

**Laboratory in Social Psychology**  
PSCH 313  
Spring 2021  
Mondays and Wednesdays, 1:00 – 2:50 pm  
Call Number: 27519, 26231  
4 Credit Hours

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**Professor**

Ed Sargis, Ph.D.

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Drop-in Hours: By appointment. On class days when we are not having formal class meetings, I will typically be available during class time to answer questions. Outside of class time, because I am stuck at home and only able to meet via Zoom or Blackboard Collaborate, I have much greater availability than I normally would. Please **DO NOT HESITATE** to make an appointment with me if you have any questions about your projects or the class.

**Teaching Assistant**

Kathryn Howard | [khowar24@uic.edu](mailto:khowar24@uic.edu)

**Course Structure**

This is an entirely online course that will incorporate both synchronous and asynchronous instruction. There will be days you are expected to attend online class sessions during our regular class time – either with the whole class or with smaller “working groups” of students. There will also be class sessions that are flexible and you will have class content in the form of narrated PowerPoints to review and/or an exercise to complete. Dates will be outlined in the course schedule at the end of this document.

**Technology Requirements.**

For the most part, the technology needs of the course are basic. The vast majority of coursework can be completed on a basic laptop or tablet with an internet connection. We will be using SPSS for a portion of the course work. This may require you to install software on a laptop or other device that will enable you to access a virtual (web-based) version of SPSS (further information will be provided).

In addition, when we have our class meetings, I ask that you, if possible, have access to a webcam for any live class sessions. I understand that some people are uncomfortable with this (I am one of those people), but it helps tremendously to see others for the limited times we will meet as a class or in smaller groups.

Please contact UIC Technology Solutions (<https://accs.uic.edu/>) to request and borrow a laptop or be assigned a hotspot for the semester if you do not have the required hardware and internet capabilities.

**Objectives**

Although the objective of many courses is to introduce you to *what* psychologists have learned about personality and social behavior, the objective of this course is to expose you to *how* psychologists learn about personality and social behavior. The assignments, projects, readings, lectures, and discussion topics are all aimed at deepening your

understanding of the research process, and how this process can inform our understanding of human nature. By the end of the semester you will have learned how to conduct your own studies in social-personality psychology and effectively communicate the results. In addition, you will be better equipped to critically evaluate the work of other researchers.

### **Prerequisites**

Students should already have credit for PSCH 100 (Introduction to Psychology), PSCH 242 (Introduction to Research in Psychology), and PSCH 343 (Statistical Methods in Psychological Science). In addition, you should have credit for or be concurrently enrolled in PSCH 312 (Social Psychology). If you do not have prerequisites, you will be dropped from the course.

### **Textbooks**

There is no required text for the course. Occasional readings will be posted on Blackboard.

### **Course Communication**

Blackboard will serve as the communication hub for the course. Each week I will send an email via Blackboard with information about the week's activities. The information in these emails can also be found in the "Weekly Content" area of Blackboard for the corresponding week. In the weekly message, I will indicate and provide links to any video lectures you are responsible for viewing for the week. I will also remind you of any activities and assignments due for the week (more information below). Copies of any assignments will be provided in the week's folder. I will also include any special announcements. It is your responsibility to read these weekly messages to stay informed about the course material.

### **Course Requirements**

**Research Participation Recruitment.** By enrolling in the course, you are agreeing to help recruit participants for class projects. Primarily we will be asking you to use your own social networks (e.g., Facebook) to recruit research participants for your studies. You do not need to have Kardashian-level social media contacts. Even simple email requests of a few family members and friends will be enough if everyone in the class contributes to this process.

**Lectures and Readings.** This is a lab course. There will be relatively few traditional lectures; that is, little time will be devoted to the simple presentation of material by your instructor. There will be a few assigned readings. The assigned readings that we do have will primarily come from articles posted to the course Blackboard site. You will also have to do some supplementary readings to design and report your research projects.

**Class Assessments.** Your course grade will be based on the following components:

**Class Participation.** To a greater extent than most other classes, this course requires you to be an active participant. In an on-line course, the meaning of participation can vary according to what we are doing each week. Some weeks it will be based on attending organized class meetings via Zoom. Other weeks you will have to watch videos and/or complete a brief exercise. In these cases, your

completion and submission of the exercises will constitute your participation for the week. Finally, in other weeks you will have to complete exercises and/or discussion with smaller groups of students. We will also be recording your participation in these sessions.

