**PSCH 242 Introduction to Research Methods in Psychology**

**3 Credit Hours**

**Spring 2017**

Instructor: Krista Miller, M.A. Lecture CRN: 38015

Office: BSB 1079 Lecture Class Times: MW 11-11:50

Email: [kmille47@uic.edu](mailto:kmille47@uic.edu) Lecture Classroom: LH 206

Office Hours: M 12-1, Th 2-3

Discussion CRN: 31091

Discussion Class Time: F 1-1:50

Discussion Classroom: LH 315

**Welcome to PSCH 242! I’m excited to be teaching this course this semester!**

**Prerequisites**: Introduction to Psychology (PSCH 100)

**Course Materials**: Cozby, P.C., & Bates, S.C. (2015). *Methods in behavioral research* (12th ed.). New York, NY: McGraw-Hill Education.

**Course Goals**: 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 a) become an informed consumer of research, and b) have the skill set necessary to conduct research.

Upon completion of this course you will learn to assess the strengths and weaknesses of various research strategies so that you will be able to read, evaluate and report on research in the behavioral science literature and in the media. In addition, you will develop a set of research skills that will enable you to formulate a testable research question and design a research study to test your prediction.

**COURSE REQUIREMENTS, METHODS OF EVALUATION, & GRADING POLICIES**

Exams (45%)

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 45% 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. Although 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. This eliminates the need for make-up exams – if you miss the exam (for whatever reason), that exam will be dropped. It also accounts for the fact that everyone can have a bad day. If you are not satisfied with a particular exam score, you always have the option to take the final and potentially boost your grade. 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.

Papers (32%)

There will be three papers over the course of the semester. The papers will be worth 32% of your final grade. See below for paper due dates. Each paper will build off the ones before it and culminate in a full research report due at the end of the semester. The first paper will serve as a draft of the introduction section of your final report and will be worth 10% of your final grade. The second paper will serve as a draft of your methods section and will be worth 7% of your final grade. The final paper is a full research report and will include all elements of a psychological report (introduction, methods, predicted results, and discussion). The final paper will be worth 15% of your final grade.

Writing a research report in a research methods class is important for several reasons. For starters, it is an excellent way to apply all of the knowledge you will have gained throughout the semester. One of the most exciting things about research is getting to design an experiment that tests a question you’re curious about, and, through this class, you will gain the tools necessary to do just that. Your final research report is a way to show-off that knowledge. It will also prepare you for advanced psychology/science-based courses. It may also help you in your future career. For example, in several different industries, you may be asked to write formal reports or even encounter grant proposals at work.

Papers must be typewritten and all pages must be stapled together.

**Homework (18%)**

You will have a total of six homework assignments over the course of the semester. Homework will be worth 18% of your final grade (See below for homework due dates).

Homework that requires written answers must be typewritten. Homework that requires numerical calculations or graphs may be hand written. Be sure to show all your work for each problem that requires written calculations. If your final answer is incorrect it may still be possible to earn partial credit if some parts of the problem were done correctly.

If your assignment is on multiple pages staple the pages together.

Attendance (5%)

Your attendance grade will be based on the percentage of classes (lectures and discussions) you attend. It will also be based on active participation in class. See below (Course Policies) for more detail on active participation. Attendance will be worth 5% of your final grade.

Final Grading

Course grades will be based on exams (45%), papers (32%), homework assignments (18%) and attendance (5%). 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 |
| F | 0-59.4 |

**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, show me the original paper with the correct grade so that I can accurately correct your grade. If you are unable to produce the graded work, you will receive the grade that appears in Blackboard.

COURSE POLICIES

Attendance

Attendance during lectures and discussion section is important and counts toward your final grade. Attendance will be taken at the start of class. If you arrive after attendance is taken, let me know. If lateness becomes a chronic problem, I will need to discuss the issue with you.

Your attendance grade will be based on the percentage of classes (lectures and discussions) you attend. You can miss a total of three classes (Monday/Wednesday/Friday). Your attendance grade will also be based on active participation in class. Active participation involves paying attention to lectures, asking questions, engaging in class discussion and working with group members to solve problems. You cannot be actively participating if you are texting, using your cell phone, or surfing the internet.

Missed or Late Work

All work is due at the beginning of class (with the exception of the final paper) on the dates indicated below. If necessary, however, you may hand in one assignment up to two days late with no questions asked. Please also note that you are welcome to hand work in early if a scheduling conflict prevents you from being in class on the day it is due.

Besides the one “free” late assignment, additional late assignments will be accepted. Additional late assignments will be penalized 10% for each day (up to 24 hours) that they are turned in late.

**Classroom Etiquette**

Appropriate classroom behavior is simply a matter of ***respecting the rights of others*** in class and ***maximizing your own learning***.

Please refrain from using your cell phone during class except in extraordinary circumstances. The use of laptops or tablets for course-related purposes is perfectly fine, but please refrain from non-course-related activities during class. Minimize talking with other students in the course during class, except when directed to discuss as part of the course. Research has shown that distracting yourself by multitasking during class impairs your performance, and it may be disruptive or distracting to other students and is disrespectful to me. Disruptive behavior may result in you being asked to leave the room so that you are not interfering with the learning of other students. It likely goes without saying, but during discussion, please respect others and their opinions, and refrain from discriminatory or hateful speech.

Academic Integrity

*All work should be your own.*

Guidelines Regarding Academic Integrity(*from the UIC Undergraduate Catalog):* As an academic community, the University of Illinois at Chicago is committed to providing an environment in which research, learning, and scholarship can flourish and in which all endeavors are guided by academic and professional integrity. All members of the campus community—students, staff, faculty, administrators—share the responsibility of insuring that these standards are upheld so that such an environment exists. Instances of academic misconduct by students, and as defined herein, shall be handled pursuant to the Student Disciplinary Policy.

