**Lecture PSYC 301: Research Methods in Psychology (3 credits)**

**Spring 2021**

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**Instructor:** Nicholas Gazzia

**Email:** ngazzia@gmu.edu (**BEST** way to reach me; include **PSYC 301** in email subject; will respond within **48 hours**)

**Office Hours:** **Wednesday 12:15 - 1:15 pm EST** (Zoom link and password will be sent first week of class) or by appointment.

**Note on office hours:** This is *your* time to meet with me remotely and I encourage you to reach out with specific and focused questions about the course material and any other questions you may have about research methods and psychological sciences.

The deadlines for adding and dropping classes are as follows:

* 02/01 last day to add
* 02/12 last day to drop for 100% refund
* 02/16 last day to drop for 50% refund

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

## **COURSE DESCRIPTION**

Welcome! This course is delivered and conducted entirely online in an asynchronous format via the GMU Blackboard. By taking this course, you will

* Learn and apply basic research methodology to topics in psychology.
* Be able to critically evaluate evidence generated by psychological research and claims made in popular press
* Develop understanding of how to conduct research in psychology
* Be able to explain and apply a number of methodological topics, including measurement, research design, statistical analysis, replicability, ethics, and others.

## BLACKBOARD LOGIN INSTRUCTIONS

Access to MyMason and GMU email are required to participate successfully in this course. Please make sure to update your computer and prepare yourself to begin using the online format BEFORE the first day of class. Check the IT Support Center website. Navigate to the Student Support page for help and information about Blackboard. In the menu bar to the left you will find all the tools you need to become familiar with for this course. Take time to learn each. Make sure you run a system check a few days before class. Become familiar with the attributes of Blackboard and online learning.

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## REQUIRED TEXTBOOKS

* Morling, B. (2015). *Research Methods in Psychology: Evaluating a World of Information* (**3rd edition**). New York: W. W. Norton & Company. **E-book with InQuizitive.**
* *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 LEARNING OUTCOMES

By the end of the course, you should be able to:

1. Learn and apply basic research designs in psychology
2. Recognize and apply statistical principles in research design
3. Critically evaluate psychological research
4. Communicate research ideas in written form using APA guidelines
5. Create a research proposal on a topic of your interest

To reach these objectives, you are expected to:

1. check gmu.edu e-mail and log in to the course site ***daily***
2. read and follow all course and assignment directions
3. request help as needed well before deadlines
4. take responsibility for actions pertaining to the course and applicable consequences
5. complete all exams, discussion, and assignments thoughtfully, accurately, and on time

## TECHNOLOGY REQUIREMENTS

**Hardware:** You will need access to a Windows or Macintosh computer with at least 2 GB of RAM and access to a fast and reliable broadband internet connection (e.g., cable, DSL). A larger screen is recommended for better visibility of course material. You will need speakers or headphones to hear recorded content and a headset with a microphone is recommended for the best experience. For the amount of Hard Disk Space required taking a distance education course, consider and allow for:

1. the storage amount needed to install any additional software and
2. space to store work that you will do for the course.

If you consider the purchase of a new computer, please go to Technology Buying Guide to see recommendations.

**Software:** Many courses use Blackboard as the learning management system. You will need a browser and operating system that are listed compatible or certified with the Blackboard version available on the myMason Portal. See supported browsers and operating systems. Log in to myMason to access your registered courses. Some courses may use other learning management systems. Check the syllabus or contact the instructor for details. Online courses typically use Acrobat Reader, Flash, Java, and Windows Media Player, and/or Real Media Player. Your computer should be capable of running current versions of those applications. Also, make sure your computer is protected from viruses by downloading the latest version of Symantec Endpoint Protection/Anti-Virus software for free here.

Students owning Macs or Linux should be aware that some courses may use software that only runs on Windows. You can set up a Mac computer with Boot Camp or virtualization software so Windows will also run on it. Watch this video about using Windows on a Mac. Computers running Linux can also be configured with virtualization software or configured to dual boot with Windows.

Note: If you are using an employer-provided computer or corporate office for class attendance, please verify with your systems administrators that you will be able to install the necessary applications and that system or corporate firewalls do not block access to any sites or media types.

**Course-specific Hardware/Software**

Check the syllabus for your course or contact the instructor prior to the start of the course to find out about specific technical requirements for your class. Hardware or software required for your course or program may be available for purchase at Patriot Computers (the University’s computer store that offers educational discounts and special deals).

