

Psychology 301 – Research Methods in Psychology Lab

Fall 2017 | **Section 208** | **Time:** Fridays 10:30am – 12:20pm | **Location:** Innovation Hall 233

Instructor: Syeda Younus

E-mail: syounus1@gmu.edu

Course Website: www.courses.gmu.edu (Blackboard)

Office: David King Hall 1004G (Knock on the 1004 door)

Office Hours: Thursdays 5:30pm – 6:30pm

Texts

You will need to purchase the following texts. They are available in the bookstore, but you may also order them from online bookstores, like Amazon.

- Dunn, D.S. (2011). *A Short Guide to Writing about Psychology*. New York: Pearson Education
- Morling, B. (2015). *Research Methods in Psychology: Evaluating a World of Information* (2nd edition). New York: W. W. Norton & Company. (Required for lecture and used some in lab)
- Publication Manual for the American Psychological Association (6th edition).
 - This manual is **optional**. If you plan on pursuing a career in Psychology, or attending graduate school, this is a good book to purchase. Most of the information is available online if you don't want to buy the book.

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)
- To increase understanding of the role of experimentation in the psychological sciences

IMPORTANT INFORMATION: This lab course fulfills the writing intensive requirement for the psychology major. It does so through writing two drafts of a research proposal and one full research proposal (Preliminary proposal introduction draft, complete introduction draft and Complete Final Research Proposal). These written assignments are completed through a draft/feedback/revision process. The schedule of due dates is on the syllabus. It is mandatory that students turn in the complete proposal introduction draft and the Final Proposal assignments in order to meet the writing intensive requirement of George Mason University. Students who fail to meet the writing intensive requirement will not pass the Psychology 301 course.

Additional Information

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 lab 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 to be 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 turning assignments. 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 honor code violation.

Disability Accommodations: If you are a student with a documented disability and require academic accommodation, please see me and contact the Office of Disability Services (ODS) at (703)993-2474. This office is located in SUBI, room 4205. All academic accommodations must be arranged through ODS office.

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.

Technology: Technological training will be gained in many ways by intensive literature searches using the online library and other online research sites, survey sites (e.g., Survey Monkey), some data analysis using SPSS, some use of Zotero and PowerPoint for presentations.

Diversity:

George Mason University promotes a living and learning environment that is based on diversity and inclusion throughout the campus community. Diversity is broadly defined to include characteristics such as, but not limited to, race, ethnicity, gender, religion, age, disability and sexual orientation. Diversity also entails different viewpoints, ideals and perspectives. Respect for these aspects of diversity will help promote a culture of inclusion and belonging in our university community.

Resources for Students:

University Writing Center	http://masononline.gmu.edu/student-resources/writingcenter
Counseling & Psychological Services	http://caps.gmu.edu/
University Career Services	http://careers.gmu.edu/
Student Health Services	http://shs.gmu.edu/

Drop/Add Class:

Last Day to Add (Full Semester Course) September 5th, 2017

Last Day to Drop (Full Semester Course) September 29th, 2017

Selective Withdrawal Period (Full Semester) October 2nd-27th, 2017

Class Cancellation Policy: Class is unlikely to be cancelled unless the university is closed for weather related events or other situations such as power shortages. If class is cancelled (e.g., due to illness or family emergency), a substitute instructor will be usually be provided. However, if this is not possible students will be notified as far ahead as possible and any adjustments to assignments will be clearly indicated by a revised syllabus, announced on Blackboard and e-mail notifications will be sent to students.

Grading Breakdown

This lab is 40% of your overall course grade for Psychology 301. The lecture portion of the course is 60%. Thus, the grade is weighted for each portion. These points are earned from participation, in-class activities, quizzes, homework assignments and the major papers.

Participation: Each student can earn up to 40 points for participation. Participation consists of regularly attending class, as well active participation in any in-class activities. Throughout the semester, there will be several activities that will be done in class, such as in-class writing, peer/group reviews and writing, participating in the in-class experiments, participation in class discussions, and experimental design critiques/discussions. You must be in class in order to receive credit for these activities. Participation points cannot be made up if you are absent from class. NO EXCEPTIONS! If you frequently miss class, do not expect to receive all participation points, and typically the grades for those who do not attend are lower.

Homework: Homework will be assigned in class, and is expected to be turned in (a hard copy or via email) before class begins on the specified due date or at the beginning of class as specified by the instructor. (See late work policy below.) **In the event you cannot make it to class, please e-mail your instructor with an explanation for your absence. The assignment must be sent before the scheduled meeting time of the class if you would like for the assignment to be considered for credit. If assignments are late they likely will not be considered for a grade but will be returned to you with feedback.**

Papers: There will one large major paper that we will be working on throughout the semester. This paper will be a research proposal based on an experiment that you will design over the course of the semester. (Your TA will instruct students in this process and give feedback on the potential design and on the written product. You will also give a short presentation of your proposal on the last day of class. The itemized point breakdown for both of these papers can be found at the end of the syllabus. Don't worry-we will discuss the details of these papers as the semester progresses.

Turning in Assignments: As mentioned above, in some classes the instructor may require that all assignments be emailed to the instructor **BEFORE CLASS OF THE DAY THEY ARE DUE**. If your instructor requests a paper copy it must be turned in at the beginning of class.

