PSYC 301-202: Research Methods in Psychology (4 credits)
Spring 2024 - Lab

Lab Instructor: Annika Esau
Email: aesau@gmu.edu
Office Hour: Thursdays, 12:15pm - 1:15pm
                     DK 1014C (if there's precipitation) / The Grove (if no precipitation)

Lab Meetings: Fridays, 10:30am - 12:20pm
                     Innovation Hall 319

Course Goals

By the end of the course, students should be able to
- Identify basic research designs in psychology
- Critically evaluate psychological research
- Communicate research ideas in written form using APA guidelines

Writing Intensive Learning Outcomes

This course has been approved by the Faculty Senate Writing Across the Curriculum Committee to fulfill the writing intensive requirement for the psychology major. You are required to complete at least 3,500 words of graded writing assignments. Details for all assignments will be provided during lab. Writing workshops, with lab instructor feedback and guidance available, will be provided during lab time.

The schedule of due dates is provided below. It is important that you complete all assigned written work for lab. Students who fail to meet the writing intensive requirement (3,500 words) will not pass the Psychology 301 course.

Learning to write within a discipline is closely connected to learning to think like a professional in that discipline. During the lab section of PSYC 301, you will:

- **Write-to-Learn:** students will use informal or formal writing in ways that deepen their awareness of the field of study and its subject matter.
- **Write-to-Communicate:** students will compose one or more written genres specific to the field of study in order to communicate key ideas tailored to specific audiences and purposes; genres may be academic, public, or professional.
- **Write-as-a-process:** students will draft and revise written works based on feedback they receive from instructors and peers, using strategies appropriate to the genre, audience, and purpose.

Grading Overview

The Research Methods lab is 40% of your overall course grade for PSYC 301. The lecture portion of the course is 60%. Your lecture instructor will calculate a final grade for the course based on your performance in the lab and lecture. Lab points are earned from writing assignments and participation in lab activities.

Lab Activities: Activities will be done during most lab sessions, including in-class writing, data collection, data analysis, and discussions. <u>Attending lab and participating in these activities will be an essential component</u> of successfully completing your writing assignments.

Writing Assignments: Details for all writing assignments will be given during lab sessions. Assignments should be turned in via Blackboard before class begins on the specified due date <u>and</u> at the beginning of class as a printed hard copy. In the event you cannot make it to class, please e-mail your instructor with an explanation for your absence prior to the class.

Late Work Policy: You will be allotted 7 "life happens" days to be used at your discretion throughout the entire semester. Each day that an assignment is late will automatically consume one of these days. After you use up all 7 days, assignments submitted late will receive a 10% per day penalty. Non-penalty extensions will be considered in the case of family or health issues or other circumstances outside of your control, but must be requested and approved <u>in advance of the due date</u> in order to waive late penalties. Requests for non-penalty extensions <u>not</u> submitted before the due date will only be considered in extraordinary circumstances. If you miss class, it is important to communicate with your instructor regarding absences and missed assignments to complete that work in a timely manner.

Grade Disputes: If you wish to challenge the merit of an individual grade that you have received on an assignment you must do that within one week of receiving the grade. Ask your instructor to go over the assignment with you and address your concerns. Disputes regarding grades must be brought to the lab instructor's attention within a week of receiving the grade.

Extra Credit: Extra credit is generally not provided in this course. No extra credit opportunity is provided for one student when not provided for all students. Please meet with your instructor promptly if you are having difficulty in this course.

Assignments Overview

Assignments	Points	Due Dates
CITI training	10	Lab 3
Evaluating Media Claims (500 words)	15	Lab 3
Research Report #1 (750 words)	50	Lab 5
Research Report #2: Introduction (500 words)	25	Lab 7
Research Report #2: Peer Reviews	40	Lab 9 (done during lab time)
Research Report #2: Final (1,500 words)	75	Lab 10
Research Report #3: Study Design and Data Collection	10	Lab 10 (done during lab time)
Research Report #3: Guided Worksheet	10	Lab 11 (done during lab time)
Research Poster (250 words)	50	Lab 13 (done during lab time)
Research Reflection	15	Lab 14
TOTAL POINTS	**300**	

- Details for all assignments will be provided during lab.
- A lab percentage grade will be calculated and shared with your lecture instructor at the end of the semester. To calculate your final lab *percentage* grade, take your total lab points divided by 300 and multiply by 100.
- Your lecture instructor determines your final grade in PSYC 301. There is only one final grade for the course, which is based on both lecture (60%) and lab (40%).