## COURSE SCHEDULE

| **WEEKS** | **CONTENT (LECTURE)** | **ASSIGNMENTS DUE** |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Week 1****01/25-01/31** | **Introduction to the courses and sources of information*** Morling, B. (2015) Chapters 1-2
* Instructional power-point presentations for chapters 1-2
 | 1. Class Introduction Blog
2. InQuizitive (Chapters 1-2)

All Due by Sunday, 11:59 pm EST |
| **Week 2****02/01-02/07** | **Three claims and four validities** * Morling, B. (2015) Chapter 3
* Instructional power-point presentation for chapter 3
 | 1. InQuizitive (Chapter 3)
2. Assignment #1

All Due by Sunday, 11:59 pm EST  |
| **Week 3****02/08-02/14** | **Measurement*** Morling, B. (2015) Chapter 5
* Instructional power-point presentation for chapter 5
 | 1. InQuizitive (Chapter 5)
2. Assignment #2

Due by Sunday, 11:59 pm EST1. Discussion #1
* Initial Post Due by Friday at 11:59 pm EST
* Responses Due by Sunday, 11:59 pm EST
 |
| **Week 4****02/15-02/21** | **Survey and observations*** Morling, B. (2015) Chapter 6
* Instructional power-point presentation for chapter 6
 | 1. InQuizitive (Chapter 6)
2. Assignment #3

Due by Sunday, 11:59 pm EST1. Discussion #2
* Initial Post Due by Friday at 11:59 pm EST
* Responses Due by Sunday, 11:59 pm EST
 |
| **Week 5****02/22-02/28** | **Sampling*** Morling, B. (2015) Chapter 7
* Instructional power-point presentation for chapter 7
* Work through the study guide for Exam #1
 | 1. InQuizitive (Chapter 7)
2. Assignment #4
3. Complete Exam #1

All Due by Sunday, 11:59 pm EST  |
| **Week 6****03/01-03/07** | **Bivariate correlational research*** Morling, B. (2015) Chapter 8
* Instructional power-point presentation for chapter 8
 | 1. InQuizitive (Chapter 8)

Due by Sunday, 11:59 pm EST1. Discussion #3
* Initial Post Due by Friday at 11:59 pm EST
* Responses Due by Sunday, 11:59 pm EST
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| **Week 7****03/08-03/14** | **Multivariate correlational research*** Morling, B. (2015) Chapter 9
* Instructional power-point presentation for chapter 9
 | 1. InQuizitive (Chapter 9)

Due by Sunday, 11:59 pm EST1. Discussion #4
* Initial Post Due by Friday at 11:59 pm EST
* Responses Due by Sunday, 11:59 pm EST
 |
| **Week 8****03/15-03/21** | **Simple experiment*** Morling, B. (2015) Chapter 10
* Instructional power-point presentation for chapter 10
 | * 1. InQuizitive (Chapter 10)

Due by Sunday, 11:59 pm EST* 1. Discussion #5
* Initial Post Due by Friday at 11:59 pm EST
* Responses Due by Sunday, 11:59 pm EST
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| **Week 9****03/22-03/28** | **Simple experiment (continued)*** Morling, B. (2015) Chapter 10
* Instructional power-point presentation for chapter 10
* Work through the study guide for Exam #2
 | 1. InQuizitive (Chapter 10)
2. Exam #2

All Due by Sunday, 11:59 pm EST |
| **Week 10****03/29 -04/04** | **Confounding and obscuring variables** * Morling, B. (2015) Chapter 11, part 1 (pp. 311-328)
* Instructional power-point presentation for chapter 11, part 1
 | 1. Assignment #5
2. InQuizitive (Chapter 11, part 1)

All Due by Sunday, 11:59 pm EST |
| **Week 11****04/05-04/11** | **Interrogating Null Results*** Morling, B. (2015) Chapter 11 (pp. 328-346)
* Instructional power-point presentation for chapter 11, part 2
 | 1. Assignment #6
2. InQuizitive (Chapter 11, part 2)

All Due by Sunday, 11:59 pm EST |
| **Week 12** **04/12-04/18** | **Quasi experiment and Small-n design*** Morling, B. (2015) Chapter 13
* Instructional power-point presentation for chapter 13
 | 1. Assignment #7
2. InQuizitive (Chapter 13)

All Due by Sunday, 11:59 pm EST |
| **Week 13****04/19-04/25** | **Ethics*** Morling, B. (2015) Chapter 4
* Instructional power-point presentation for chapter 4
 | 1. Assignment #8
2. InQuizitive (Chapter 4)

