**PSCH 242**

**Introduction to Research in Psychology**

**3 Credit Hours**

**Spring 2017**

**Prerequisites: PSCH 100**

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| **Instructor:** Tim George | **CRN:** Lecture: 36843 Discussion: 36844 |
| **Office:** 1029 BSB | **Meeting times:** Lecture: M/W 10-10:50 am,  Discussion: F 9-9:50 am |
| **E-mail:** tgeorg7@uic.edu | **Class location:** Lecture: Taft Hall 207  Discussion: BSB 1076 |
| **Office hours:** Tuesday 10-11, or whenever my door is open, or by appointment | |

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| **Course Description, Goals, and Objectives**  Welcome to Research Methods! I am excited to have the opportunity to teach this course for you this semester.  The goal of this course is to introduce you to the way psychological scientists think about human thought and behavior, while teaching you the basics of conducting and evaluating research. You will learn how the scientific method is used to answer important questions about many areas of psychology including cognitive, emotional, clinical, social, personality, developmental, and many other social science disciplines.  I want you to come out of this course with an understanding and appreciation of the research process, and with the skills needed to be a critical consumer of research. Although research does require a lot of rigorous and logical thinking, it also involves exploration of ideas, innovation, and even creativity. Therefore, I also hope this course will also be an enjoyable experience for you. Perhaps some of you will even be motivated to pursue a career in research.  I recognize that not all of you will remain in the field of psychology and that some of you are not psychology majors. However, this course will still provide you with valuable critical thinking skills that are relevant for your own field, future jobs, and day-to-day life. |

**COURSE MATERIALS**

**Required Texts**

* Morling, B. (2015) *Research methods in psychology: Evaluating a world of information*. New York: Norton.
  + I have put a copy of this book on reserve in the library.

**COURSE FORMAT**

This course will be a mixture of lecture and discussion. Generally, you can expect that I will lecture on the content of the course on Mondays and Wednesdays, while Fridays will serve as the discussion section. Although I will also lead the discussion section, this is meant to be more interactive and activity-based than the lecture. These discussions will often serve as “workshops” for the final papers. I will leave some flexibility in the distinction between lecture and discussion – that is, there will sometimes be activities during lecture, and sometimes I will lecture in discussion.

COURSE POLICIES

Attendance Policy

A large portion of what you learn will come from the lecture, and the textbook serves to reinforce the lecture – not replace it. Therefore, a portion of your grade in this course comes from attendance (this means you get points just for showing up!). I ask that you show up on time for all lectures. I allow three unexcused absences.

Policy for Missed or Late Work/Exams

In general, I will not accept late work unless there is an emergency. However, I am aware of the stress associated with juggling multiple deadlines. With this in mind, I will allow ONE late paper that you may turn in up to three days past the original due date, no questions asked.

Additionally, you may drop your lowest exam score. If you miss an exam, that exam will count as your lowest exam score.

Electronic Communication

I encourage you to e-mail me with questions or concerns. To make this easier, please include “PSCH 242” in the subject line of your email and make your question specific. If you have more general or broad questions, it is probably best to meet with me in person. I will try my best to respond to you quickly, however, I can only guarantee a response within 24 hours.

**Academic Integrity**

All work should be your own. You are allowed, and even encouraged, to seek feedback from others, but all the writing you submit should be your own. Plagiarism is representing the words or ideas of others as your own, without crediting the source, and thus also includes copying or paraphrasing from your classmates or papers on the Internet. Major writing assignments will be submitted electronically via **SafeAssign** to automatically screen for potentially plagiarized material and ensure academic honesty. Familiarize yourself with violations of academic honesty and the student disciplinary policy at <http://dos.uic.edu/conductforstudents.shtml>. You can find a number of principles, policies, and advice about crediting others and avoiding plagiarism at that website as well as at <http://edelberg.people.uic.edu/crediting_others/index.htm>.

Any form of plagiarism or cheating on assignments, papers or tests (misrepresentation of another's work or answers as your own) will not be tolerated.  Students who are found to have plagiarized work or cheat on any assignment will be subject to various disciplinary actions including a failing grade on the particular assignment, failure of the entire course, and possible expulsion from the University

**RELIGIOUS HOLIDAYS**

Students who wish to observe their religious holidays should notify me **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, you should notify me at least five days in advance of the date when you will be absent. I will make every reasonable effort to honor the request, not penalize you for missing class, and if an exam or assignment is due during the absence, I will make arrangements for you to make it up.

**DISABILITY ACCOMMODATION**

The University of Illinois at Chicago is committed to maintaining a barrier-free environment so that students with disabilities can fully access programs, courses, services, and activities at UIC. Students with disabilities who require accommodations for access to and/or participation in this course are welcome. You may register with the Disability Resource Center (DRC). You may contact DRC at 312-413-2183 (v) or 312-413-0123 (TTY) and consult the following:

<http://www.uic.edu/depts/oaa/disability_resources/faq/accommodations.html>.

**ASSESSMENT & GRADING**

**Exams = 30%** (3 highest exams at 10% each)

Exams will consist of multiple-choice questions that may be drawn from either lecture or assigned reading. There will be a total of 4 exams: 3 exams during the semester, and 1 cumulative final during finals week. Of the 4 exams, the exam with the lowest grade will be dropped. If you miss an exam, that exam will become your dropped exam.

The material for each exam will likely build off of material from a previous exam. If you have difficulty on one exam, you should re-review that material so that your difficulty doesn’t return on later tests.

