

PSCH 242 Introduction to Research Methods in Psychology

3 Credit Hours

Fall 2016

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| Instructor: Tomas Ståhl | CRN/Course Number: 35658 |
| Office: BSB 1054A | Lectures: MW 4-4:50 |
| Office phone: 312 413 9407 | Classroom: 2LCD D002 |
| E-mail address: tstahl@uic.edu | Office hours: MW 9-10am |

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| <p>TAs:</p> <p>Marta Mielicki Discussion sections: F 10am (2BSB 219) F 11am (2BSB 335) Office hours: F 11-12pm (BSB 1051) Email: mmieli2@uic.edu</p> <p>Chelsea Perschon Discussion sections: F 2pm (2ETMSW 2417) F 3pm (2LH 320) Office hours: F 1pm (BSB B143) Email: TBD</p> | <p>Laurette Mcilwee Discussion section: F 4pm (2TH 207) Office hours: TBD (BSB B143) Email: lmcilwee@depaul.edu</p> |
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Course Description, Goals, and Objectives

This course is designed to provide an overview of the most widely used methods employed by psychologists and other behavioral scientists. You will get a basic understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the various research strategies used by psychologists so that you can become an informed consumer of research both in the behavioral science literature and in the media. In addition, you will begin developing a set of research skills that will prepare you for more advanced study in the behavioral sciences.

COURSE MATERIALS

Required Text

Graziano, A. M. & Raulin, M. L. (2013). *Research methods: A process of inquiry* (8th Ed.). Boston, MA: Prentice Hall.

A basic pocket calculator.

You should bring this calculator with you to lectures and lab sections. Any basic calculator will do as long as it can perform addition, subtraction, multiplication, and division, as well as compute square roots.

COURSE POLICIES

Attendance

Attendance during **lectures** is not required, but **strongly recommended**.

Weekly discussion sections are designed to give you “hands on” experience with the concepts discussed in class. **Attendance during discussion sections is expected and will count toward your lab section grade.** Attendance will be taken at the start of discussion sections. If you arrive after attendance is taken, you may let your TA know that you were late the first time it occurs, if lateness becomes a chronic problem you will be marked absent in the future. In addition, if you leave early, after attendance has been taken but before you complete that day’s activity, you will be marked absent from the section. If you need to leave early on a particular day, see your TA. Your discussion section attendance grade will be based on the percentage of sections you attend.

Missed or Late Work

It is crucial that you turn in assignments on time. Unless stated otherwise, you must upload **an electronic copy of the assignment to Safe Assign on Blackboard before the deadline, and turn in a hard copy at the beginning of class** on the day that it is due.

Late assignments will be penalized **10% for each day** (up to 24 hours) that it is turned in late. The only late work that will be accepted without penalty will be work presented with a **documented excuse** (such as a documented case of illness or death in the family). In this case, you must contact the professor by email (and copy the TA) as soon as possible to document your excuse.

Electronic Communication

Provided that you ask a reasonable question and articulate yourself clearly in your message, I will respond to e-mails. However, please understand that I receive a lot of e-mails in a given day. Each semester I teach up to three classes and have approximately 300 students. Therefore, please expect that it may take up to 48 hours until you receive my response.

Many things I am asked in emails are things that are addressed in this document (e.g., can I drop an exam?) or things that I have already addressed in class. I will not respond to these emails. If what you ask is a question that is relevant to the rest of the class, I may address your question in class instead of responding to the e-mail.

If you e-mail the instructor or your TA and you would like a response, your message should be well thought out, well-written, and include information about who you are and what course you are in (or discussion section for the TA).

Academic Integrity

A student who submits work, at any stage of the writing process, which in whole or part has been written by someone else or which contains passages quoted or paraphrased from another’s work without acknowledgment (quotation marks, citation, etc.) has plagiarized. Maintain your integrity when completing assignments and be overzealous to give credit where it is due. If you are ever unsure about what constitutes plagiarism, ask me. Students who are found to have plagiarized work may be subject to various disciplinary actions, including a failing grade on a

particular assignment, failure of the entire course, and possible expulsion from the university. **For any case of academic dishonesty, my policy is to file a complaint with the Office of the Dean of Students.** For more information about violating academic integrity and its consequences, consult the website of the UIC Office of the Dean of Students at <http://www.uic.edu/depts/dos/studentconduct.html>.

RELIGIOUS HOLIDAYS

Campus Policy States: The faculty of the University of Illinois at Chicago shall make every effort to avoid scheduling examinations or requiring that student projects be turned in or completed on religious holidays. Students who wish to observe their religious holidays shall notify the faculty member by the tenth day of the semester of the date when they will be absent unless the religious holiday is observed on or before the tenth day of the semester. In such cases, the student shall notify the faculty member at least five days in advance of the date when he/she will be absent. The faculty member shall make every reasonable effort to honor the request, not penalize the student for missing the class, and if an examination or project is due during the absence, give the student an exam or assignment equivalent to the one completed by those students in attendance. If the student feels aggrieved, he/she may request remedy through the campus grievance procedure.

