PSYC 301: Research Methods in Psychology (4 credits)
Spring 2023 - Lab

Lab Instructor: **Zion Howard**
Email: zhoward4@gmu.edu
Office Hour: Wednesdays 11am or by appointment
Zoom Link: https://gmu.zoom.us/j/96644769828

Lab Meetings: Mondays - 7:20pm – 9:00pm – Innovation Hall 203

Textbook: Morling, B. (2021). *Research Methods in Psychology: Evaluating a World of Information* (4th edition). New York: W. W. Norton & Company.

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. This will be accomplished primarily through three research reports. 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 writing to explore and respond to texts or other content in ways that deepen their awareness of the field of psychology and its subject matter.

Write to communicate: Students will demonstrate through writing assignments a rhetorical awareness of the decisions they make related to purpose, audience, and the context in which they write, including writing conventions that are specific to psychology.

Write as a process: Students will develop strategies appropriate to the discipline of psychology for revising, reorganizing, and proofreading writing based upon feedback they receive as they engage in a recursive writing process.

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 turning 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 cannot 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 30. Last Day to Drop without tuition penalty: February 6. Drop period with 50% tuition refund: February 7 – February 13. Drop period with no refund: February 14 – February 27. Selective withdrawal period: February 28 – April 3. 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.

Grading Overview

This lab is 40% of your overall course grade for PSYC 301. The lecture portion of the course is 60%. 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. Attending lab and participating in these activities will be an essential component of successfully completing your writing assignments.

Writing Assignments: Details for all writing assignments will be given during lab sessions. Assignments should be turned in before class begins on the specified due date or at the beginning of class as specified by the instructor. In the event you cannot make it to class, please e-mail your instructor with an explanation for your absence prior to the class. The assignment should be sent before the scheduled meeting time of the class to avoid a late penalty.

Late Work Policy: Assignments submitted late will receive a 5% per day penalty. Non-penalty extensions will be considered in the case of family or health issues or other circumstances outside of your control. Except in emergencies, notify your instructor about any planned or excused absences in advance and make arrangements for making up any missed assignments. 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. 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 if you are having difficulty in this course.

Assignments Overview

Assignments	Points	Due Dates
CITI training	10	02/06/23
Evaluating Media Claims	15	02/06/23
Research Report #1	50	02/20/23
Research Report #2: Introduction	25	03/13/23
Research Report #2: Peer Reviews	40	03/20/23
Research Report #2: Final	75	03/27/23
Research Report #3: Study Design and Data Collection	10	04/03/23 (during lab time)
Research Report #3: Guided Worksheet	10	04/10/23 (during lab time)
Research Poster	50	04/17/23
Research Report #3: Final	50	04/24/23
Research Reflection	15	04/24/23(during lab time)
TOTAL	350	

- **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 percentage, take your total lab points divided by 350 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%).**

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	Class Topics	Assignments/Activities	Homework
1/23	Introductions Course Overview	• Critical Consumers of Research	• CITI training (due Lab 3)
1/30	Writing an APA Report Finding Sources	• PsycInfo Searches • Evaluating Media Claims	• Evaluating Media Claims (due Lab 3)
2/06	Research questions and hypotheses Research Report #1: Overview	• Data Collection (RR#1) • Create template for research report	• Assigned readings (Fallon, Hotaling)

2/13	RR #1: Data Analysis	• Writing Workshop	• Research Report #1 (due Lab 5)
2/20	Writing an APA Introduction	• Data collection (RR#2) • Outline Introduction for RR#2	• Assigned readings (articles for RR#2)
2/27	RR #2: Data Analysis Method and Results sections	• Writing Workshop for RR#2	• Continue working on RR #2
3/06	Discussion section	• Writing Workshop for RR #2	• Complete draft of Introduction for RR #2 (due Lab 8)
3/20	Citation and plagiarism	• Writing Workshop for RR #2	• Complete draft of RR #2 (due Lab 9)
3/27	Peer Review	• Complete three peer reviews	• Finalize RR #2 (due Lab 10)
4/03	RR #3: Observational study	• Design study and collect data	• Bring data to next lab
4/10	RR #3: Results	• Guided worksheet for Method and Results sections	• None
4/17	Research Poster	• Create complete draft of research poster	• None
4/24	Research Poster	• Finalize research poster and share	• Finalize RR #3 (due Lab 14)
5/01	Research at GMU	• Research Reflection	• Finished!