Late Work Policy

Late work will not be accepted except in the case of a documented, personal emergency or excused absence. You will not be allowed to make up assignments unless you provide the documentation of an excused absence or emergency (e.g., doctor's note for the day of the absence, coach note for competition). Except in rare cases (e.g., an automobile accident on the way to class) you must notify your instructor about any planned or excused absences ahead of time, provide documentation and make arrangements for making up any missed assignments ahead of time. There will be a **firm deadline** for making up any missed work, usually within a week or less of the original deadline depending on the complexity of the assignment.

Technology failures, work-related absences, work in other classes, oversleeping or meeting with other instructors are not considered personal emergencies. Importantly, even if you have a documented, excused absence, there are some types of work in this class that may be impossible to make up, such as in-class activities, workshops, group work and individual presentations. Additionally, the assignments in this class build upon the previous ones so your grade is likely to suffer if you miss assignments.

Missing multiple assignments will not be tolerated unless there is concrete and documented evidence that the student was unable to be in class and complete these assignments (e.g., surgery, severe family emergency). Generally, missing more than two classes (two weeks) will be highly detrimental to your grade and is typically grounds to recommend that the student withdraw from the class. Students may not turn in multiple late assignments at the end of the semester. If you must miss class it is important to communicate with your instructor regarding absences and missed assignments in order to complete that work in a timely manner.

Grade Disputes

In this course, 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. Any dispute regarding that grade must be addressed and resolved within a week of receiving the grade. Otherwise no further consideration for a change of grade on these assignments will be allowed. Under no circumstances will any grade dispute on individual assignments be considered once the semester has ended and grades have been posted.

Extra Credit

Extra credit will be minimal to nonexistent in this course, as students who are not performing well are generally not spending enough time on required assignments. No extra credit opportunity is provided for one student when not provided for all students. Absolutely no additional work can be completed after the end of the semester. Please meet with your instructor if you are having difficulty in this course.

Point Values for Each Assignment in Psychology 301 Labs

Class participation 40 points

(may vary from lab to lab)

(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.

Bring Article from public source	5 points
Plagiarism quiz completion	10 points
Write-up for scientific source	10 points
Observation assignment data collection	5 points**
Observation write-up (Method & Results Sections)	20 points
Survey write-up (Method and Results Sections)	20 points
Preliminary Proposal Introduction Draft	20 points
Complete Proposal Draft	25 points
Discussion Draft (Final Proposal)	10 points
Proposal Draft for review	optional
(May assign points)	
Abstract Draft	10 points
Completed Written Proposal	100 points
Final Proposal Presentation	25 points

Total May vary across labs

****Must be confirmed by actual data summary given to TA with the appropriate written assignment.**

Course Schedule

→ *In-class activities are italicized.*

Week	Date	Class Activity	Assignment (Due next week)
1	9/1	Go Over Syllabus, details of lab. Basics of scientific Method, Description of Library Resources. Plagiarism discussion/exercise on plagiarism	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Find and bring to class an article on psychology from public domain (e.g., newspaper, magazine, media such as CNN) Plagiarism quiz
2	9/8	Sources of Information Discussion of psychology articles	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> TBA
3	9/15	Basics of Research/ Measuring Behavior	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Observational experiment-group assignment
4	9/22	Bring data summary from experiment APA Style-Method and Results <i>Methods and results section workshop</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Method and Results sections due next week. Read pages 93-99 in <i>Dunn</i> book. Use book as a resource
5	9/29	Turn in Method & Results section for observational study Correlational and survey research Entering data <i>In-class survey example</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> None ☺ Students collect some survey data outside of class (TBA)
6	10/6	Discuss survey results Discuss method and results section from last week. <i>In-class experiment</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Written Method and Results sections for in-class survey experiment. (Due next week)
7	10/13	Turn in Method & Results section for in-class survey study Experiment results Workshop on how to review scientific literature	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> References in APA formation Read and outline/summarize 5 articles for student's proposed study
8	10/20	Bring summary outline of 5 articles related to your topic. Discuss 2 nd method and results section Research Questions and Hypotheses <i>Introduction section writing workshop</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Partial written rough draft of Introduction section (5 articles)
9	10/27	Introduction section <i>In-class peer review and writing workshop for introduction</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Partial rough draft due with additional articles) (See Sample paper in text and in Dunn text.) Very helpful!
10	11/3	Complete Rough Draft of Introduction is due Finalizing method and results Your research design plan) Writing the discussion section Preparing for the final paper (proposal)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Dunn-pages 116-117 on research proposal writing Discussion Section

11	11/10	Discussion Section Due How to write an abstract section Getting the citations right in text and in reference section <i>Writing workshop on abstracts and references</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Abstract Section
12	11/17	Abstract for proposal due Return and go over discussion section Instruction on giving scientific oral presentations.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work on rough draft of proposal • Rough draft due next week **bring 4 copies of proposal for peer reviews**
	11/24	No class - Enjoy your Thanksgiving break!	
13	12/1	Peer Review of complete paper drafts Go Over Abstracts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work on proposal • Finalize presentation
14	12/8	Presentations Final paper due!!!!	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • FINAL PAPER DUE and PRESENTATIONS

End Notes

Please be aware that the topics and due dates listed above are tentative, therefore subject to change. Although your instructor will send out e-mails/announcements on blackboard highlighting changes to our schedule, coming to class is the only way to ensure that you stay current with all due dates and assignments. E-mails will be sent out as soon as we know that class is cancelled or there are any schedule changes. **Check e-mails and Blackboard for announcements about closures or class cancellations. Otherwise, come to class!**

Point Guideline for Final Proposal Assignment

Abstract	5 points
Introduction	35 points
Hypothesis	5 points
Method	25 points
Results/analysis plan and expected outcome	5 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.)