All Due by Sunday, 11:59 pm EST |
| **Week 14****04/26-05/02** | **Replication and generalization*** Morling, B. (2015) Chapter 14
* Instructional power-point presentation for chapter 14
* Work through the study guide for Exam #3
 | 1. InQuizitive (Chapter 14) Due by Sunday, 11:59 pm EST
2. Discussion #6
* Initial Post Due by Friday at 11:59 pm EST
* Responses Due by Sunday, 11:59 pm EST
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| **Week 15****05/03-05/09** | **Final Exam**  | Complete between Thursday, 8:00 am EST and Sunday, 11:59 pm EST |

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## ASSIGNMENT DESCRIPTION

**Exams** (100pts x 3 = **300 pts**): Three exams will be given. You are responsible for all material covered in assigned readings and lectures. Material not covered in the text is often discussed in lecture. All exams count toward your final grade.

**Assignments** (10 points x 7 assignments + 5 points x 1 assignment = **75 pts towards grade**): Throughout the course, a number of small assignments will be given.

**InQuizitive Quizzes**. (5 points x 12 chapters = **60 pts towards grade**) Interactive quizzes will be given each week to facilitate engagement with chapter material.

**Discussion posts (**5 points x 6 discussions **= 30 points towards the grade)**

**SONA Research participation (15 points)**

All students are required to serve for 3 hours as participants in psychological research though Sona Systems. For students who choose not to participate or under 18 years of age, alternate options are available. You can participate in any number of research projects, but the hours must total at least 3. For every 30 minutes that a student participates in an experiment, students will receive 0.5 research credits (e.g., an experiment that takes one and a half hours to complete should issue students a total of 1.5 credits for completing the experiment).

Student research participation is coordinated through the GMU Psychology Research Participation website – Sona Systems – at http://gmu.sona-systems.com/.

You are encouraged to use the Research Participation Reaction Form to reflect on your research participation experiences. The form can be found in the main guidelines document posted to the Sona homepage. In cases in which a student’s research credit is not recorded on the website, course instructors may accept a Research Participation Reaction Form as proof a student participated in a particular experiment.

Important dates:

• Friday, April 30: Last day to participate in research

• Sunday May 2: Last day for researchers to assign credit

• Tuesday May 4: Instructors begin running course reports

**Lab** (38.5% of your final grade in this course): The laboratory section is taught separately from the lecture section of this course. However, your work through the lab accounts for you final grade. 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. Each assignment is completed through a draft/feedback/revision process. The schedule of due dates will be on the lab syllabus. It is required that students successfully complete written assignments. The final written 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 in order 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.

## GRADING SCALE

**Assignments Maximum Points Grade Breakdown**

Exams 300 A+ 97.00-100.00% A 93.00-96.99% A- 90.00-92.99%

Lab 295 B+ 87.00-89.99% B 83.00-86.99% B- 80.00-82.99%

Lecture Assignments 75 C+ 77.00-79.99% C 73.00-76.99% C- 70.00-72.99%

SONA Research 15 D+ 67.00-69.99% D 63.00-66.99% D- 60.00-62.99%

InQuizitive 60 F below 60%

Discussion 30

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 775

## COURSE POLICIES

**Attendance:** This is an online class and attendance is treated differently from traditional classrooms. You will be presenting with multiple avenues for accessing instructional materials and interaction, from completing individual small projects to participating in different peer interaction activities. You should strive to keep up with the assignments, small projects, and several research project tasks that show that you are “attending” and participating. However, overall completion is based primarily upon your peer interaction and communication throughout this semester. Your final attendance will be counted in this manner.

**Reading and Participation:** You will be involved in the learning process through active class participation and application of material to research topics of interest. You are expected to contribute to a collegiate atmosphere by offering your own ideas and encouraging ideas of others on topics relevant to this course.

**Make-up policy:** Make-up exams will only be given in special circumstances. Prior approval should be obtained if circumstances allow. Please see me as soon as possible if you are unable to take the exam at its scheduled time.

**Instructor-Student Communication:** I will respond to your emails **within 48 hours.** If I will be away from email for more than one day, I will post an announcement in the Blackboard course folder. Before sending an email, please check the following (available on your Blackboard course menu) unless the email is of a personal nature:

1. Syllabus
2. Ask Professor
3. On-demand Blackboard videos on how to use Blackboard features, and Technical Requirements.
4. Feel free to respond to other students in the Ask Professor forum if you know the answer.