**“Skill Builder” Assignments.** Throughout the course, we will complete several assignments designed to hone your basic research and writing skills. These will include things like developing a questionnaire and analyzing data in SPSS. Assignments that include a formal, written component will be graded on a standard percentage scale based on the quality of the completed work. Assignments to be graded pass/fail will be aggregated at the end of the semester and you will receive a total grade based on the percentage of these assignments you complete. At the end of the semester, the pass/fail total will be averaged with each of the individual assignments to determine the total percentage you will earn for your “Skill Builder” assignments.

**Research Projects.** Because this is a laboratory course in psychology, emphasis will be placed on the quality of your research projects and the papers that result from them. Note that your research ideas and surveys need to be approved by either the instructor or TA. Because this is a course, we do not need to seek IRB approval for our class projects. However we must verify that any work you do with subjects meets ethical standards. **Therefore, if you collect any data using an unapproved idea and/or unapproved measure(s), that project will receive a zero for any subsequent work you turn in (e.g., papers, presentations).** Make sure you have approval before moving forward with any project.

**Class Research Project.** For this project we will conduct a study as a class working on a common research question. You will each independently write a separate APA style paper (5-10 pages of text) describing the background, methods, and results of our study. More details will be discussed in the first few weeks of class.

**Experimental Research Project.** The final research project will be completed in small groups. The projects will be based on general research questions we provide. For this project you must manipulate an independent variable and measure a dependent variable. Your group will be required to put together an APA-style research poster presentation based on your research. In addition, each of you will be expected to independently write and turn in a final APA-style research paper describing the study.

**Feedback and Revision.** Because this course fulfills the writing in the discipline for the psychology major, writing will comprise a large part of your course grade. For several assignments over the course of the semester (e.g., Article Summary, Class Research Project Paper, Experimental Research Project Paper), you will receive feedback on your writing with suggestions on how to improve it. You will receive credit for doing this as a Skill Builder assignment. You should also incorporate this feedback to help you earn additional points on the papers in which feedback is available.

**Independence of Writing and Group Work.** I believe that people learn how to do research more effectively when working with others. Moreover, the vast majority of

researchers do their work in collaboration with others. However, it is extremely important that any written work you turn in be entirely yours. You are permitted to analyze and discuss the interpretation of your results with your labmates and fellow group members. Beyond this point, any written work you turn in must be your own. If we discover overlap in the actual words written between you and your lab partners (which is surprisingly easy to detect), you will fail the assignment with a zero and will receive no opportunity for revision (if it is an initial draft). This will put you at serious risk of failing the course. Please trust me when I say that it would be so much better for your grade to put in an honest effort to write your papers in your own words and do poorly than get caught borrowing words from another. Also note that these consequences apply to everyone involved (i.e., the person supplying the words and the person plagiarizing). If you have any questions about how to express an idea in your own words, never hesitate to contact us. We are more than happy to help you with this issue. (Please also see the discussion of academic dishonesty below.)

## Grading

10% Attendance and Participation  
25% Class Research Project Paper  
10% Experimental Research Study Presentation  
25% Experimental Research Study Paper  
30% "Skill Builder" Assignments

**Late Work.** It is essential that you turn your work in on time. Any assignments turned in late will be penalized 10% per day that they are late (effective 1 minute after the date and time it is due). For papers where a revision is allowed, any points deducted for lateness will carry over to the evaluation of the final draft.

## Additional Notes

### Academic Integrity and Online Classes.

This is a highly collaborative course in which I will encourage you to work with your fellow students. While you will be working with others on many aspects of your assignments and projects, it is essential that any written work you turn in be your own. Please understand that plagiarism or any other type of academic dishonesty will not be tolerated. **If it is determined that any work you turned in resulted from a lapse of academic integrity you will fail the course.** If you have any questions about how to properly cite someone else's ideas, you are encouraged to see me or your TA in advance of a deadline for help on how to do this. In all cases I find of students who violate academic integrity policies, I will file a complaint with the Dean of Students, who will place a notice about the incident in your student file and you will receive a penalty that will affect your grade in the course. There will be no exceptions to this policy.

Also note that lapses in academic integrity often involves at least two students. To be clear, any student who is a party to academic dishonesty will be subject to the penalties outlined above.

Please see the following for additional information about academic dishonesty and student disciplinary procedures.

