

Psychology 241: Methods of Inquiry in Psychology
Summer 2007
Tuesday, Wednesday & Thursday 6:30-9:00
Tobin 520

Instructors:

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Office Hours: Tuesday, Wednesday & Thursday 6-6:30 and by appointment

Course Description:

This course is an introduction to experimental methods in psychology. You will learn the details associated with planning, executing, explaining and critiquing research. You will also learn about experimental design, statistics, ethical standards of research and writing up a report.

As consumers of research from psychology and other scientific disciplines, you need to be aware of the strengths and limitations of “evidence” often presented by the media. The material covered in this course should allow you to assess research findings as well as design studies of your own, collect and analyze data and write an APA style report.

Course Readings:

1. *Research Methods in Psychology* (7th Edition) by Shaughnessy, Zechmeister & Zechmeister, which is available at the Campus Bookstore
2. Course Packet- In addition to the text, a course packet is required and will be available on our course website. This packet contains class notes and other important course information. You are expected to bring the course packet to class. The course packet is NOT designed to be a replacement for attending class.

WebCT:

Our course website is available through WebCT. If you have a UMass OIT account and are registered for the course, you automatically have access to the site. The WebCT login page is located at <http://www.oit.umass.edu/webct/public/home.pl>. At the login page, click on “log in to” and type in your UMass OIT ID and password. Next, click on “Methods of Inquiry in Psychology” and this will take you to the course webpage. If you do not have a UMass OIT account, you will need to get one for this course.

Attendance Policy:

Attendance is crucial. Be advised that one class during the summer session is equal to one week during the fall or spring semester. Because the information that you learn in this course is cumulative and you will collaborate often and your collaborators rely on your input and participation, attendance is a significant part of your grade. There will be in-class assignments and quizzes, unannounced, which cannot be made up if you do not have a University excused absence.

According to the University policy on class absences, an absence may be excused for any of the following reasons: religious observances; poor health; family illness or death; and other extenuating non-academic reasons (e.g., jury duty, accident). If you anticipate an absence for religious reasons, please inform us, in writing, of the date(s) you will be absent by the end of the first week of the semester in order to be excused. If you are sick and unable to come to class, your absence will be excused if you provide written verification from the attending physician within a week of the date you were absent. If possible, please e-mail us to let us know why you were not in class so we won't worry! Absences for any other reasons may require written verification in order to be excused.

Depending on the circumstances, if you miss more than two class sessions, you may be given an incomplete. If you receive an incomplete, you will need to make up the material as soon as possible or you will receive an F for the course. The bottom line: if you are going to be absent, please let us know as soon as possible so we can help you keep up with the course!

Grading:

Your grade in this course will be based on the following point distribution, given for lab assignments, quizzes, in-class activities and participation, a final research project and take-home assignments:

Lab Assignments:	100 points
Quizzes:	100 points (10 points each)
In-class Activities & Participation:	72 points
Final Research Project:	75 points (60 points for the paper, 15 for the presentation)
Take-home Assignments:	45 points
Extra Credit:	8 points

Total: 400 points

A	376-400	C	296-307
A-	360-375	C-	280-295
B+	348-359	D+	268-279
B	336-347	D	256-267
B-	320-335	F	Below 256
C+	308-319		

Participation in Research:

You may earn up to 8 extra points toward your course grade by participating in research opportunities available through the psychology department. One hour of research participation equals one extra credit point. If you sign up for a study, you must show up for it or cancel at least 24 hours in advance of your appointment. If you fail to show up, or if you fail to cancel within 24 hours of your appointment, 1 point may be deducted from your final course grade. Research participation opportunities will be announced in class. Experimentrak will not be available during the summer session.

Lab Assignments:

There are a variety of projects and exercises that you will work on over the course of the semester. Most of these exercises will be related to the experiment you will be conducting in small groups as your final project (see below). These assignments will be discussed in more detail in lab.

Extensions & Late Assignments:

Extensions will not be considered and late assignments will not be accepted unless there is an extenuating circumstance that prevents you from completing an assignment on time. Please e-mail us or talk to us before class if you cannot complete an assignment on time.