Course Technology Use:Several Internet-related materials are required for access to and success in this course, including the following:

1. **A hard-wired, high-speed Internet connection**: Non-stable or slow Internet connections will not excuse failures to complete any assignments or exams by dates due.
2. **A functioning gmu.edu e-mail account**: Personal e-mail accounts will not suffice for correspondence for this course, as you will only be contacted via their GMU-affiliated e-mail addresses.
3. **Downloading capability:** You must have regular access to a computer onto which they can download and use the Exam Guard browser for testing throughout the course. <insert additional information>
4. **Microsoft Office:** Word access: You must have regular access to a computer onto which they can create, save, and submit written assignments in (.doc) or (.docx) format.
5. **Blackboard familiarity:** This course is delivered and conducted entirely online via the GMU Blackboard. As registrants in this course, you can (a) access the Student Tutorial or (b) contact the Help Desk or (c) refer to the Tech Support tab in the upper-right-hand corner of the course site for more information. You can find the following on BB:
	1. **Course materials:** Various course materials (syllabus, reading materials, notes, guidelines/grading criteria for assignments, projects, and proposal) are/will be available from this site.
	2. **Online discussion:** Discussion of and reflection on course content, inside and outside of class.
	3. **Grades/Progress updates:** You may get an update of their current course grades periodically.

**Writing Intensive Nature of Class:** This class fulfills GMU undergraduate requirements for a writing intensive course. You will be expected to exercise writing skills through written research assignments, culminating in a formal independent empirical research report. All written work will be graded not only on its content, but also on how well it is written (e.g., adherence to spelling, grammar, sentence structure, word choice, formatting). For writing assistance, see The George Mason University Writing Center, which offers free writing consultation to all students who are registered for at least one credit hour. For information, please contact the writing center at Robinson Hall Room A114, 703-993-1200.

**Official Communications via GMU E-mail:** Mason uses electronic mail to provide official information to students. Examples include communications from course instructors, notices from the library, and notices about academic standing, financial aid information, class materials, assignments, questions, and instructor feedback. You are responsible for the content of university communication sent to their Mason e-mail account and are required to activate that account and check it regularly.

**Class Cancellation Policy:** Please check blackboard and your email regularly. If class is cancelled, I will notify you by email/blackboard and how we will make the time up.

## UNIVERSITY POLICIES AND RESOURCES

1. **Academic Integrity:** Academic integrity refers to honest and ethical behavior in all aspects of academic activity. This includes: not cheating on exams or homework assignments (e.g., copying the work of others or using crib notes), not passing off someone else's ideas as your own (plagiarism), not engaging in dishonesty of any kind with regard to your class participation and assignments.
2. **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. You in this course are expected to behave at all times in a manner consistent with the GMU Honor Code. Violations of the Honor Code will not be tolerated in this course and will be reported according to GMU procedures. You must paraphrase any information from a source into your own words. Do not copy anything word for word, even if you are citing the source; direct quotes are not accepted for Critique and Redesign and Proposal projects in this class. The instructor reserves the right to use software to determine the extent to which the work is the student’s.
3. **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 in class, all work done for courses -- papers, examinations, homework exercises, laboratory reports, oral presentations -- 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.
4. 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). 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. Undergraduate students may choose to exercise a selective withdrawal. See the Schedule of Classes for selective withdrawal procedures.
6. **Student services:** The University provides range of services to help you succeed academically and you should make use of these if you think they could benefit you. I also invite you to speak to me (the earlier the better).
7. Students are responsible for the content of university communications sent to their George Mason University email account and are required to activate their account and check it regularly. All communication from the university, college, school, and program will be sent to students solely through their Mason email account.
8. 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.
9. If you have any specific needs (e.g., related to vision, hearing, learning, or medical conditions) or any religious or cultural practices, please let me know by the second week of class so that I can make the appropriate arrangements. Disabilities must be documented by the Disability Resources Center (703-993-2474) for reasonable accommodations to be provided. Students with disabilities who seek accommodations in a course must be registered with the George Mason University Office of Disability Services (ODS) and inform their instructor, in writing, at the beginning of the semester.
10. The George Mason University Writing Center 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. University Writing Center: Robinson Hall Room A114, 703-993-1200. The writing center includes assistance for students for whom English is a second language.
11. 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.
12. Notice of a mandatory reporting of sexual assault, interpersonal violence, and stalking: As a faculty member, 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.
13. 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 must contact the Instructor at least 2 weeks in advance of the conflict date in order to make alternative arrangements.