Weekly Class Overview

Each week's class period will loosely follow this schedule:

1. **Homework submission.** Most assignments will be due online before class begins, and hard copies will be collected at the start of class. I'll answer any questions about recent or upcoming homework.

2. **Attendance.** Attendance is taken not for points but to help us if we need to check in on you. It will also help me learn your names, which is always tricky! Though attending class is not technically mandatory, it will be very difficult to succeed in the course without it.

3. **Mini-lecture.** I'll give a little schpiel about upcoming assignments and a refresher on some part of the course content. This usually only takes 30--60 minutes max. Sometimes, we'll also have an interactive activity, usually an experiment related to the assignments.

4. **Bonus activity.** This part is optional! You can usually leave after the lecture (of course, we're all adults; you can leave any time!). Sometimes, I'll have an interactive activity that has something to do with a field of Psychology. Time permitting, depending on interest, etc.

5. **In-class work time.** The entire class period is your time! Often, we'll have plenty of time at the end of class where you can work on assignments and ask me for help/feedback. Sometimes, we'll have guided work sessions in which I'll walk everyone through parts of an assignment.

Course Schedule

Please be aware that the topics and due dates listed below are tentative, therefore subject to change. Check e-mail and Blackboard for announcements about closures or class cancellations.

Lab	Date	Lecture	Activity/In-Class Work	Homework Assigned
1	1/19	Introductions & Overview	● Critical Consumers of Research	● Media article about a research finding (due 1/26) ● CITI training (due 2/2)
2	1/26	Writing an APA Report Finding Sources	● PsycInfo Searches ● Evaluating Media Claims	● Evaluating Media Claims (due 2/2)
3	2/2	Research Report #1: Overview	● Data collection (RR1) ● Create template for research report	● Assigned readings
4	2/9	RR #1: Data Analysis	● Data analysis (RR1) ● Writing workshop (RR1)	● Research Report #1 (due 2/16)
5	2/16	Writing an APA Introduction	● Data collection (RR2) ● Feedback ● Outline Introduction for RR#2	● Assigned readings (articles for RR#2) ● RR2 introduction draft (due 3/1)
6	2/23	RR #2: Data Analysis Method and Results	● Data analysis (RR2) ● Writing workshop (RR2)	
7	3/1	Discussion section	● Writing workshop (RR2)	● Draft RR2 (due 3/22)
8	3/15	Citation and plagiarism	● Writing workshop (RR2)	
9	3/22	Peer Review	● Peer reviews (RR2)	● Final RR2 (due 3/29)
10	3/29	RR #3: Observational study	● Feedback ● Design study (RR3) ● Data collection (RR3)	
11	4/5	RR #3: Results	● Method & Results worksheet (RR3) ● Calculating IRR (RR3)	
12	4/12	Research Poster	● Writing workshop (RR3 poster)	
13	4/19	Research Poster	● Poster presentation (RR3 poster)	● Research reflection (due 4/26)
14	4/26	Research at GMU	● Research reflection presentation ● End-of-semester party	

Course Policies:

1. **Academic Integrity and the Honor Code:** Written assignments are expected to be the student's own work. Students may use books, notes, and other sources in preparing research reports. In fact, I encourage you to take advantage of a variety of resources. However, under **NO** circumstances are you to collectively write papers with another student or use the work of others without proper and accurate citations. This is considered plagiarism and plagiarism of any kind will not be tolerated. It is not permissible to cheat, plagiarize, steal, or lie in matters relating to academic work. 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. It is the student's responsibility to understand what is meant by plagiarism and to seek guidance prior to submitting assignments. Unless advised by your instructor to use such tools, do not use AI-generated material for your assignments. This is a writing intensive course, and our goal is to strengthen your writing skills. We can not provide you with appropriate feedback to improve your writing if the work is not your own. Academic misconduct is taken seriously and may result in a failing grade on the assignment or in the course and will be reported to the GMU Honor Committee. The instructor for this course reserves the right to enter a failing grade in the lab for any student found guilty of an honor code violation.

2. **Disability Accommodations:** Disability Services at George Mason University is committed to providing equitable access to learning opportunities for all students by upholding the laws that ensure equal treatment of people with disabilities. If you are seeking accommodations for this class, please first visit http://ds.gmu.edu/ for detailed information about the Disability Services registration process. Please be sure to share your approved accommodations with me. Disability Services is located in Student Union Building I (SUB I), Suite 2500. Email: ods@gmu.edu | Phone: (703) 993-2474

3. **Official Communication via GMU Email:** Mason uses electronic mail to provide official information to students. Examples include communications from course instructors, notices from the library, notices about academic standing, financial aid information, class materials, assignments, questions, and instructor feedback. Students are responsible for the content of university communication sent to their Mason email account and are required to activate that account and check it regularly. In the event that class is canceled, I will notify you via email; this email will include information about making up the missed class.

