

**PSYCHOLOGY 301 LAB SYLLABUS**  
**RESEARCH METHODS IN PSYCHOLOGY**

Fall 2006, CRN # 73512

Wednesday: 10:30 AM – 12:20 PM, Innovation Hall 330

Instructor: David Kidd

Email: dkidd3@gmu.edu

Office: 2063 David King Hall

Office Phone: (703) 993-1714

Office Hours: Wednesday, 1:00 PM – 2:00 PM, or by appointment

Mailbox located in David King Hall 2073 (Arch Lab)

**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.
- Publication Manual for the American Psychological Association (5<sup>th</sup> edition).
- Dunn, D.S. (2004). *A Short Guide to Writing about Psychology*. New York: Pearson Education, Inc.

**COURSE GOALS**

- To reinforce understanding of experimental design
- To learn scientific report writing in psychology using APA format
- To understand and apply statistical principles in research design (not calculation of statistics per se)
- To facilitate understanding of the role of experimentation in the psychological sciences

Psychology 301 meets the writing intensive requirement for psychology majors. This requirement is met by successful completion of the required written assignments in the course and by successful completion of the Psychology 301 course with an overall grade of C.

**ATTENDANCE**

Lab attendance is very important and strongly encouraged. Students will receive participation grades, which account for a substantial portion of the final lab grade. Students are responsible for all materials and assignments covered in the lab. **If a student misses an in-class assignment or experiment, this cannot be made up at a later date. No late assignments will be accepted.** If a student cannot attend class, the assignment must be placed in my box **and** emailed to me prior to the beginning of the class on which the assignment is due.

**HONOR CODE**

Lab reports are expected to be the student's own work. Students may use books, notes, and other sources in preparing lab reports. Under no circumstances are you to collectively write papers with another student. This is considered to be plagiarism and plagiarism of any kind will not be tolerated. Work such as library references, statistics, and reports of the research studies should be each student's own work. Quotations in lab reports should be minimal and the appropriate citation must be given.

**ADDITIONAL INFORMATION**

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

**IMPORTANT DATES**

September 12, 2006      Last Day to Add (Full Semester Course)

September 29, 2006      Last Day to Drop (Full Semester Course)

September 30 – October 27, 2006      Elective Withdrawal Period (Full Semester Course)

**GRADING CRITERIA**

**Lab counts for 40% of the total grade in Psyc 301**

Class participation	50 points
<i>Class participation includes in-class writing, peer/group reviews and writing, participating in the in-class experiments, participation in class discussions, and experimental design critiques/discussions. No participation points may be made up if the student misses class.</i>	
Two Quizzes/assignments (10 points each) 10 points per assignment (No make-up for missed quizzes)	20 points
Observation assignment data collection	15 points**
Observation write-up (Method & Results Sections)	15 points
Survey write-up (Method and Results Sections)	15 points
<b>Paper 1</b>	
Introduction Draft (Maximum is 20 points and may be less based on the quality)	20 points
Discussion Draft	10 points
Data collection	15 points**
Completed Paper 1	100 points
<b>Final Proposal</b> (See page 6 for detailed instructions)	
Abstract Draft	10 points
Proposal Draft	Optional
Final Proposal	100 points
Final Proposal Presentation	25 points

**Total: 395 Available Points**

**\*\*Must be confirmed by actual data handed in to TA with the appropriate written assignment.**

**COURSE OUTLINE**

**Note:** This is a tentative schedule. Topics and assignments are subject to change. Any changes will be announced in class.

