

PSYCHOLOGY 301(001) (73635)– Research Methods in Psychology

FALL 2006                      MW 12:30-1:20 pm                      Robinson A 125

INSTRUCTOR:                      Dr. Patricia Wanschura  
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Office hours: M-2:30-4:30 pm; F-12:25-1:25 pm; 2:30-3:30 pm  
Other times by appointment

TEXTS:                                      Shaughnessy, J.J., Zechmeister, E.B., & Zechmeister, J.S. (2006). Research Methods in Psychology (7<sup>th</sup> edition). Boston: McGraw-Hill Higher Education. (Required)

Dunn, D. (2003). A Short Guide to Writing About Psychology. Boston: Longman. (Required)

Publication Manual for the American Psychological Association (5<sup>th</sup> edition). (Recommended)

GOAL:                                      This course is designed to provide an introduction to research methods in psychology. It will include general issues in research as well as specific descriptive, experimental and applied methods. We will discuss the strengths and weaknesses, the ways that data are collected and analyzed, and the limits to interpretation for the various techniques. The course should help develop skills in critically evaluating research studies as well as provide the tools needed to identify a research question and design one's own study.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS:

EXAMS:                                      There will be 3 exams and a final consisting of multiple-choice, true/false, matching short answer, and essay type questions. They will cover the text, lecture, videos, and any other material covered in the course of the class. There will be an OPTIONAL cumulative Replacement exam, all objective, which can be used to substitute for a missing exam or to replace a low exam grade. I would suggest a strategy of reviewing old exams (25% of the questions will be directly from the old exams) and the review questions at the end of each chapter. (50 points each).

Missed Exams: If you are unable to make an exam (e.g. illness, business, etc.), you must leave a message on my voice mail or e-mail BEFORE the scheduled exam. Otherwise you will have to use the optional cumulative replacement exam to replace it. If you qualify to make up the exam since you contacted me before the exam for a legitimate reason, it should be done as soon as possible. (Make-up exams could be all short answer and essay.) If a student misses more than one exam at the scheduled time, he/she will not be given additional make-up exams.

HOMEWORK:                                      There will be 2 homework assignments. They will be due at the beginning of class on the due date. If you must miss class, you may submit it via e-mail and provide a paper copy the next class. There will be a 2 pt.deduction each class period it is late. No assignments accepted after 12/6/06 (0-20 pts each depending on the quality of the product).

CLASS ACTIVITIES:                                      There will be 12 in-class activities. You must be IN CLASS to do it, but you can make up two. The topic will be posted on Web CT after it occurs. No make-ups accepted after 12/6/05. (0 -2 pts each, depending on the quality of the group (or individual) response).

LAB: You must be enrolled in a Psy 301 lab section and attend the section in which you are enrolled. Lab is designed to provide hands-on experience with research and exposure to some classic research studies. It is considered **writing intensive**, so it will include multiple writing assignments with some feedback. A separate lab syllabus will be provided in the first lab session. It will count for 40% of the final grade.

GRADES: Grades will be based on a total of 440 points. Exams(3) plus Final (4 at 50 pts each) -200 pts.; Homework (2 at 20 pts each) -40 pts.; Class activities (12 at 2 pts each) - 24 pts; Lab- 176 pts. (Lab grades will be translated, such that if you earn 90% of the possible points in lab, then you would be assigned  $.90 \times 176 = 158.5$  pts).

Letter grades will be A=409 pts; A- = 396 pts; B+ = 383 pts; B= 365 pts; B- = 352 pts; C+ = 339 pts; C= 321 pts; C- = 308; D= 264 pts; F= below 264 pts.

EXTRA CREDIT: 1) There will be 4 extra credit quizzes on Web CT (see below). If you get 70% of the multiple choice questions correct (i.e. 7 out of 10), you will earn 2 points extra credit for that quiz.

2) You may participate in psychology research projects for up to 2 hours for extra credit. Each hour will be worth 2 pts. I will need to be notified by the researcher at the end of the semester of your participation, **and you will need to write one short paragraph about each project and turn it into me, no later than 12/6/06**. The paragraph needs to identify the study, and comment on the mechanics of the study – Experimenter act professionally? Instructions clear? Environment conducive to participation? Recording of responses not disruptive? Demand characteristics a problem? etc.

To sign up for an experiment, you must follow the following instructions:

- a) log on to [www.experimetrix.com/gmu](http://www.experimetrix.com/gmu) and click on new user link
- b) enter all the required information
  - don't include dashes in your SSN
  - use your GMU e-mail account (your password will be sent to this account). If you do not know your GMU e-mail account, log on to <http://www.gmu.edu/mlnavbar/finder/index.html> and enter your last name to find your GMU e-mail account.
- c) click on register.