4. **Technology:** You must be able to check Blackboard and your GMU email regularly. Regarding electronic devices in class (such as laptops, cell phones, etc.), please be respectful of your peers and your instructor and do not engage in activities that are unrelated to class. Such disruptions show a lack of professionalism and may affect your grade. Students must follow the university policy for Responsible Use of Computing.

5. **Enrollment:** Students are responsible for verifying their enrollment in this class. Schedule adjustments should be made by the deadlines published in the Schedule of Classes (available from the Registrar's Website: registrar.gmu.edu.). Last Day to Add: January 23. Last Day to Drop without tuition penalty: January 30. Drop period with 50% tuition refund: January 31 – February 6. Drop period with no refund: February 7 – February 20. Selective withdrawal period: February 21 – March

25. After the last day to drop a class, withdrawing from this class requires the approval of the dean and is only allowed for nonacademic reasons.

6. Diversity: George Mason University promotes a living and learning environment for outstanding growth and productivity among its students, faculty and staff. Through its curriculum, programs, policies, procedures, services and resources, Mason strives to maintain a quality environment for work, study and personal growth. George Mason University promotes a living and learning environment for outstanding growth and productivity among its students, faculty, and staff. An emphasis upon diversity and inclusion throughout the campus community is essential to achieve these goals. Diversity is broadly defined to include such characteristics as but not limited to, race, ethnicity, gender, religion, age, disability, and sexual orientation. Diversity also entails different viewpoints, philosophies, and perspectives. Attention to these aspects of diversity will help promote a culture of inclusion and belonging, and an environment where diverse opinions, backgrounds, and practices have the opportunity to be voiced, heard, and respected.

7. **Title IX:** Notice of a mandatory reporting of sexual assault, interpersonal violence, and stalking: As an instructor, I am designated as a "Responsible Employee", and must report all disclosures of sexual assault, interpersonal violence, and stalking to Mason's Title IX Coordinator per University Policy 1412. If you wish to speak with someone confidentially, please contact one of Mason's confidential resources, such as Student Support and Advocacy Center (SSAC) at 703-380-1434 or Counseling & Psychology Services (CAPS) at 703-993-2380. You may also seek assistance from Mason's Title IX Coordinator by calling 703-993-8730 or emailing cde@gmu.edu.

8. **Religious Holidays:** A list of religious holidays is available on the University Life Calendar page. See the Religious Holiday Calendar. Any student whose religious observance conflicts with a scheduled course activity should let me know in advance of the conflict date so that we can make alternative arrangements.

University Resources and Support:

The George Mason University Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS) staff consists of professional counseling and clinical psychologists, social workers, and counselors who offer a wide range of services (e.g., individual and group counseling, workshops, and outreach programs) to enhance students' personal experience and academic performance.   Counseling Center: Student Union I, Room 364, 703-993-2380. Website here.

The Lab for Writing and Communication staff provides a variety of resources and services (e.g., tutoring, workshops, writing guides, handbooks) intended to support students as they work to construct and share knowledge through writing. The Lab: John Center 227E, 703-993-1200, wcenter@gmu.edu. The writing center includes assistance for students for whom English is a second language.

Student Support and Advocacy Center: Offers educational programs and support services to help students address issues related to personal wellness, interpersonal violence, and alcohol and drug use. SSAC also assists students who are encountering life challenges or crises. Need support for yourself or worried about a peer? You can submit a referral here.

Learning Services: Provides a variety of experience-based learning opportunities through which students explore a wide range of academic concerns. Services include support to students with learning differences, individual study skills counseling, individualized programs of study, and provision of tutoring resources. Presentations on a variety of academic skill topics are available to the university community. The programs are open to all George Mason University students free of charge. Services are confidential and use of these services does not become part of the student's academic record.

Center for Culture, Equity, and Empowerment: Leverages programs and services focused on advocacy and direct student support to strengthen equity and inclusion at George Mason University. Their three areas: Student Access and Equity (SAE), Student Engagement for Racial Justice (SERJ), and LGBTQ+ Resources, serve as resources to those in the Mason Community who seek to meaningfully engage and interact with people with different identities and intersections to co-create an equitable campus environment.

University Career Services: Provides information on career choices, internships and employment, and graduate and professional school.

Don't see what you need? Check out the Stearns Center list of Student Support Resources on Campus.