

Home Page

Welcome to Research in Psychology

This course reviews scientific method in Psychology. It is meant for Psychology majors or students with a clear interest in research. We will discuss how science "works", how scientific reasoning differs from religious or political thought, how politics or culture can bias science, and what we can and cannot learn from the different research strategies Psychologists use.


Students will understand the virtues - and problems - of measurement or correlational studies, "true" experiments, and the "quasi"-experiments (or field studies) often used in Psychology. Students will also be introduced to statistical reasoning in science, and to basic statistics.



The skull of *Homo floresiensis* is tiny compared to modern day *Homo sapiens*.
 © P. Brown

Homo floresiensis: Distant cousin or dwarf?

Controversy surrounds a small, "Hobbit - like" species recently discovered in Indonesia. Were they a distinct humanoid sub-species, or a simple case of dwarfism? How can we tell? [Click!](#)

- **This course is centered on the class web site. Get comfortable using this and other web sites.**
- **Look at the "Announcements" window (to the left) for updates or announcements as the course goes on.**
- **Please e-mail me ASAP if you find a broken or incorrect link!**
- **Each week has its own web page. Weekly Web pages give key terms, discussion group assignments, and links to the PowerPoint notes I will be using in lecture.**
- **The best way to print PowerPoint slides:**
 - With the file open, click "File" then "print".
 - In the print menu, under "print what" ask for "handouts", and 3 slides per page.
 - Make the color "grayscale", and check "scale to fit paper".
 - Now click "Preview" at the lower left of the print window. Click on the button to make the slides print portrait style.  Click "Options" to add a header / footer or page numbers.
 - Print and bring to lecture.

**Psychology 242 now on
Blackboard!**

Check there for discussion points & grades.

We are starting a *Discussion Board* there for students and instructors.
 Please give it a try!

Announcements (2/9/08)

The week 5 discussion group assignment **here** has been updated today (Monday). All groups meet in 2057 BSB this week only.

Examples of exam

questions are [here](#), overview of key exam topics [here](#).

New stuff: click [here](#) for an electronic guide to writing papers in APA style.

Using internet explorer?
Allow your browser to run scripts and Active X content.

Don't have PowerPoint on your machine to read the lecture notes? Get a free viewer [here](#).

Overview

- The class is CRN 14661; it meets Monday / Wednesday, 9:00 am, **Lecture Center C, room 3**.
- Lecture attendance is assumed: all course materials and the content of your exams will be provided in lecture.
- Course content is given primarily in PowerPoint slide sets I will use for lecture, accompanied by readings I provide on this web site, and the text. There are a good number of newspaper or other readings - many from the **New York Times** - the we will use to illustrate many of the basic research principles we will discuss. You are expected to read those carefully. Others are "bonus" articles that I provide for interested students.
- Your grade is determined by three exams (together worth 50% of your grade), discussion group attendance (20%), and a term paper worth 30% of your grade.



[Site Map](#) [Copyright David J. McKirnan, 2006](#)

Text

Ray, W.J. (1999/2006). *Methods: Toward a Science of Behavior and Experience*, 5th ed. or later, Belmont, CA. Wadsworth. Buy any recent edition of the Ray book; they are all the same. Look on [Amazon.com](#), [e-Bay](#) ([half.com](#) takes you directly to eBay textbooks), or other used bookstores for cheap copies. UIC bookstore may have used copies. On Amazon or e-Bay use the advanced search and enter "Ray" as author and "Methods" as the title, or simply "Methods, toward a science of behavior" in the search window. Get at least the 5th edition, and make sure it is the title given above; there are other methods books and workbooks by Ray.



The allegory of Plato's Cave illustrates how difficult it is to objectively "know" about reality (and may be the basis of the Matrix films). Click image for discussion & links.

Class notes and updates

Students are required to use the WEB and an e-mail account. Readings, lecture notes, and discussion group assignments are available in the "Weekly notes" link. I post class updates on the web, so check this site regularly.

