

Psychology 301 Lab Syllabus
Research Methods in Psychology
Fall, 2006: Wednesday 6:00 pm-7:50 pm, 8-9:00 pm

Instructor: Stephanie Wong

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Office Hours: Wednesday 4:45pm-5:45 pm, or by appointment, 3rd Floor, Johnson Center
(outside room H)

Texts

- ❖ **Dunn, D.S. (2004). *A Short Guide to Writing About Psychology*. New York: Pearson Longman.**
- ❖ **Shaughnessy, J.J., Zechmeister, E.B., & Zechmeister, J.S. (2006). *Research Methods in Psychology* (7th edition). Boston: McGraw-Hill Higher Education**
- ❖ **Publication Manual for the American Psychological Association (5th Edition).**

Course Goals

- ❖ **Understand the role of experimentation in psychology and learn about experimental design**
- ❖ **Understand and apply statistical principles in research design (not calculation of statistics)**
- ❖ **Learn how to access and use psychological databases (e.g., E-Journal Finder and PsychInfo)**
- ❖ **Gain experience proposing and conducting your own psychological research**
- ❖ **Learn how to write a scientific report in APA format**

Writing Intensive (WI)

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 a C.

Attendance

Lab attendance is extremely important and strongly encouraged. Students will receive participating 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. However, an absence must be a legitimate excuse, such as a doctor's appointment. I reserve the right to request documentation.

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 documented disability and require some academic accommodation, 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 Elective Withdrawal Period (Full Semester Course)

Grading Criteria

****PLEASE NOTE: Lab counts for 40% of the total grade in 301 (A total of 395 points)**

Class participation In-class assignments, experiments, & discussions; peer/group reviews, & design critiques	50 points
Two In-Class Quizzes/Assignments Note: No Make-up 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

Paper 1

Draft of Introduction	20 points
Draft of Discussion	10 points
Data collection	15 points
Completed Paper	100 points

Final Proposal (See page 4 for detailed instructions)

Draft of Abstract	10 points
Draft of Proposal	Optional
Completed Final Proposal	100 points
Presentation of Final Proposal to Class	25 points

COURSE OUTLINE

<i>Date</i>	<i>Class</i> BOLD = In-class activities, ITALICS = Assignments due	<i>Assignments</i> <i>(Due the following week)</i>
Week 1 August 30	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ice Breaker • Contact List Sheet • Syllabus • Goals of the lab • Overview of the “nuts and bolts” of research design • Description of library resources, both in the library and online • Handout of article: Pennebaker et al. (1979). <i>Don't the Girls Get Prettier at Closing Time: A Country and Western Application to Psychology</i>. <i>Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin</i>, 5, 122-5. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Read Pennebaker et al. article
Week 2 September 6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Observational research with and without intervention. • Operational definitions • Descriptive statistics (mainly means). • Inter-rater reliability • Discuss Pennebaker et al. article • Small group discussion about observational study 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conduct observational study. • Also, bring in collected data, along with a written summary, including a list of variables and operational definitions, and means.
Week 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • APA format. • Different sections of an APA-style paper. • How to write the Method and Results sections of an APA paper 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Write method and results section of observational study.

September 13	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Writing Workshop • <i>Turn in written summary of observational study</i> 	
Week 4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Correlations and correlational research • Complete Surveys • Entry of survey data into SPSS • <i>Turn in observational study Method and Results section</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Print out calculated results from surveys (will be sent via email)
September 20		
Week 5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Return completed method and results sections from observational study • Discussion of survey results • Experiment (Basis for Paper 1) • Entry of data into SPSS 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Write method and results section for correlational study. • Collect data from 3 people outside of class
September 27		
Week 6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Literature review in APA-style papers • Workshop on writing an introduction • <i>Turn in method and results section from correlational study</i> • <i>Bring data from the experiment to class</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Obtain and read 3 pertinent articles in addition to the main article • Write draft of introduction section for paper #1
October 4		
Week 7	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Return completed method and results section from correlational study • Go over results from experiment • Workshop on writing a discussion section • <i>Turn in draft of introduction for paper #1</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Write draft of discussion section for paper #1 • Recommendation: Begin writing other sections (methods & results) of the paper while I critique/grade Introduction Section
October 11		
Week 8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Return and discuss introduction section drafts • Peer critique of discussion section • <i>Turn in draft of discussion for paper #1</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complete final version of Paper 1
October 18		
Week 9	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discuss ideas for final proposal • <i>Turn in final version of Paper #1</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Begin literature review for final proposal • Obtain and summarize at least 5 Relevant articles for final proposal
October 25		
Week 10	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discuss outline for final proposal • <i>Turn in articles and summaries for final proposal</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Write an abstract for final proposal
November 1		
Week 11	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Return and discuss Paper 1 • Return and discuss final proposal abstracts • Workshop on proposal abstracts 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work on rough draft of final proposal
November 8		
Week 12	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discussion of final proposals 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work on rough draft of final proposal
November 15		
Week 13	Due to the observance of Thanksgiving Recess, class will not be held.	
November 22		
Week 14	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discuss presentations • Peer review of final proposal • <i>Bring 3 copies of draft of final proposal</i> 	
November 29		
Week 15	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student presentations of final proposal • <i>Turn in final proposal</i> 	
December 6		

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

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:

- a. “The present project is designed to investigate whether older adults recall more items than younger adults.”
- b. “The participants will be tested in a laboratory setting.”
- c. 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. It is an opportunity for students to demonstrate to their classmates what kind of research they are interested in and what they think their study would reveal. This presentation should be considered as an informal conversation with their classmates as well as a good opportunity to “practice” speaking in front of others.

All materials will be returned to the students at the end of the semester.