

PSYCHOLOGY 301 LAB SYLLABUS
RESEARCH METHODS IN PSYCHOLOGY

Fall 2008

Psyc 301 209: Tuesday 6:00 PM – 7:50 AM, Innovation Hall 318

Psyc 301 210: Tuesday 8:00 PM – 9:50 PM, Innovation Hall 318

Instructor: Evan Kleiman

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Office Hours: Mondays 12:30-1:30 (Also by appointment)

Mailbox: located by Graduate Psychology Office near David King Hall, room 2001

Course Website: <http://mason.gmu.edu/~ekleiman/teaching/>

TEXTS

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

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 increase 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 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 9, 2008

September 26, 2008

September 23 – October 24, 2008

Last Day to Add (Full Semester Course)

Last Day to Drop (Full Semester Course)

Selective Withdrawal Period (Full Semester Course)

Point Breakdown

Class participation	50 points
Critique	15 points
Two Quizzes/assignments (10 points each)	20 points
Observation assignment data collection	10 points**
Observation write-up (Method & Results Sections)	15 points
Survey write-up (Method and Results Sections)	15 points
Introduction Draft (Paper 1)	20 points
Discussion Draft (Paper 1)	10 points
Completed Paper 1	100 points
Abstract Draft (Final Proposal)	10 points
Proposal Draft	10 points
Final Proposal	100 points
Final Proposal Presentation	25 points

Total 400 Points

*(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.

**Must be confirmed by actual data handed in to me 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>
BOLD = In-class activities, ITALICS = Assignments due		
Week 1 8/27	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Go over syllabus (Note: Lab counts as 40% of total Psyc 301 grade). • Detail the goals of the lab. • Brief overview of the “nuts and bolts” of research design. • Description of library resources, both in the library and online. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Read “Don’t the Girls Get Prettier at Closing Time: A Country and Western Application to Psychology” • Read Dunn, p 47-53, 114 • Write a Critique of the article
Week 2 9/3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discuss Pennebaker Article • Procedures for observational research with and without intervention. • How to measure behavior and its application to observation. • Descriptive statistics (mainly means). • Inter-rater reliability in observational research. • Small group discussion about upcoming observational study. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conduct and complete observational study before next week. • Bring in collected data, <i>along with a summary of the data</i> (e.g., means of the different measures, inter-rater reliability).
Week 3 9/10	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The importance of APA format. • Exploring the different sections of an APA-style paper. • Learning how to write the Method and Results sections of an APA paper. • Writing workshop on writing a Method and Results section. • <i>Turn in summarized data of observational study.</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Read Dunn, Chapter 5 (esp, p92-96) • Write the Method and Results sections of your own observational study (Individually, not as a group).

<i>Date</i>	Class BOLD = In-class activities, ITALICS = Assignments due	Assignments (Due the following week)
Week 4 9/17	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Using correlations. Exploring survey research. Complete surveys. Enter in-class survey data into SPSS. <i>Turn in Method and Results section of observational study.</i> 	NONE!
Week 5 9/24	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Return and go over Method and Results papers. Discuss survey data (including magnitude, direction, and significance). Discuss methodology and potential outcomes for the first paper experiment and generate hypotheses Become participants in experiment used for Paper 1 Entry of experimental data into SPSS Discuss experiment methodology and potential outcome 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Read Dunn, Chapter 6, (esp p104-113) Write Method and Results section for correlational/survey study.
Week 6 10/8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Writing the Introduction of an APA paper Workshop on writing the Introduction section <i>Turn in Method and Results section from correlational/survey study at beginning of class</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Print and read articles provided. Write a rough draft of the Introduction section for paper #1 (No late papers will be accepted)
Week 7 10/15	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Return and go over completed method and results section from correlational study Go over results from experiment completed in week 6 Discuss methods and results section for Paper 1 Workshop on writing the Discussion section <i>Turn in draft of introduction for paper #1</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Write a rough draft of the Discussion section for paper #1 Paper # 1 Due Week 9 (begin working on other sections)
Week 8 10/22	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Return and discuss Introduction section drafts Peer reviews of Discussion sections in small groups <i>Turn in draft of Discussion for paper #1 (I will leave the corrected drafts in my box for you to pick up)</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Final Draft of Paper # 1 Due Week 9 (Next week)
Week 9 10/29	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Discuss ideas for final proposal assignment Understanding how to develop a research question and design a study <i>Turn in final version of Paper #1</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Begin a literature review for final proposal Obtain and summarize at least 5 relevant articles for final proposal Think about basic outline for your final proposal while reading articles
Week 10 11/5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Discuss final proposal ideas and study designs Review the final proposal assignment and potential issues/concerns Creating a proposal outline <i>Turn in articles and summaries for final proposal</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Create an outline for your final proposal topic
Week 11 11/12	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Return and discuss strengths and weaknesses of Paper 1 Workshop on proposal outlines and ideas <i>Bring in Final Proposal Outline to Discuss In Class</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work on rough draft of final proposal (due Week 13)
Week 12 11/19	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Discuss progress of final proposals and resolve any problems Discuss proposal problems and concerns 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work on rough draft of final proposal ** Bring 3 copies of the rough draft to class
11/26	No Class—Thanksgiving break	
Week 13 4/24	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Peer review of proposal rough draft with feedback Discuss class presentations for final proposals (for Week 14) <i>Bring 3 copies of rough draft of final proposal</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Prepare a brief presentation for final proposal with at least one overhead/PowerPoint Complete the final draft of the final proposal
Week 14 5/1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Student presentations of final proposal <i>Turn in final proposal</i> 	

Point Guidelines for First Full Paper

Point guideline for Paper 1

Title page	3 points
Abstract	10 points
Introduction	25 points
Method	<u>18 points</u> (total)
<i>Design</i>	2 points
<i>Participants</i>	2 points
<i>Materials/Apparatus</i>	3 points
<i>Procedure</i>	<u>10 points</u>
Results - written	14 points
Figure/Table	5 points
Discussion	12 points
Reference Page	4 points

(Papers must have at least 4 references (paper 1) and the proposal must have 5 references). 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	10 points
Potential Conclusions	10 points
References	5 points

Overall paper quality 10 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 Guidelines -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 states the main area of the proposed research and then includes a review of the relevant literature that is directly relevant to the topic. It should also state the research question of interest and then state the hypothesis, usually 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. An **Analysis Plan** section should briefly describe how the data would be analyzed and what the expected result might 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.....” This part should have only a few sentences.
 - **Students should not be asked to “make up” findings, but should mention the likely findings/direction of the outcome based on previous findings.**
4. A **Conclusion** section (based on potential outcomes) 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.
 - e. This should be only a paragraph or two at most.
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. One paper copy of the students' completed proposal**
- b. A copy of all articles referenced in the report**
- c. Copies of all measures that are to be used (unless they are surveys that must be purchased)**
- d. An electronic copy of the proposal sent to the student's TA, which will be stored on a CD for future reference paper and kept by Dr. Chrosniak.**
- e. If all of these materials are not included, there will be an automatic letter grade reduction (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 not be considered "scary." Rather it is a chance for you to speak to your classmates about your research project and practice speaking in front of others. See the Dunn book (pages 115) on presentations.