**Attendance = 10%**

Attending both lecture and discussion is important for learning the concepts in this class. Therefore I ask that you attend regularly.

**Activities/Assignments = 30%**

There will be both in-class and take-home assignments to encourage your engagement with the course. These activities may include quizzes, group discussion, or homework assignments that will be assigned throughout the semester. There will be 13 total activities with the highest 10 counting towards your final grade (e.g. you can miss up to three activities before it begins to affect your grade). Due to this drop policy, there will be no make up activities/assignments. Don’t be alarmed by the fact that there are 13 assignments! These will not be extremely challenging or time-consuming – rather they are meant as exercises that will help reinforce concepts as we move through the semester.

**Research Proposal = 30%** (components due throughout semester = 10% + final paper = 20%)

By the end of the semester, you will be expected to have developed a research proposal about a topic in psychology from a list of 9 topics (or one of your own choosing, pending my approval). This proposal will include a title page, abstract, introduction/background review, proposed methodology, and predicted results. Pieces of the project will be due throughout the semester, and you will receive feedback on each component of the project. We will discuss the research proposal in depth, and further information about each of the components of this project will be provided as they are assigned. Assignments are to be submitted to SafeAssign, and a hard copy brought to class.

**COURSE CALENDAR**

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| **Date** | **Topic** | **Reading** | **Assignment** |
| Week 1 | | | |
| 1/9 | Introduction | Ch. 1 p. 3-13  Ch. 2 p. 23-38 |  |
| 1/11 | Is Psychology a Science / Scientific Method |
| 1/13 | Discussion: Overview of the Research Proposal |  |  |
| Week 2 | | | |
| 1/16 | No Class, MLK |  |  |
| 1/18 | Three Claims in Research  Discussion: Three Claims in Research | Ch. 3 p. 55-78 |  |
| 1/20 |
| Week 3 | | | |
| 1/23 | Measurement, reliability, and validity | Ch. 5 |  |
| 1/25 |
| 1/27 | Discussion: Forming a good research question + operational definitions |  |  |
| Week 4 | | | |
| 1/30 | Surveys, observation and sampling + Central tendency | Ch. 6 p.157-166, p 168-176.  Ch. 7 p. 181-188,  Statistics p. 444-446 |  |
| 2/1 |
| 2/3 | Discussion: Literature review |  | Research Question Draft due |
| Week 5 | | | |
| 2/6 | Catch-up and Review |  |  |
| 2/8 | **EXAM #1** | | |
| 2/10 | Discussion: How to read articles |  | Revised Research Question & References Draft due |
| Week 6 | | | |
| 2/13 | Experimental methods: Independent Groups Designs, + Variability | Ch. 10 + p. 446-449 |  |
| 2/15 |
| 2/17 | Discussion: In-class experiment |  |  |
| Week 7 | | | |
| 2/20 | Experimental Methods:  Within-Groups Designs | Ch. 10 |  |
| 2/22 |
| 2/24 | Discussion: Intros + random assignment |  | Revised References due |
| Week 8 | | | |
| 2/27 | Understanding Confounds/Internal Validity | Ch. 11 |  |
| 3/1 |
| 3/3 | Discussion |  | Title Page Draft & Intro. Draft due |

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| Week 9 | | | | |
| 3/6 | Inferential Statistics, Type I/Type II error | p. 463-482 | |  |
| 3/8 |
| 3/10 | Discussion: t-tests |  | |  |
| Week 10 | | | | |
| 3/13 | Catch-up and Review |  | |  |
| 3/15 | **EXAM #2** | | | |
| 3/17 | Discussion: Writing/displaying results |  | | Revised Title Page & Revised Intro due |
| Spring Break 3/20 – 3/24 | | | | |
| Week 11 | | | | |
| 3/27 | Complex Designs: Interactions | Ch. 12 | |  |
| 3/29 |
| 3/31 | Discussion |  | | Methods & Predicted Results Draft due |
| Week 12 | | | | |
| 4/3 | Quasi-experimental / small-N studies | Ch. 13 | |  |
| 4/5 |
| 4/7 | Discussion |  | |  |
| Week 13 | | | | |
| 4/10 | External Validity | Ch. 14 | |  |
| 4/12 |
| 4/14 | Discussion |  | | Revised Methods & Predicted Results due |
| Week 14 | | | | |
| 4/17 | Ethics and other considerations | Ch. 4 | |  |
| 4/19 |
| 4/21 | Discussion |  | |  |
| Week 15 | | | | |
| 4/24 | Catch-up and Review |  | |  |
| 4/26 | **EXAM #3** | | | |
| 4/28 | No discussion | |  | Final Proposal Due |
| **FINAL EXAM DATE TBD** | | | | |

**UIC-WIDE INFORMATION**

**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.

See also:

**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](http://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.accc.uic.edu/pclabs>. 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. Student Services Building, 1200 W Harrison Street, Suite 2900, Phone: (312) 413-0031.

UIC is committed to the most fundamental principles of academic freedom, equality of opportunity, and human dignity involving students and employees. Freedom from discrimination is a foundation for all decision making at UIC. Students are encouraged to study the University's “[Nondiscrimination Statement](http://www.uic.edu/depts/oar/campus_policies/nondiscrimination_statement.html)”. Students are also urged to read the document “[Public Formal Grievance Procedures](http://www.uic.edu/depts/oar/campus_policies/public_grievance_procedures.html)”. Information on these policies and procedures is available on the University web pages of the Office of Access and Equity: [www.uic.edu/depts/oae](http://www.uic.edu/depts/oae).