<i>Date</i>	<i>Class</i>	<i>Assignments (Due the following week)</i>
	<b>BOLD = In-class activities, ITALICS = Assignments due</b>	
Week 1 8/30	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Go over syllabus (<b>Note:</b> Lab counts as 40% of total Psyc 301 grade).</li> <li>Detail the goals of the lab.</li> <li>Brief overview of the “nuts and bolts” of research design.</li> <li>Description of library resources, both in the library and online.</li> <li>Discuss Pennebaker et al. 1979 article.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Review “Don’t the Girls Get Prettier at Closing Time: A Country and Western Application to Psychology” for observational study discussion next week.</li> </ul>
Week 2 9/6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Procedures for observational research with and without intervention.</li> <li>How to measure behavior and its application to observation.</li> <li>Descriptive statistics (mainly means).</li> <li>Inter-rater reliability in observational research.</li> <li><b>Small group discussion about upcoming observational study.</b></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Conduct and complete observational study before next week.</li> <li>Bring in collected data, along with a summary of the data (e.g., means of the different measures).               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Create a table displaying the data</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
Week 3 9/13	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The importance of APA format.</li> <li>Exploring the different sections of an APA-style paper.</li> <li>Learning how to write the Method and Results sections of an APA paper.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Write the Method and Results sections of your own observational study.</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Writing workshop on writing a Method and Result section.</b></li> <li>• <i>Turn in summary and table of observational study.</i></li> </ul>	
Week 4 9/20	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Using correlations.</li> <li>• Exploring survey research.</li> <li>• <b>Complete surveys.</b></li> <li>• <b>Enter in-class survey data into SPSS.</b></li> <li>• <i>Turn in Method and Results section of observational study.</i></li> </ul>	NONE!!
Week 5 10/4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Return Method and Results section and go over the papers.</li> <li>• Discuss survey data (including magnitude, direction, and significance).</li> <li>• Discuss methodology and potential outcomes for the first paper experiment and generate hypotheses</li> <li>• <b>Become participants in experiment used for Paper 1</b></li> <li>• <b>Entry of experimental data into SPSS</b></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Write Method and Results section for correlational/survey study.</li> <li>• Collect data from 3 people outside of class using the experimental materials</li> </ul>
Week 6 10/11	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The importance and relevance of the literature review, APA style</li> <li>• <b>Workshop on writing the Introduction section</b></li> <li>• <i>Turn in Method and Results section from correlational/survey study</i></li> <li>• <i>Bring experimental data from 3 people to class</i></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Print and read articles provided.</li> <li>• Obtain and read 3 other pertinent articles directly related to the topic</li> <li>• Write a rough draft of the Introduction section for paper #1</li> </ul>
Week 7 10/18	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Return and go over completed method and results section from correlational study</li> <li>• Go over results from experiment completed in week 6</li> <li>• <b>Workshop on writing the Discussion section</b></li> <li>• <i>Turn in draft of introduction for paper #1</i></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Write a rough draft of the Discussion section for paper #1</li> </ul>
Week 8 10/25	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Return and discuss Introduction section drafts</li> <li>• <b>Peer reviews of Discussion sections in small groups</b></li> <li>• <i>Turn in draft of Discussion for paper #1</i></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Complete Final version of Paper #1</li> <li>• Discussion sections will be returned during the week (details about pick-up will be given in class)</li> </ul>
Week 9 11/1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Discuss ideas for final proposal assignment</b></li> <li>• Understanding how to develop a research question and design a study</li> <li>• <i>Turn in final version of Paper #1</i></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Begin a literature review for final proposal</li> <li>• Obtain and summarize at least 5 relevant articles for final proposal</li> <li>• Think about a basic idea/outline for your final proposal while reading your articles</li> </ul>
Week 10 11/8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Discuss final proposal ideas and study designs</b></li> <li>• Review the final proposal assignment and potential issues/concerns</li> <li>• <i>Turn in articles and summaries for final proposal</i></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Write an abstract (or outline) on final proposal topic</li> </ul>
Week 11 11/15	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Return and discuss strengths and weaknesses of Paper 1</li> <li>• Return and discuss final proposal abstracts</li> <li>• <b>Workshop on proposal abstracts</b></li> <li>• <i>Turn in final proposal abstract/outline</i></li> <li>• <u>NO CLASS NOVEMBER 22, 2006 (THANKSGIVING BREAK)</u></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Work on rough draft of final proposal (due Week 13)</li> </ul>
Week 12 11/20	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Discuss progress of final proposals and resolve any problems</li> <li>• <b>Class discussion of proposals</b></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Complete rough draft of final proposal</li> <li>• <i>** Bring 3 copies of the rough draft to class</i></li> </ul>
Week 13 11/29	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Peer review of final proposal (with peers or instructor)</b></li> <li>• Discus class presentations for final proposals</li> <li>• <i>Bring 3 copies of rough draft of final proposal</i></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Prepare a brief presentation for final proposal with at least one overhead/PowerPoint</li> </ul>

