

## Psychology 301- 005 Research Methods in Psychology

**Instructor:** Kellie R Stanton  
**Location:** Robinson A243  
**Thursday:** 7:20 pm – 9:10 pm

**Office:** KI Great Room  
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**Phone** (703) 380-6216  
**Office Hours:** Thurs. 3-5 pm

**Prerequisites:** Six hours of Psychology courses or permission of instructor. Psyc 300: Students are strongly encouraged to take Psyc 300 statistics, concurrently.

**Course 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. The strengths and weaknesses, the ways that data are collected and analyzed, and the limits to interpretation for the various techniques will be discussed. The course should help students develop the necessary skills for critically evaluating research studies and should provide the tools needed for identifying research questions and designing one's own study.

### Required Texts

Shaughnessy, J., Zechmesiter, E., & Zechmeister, J. (2006). *Research Methods in Psychology* (7<sup>th</sup> Edition), McGraw-Hill Higher Education: Boston.

American Psychological Association. (2002). *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association*. Washington, DC: Author. (*Recommended*)

<b>Course Schedule</b>			
<b>Dates</b>	<b>Topic</b>	<b>Chapter</b>	<b>Work Due</b>
8/31	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Introduction – to class and text</li> </ul>	1	
9/7	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Scientific Method, Ethical Issues</li> </ul>	2 & 3	
9/14	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Observation</li> </ul>	4	
9/21	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Review</li> <li>• Exam 1</li> </ul>	1-4	<b>Exam One 9/21!</b>
9/28	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Survey Research</li> </ul>	5	
10/5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Unobtrusive Measures of Behavior</li> <li>• Independent Groups Design</li> </ul>	6 & 7	
10-12	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Independent Groups Design</li> <li>• Repeated Measures</li> </ul>	7 & 8	
10/19	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Repeated Measures</li> <li>• Complex Designs</li> </ul>	9	
10/26	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Review</li> <li>• Exam 2</li> </ul>	5-9	<b>Exam 2 10/26!</b>
<b>11/2</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Single-case research designs</li> </ul>	10	

11/8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Quasi-experimental Designs and program evaluation</li> </ul>	11	
11/15	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Analyzing and Reporting Research</li> </ul>	12 & 13	
11/22	<b>Happy Thanksgiving!</b>		
11/30	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Analyzing and Reporting Research</li> </ul>	12 & 13	
12/7	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Review</li> <li>• Exam 3</li> </ul>	12 & 13	<b>Exam 3 12/7!</b>  <b>All extra credit due 12/7.</b>
12/14	<b>Final Exam: 1:30 p.m. – 4:15 p.m.</b>		

**Grades:** 40% of your grade will be determined by your Lab grade and the remaining 60% will be determined from exams and class projects (i.e., homework assignments and in-class activities).

**Exams:** Exams will consist of multiple choice, true/false, short answer, and essay type questions. They will cover the text, lecture and any other material covered in the course of the class.

**IMPORTANT EXAM INFORMATION**

- 1) **There will be 4 exams in total.**
- 2) **The lowest exam grade will be dropped.**
- 3) **There are no make-up exams.**
- 4) **The final exam will be cumulative.**

**Other work:** In addition to the exams, there will be assignments. There will be one “in class” assignment a week. The assignments will be completed in small groups. “In class” assignments cannot be made up. The lowest two in class assignment grades will be dropped.

The lecture portion of your grade will consist of 400 points as follows:

Exams (3)	100 pts ea	300 total
In class Work (12)	10 pts ea (lowest 2 dropped)	100 total

The following distribution will be used for assigning final letter grades. I reserve the right to alter the cut-off points. Any changes to the distribution will be announced in class:

<i>Grade</i>	Percentage	<i>Grade</i>	Percentage	<i>Grade</i>	Percentage	<i>Grade</i>	Percentage
A+	97 – 100	B+	87 – 89.9	C+	77 – 79.9	D+	67 – 69.9
A	93 – 96.9	B	83 – 86.9	C	73 – 76.9	D	63 – 66.9
A-	90 – 92.9	B-	80 – 82.9	C-	70 – 72.9	D-	60 – 62.9
						F	0 – 59.9

**Degree Requirement:** A minimum of a C- is required in this course to satisfy psychology degree requirements.

**Extra Credit:** You may participate in psychology research projects for up to 6 hours of extra credit. Each hour will be worth 1 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 in to me-no later than December 7<sup>th</sup>, 2006.** The paragraph needs to identify the study and comment on the mechanics of the study – e.g., Experimenter acting professionally? Instructions clear? Environment conducive to participation? Recording of responses not disruptive?

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

1. log on to [www.experimetrix.com/gmu](http://www.experimetrix.com/gmu) and click on new user link
2. Enter all the required information
  - a. Don't include dashes in your SSN
  - b. 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
3. Click on register
- 4.

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 301 005). You can also edit your information (change your password, add an additional e-mail account, etc.).

**OR** - If you do not wish to participate in research, you may do a journal article critique (Up to 3/Semester). The assignment will be handed out in the first week of classes, and emailed. The critique **MUST** be done in the format given on the assignment sheet. (2 pts each) **Due date 12/7/06.**

**University Honor Code Statement:**

The University has established a clear Honor Code. The bottom line is: do NOT cheat, do NOT plagiarize, do NOT lie and do NOT steal. Any academic dishonesty including plagiarism will result in severe consequences. Under no circumstances are students to collectively write papers or complete homework assignments. If you have questions about any of this, please ask me.

**Special Needs:** 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.

**Last Day to Add (Full-Semester Course) September 12, 2006**  
**Last Day to Drop (Full-Semester Course) September 29, 2006**

**Technology Use:** Most lectures will be delivered using a whiteboard or overhead projections. When appropriate and depending on the technology available in the classroom, PowerPoint-type presentations and computer-based demonstrations will be used. The majority of communication will take place through campus email. Please check it regularly.

*The instructor reserves the right to modify the syllabus.*