recess	Submit: bibliography (Fri)
3/20	Data collection	
3/27	Data collection and data entry into SPSS	SPSS database Due (Fri)
4/3	Discuss data analysis Discuss data output with the instructor	SPSS Outputs Due (Wed)
4/10	Easter Recess (13-16 th)	Rough Draft Due (Mon) - optional
4/17	Group Presentation #2 (4/17)	Group Pres. #2 Submit: Poster due (Wed)
4/24	4/24 Poster Conference (1-3:00pm) 4/26 Last day of class 4/28 URCAS (no class)	
5/1	Finals week: Good luck!	Submit: Research Paper (5/2 by noon)