DISABILITY ACCOMMODATION

Students with disabilities who require accommodations for access to and/or participation in this course are welcome, but must be registered with the Disability Resource Center (DRC). You may contact DRC at 312-413-2183 (v) or 312-413-0123 (TTY).

RULES DURING CLASS/EXAMS

When you are in class, I ask that you be courteous to me as well as your fellow students. **Please do not have conversations with or write notes to fellow students during lecture. In addition, please do not listen to music, send text messages, or engage in similar distracting behaviors during lecture.** You may feel like you are an anonymous student in a class and that the instructor doesn't notice. Instructors do notice these things, and it ultimately disrupts the class. If I ask that you stop doing some behavior and you persist, I may ask you to leave the class.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS, METHODS OF EVALUATION, & GRADING POLICIES

Exams

There will be four exams offered during the course; three exams during the semester and a final exam. **Your lowest grade of the four will be dropped.** The tests will be worth 80% of your final grade (See below for exam dates). Exams offered during the semester will be non-cumulative with the caveat that each section of the course builds on previous sections. Though I will not explicitly test you on concepts from an earlier unit, you will have to draw on knowledge from previous units on later exams. A cumulative final exam will be offered during the week of finals.

As mentioned above, the lowest of the four exams will be dropped. I will drop your lowest exam for several reasons. The primary reason one exam will be dropped is that it eliminates the need for make-up exams. **Make-up exams will not be given under any circumstances.** You may be sick or out of town on a particular exam day, or oversleep on the day of the exam. If this were

to occur, you would not need to worry about missing the exam because that exam will be dropped. A second reason I drop the lowest exam is that everyone can have a bad day. If you happened to take an exam on a day you were not prepared and you were not satisfied with your score, you could take the final exam. If the score on your final is better than one of your previous exams, the earlier exam would be dropped from your final grade calculation. However, this can only happen if you take the first three scheduled exams. In addition, if you are happy with your first three exam scores, you are not required to take the final.

Homework

You will have a total of six homework assignments over the course of the semester. Homework will be due on the dates outlined in the syllabus. **The lowest of your six homework grades will be dropped. As with exams, there will be no Make-up assignments.**

Homework that requires written answers must be typewritten. If your assignment is on multiple pages **staple** the pages together (do not do the fold the corner and tear the top trick, it does not work). Homework that requires numerical calculations or graphs may be hand written. However, neatness counts. If your work is illegible, crammed together, or so disorganized that it cannot be followed in a logical sequence you will lose credit. Be sure to show all your work for each problem that requires written calculations. Do not simply report your final answer. If your final answer is incorrect it may still be possible to earn partial credit if some parts of the problem were done correctly. This is possible, however, only if you have shown all of your intermediate steps.

Discussion section attendance

As stated previously, attendance in discussion sections will count towards your grade. Specifically, the percentage of discussion sections you attend will be factored in as an additional homework at the end of the semester.

Course Grading

Course grades will be based on exams (80%), and lab activities and homework (20%). Grades will be based on the following scale.

| Grade | Percent |
|-------|-------------|
| A | 89.5 – 100 |
| B | 79.5 – 89.4 |
| C | 69.5- 79.4 |
| D | 59.5 – 69.4 |
| E | 0 – 59.4 |

To estimate your grade during the semester, you can use the following formula:

$$(0.8 \times \text{Exam average}) + (0.2 \times \text{Homework Average [including discussion section attendance]})$$

It will be your responsibility to keep track of your scores on Blackboard. Be sure to keep copies of all of your graded assignments in case any discrepancies arise. If you notice that a score has been incorrectly entered into Blackboard, you must show the original paper with the

correct grade to your TA by Monday of finals week. If you are unable to produce the graded work, you will receive the grade that appears in Blackboard.

CALENDAR OF MAJOR COURSE EVENTS AND DEADLINES

| <i>Week/Day/Date</i> | <i>Course Event</i> |
|---------------------------|---------------------|
| Week 3, Friday 9 Sept | Homework 1 Due |
| Week 5, Monday 19 Sept | EXAM 1 |
| Week 5, Friday 23 Sept | Homework 2 Due |
| Week 7, Friday 7 Oct | Homework 3 Due |
| Week 9, Monday 17 Oct | EXAM 2 |
| Week 9, Friday 21 Oct | Homework 4 Due |
| Week 11, Friday 4 Nov | Homework 5 Due |
| Week 13, Friday 18 Nov | Homework 6 Due |
| Week 15, Wednesday 30 Nov | EXAM 3 |
| Week 16, TBD | Final EXAM |

UIC RESOURCES

If you find yourself having difficulty with the course material or any other difficulties in your student life, don't hesitate to ask for help! Come to me, or if it is about an issue beyond this class, please contact your college advisors, or get help from any number of other support services on campus. You can get a referral to the right place, or help on the spot, from concerned advisor in the Undergraduate Success Center (USC) at usc@uic.edu.

