

**PSYCHOLOGY 301 LAB SYLLABUS**  
**RESEARCH METHODS IN PSYCHOLOGY**  
Spring 2006, Innovation Hall, Room 333  
Friday: 8:30am-10:20am (209), 10:30am-12:20pm (210)

Instructor: Luke Brooks-Shesler E-mail: lbrookss@gmu.edu  
Office: Adjunct Faculty Office, Thompson Hall, Room 131  
Office Hours: Jazzman's Café in Johnson Center, Friday 12:30pm-1:30pm, Phone: 703-993-1349  
or by appointment  
Mailbox located labeled "Brooks-Shesler" in hallway of David King Hall in adjunct faculty section

**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).

**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 psycINFO)
- Gain experience proposing and conducting your own psychological research
- Learn how to write a scientific report in APA format

**POLICIES**

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.

**GRADING CRITERIA Lab counts for 40% of the total grade in 301. (A total of 425 points is possible)**

Class Participation 60 points  
*In-class assignments, experiments, & discussions; peer/group reviews, & design critiques*

APA Manual Ch. 2 quiz 10 points  
Observation Data Collection (design sheet, data and summary) 15 points  
Observation Write-up (*method & results*) 20 points  
Survey Write-up (*method and results section*) 20 points

**PAPER 1**

Draft of Introduction 25 points  
Draft of Discussion 10 points  
Data Collection 10 points  
Draft of entire paper Extra Credit  
Completed Paper 100 points

**FINAL PROPOSAL** (*see page 4 for detailed instructions*)

Articles & Summaries 10 points  
Draft of Abstract 10 points  
Outline of final proposal 10 points

Draft of Proposal  
 Completed Final Proposal  
 Presentation of Final Proposal to Class

Extra Credit  
 100 points  
 25 points

**ADDITIONAL INFORMATION**

Last Day to Add (Full Semester Course) February 7, 2006  
 Last Day to Drop (Full Semester Course) February 24, 2006  
 Elective Withdrawal Period (Full Semester Course) February 25, 2006 – March 24, 2006

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.

**Tentative Syllabus**

**Note:** Topics and assignments are subject to change. Any changes will be announced in class.

<b>Date</b>	<b>Class</b> <b>BOLD = In-class activities, ITALICS = Assignments due</b>	<b>Assignments</b> <b>(Due the following week)</b>
Week 1 Jan 27	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Review Syllabus</li> <li>• Goals of the lab</li> <li>• Brief overview of research design</li> <li>• <b>Learn how to use library resources</b></li> </ul>	
Week 2 Feb 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Procedures for observational research</li> <li>• The measurement of behaviors</li> <li>• Descriptive statistics</li> <li>• Inter-rater reliability</li> <li>• <b>Divide into groups for observational research Study</b></li> </ul>	Complete observational study. Compile and summarize data, incl. means for the variables measures. (Putting means in a Table is recommended.)
Week 3 Feb 10	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Turn in data from observational study</i></li> <li>• The importance of APA format</li> <li>• Parts of an APA paper</li> <li>• Writing the Method and Results sections</li> <li>• <b>Writing workshop on Method and Results Sections</b></li> </ul>	Write Method and Results sections for your observational study.
Week 4 Feb 17	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Turn in Method and Results sections for observational study</i></li> <li>• Correlational research</li> <li>• <b>Complete in-class surveys</b></li> </ul>	
Week 5 Feb 24	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Return and discuss completed Method and Results sections from observational study</li> <li>• Discuss survey results</li> <li>• <b>Complete and discuss Experiment</b></li> </ul>	Write Method and Results sections for the correlational study. Collect data for Experiment from 3 people outside class.

Week 6 Mar 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Turn in data for Experiment</i></li> <li>• <i>Turn in Method and Results sections for correlational study</i></li> <li>• <b>Workshop on writing an introduction</b></li> </ul>	Read 4 articles relevant to Experiment. Write the first draft of the Introduction (incorporate the 4 articles into the Introduction).
Week 7 Mar 10	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Turn in first draft of the Introduction</i></li> <li>• Return and discuss completed Method and Results sections from correlational study</li> <li>• Review results from Experiment</li> <li>• <b>Workshop on Discussion section</b></li> </ul>	Write the first draft of the Discussion section
<b>SPRING BREAK -- No Class on March 17</b>		
Week 8 Mar 24	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Turn in first draft of the Discussion section</i></li> <li>• Return and discuss first draft of Introduction section</li> <li>• <b>Peer critique of the first draft of Discussion section.</b></li> </ul>	Final version of Paper 1 <b>due Apr. 7.</b> (Includes: Introduction, Method, Results and Discussion.) <b>Extra Credit:</b> get up to 5 points if you include an Abstract.
Week 9 Mar 31	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Return and discuss first draft of Discussion section</li> <li>• Discuss ideas for final proposal</li> <li>• <b>Divide into groups to discuss final proposal</b></li> </ul>	Find (and print) 5 articles relevant to your final research proposal topic.
Week 10 Apr 7	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Turn in Paper 1 and the Abstracts from the 5 articles relevant to your final research proposal topic</i></li> <li>• <b>Abstract workshop.</b></li> <li>• Discuss outline for final proposal. <b>Note: I must approve your final proposal idea by the end of this class.</b></li> </ul>	Write an Abstract for your final proposal.
Week 11 Apr 14	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Turn in the Abstract of your final proposal</i></li> <li>• Return and discuss Paper 1</li> <li>• Discuss progress/questions regarding final proposal</li> </ul>	First draft of the final proposal <b>due Apr. 28</b>
Week 12 Apr 21	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Discuss problems/progress of final proposals</li> </ul>	
Week 13 Apr 28	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Turn in first draft of final proposal (bring 3 copies)</i></li> <li>• Discuss presentation of final proposal</li> <li>• <b>Peer review of final proposal</b></li> </ul>	Final proposal <b>due May. 14</b>
Week 14 May 5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Turn in 2 copies of final proposal</i></li> <li>• <b>Student 5 minute presentations of final proposal</b></li> </ul>	Graded copies of final proposals will be placed in my mailbox for pick-up.

## Final Proposal Assignment -Psychology 301

The last/second full writing assignment project is to be an original experimental proposal or partial-replication of an 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 a 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 relevant to the topic. The hypothesis should also be stated at the end of the introduction.
2. A **Method** section that includes the design (e.g., a 2 X 2 mixed factorial), participants, materials and procedure. 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. This is likely because .....”
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.**(Note: this section should be only one or two paragraphs and does not have to be extensive.)**
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.”

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.

When the final proposals are turned in, students must include the following:

- a. **A copy of all articles referenced in the report, copies of the measures, etc. mentioned above**
- b. **Two copies of the final paper. If all of these are not included, there will be a grade reduction.**

### 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 the 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. The extra copy of the papers will be given to Dr. Linda Chrosniak for her files. We keep copies of all papers written in Psychology 301 to minimize plagiarism and to use in writing assessments for the university.