[https://dos.uic.edu/wp-content/uploads/sites/262/2020/01/DOS\\_Student-Disciplinary-Policy-2020.pdf](https://dos.uic.edu/wp-content/uploads/sites/262/2020/01/DOS_Student-Disciplinary-Policy-2020.pdf)

## **Emails**

I do my best to respond to student emails in a timely manner. I read every email I receive, but sometimes I am unable to respond to students as quickly as I would like. If I do not respond to an email question within 48 hours, please resend me your email.

**It will be your responsibility to keep track of your scores in Blackboard.** 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.

## **Disability Accommodations**

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, but must be registered with the Disability Resource Center (DRC). You may contact DRC at 312-413-2183 (v) or 773-649-4535 (VP/Relay) and consult the following: <http://drc.uic.edu/guide-to-accommodations>.

## **Course Communication Guidelines (Netiquette)**

Netiquette is a set of rules for behaving properly online. Much of our communication in this course will take place in the forums and through email. Here are some guidelines for online communication in this course:

- Be sensitive to different cultural and linguistic backgrounds, as well as different political and religious beliefs.
- Use good taste when composing your responses. Swearing and profanity should be avoided. Also consider that slang terms can be misunderstood or misinterpreted.
- Don't use all capital letters when composing your responses. This can be considered "shouting" on the Internet and is regarded as impolite or aggressive. It can also be stressful on the eye when trying to read your message.
- Be respectful of others' views and opinions. Avoid "flaming" (publicly attacking or insulting) others.
- Be careful when using acronyms. If you use an acronym it is best to spell out its meaning first, then put the acronym in parentheses afterward, for example: Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs). After that you can use the acronym freely throughout your message.
- Use good grammar and spelling, and avoid using text messaging shortcuts.
- In emails, always identify yourself and what class and section you are in. It is a good practice to put your course and section in the subject line. This helps your instructor identify course related emails.

**Religious Holidays:** Students who wish to observe their religious holidays must notify me by the tenth day of the semester they will be absent unless their religious holiday is observed on or before the tenth day. In such cases, the student shall notify me at least five days in advance of the date when he or she will be absent.

**Incomplete Grades:** University policy on incomplete grades is very strict and I follow that policy. I will grant an incomplete grade only under the most extreme circumstances. Do not request an incomplete unless the following conditions apply (taken from the undergraduate catalogue):

Course work is incomplete when a student fails to submit all required assignments or is absent from the final examination; incomplete course work will normally result in a failing grade. The IN (incomplete) grade may be assigned in lieu of a grade only when all the following conditions are met: (a) the student has been making satisfactory progress in the course; (b) the student is unable to complete all course work due to unusual circumstances that are beyond personal control and are acceptable to the instructor; (c) the student presents these reasons prior to the time that the final grade roster is due. The instructor must submit an Incomplete report with the final grade roster for the IN to be recorded. This report is a contract for the student to complete the course work with that instructor or one designated by the department executive officer in the way described and by the time indicated on the report. In resolving the IN, the student may not register for the course a second time, but must follow the procedures detailed on the report. An IN must be removed by the end of the student's first semester or summer session in residence subsequent to the occurrence, or, if not in residence, no later than one calendar year after the occurrence. When the student submits the work, the instructor will grade it and change the IN to the appropriate grade. If an undergraduate fails to meet the stated conditions, the instructor will assign an E for the final grade.

Note that you will be graded according to the grading criteria listed above. **Please do not ask to be bumped up to the next highest grade at the end of the semester** (e.g., ask me for a C in the course when you have a 67.7% in the course). I will not do this. The number one factor that puts students in this situation is missed assignments and quizzes. I am unable to make exceptions for one student that I am not able to make for others in the class.

With this said, **if you have any problems or concerns throughout the class, please come see us during our office hours, before it is too late at the end of the semester.** I and the TAs are happy to work with you during the semester to help facilitate your understanding of the course material. Please use office hours whenever possible, but we are willing to make appointments if your schedule makes it impossible to make our office hours.

## (Extremely) Tentative Topic and Attendance Schedule

I have done my best to provide a schedule that is firm. However, changes can happen. I will communicate any changes in the weekly email to the class. However, it is your responsibility to keep track of these changes and be as flexible as you can.

