

Research Methods

PSYC 207-013

Fall 2019 • Sharp Lab Room 100 • MW 8:40-9:55

Instructor

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Office Hours: MW 10:00-11:00 in Wolf 317 (or by appointment)



Course Purpose and Goals

Welcome to Research Methods! The purpose of this course is to introduce you to the skills needed to be knowledgeable and effective consumers of psychological research. This course covers research foundations, tools for evaluating others' research, and practice communicating scientific results to different audiences. You will also be exposed to tools needed to be producers of research. I hope through this course you learn how fun and valuable psychological research can be, but also develop a critical eye for its limitations.

At the completion of this course, you should be able to:

- Categorize research claims as frequency, association, or causal.
- Identify which research methods can address which research questions.
- Detect and resolve basic ethical dilemmas in human subjects research.
- Find empirical articles online using public search engines.
- Distinguish experimental and correlational designs.
- Critically evaluate research and the accuracy of conclusions drawn from research (e.g. in popular media) using the four big validities.
- Express appropriate skepticism of psychological theories and research claims.
- Communicate research results scientifically using APA style and in non-jargon language.

Course Materials

Morling, B. (2018). *Research Methods in Psychology, 3rd Edition*. New York, NY: W.W. Norton & Company, Inc.

If accessing a copy of the textbook is going to be prohibitive for you in any way, please come talk to me as soon as possible and I'll do what I can to help you out.

Course Requirements

Homework Assignments (50 points)

Homework assignments will be assigned periodically throughout the semester. These will include reflecting on the reading assignments or elaborating on in-class material/discussions. Homework assignments and due dates will be posted on Canvas. Deadlines are firm and always

11:59pm, but do not leave submission to the last minute. Late assignments will not be accepted (even if your internet crashes at 11:58!). Your lowest homework grade will be dropped.

In-Class Activities (50 points)

We will have daily in-class activities. These will include reading checks/quizzes, individual and group activities, and peer review. You earn points by being present in class and completing the assignments. No make-ups or late assignments will be given due to absence, but I will drop the three lowest scores.

Media Critique (50 points)

Throughout the course, you will be expected to complete three cumulative papers critiquing a popular media clipping. You will find a media clipping that presents findings from a scientific study, will critique the media outlet's portrayal of the results, and will identify the strengths and weaknesses of the original scientific article. Titles of media clippings might be something like "Facebook lowers self-esteem" or "Science says people who take selfies are happier than people who don't." This is a three-part assignment with three different due dates. Late assignments will be accepted, but you will lose 10% of your possible points for each day late (e.g. the highest score you can receive is an 90% if one day late, a 80% for two days late).

APA Write-Up (25 points)

You will be expected to write up study results in APA format. You will also write a 1 paragraph press release blurb in layman's terms. Again, 10% reduction for each day late.

Exams (300 points)

There will be 2 midterms and one final exam. Each will each be 100-point, cumulative tests of your knowledge. They will have a mixture of question formats including multiple choice, fill in the blank, and short answers. They will reflect skills assessed in class exercises and homeworks.

Late Work Policy

In general, I do not accept late work because I don't think it is fair to those who worked to get the assignment in on time. See descriptions of assignments for specific late work rules. I suggest not leaving work to the last minute to avoid late work penalties.

Missing Class

Regardless of attendance, assignments on Canvas are due by the deadline. In class assignments cannot be made-up, however I will drop the 3 lowest grades to account for absences due to illnesses, religious holidays, etc. If you know you will miss an exam, please schedule a make-up exam with me as soon as possible!

Grading Breakdown

	475 Total Points
Media Critique Part 1	10
Media Critique Part 2	10
Media Critique Part 3	30
In-class Activities	50
Homework Assignments	50
APA write up	25
Midterm Exams	200
Final Exam	100

Class Schedule

This schedule is subject to change. Homeworks and due dates will be posted on Canvas.

