

Psychology 301-C01 Research Methods

Online

Lab(s)

PSYC 301-2C1: ONLINE; Lab Instructor: Laura Martin (Lmarti34@masonlive.gmu.edu)

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Course Website: <https://sites.google.com/view/psyc301/home>

Piazza Discussion Board: piazza.com/gmu/summer2020/psyc301/home

Lecture Instructor: Shea Fyffe
Email: sfyffe@masonlive.gmu.edu

Office Hours: By appointment
(via Skype or Hangouts)

Course Description: Students will learn and apply research methodology to psychological phenomena. This course will break down each step of the research process—starting with the definition of *science*. Understanding research methods requires familiarity with several methodological topics, including measurement, research design, and statistical analysis. Along the way, students will develop a “healthy skepticism,” while actively applying what they’ve learned in class to their lives.

Learning Outcomes: By the end of the course, students should be able to:

- Understand why a knowledge of research methodology is a practical skill
- Integrate the Scientific Method into their everyday lives
- Identify and apply basic research design principals
- Critically evaluate psychological research
- Communicate research ideas in written form using APA guidelines

Specialized Designation: Writing Intensive in the Major.

Recommended Prerequisite: PSYC 100 and either PSYC 300, STAT 250, or STAT 350 or equivalent.

Texts:

Morling, B. (2018). *Research Methods in Psychology: Evaluating a World of Information* (3rd edition). New York: W. W. Norton & Company. (Required; **note: the access code is not required. Feel free to purchase or rent a used copy of the text.**) ISBN: 9780393617542

Dunn, D. (2011). *A Short Guide to Writing About Psychology* (3rd edition). Boston: Longman. (Required for lab)

Publication Manual for the American Psychological Association (7th edition). (Recommended)

Course Overview

This course is divided into **5** weekly modules. For each weekly module you will be required to do the following:

1. *Attentively* watch the online lecture(s)
2. Respond to the Piazza discussion
3. Complete weekly assignments (password to quiz will be given during online lecture)
4. Work on lab assignments

Given the asynchronous nature of the class, weekly assignments will **not** be accepted after the due date. *If you are having technical difficulties, these should be communicated to at least one day before the due date.* This course is designed to give you autonomy, while ensuring accountability for your course responsibilities.

- This class is taught entirely online. This course is also designated as “asynchronous” meaning that there is no appointed “class time” when everyone needs to be online together. The schedule is somewhat self-paced.
- This course is divided into weekly modules- each module will be due on *Sunday at 11:59 pm EST*. I will release materials related to that week on *Monday at 11:59 am EST*. You may complete the required components at any time prior to the module due date. Module due dates and start dates are listed in the [Course Schedule](#).
- While the ability to have this course be self-paced allows for flexibility, it can also make it easier to procrastinate and fall behind. I highly recommend NOT waiting until right before due dates to start working on the assignments or watching the lectures.

All course materials will be stored within Google Drive; however, access to these documents will be provided through Blackboard.

Required Lectures: Each week I will release online lecture(s)—these lectures are meant to supplement your understanding. Lecture slides will be posted corresponding to each week ([you can see the lectures here](#)). **Quizzes will address material discussed in the lectures.**

Required Discussions: Each week I will post a thought question on the course’s [Piazza website](#). To receive credit in a given week you will need to:

- Create a follow-discussion that responds to my question
- Reply to a classmate’s follow-up discussion