Academic dishonesty includes, but is not limited to:

• Cheating: Either intentionally using or attempting to use unauthorized materials,

information, people, or study aids in any academic exercise, or extending to or receiving

any kind of unauthorized assistance on any examination or assignment to or from another

person.

• Fabrication: Knowing or unauthorized falsification, reproduction, lack of attribution, or

invention of any information or citation in an academic exercise.

• Facilitating Academic Dishonesty/Plagiarism: Intentionally or knowingly representing

the words or ideas of another as one’s own in any academic exercise.

• Bribes, Favors, Threats: Bribing or attempting to bribe, promising favors to or making

threats against, any person, with the intention of affecting a record of a grade, grade, or

evaluation of academic performance. Any conspiracy with another person who then takes

or attempts to take action on behalf or at the direction of the student.

• Examination by Proxy: Taking or attempting to take an exam for someone else other

than the student is a violation by both the student enrolled in the course and the proxy or

substitute.

• Grade Tampering: Any unauthorized attempt to change, actual change of, or alteration

of grades or any tampering with grades.

• Non-original Works: Submission or attempt to submit any written work authored, in

whole or part, by someone other than the student.

**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). I’m happy to help you.

**Calendar of Major Course Events and Deadlines**

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| --- | --- |
| ***Week/Day/Date*** | ***Course Event*** |
| Week 2, Friday 1/20 | Homework 1 Due |
| Week 4, Wednesday 2/1 | Homework 2 Due |
| Week 5, Monday 2/6 | Exam 1 |
| Week 6, Friday 2/17 | Homework 3 Due |
| Week 7, Monday 2/20 | Paper 1 Due |
| Week 9, Monday 3/6 | Homework 4 Due |
| Week 10, Wednesday 3/15 | Exam 2 |
| Week 11, Wednesday 3/29 | Paper 2 Due |
| Week 12, Friday 4/7 | Homework 5 Due |
| Week 14, Monday 4/17 | Homework 6 Due |
| Week 15, Monday 4/24 | Exam 3 |
| Finals Week, Sunday 4/30 | Paper 3 Due |
| Finals Week, TBD | Final Exam |

**UIC Resources**

If you find yourself having difficulty with the course material or any other aspect of 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.

**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. Phone: (312) 413-0031. They are located in the Student Services Building, located at 1200 W Harrison Street.

**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 the staff there 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**

*Please note:*“Discussion section” activities will not exclusively be held on Friday classes. Instead Monday, Wednesday and Friday classes will be used for lecture and/or discussion as I see fit.

(subject to change)

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| Week # | Date | Chapter | Topic |
| 1 | M 1/09  W 1/11  F 1/13 | Ch. 1, Appendix A | Introduction  Science and Psychology  Science versus Pseudoscience Activity |
| 2 | **M 1/16**  W 1/18  F 1/20 | Ch. 2 | **\*\*No class – MLK Day\*\***  Research Questions and Hypotheses  Research Question/Literature Review Workshop  **Homework 1 Due** |
| 3 | M 1/23  W 1/25  F 1/27 | Ch. 3, 4 | Ethics  Variables and Operational Definitions  **Research Question and References Due**  Variables and Operational Definitions Activity |
| 4 | M 1/30  W 2/1  F 2/3 | Ch. 4, 5 | Validity and Reliability  Validity and Reliability  **Homework 2 Due**  Validity and Reliability Activity |
| 5 | M 2/6  W 2/8  F 2/10 |  | **Exam 1**  Review Exam 1  Workshop Introduction – Peer Review |
| 6 | M 2/13  W 2/15  F 2/17 | Ch. 6, 7 | Observational Research  Survey Research/Survey Lab Pt. 1  Survey Lab Pt. 2  **Homework 3 Due** |
| 7 | M 2/20  W 2/22  F 2/24 | Ch. 8 | Experimental Design  **Paper 1 Due**  Experimental Design  Experimental Design Activity |
| 8 | M 2/27  W 3/1  F 3/3 | Ch. 9, 10 | Conducting Experiments  Complex Experimental Design  Main Effects and Interactions Activity |
| 9 | M 3/6  W 3/8  F 3/10 | Ch. 11 (pp. 222-231) | Quasi-Experimental Design  **Homework 4 Due**  Workshop Methods Section  Putting it Altogether Activity – Pt. 1 |
| 10 | M 3/13  W 3/15  F 3/17 |  | Putting it Altogether Activity – Pt. 2  **Exam 2**  Review Exam |
| SPRING BREAK | | | |
| 11 | M 3/27  W 3/29  F 3/31 | Ch. 12 | Frequency Distributions  Descriptive Statistics  **Paper 2 Due**  Descriptive Statistics Activity |
| 12 | M 4/3  W 4/5  F 4/7 | Ch. 12, 13 | Correlations  Inferential Statistics: Hypothesis Testing and Prob.  Inferential Statistics Activity: Probability  **Homework 5 Due** |
| 13 | M 4/10  W 4/12  F 4/14 | Ch. 13 | Inferential Statistics: t-test and F-test  Inferential Statistics: Calculating t-tests  Selecting the Appropriate Statistical Test Activity |
| 14 | M 4/17  W 4/19  F 4/21 | Ch. 14 | Generalizability  **Homework 6 Due**  The Importance of Replications  Catch-up Day |
| 15 | M 4/24  W 4/26  F 4/28 |  | **Exam 3**  Review Exam 3  Review for Final/Final Paper Workshop |
| FINALS WEEK | TBD | FINAL EXAM – TBD  Final Paper Due Sunday (4/30) by midnight | |