Please note which days you are expected to attend. On many of these days, you will need to have completed an exercise (please see the Homework Schedule below). It is important for classes on these dates. I will also do my best to remind you in the weekly message to the class.

<b>Week</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Activity or Topic</b>	<b>Attendance Required?</b>
1	1/11	Course Orientation (Read Syllabus, See if we can get SPSS running)	No
1	1/13	Welcome	Yes
2	1/18	No Class MLK Holiday	No
2	1/20	Methods Overview	No
3	1/25	Discuss Eskine et al.	Yes
3	1/27	Statistics Overview; Begin SPSS Assignment	No
4	2/1	Work on SPSS Assignment	No
4	2/3	Fix a Problematic Results Section	Yes
5	2/8	Identifying Confounds	No
5	2/10	Limitations, Future Directions for a study.	Yes
6	2/15	Develop a questionnaire Assignment Overview	No
6	2/17	Brainstorm and discuss questions.	Yes
7	2/22	Introduction to Qualtrics	No
7	2/24	Create a Survey	No
8	3/1	Class Project Paper study Overview	No
8	3/3	Take a pass at stimulus materials	Yes
9	3/8	Take a pass at dependent variable items.	Yes
9	3/10	Work on Class Project Intro and Methods	No
10	3/15	Analyze Class Project Data	Yes
10	3/17	Identify limitations and future directions, for Class Project Study.	Yes
SB	3/22	No Classes – Spring Break	
11	3/29	Randomizing Stimuli in Qualtrics	No
11	3/31	Introduce Experimental Research Project	Yes
12	4/5	Develop Experimental Research Project Ideas	Yes
12	4/7	Prepare stimulus materials/ Measures	Yes
13	4/12	Prepare stimulus materials/ Measures	Yes
13	4/14	Program Surveys in Qualtrics	Yes
14	4/19	Finalize/Field Surveys	Yes

14	4/21	Finalize/Field Surveys	Yes
15	4/26	Analyze Final Project Data	<b>Yes</b>
15	4/28	Analyze Final Project Data	<b>Yes</b>
Finals	5/3	Turn in Final Papers, Wednesday May 5	

### (Extremely) Tentative Homework Schedule

I have done my best to provide a homework schedule so that you can plan. However, changes can happen and probably will. I will communicate any changes in the weekly email to the class. Note that I will also include more details about what each assignment will entail as we move forward. With the exceptions of the Class Project Paper, Experimental Project Paper, and Experimental Project Presentation, the assignments are “Skill Builder” assignments.

Finally, note that many of these assignments will incorporate or summarize what you will be doing “in class”. So many of these assignments will have some class time set aside for you to work on them.

Week	Date	Homework
2	1/20	Read Eskine et al. and Review Discussion Questions for Monday 1/25.
3	1/25	Eskine et al. Article Discussion Questions due Monday 1/25 <b>BY CLASS TIME.</b>
3	1/25	Find your own research article for Article Summary Assignment for Monday 2/1
4	2/1	Article Summary Assignment due Monday 2/1.
4	2/1	Find 3 Articles for Article Integration Paper (Due 2/12)
5	2/8	Fixing a Problematic Results Section Write-up. Due Monday 2/8.
5	2/12	Article Integration Paper due Friday 2/12
6	2/15	SPSS Assignment Due Monday 2/15.
6	2/17	Developing Survey Questions due Wednesday 2/17 <b>BY CLASS TIME.</b>
7	2/26	Create a Qualtrics Survey Exercise Due Friday 2/26.
8	3/3	Possible Stimulus Materials for Class Project Study. Due Wednesday 3/3 <b>BY CLASS TIME.</b>
9	3/5	Aggregating Variables and Alpha Calculating Exercise Due by Friday 3/5.
10	3/15	Draft of Class Project Paper Introduction and Methods due Monday 3/15.
11	3/29	Draft of Class Project Paper Results and Discussion Sections Due Monday 3/29.
11	3/31	Choose a research question/ Start literature search. Due 4/2.
11	4/2	Randomize Stimuli In Qualtrics Exercise. Due Friday 4/2.
12	4/9	Complete Class Project Papers Due Friday 4/9.
13	4/12	Final Stimulus Materials Due Monday 4/12.
13	4/14	Draft of Final Project Introduction and Methods Due Wednesday 4/14.
15	4/30	Final Project Research Presentations Due Friday 5/30.
Finals	5/3	Final Papers Due Wednesday May 5