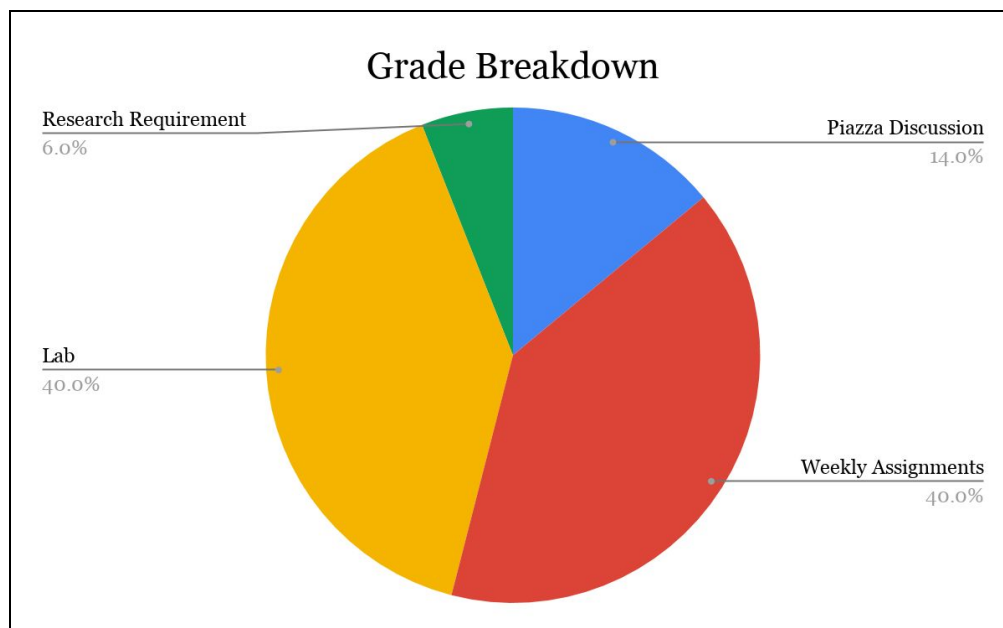
You can post your post and reply anonymously (I will still be able to see who posted what). I just ask that you **do not troll** one another, please see the [Technology Policy](#) for more information on how to behave within *Piazza*.

Additionally, at the end of the semester, I will reward 10 bonus points to 15 students that go over their 2 post requirements with interesting thoughts, follow-up points, questions, etc. This reward will be given to 3 students each week—students can only receive the award once during the class.

Required Assignments: You will be required to complete *2 weekly assignments*. These will be a combination of multiple-choice quizzes and short-answer questions. I am not an instructor that enjoys giving assessments that require memorization. Much of the assessment content will evaluate high-order thinking— so be prepared.

Note: All weekly assignments will be open-note, password protected, and timed. Passwords will be given during the lecture. Assignments will need to be completed in a single sitting, this is to prevent cheating.

Grading Policy



Weekly Assignments (40%): Each week you will have to complete **2** weekly assignments that will assess your understanding of the reading and lecture. These will be timed assignments.

Piazza Discussion (14%): Each week you will have to post an answer to a discussion question, as well as reply to a classmate's question.

Lab (40%): The laboratory section is taught separately from the lecture section of this course. However, your work through the lab accounts for 17% of your final grade in this course. Your lab instructor will provide me with your grades for lab assignments and papers.

The lab for Psychology 301 fulfills the **Writing Intensive requirement** in the psychology major that is a university requirement. It does so through a written research proposal completed in the context of the

lab sections and through other written assignments. The schedule of due dates will be on the lab syllabus. The final research proposal is mandatory. Drafts will be essential and if a student fails to turn in drafts it is unlikely the final written proposal will receive a passing grade. This written work is required for students to successfully fulfill the university writing intensive requirement. *Students who fail to meet the writing intensive requirement will not receive a passing grade in Psychology 301.* **Please note that the above requirement is mandated by the University.**

Research Participation (6%): Each student is required to complete **three** credits as a participant in psychology experiments. Alternate experiences may be substituted. You can sign up for a Sona Systems account by using this link: <http://gmu.sona-systems.com/> and then clicking on the “Request an account here” link under New Participant. Each completed credit will count as 2% points added to your final grade. Given research changes due to COVID-19, I will also provide an alternative assignment in week 4 as a potential substitute for research participation.

Optional Cumulative Final Exam (40%): If you are not happy with your weekly assignment grade, you may take an optional Final Exam. The Final Exam will be cumulative and will include material from the text as well as material from class. If you choose to take the optional Final Exam, I will calculate your Final Grade two ways: based on the grade you aren’t happy with and also based on the Final Exam. I will assign as your Final Grade the higher of the two. **Please note:** that all percentages will be truncated (you must be able the lower bound).

Grade Breakdown

A+	97-100%	A	93-96%	A-	90-92%
B+	87-89%	B	83-86%	B-	80-82%
C+	77-79%	C	73-76%	C-	70-72%
D+	67-69%	D	63-66%	D-	60-62%
F	below 60%				

Attendance Policy

Attendance: Students should ensure they have a reliable way to complete course assignments. I understand that technological issues can happen (e.g., internet outages, spilling wine on your laptop); however, *these issues should be brought up at least one day before a weekly deadline.* Given the asynchronous nature of the class, **I will not accept excused absences.** This may seem a little harsh; however, it ensures fairness to all students. It is hard to determine the legitimacy of a student’s excuse. I’ve also set the class up to accommodate for tragedies that could occur (hopefully they don’t).