Final Research Project:

Throughout the semester, you and a small group of classmates will research, design, conduct, and write-up an experiment. At the end of the semester, you will present your project to the class and hand in an APA style report. The research project will be broken down into smaller parts to make the process easier and less stressful for you.

Additional Issues and Expectations:

- **Students with documented disabilities** who need special arrangements in this course should speak to us immediately.
- **Class participation is expected.** We strive for an informal, interactive class environment in which questions and discussion are routine, and hope to have enjoyable and stimulating discussions. The flip side of this is that you need to take responsibility for participation. We expect you to be ready to discuss, ask questions, and to look alert (bring caffeine if necessary!)
- **Any written assignments must be typed and double-spaced.** They should be checked for correct spelling, grammar and punctuation.
- **Internet access and an email account are required.** We will communicate with you via email, and we expect that you will check it routinely, at least every day or two. There are public computer terminals available in the libraries.
- **Please bring extra paper** to each class for in-class assignments.

Plagiarism

Plagiarism is representing someone else's work as your own. This includes copying information from ANY website without proper citation, copying someone else's paper, buying a paper, or letting someone copy your work. In this course, you are expected to talk to your classmates about the course material but NEVER to share in the writing of papers, nor are you to use papers written by previous students in this course. Plagiarism will result in a grade of F and a report will be filed with the Academic Honesty Board. This penalty will be enacted both for the person who copies and anyone who allows copying to occur.

Plagiarism will be discussed in class and you will be expected to understand what constitutes plagiarism. You are expected to understand your sources sufficiently well to write your own paper *in your own words*. However, you should cite the sources of ALL ideas in your papers even when you are paraphrasing a source.

The Department policy states all students are expected to adhere scrupulously to the University policy concerning academic honesty, which is found in "Undergraduate Rights and Responsibilities" at the following web site:

http://www.umass.edu/dean_students/code_conduct/acad_honest.htm

Students should be aware that suspect assignments (e.g., those without drafts, without works cited pages, or with large departures in style) will be submitted to Turnitin and/or MyDropBox by the instructor for the purpose of detecting possible plagiarism. Submitted assignments will be included in the UMass Amherst dedicated databases of assignments at Turnitin and/or MyDropBox. These databases of assignments will be used solely for the purpose of detecting possible plagiarism during the grading process during this term and in the future. Students must provide an electronic copy of their assignment to the instructor for submission to one or both of the services when plagiarism is suspected, in order to receive a grade on the assignment and to avoid possible sanctions.

Semester Schedule & Assignments*

Tuesday, July 17th

Course Introduction

Reading: chapter 1 pages 3-26

Wednesday, July 18th

The Science of Psychology

Reading: chapter 2 pages 27-57

Thursday, July 19th

The Scientific Method

Reading: chapter 3 pages 58-99

Take-home assignment 1: summarizing your articles

Tuesday, July 24th

Ethical Issues in the Conduct of Psychological Research

Reading: chapter 4 pages 102-142

Wednesday, July 25th

Observation

Reading: chapter 5 pages 143-192

Thursday, July 26th

Survey Research

Reading: chapter 7 pages 222-262

Take-home assignment 2: building a questionnaire & writing a reference section in APA format

Tuesday, July 31st

Independent Groups Designs

Reading: chapter 8 pages 263-288

Wednesday, August 1st

Repeated Measures Designs

Reading: chapter 9 pages 289-321

Thursday, August 2nd

Complex Designs

Reading: chapter 10 pages 324-256

Take-home assignment 3: writing the introduction & methods sections

Tuesday, August 7th

Single-Case Designs and Small-*n* Research
Reading: chapter 11 pages 257-396

Wednesday, August 8th

Quasi-Experimental Designs
Reading: chapter 12 pages 398-438

Thursday, August 9th

Data Analysis and Interpretation: Part I
Reading: chapter 13 pages 439-484
Take-home assignment 4: writing the results & discussion sections

Tuesday, August 14th

Data Analysis and Interpretation: Part II
Reading: chapter 14 pages 485-531

Wednesday, August 15th

Communication in Psychology

Thursday, August 16th

Group Presentations

Tuesday, August 21st

Group Presentations

Wednesday, August 22nd

Group Presentations
Course Evaluations

*This syllabus is a guide for how the course will go but is subject to change.