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Complete the final draft of the final proposal</li> </ul>
Week 14 12/6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Student presentations of final proposal</b></li> <li>• <i>Turn in final proposal</i></li> </ul>	

### Point Guidelines for grading papers in Psychology 301 lab papers

Point guideline for Paper 1

Title page	5 points
Abstract	10 points
Introduction	25 points
Method	<u>15 points</u> (total)
<i>Design</i>	2 points
<i>Participants</i>	2 points
<i>Materials/Apparatus</i>	3 points
<i>Procedure</i>	<u>8 points</u>
Results - written	10 points
Figure/Table	5 points
Discussion	15 points
Reference Page	5 points

(Papers must have at least 4 references (paper 1) and 5 for the final proposal). If the references do not include four different primary sources, no credit is given for the reference page.)

Overall paper quality 10 points

(This evaluation by instructor regards the overall quality of paper, which may include content, format, organization, grammar, and the general quality of the written paper.)

### Point Guideline for Final Proposal Assignment

Abstract	5 points
Introduction	35 points
Method	25 points
Results/analysis plan and expected outcome	5 points
Potential Conclusions	5 points
References	5 points
Overall paper quality	20 points.

(This evaluation by the instructor regards the overall quality, which may include integration of theory and ideas, content, format, design of the study, organization, grammar and the general quality of the written paper.)

### Final Proposal Assignment -Psychology 301

The last/second full writing assignment project is to be a proposal for an experiment that is original (or a partial replication) experiment relevant to topics in psychology. The student may “propose” a project from any area of psychology. Correlational or observational studies are acceptable but studies with at least one variable to manipulate are encouraged.

Students are required to write the proposal using APA format. A minimum of **five** references is required. The proposals must be projects that are plausible in that the project could realistically be completed. For example, if I wanted to test 100 amnesic patients, it would not be plausible because it would be extremely unlikely that I would have access to 100 amnesic patients.

Since this is a proposal of research to be conducted in the future, the paper should be written in the **future tense**: Below are a few examples:

- “The present project is designed to investigate whether older adults recall more items than younger adults.”
- “The participants will be tested in a laboratory setting.”
- Participants will be presented with lists of words from.....”

**The proposals must include the following:**

1. An **Introduction** section that introduces the question/problem and includes a review of the literature that is directly relevant to the topic. The hypothesis should also be stated at the end of the introduction.
2. A **Method** section that includes a design section (e.g., a 2 X 2 mixed factorial), participants section, materials section and the procedure section. All of the sections should be written in appropriate APA format.
3. A **Results** section should briefly describe how the data would be analyzed and what the expected result would be based on the hypothesis. For example, if a correlational study is done, the student would write something such as “A Pearson-product correlational analysis will be conducted to determine the strength and direction of the correlation between anxiety and depression. It is expected that the correlation between these variables would be..... because.....”
  - **Students should not be asked to “make up” findings, but should discuss the likely findings/direction of the outcome based on previous findings.**
4. A **Discussion/Conclusion** section should include the following:
  - a. What would this research contribute to the literature if the hypothesis were supported?
  - b. A discussion of what would be done next if the hypothesis were supported. In other words, what would be the next step in the research or what would the researcher do next.
  - c. Additional ideas if the hypothesis were not supported could be added. Of course, this would be hypothetical.
  - d. A critique of their own design or the limitations of the study.
5. An **Abstract** should be included as well. Students may include an expected outcome rather than a real outcome. Again the text should be written in the future tense. For example, “It would be expected that older adults would recall fewer words than younger adults.”  
**(Note: This section should be only one or two paragraphs and does not have to be extensive.)**

All students must attach the measures/materials to be used (e.g., a survey). An exception will be made if the survey would have to be purchased by the student. However, this is a rare exception.

**Important note for students:**

When the final proposals are turned in to the lab instructor, the following are required to be included with the final paper.

- a. **A copy of all articles referenced in the report**
- b. **Copies of the measures that are to be used (unless they are surveys that must be purchased)**
- c. **Two copies of the final paper. If all of these are not included, there will be an automation grade reduction of one letter grade (e.g., from an A down to a B).**

**Final Presentation**

Each student is required to present the proposal to his/her classmates the last day of lab class. This presentation should be considered as an informal conversation with classmates as well as a good opportunity to “practice” speaking in front of others.