Exams

There are three exams, each covering about 1/3 of the course. Exams are cumulative, but most questions will address material covered since the last exam, with an emphasis on lectures and discussion groups. Most exam items are short answer or "fill in the blank," **not** multiple choice. The first two exams are each worth 15% of your grade, and the last is worth 20%. There are **NO** make up exams.

What will be on the exams? All exam material is covered in the lectures. I provide PowerPoint lecture notes each week that, combined with my actual lectures, present all the exam content. Attend lectures! During each lecture I announce specific topics that will show up on the exam; to know how to study attend lectures (and ask questions!), then use your annotated PowerPoint notes to study. I do not provide detailed study guides: all the information you need is in lecture. Examples of exam items are posted [Here](#). Each exam focuses on the material we have covered in that section of the course.

Term paper

The term paper consists of a short research project, due in your discussion group during the 14th week of the term. All papers must be typed in a computer text editor (we prefer Microsoft Word), formatted in American Psychological Association style. The paper is worth 30% of your grade. Many discussion groups will be devoted to the development of this paper. Complete instructions for the paper are given on the [paper assignment](#) link, above. Use this to write your paper, and for links to other paper resources. If you want comments on your paper submit it with a self addressed envelope (stamps are not necessary). Give a first draft to your TA for feedback if you want to maximize your points!

Office Hours & Communication

My office hours (1058b BSB) are Monday and Wednesday, from 10:00 to 12:00, or by appointment. Please use e mail to contact me with questions, comments, or to make appointments. I am happy to hear from students on any & all issues related to the course. Names, e-mails, and office hours for Teaching Assistants are given below. Feel free to e-mail your TA for an appointment any time, or just show up during office hours.

- Lisa Alvy <ealvy2@uic.edu>, 2:30 - 3:30 on Wednesdays, 3019 BSB.
- Jessica Salerno <jsaler4@uic.edu>, Monday 12:00 - 2:00. 1049 BSB.
- Tamara Springle <tsprin2@uic.edu>, 10:00 - 12:00 on Wednesdays, 1080 BSB.
- Margaret Stevenson <msteve1@uic.edu>, 10:00 - 11:00 on Wednesdays, 1049 BSB.

Discussion groups

Attendance and completion of discussion group assignments are mandatory. Your research paper will be developed in these groups. Discussion group assignments and attendance will be worth 20% of your final grade (1.5 points per week). Discussion group assignments are given in links in the class schedule, **for the week they are due**. Part of your discussion points are awarded for attendance in the group, part based on the quality of your homework. Do not submit homework assignments by e-mail: they must be handed in during discussion group itself.

Discussion Group Assignments

Call #	Day & Time	Room	T.A.
14650	Friday, 3:00	285 BSB	Lisa Alvy
14651	Friday, 10:00	435 EPASW	Jessica Salerno
14652	Friday, 11:00	389 BSB	Jessica Salerno
14653	Friday, 12:00	435 EPASW	Margaret Stevenson
14654	Friday, 1:00	435 EPASW	Tamara Springle
14658	Friday, 2:00	319 BSB	Tamara Springle

Academic Honesty:

The great majority of students are honest, and I rarely have to take action on cheating in this class. However, in fairness to other students note that I will not tolerate cheating. If you cheat on any test or assignment you will fail the entire class, not just that assignment. If I feel it appropriate I will notify the Dean of Students, who will place a notice about the incident in your permanent record. There are no exceptions to this policy.

Cheating includes, but is not limited to, looking on others' tests or letting them look on yours during a test, copying or giving others test answers, and plagiarism. Plagiarism includes copying the words of a fellow student or any other author in your papers, copying even short phrases from written work that you are using as a reference (even if you cite it properly), handing in work that you have handed in for another class, or handing in papers you've gotten from the internet or from other students.

If you have any concerns about this policy or about cheating in the class, please contact me directly to discuss it.