Date	Reading due that day
8/28	Introductions, syllabus review, pre-test, activity
9/2	Labor Day- No Class
9/4	Psychology is a way of thinking; Chapter 1, p. 5-23
9/9	Sources of information; Chapter 2, p. 25-55
9/11	Three claims, four validities; Chapter 3, p. 57-68
9/16	Three claims, four validities; Chapter 3, p. 68-85
9/18	Ethical guidelines; Chapter 4, p. 89-115
9/23	Identifying good measurement; Chapter 5, p. 117-132 Media Critique Part 1 due
9/25	Identifying good measurement; Chapter 5, p. 132-149
9/30	MIDTERM #1
10/2	Surveys and observations; Chapter 6, p. 153-177
10/7	Sampling; Chapter 7, p. 179-199
10/9	Sampling; Chapter 7, p. 179-199

10/14	Bivariate correlational research; Chapter 8, p. 203-235
10/16	Bivariate correlational research; Chapter 8, p. 203-235 Media Critique Part 2 Due
10/21	Multivariate correlational research; Chapter 9, 237-269
10/23	Multivariate correlational research; Chapter 9, 237-269
10/28	MIDTERM #2
10/30	Introduction to simple experiments; Chapter 10, p. 273-290
11/4	Introduction to simple experiments; Chapter 10, p. 290-309
11/6	More on experiments; Chapter 11, p. 311-329
11/11	More on experiments; Chapter 11, p. 330-349
11/13	Complex designs; Chapter 12, p. 351-369
11/18	Complex designs; Chapter 12, p. 370-385 Class Presentations- Media Critique
11/20	APA-style reports and conference posters, p. 505-543 Media Critique Part 3 due
11/25	Thanksgiving Break- No Class
11/27	Thanksgiving Break- No Class
12/2	Replication, generalization, real world; Chapter 14, p. 425-455 APA Report Due
12/4	Catch-up/ Review for Final

Course Policies:

Safe Space Guidelines

Because psychology is the study of human thoughts, feelings, and behaviors, most students find it particularly relevant to their own lives. As such, this class may cover topics that can be difficult to talk about. If there is any class material that triggers emotions or concerns, please feel free to come talk to me! Additionally, the Center for Counseling and Student Development (see below) is a resource for students who would like extra support.

In addition to monitoring your own thoughts and feelings about class material, please be respectful of others' experiences, opinions, and possible sensitivities. Each of us has a unique background that shapes our current point of view. As your instructor, it is my goal to create an environment where everyone feels comfortable sharing their opinions or stories and where discussion promotes learning and understanding.

Please note that I am required by DE state law to report all personal disclosures of current or past sexual or physical abuse of a minor (under the age of 18) or elder (over the age of 65). That being said, I am qualified and more than willing to support survivors in this process.

Academic Integrity

<http://www.udel.edu/studentconduct/ai.html>

Please familiarize yourself with UD policies regarding academic dishonesty (<http://www.udel.edu/stuguide/14-15/code.html>). To falsify the results of one's research, to steal the words or ideas of another, to cheat on an assignment, to re-submit the same assignment for different classes, or to allow or assist another to commit these acts corrupts the educational process. Students are expected to do their own work and neither give or receive unauthorized assistance. There will be several in-class assignments in which you will work collaboratively. Otherwise, all work must be your own.

Center for Counseling and Student Development (CCSD)

<http://www.udel.edu/counseling/>

At times, personal problems, stress, or life circumstances can interfere with your academic functioning. UD's Center for Counseling and Student Development provides a variety of services to support you in your academic work and be successful. CCSD is funded by the student health fee and does not charge for services. For more information, visit their website, or call the office at 831-2141.

Inclusion of Diverse Learning Needs

<http://www.udel.edu/DSS/>

This course is open to all students who meet the academic requirements for participation. Any student who has documented a need for accommodation should contact Disability Support Services and the instructor privately to discuss the specific situation as soon as possible. Disability Support Services can be reached at 302-831-4643, or dssoffice@udel.edu. DSS staff will coordinate accommodations for students.

Please note: The University of Delaware is committed to all students' learning and welcomes students with disabilities. If you have a documented disability and need for an accommodation in this course, please contact the Office of Disability Support Services located at dssoffice@udel.edu or call 302-831-4643 to coordinate accommodations.

Other Resources

It is your responsibility to understand the expectations of this course. If the expectations are unclear, please talk to me. If you need additional assistance with the course, there are resources available to you:

- University Writing Center, 016 Memorial Hall, 302-831-1168
- University Writing Center Grammar Hotline, 302-831-1890
- Office of Academic Enrichment, 148-150 S. College Ave., 302-831-2805
- Office of the Dean of Students, 101 Hullihen Hall, 302-831-8939
- Office of Student Conduct, 218 Hullihen Hall, 302-831-2117
- Student Services for Athletes, Delaware Field House, 302-831-4294