The Writing Center, located in Grant Hall 105, offers one-on-one consultation with student writers who need help developing ideas, or need advice, guidance or additional instruction on any aspects of writing in any class. Tutors are prepared to spend fifty minutes per appointment, and there is no limit to the number of tutoring sessions you can have each semester. Make an appointment and be on time! Bring the paper on which you're working, as well as any related drafts or notes, and information about the assignment. For an appointment, call the Writing Center at (312) 413-2206, or stop by room 105 of Grant Hall. Visit the Writing Center website at www.uic.edu/depts/engl/writing for more information.

Public Computer Labs are available throughout campus where you may write and/or print out your work. For a list of labs and the hours they're open, go to www.acc.uic.edu/plabs. NOTE: Do not wait until the last minute to print out papers. Sometimes labs have long lines of students waiting for access.

The Academic Center for Excellence can help if you feel you need more individualized instruction in reading and/or writing, study skills, time management, etc. Phone: (312) 413-0031.

Counseling Services are available for all UIC students. You may seek free and confidential services from the Counseling Center www.counseling.uic.edu. The Counseling Center is located in the Student Services Building; you may contact them at (312) 996-3490. In addition to offering counseling services, the Counseling Center also operates the InTouch Crisis Hotline

from 6:00 p.m.-10:30 p.m. They offer support and referrals to callers, as well as telephone crisis interventions; please call (312) 996-5535.

Tentative schedule

The following pages contain a listing of topics and assigned readings. All readings will come from the Graziano & Raulin textbook. Students are expected to have read the required readings for the week each topic is covered.

Note: This topic schedule is **tentative**. Topics may take more or less time to cover depending on class understanding of various topics. It is your responsibility to track these changes.

Note that even if no homework is due, you have a discussion section every Friday unless indicated otherwise.

| Week # | Date | G & R Chapter | Topic |
|--------|--------|---------------|--|
| 1 | M 8/22 | CH 1 | Introduction |
| | W 8/24 | | Science and Psychology |
| | F 8/26 | | **No Discussion Section 8/26 |
| 2 | M 8/29 | CH 2, 3 | The research process |
| | W 8/31 | | Developing Research Questions & Hypotheses |
| | F 9/2 | | Discussion Section |
| 3 | M 9/5 | CH 2, 3 | ** No Class 9/5 – Labor Day |
| | W 9/7 | | Research Ethics |
| | F 9/9 | | Discussion Section: Homework 1 Due |
| 4 | M 9/12 | CH 4 | Data and Measurement |
| | W 9/14 | | Data and Measurement |
| | F 9/16 | | Discussion section |
| 5 | M 9/19 | CH 5 | EXAM 1 – Monday, September 21 |
| | W 9/21 | | Numerical Description of Behavior |
| | F 9/23 | | Discussion Section: Homework 2 Due |
| 6 | M 9/26 | CH 5 | Numerical Description of Behavior |
| | W 9/28 | | Numerical Description of Behavior |
| | F 9/30 | | Discussion section |
| 7 | M 10/3 | CH 5 | Numerical Description of Behavior |

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| | W 10/5 F 10/7 | | Inferential Statistics Discussion Section: Homework 3 Due |
| 8 | M 10/10 W 10/12 F 10/14 | CH 5 | Inferential Statistics Inferential Statistics Discussion Section |
| 9 | M 10/17 W 10/19 F 10/21 | CH 6 | EXAM 2 – Monday, October 19 Low Constraint Methods Discussion Section: Homework 4 Due |
| 10 | M 10/24 W 10/26 F 10/28 | CH 7, 8 | Correlational and Differential Methods Hypothesis Testing Discussion Section |
| 11 | M 10/31 W 11/2 F 11/4 | 8, 9 | Threats to Validity Controlling Threats to Validity Discussion Section: Homework 5 Due |
| 12 | M 11/7 W 11/9 F 11/11 | CH 10, 11 | Single Variable, Independent-Group Designs Within and Matched Subjects Designs Discussion Section |
| 13 | M 11/14 W 11/16 F 11/18 | CH 12 | Factorial Research Designs Factorial Research Designs Discussion Section: Homework 6 Due |
| 14 | M 11/21 W 11/23 F 11/25 | CH 13 | Field Research ** No Class 11/23 - Thanksgiving ** No Discussion section 11/27 - Thanksgiving |
| 15 | M 11/28 W 11/30 F 12/2 | --- | Final Remarks EXAM 3 – Wednesday, November 30 Discussion Section |
| Final Exams | TBD | --- | FINAL EXAM – TBD |