Your login and password will be sent to your GMU e-mail account. You will need to log on to the site to activate your account within 3 days or else you will need to re-register. Click 'log in' to access your account. You will need to select your course by clicking on the 'Edit Your Course Selection link' (Psyc 301 001). You can also edit your information(change your password, add an additional e-mail account, etc.).

3) **OR** - If you do not wish to participate in research, you may do a journal article critique. The assignment will be posted on webct. The critique **MUST** be done in the format given on the assignment sheet. (4 pts) Due date 12/4/06. N.B. This date is before the last class.

TECHNOLOGY: We will be using Web CT for the syllabus, old chapter notes, class activities, homework assignments, extra credit quizzes and grades. The best way to contact me is through e-mail.

Students automatically receive a WebCT username and password authorization when they first register for courses at George Mason. The username and password is always the same as their Mason e-mail account username and password. If you need to activate your email account please go to <https://chimera.gmu.edu/e-mail/prod/index.html>

To use Web CT you will need to go to <http://webct41.gmu.edu>. You click on Login and it will ask for your user name and password. Then a list of courses you have on webct will appear and you click on Psyc 301(001) There is also a website that explains webct – <http://www.irc.gmu.edu/Webct/default.asp> and you can get technical support at [webct@gmu.edu](mailto:webct@gmu.edu).

- DUE DATES:** NO homework, make-up activities, extra credit, etc. will be accepted after 12/6/06.
- HONOR CODE:** All provisions of the GMU Honor Code will be followed in this class. Under no circumstances are you to collectively write papers with another student. No plagiarism will be tolerated.
- DISABILITY HELP:** If you are a student with a disability and you need academic accommodations, please see me and contact the Disability Resource Center (DRC) at 703-993-2474. All academic accommodations must be arranged through that office.

#### SYLLABUS\*

M 8/28	Chapter 1 & 2	Introduction/ Scientific method	Last day to add - Sept 12
W 8/30	Chapter 2	Scientific Method	Last day to drop - Sept 29
<b>M 9/4</b>	<b>HOLIDAY</b>	<b>Labor Day</b>	Elective withdrawal period -
W 9/6	Chapter 4	Observation	9/30-10/27
M 9/11	Chapter 4		
W 9/13	Chapter 4		
<b>M 9/18</b>	<b>EXAM 1</b>	(Chapters 1,2,4)	*Syllabus subject to change as Necessary.
W 9/20	Chapter 3	Ethical Issues	
M 9/25	Chapter 3		
W 9/27	Chapter 5	Survey Research	
M 10/2	Chapter 5 & 12	Pp. 413-17	
W 10/4	Chapter 5 & 12	Pp. 424-435; Correlation	
<b>M 10/9</b>	<b>HOLIDAY</b>	<b>Columbus Day</b>	
<b>T 10/10</b>	Chapter 6	Unobtrusive Measures	
W 10/11	Chapter 6		
<b>M 10/16</b>	<b>EXAM 2</b>	(Chapters 3,5,6, parts of 12 - pp. 413-417, 424-435)	
W 10/18	Chapter 7	Independent Groups Designs	
M 10/23	Chapter 7 & 12	Pp. 399-413	
W 10/25	Chapter 7 & 13	Pp. 453- 459; 464-465	
M 10/30	Chapter 8		
W 11/1	Chapter 8	Repeated Groups Design	
M 11/6	Chapter 8 & 13	Pp. 466-471	
<b>W 11/8</b>	<b>EXAM 3</b>	(Chapters 7,8, parts of 12 - pp. 399-413, parts of 13 -453-459;464-471)	
M 11/13	Chapter 9	Complex Designs/Interactions	
W 11/15	Chapter 9		
M 11/20	Chapter 9&13	Pp. 471-74; 477-80	
<b>W 11/22</b>	<b>HOLIDAY</b>	<b>Thanksgiving</b>	
M 11/27	Chapter 10	Single Case Designs and Small-n Research	
W 11/29	Chapter 10		
M 12/4	Chapter 11	Quasi-Experimental Designs	
W 12/6	Chapter 11		
<b>M 12/18</b>	<b>FINAL EXAM</b>	(Chapters 9,10, 11, parts of 13 - 471-74, 477-80) - 10:30 – 1:15 pm	
<b>M 12/18</b>	<b>OPTIONAL REPLACEMENT EXAM</b>	- 10:30 - 1:15 pm; After the final is completed/ turned in.	
.		(All chapters; all objective -multiple choice, true/false, matching; 25% from old exams)	