Scheduling Policies

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: July 8

- Last Day to Drop without tuition penalty: July 8
- Selective withdrawal period: July 21 – July 28

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. Please see the following webpage for more details about the new Add/Drop policy: <https://registrar.gmu.edu/drop-withdrawal-deadlines-faqs/>

Changes to Syllabus: The instructor reserves the right to make necessary changes to the syllabus with reasonable advance notice.

Student Policies

Academic Integrity: Academic integrity refers to honest and ethical behavior in all aspects of academic activity. This includes not cheating on in-class assignments (e.g., copying the work of others or using), not passing off someone else's ideas as your own (plagiarism), not engaging in dishonesty of any kind regarding your class participation and assignments.

Plagiarism: Plagiarism is the unacknowledged use of another person's labor, another person's ideas, another person's words, or another person's assistance. *Unless otherwise stated, all work done for courses is expected to be the individual effort of the student presenting the work.* Any assistance must be reported to the instructor. If the work has entailed consulting other resources -- journals, books, or other media -- these resources must be cited in a manner appropriate to the course. Everything used from other sources -- suggestions for organization of ideas, ideas themselves, or actual language -- must be cited. Failure to cite borrowed material constitutes plagiarism. Undocumented use of materials from the World Wide Web is plagiarism. If you are caught plagiarizing or cheating, you will fail the assignment, and, depending upon the severity of the violation, you may fail the class.

Honor Code: George Mason University has an Honor Code, which requires all members of this community to maintain the highest standards of academic honesty and integrity. Cheating, plagiarism, lying, and stealing are all prohibited. All violations of the Honor Code will be reported to the Honor Committee. See honorcode.gmu.edu for detailed information.

Classroom Needs: 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. Then please discuss your approved accommodations with me. Disability Services is located in the Student Union Building I (SUB I), Suite 2500. Email: ods@gmu.edu | Phone: (703) 993-2474

Diversity and Psychological Services: George Mason University is committed to providing a learning, living and working environment that is free from discrimination and a campus that is free of sexual misconduct and other acts of interpersonal violence in order to promote community well-being and student success. We encourage students who believe that they have been sexually harassed, assaulted or subjected to sexual misconduct to seek assistance and support. [University Policy 1202: Sexual Harassment and Misconduct](#) speaks to the specifics of Mason's process, the resources, and the options available to students. Any faculty or staff member at Mason is required to report all disclosures of sexual

assault, interpersonal violence, and stalking to Mason's Title IX Coordinator, but please know that such reports will result only in someone reaching out to you directly to let you know about available services and to determine if you wish to take any action. That said, you can also contact the Student Support and Advocacy Center (703-380-1434) or Counseling and Psychological Services (703-993-2380) to speak to someone confidentially, as individuals who work in those offices are not required to report disclosures. You may also seek assistance directly from Mason's Title IX Coordinator (703-993-8730; titleix@gmu.edu).

Online Class Etiquette: Though this class is online, this course is a “safe space”, which means we commit to: (1) Making our class a welcoming, open space for everyone; (2) Being aware of our prejudices and insecurities and how our words affect others; (3) Providing room for each of us to explore our own identities; (4) Allowing others to define their own identities and to speak for themselves; (5) Respecting the privacy of others by maintaining confidentiality.

Technology Policies

Official Communications 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. If class is canceled, I will notify you via email; this email will include information about making up the missed class.

Technology: Please check Blackboard and your email regularly. You will be able to find online lectures, weekly assignments, and a link to the Piazza discussion board on the course's Blackboard page.

Piazza Etiquette: Piazza will be an interactive environment where you can engage with your classmates about topics related to the course. It's meant to be interactive. I would prefer if you have questions related to the class that you post them on Piazza because it's likely that your classmates have the same questions. With this said, I reserve the right to remove unnecessary or offensive posts. Topics should be related to the course. If a student becomes disruptive, I reserve the right to ban them from the Piazza page, which will result in missing the remaining discussions in the class (i.e., it will affect your grade).

Course Schedule

NOTE: Your instructor reserves the right to make edits to this schedule based on several factors, including the progression of lecture.

[Click here for Course Schedule](#)