

Introduction to Research Methods

(PSY 234.03)

3 Credit Hours

Spring 2008

MWF 8 – 9 a.m.

AB4 205

Instructor: Drew Curtis, MA

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Office Hours: MWF 11-12

Required Text: Myers, A. & Hansen, C. (2006). *Experimental Psychology* (6th Ed.). Belmont, CA: Thomson Learning Academic..

Recommended Text: *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association* (5th Ed., 2001). Washington, DC: American Psychological Association.

Prerequisite: Must be taken with PSY 214 (Research Methods Lab)

Course Description: This course is designed to introduce the student to the scientific method in general and research methodology in psychology in particular through laboratory and field experiments. This course will primarily consist of lectures and reading assignments dealing with research methodology and the applications of these methodologies to various research areas in psychology. This course is designed to accompany PSY 214 (Introduction to Research Methods Laboratory). PSY 214 will provide you with hands-on experience with all aspects of psychological research including the collection, analysis, and reporting of behavioral data. Thus, you will learn more about how research methodology works in this course and then apply that knowledge in PSY 214.

Course Objectives: The course objectives include:

- Students should gain an understanding of the scientific process involved in conducting psychological research.
- Students should be able to conduct and understand research in the discipline of psychology.
- Students should learn the skills necessary to communicate the results of psychological research.
- Students should learn to apply the course material to improve critical thinking and problem solving skills.
- Students should learn specific skills and competencies needed by psychology professionals.
- Students should learn the skills necessary to find and use scientific resources to answer psychological questions and solve problems.

Instructional Format: The class format will include lectures and group discussions.

Exams: There will be four exams worth 100 points each (3 exams and a comprehensive final). **Make-up exams will be given in RARE cases (and the make-up exam may be**

all essay). Exams will be comprised of multiple choice, true/false, and essay/short answer questions. The exams will be based on class lectures and material from the textbook. The final exam must be taken at the time designated by the University or prior arrangements must be made with the instructor.

Research Proposal: You will take a topic of interest to you and design a study to learn more about that subject, using all the skills and tools that are available. **Although this proposal will count as one exam score and is equal to only 20% of the course grade, you must complete this project in order to earn a passing grade.** You must also be enrolled in the laboratory class that accompanies this course. The lab instructor will announce the due date for this project. All topics must be approved before you begin.

Grading: There are a possible 500 points available in the course (3 exams, final, research proposal). Your grade will be based upon the following schema:

Research Proposal = 100 pts.	A = 90-100%
Exam 1 = 100 pts.	B = 80-89%
Exam 2 = 100 pts.	C = 70-79%
Exam 3 = 100 pts.	D = 60-69%
Final Exam = 100 pts.	F = 0-59%

Attendance Policy: Attendance is expected and will be recorded. Attending class is important to pass the course and to keep up with the course material. Attendance will be considered in cases of borderline grades. The university's full attendance policy can be found at the following website:

<http://www.shsu.edu/administrative/faculty/sectionb.html#attend>

Syllabus Guidelines: You may find online a more detailed of the following policies. These guidelines will also provide you with a link to the specific university policy or procedure: <http://www.shsu.edu/syllabus>

Academic Dishonesty: All students are expected to engage in all academic pursuits in a manner that is above reproach. Students are expected to maintain complete honesty and integrity in their academic experiences both in and out of the classroom. Any student found guilty of dishonesty in any phase of academic work will be subject to disciplinary action. The University and its official representatives may initiate disciplinary proceedings against a student accused of any form of academic dishonesty including, but not limited to, cheating on an examination, plagiarism, collusion and the abuse of resource materials.

Classroom rules of conduct: Students are expected to assist in maintaining a classroom environment that is conducive to learning. Please do not talk, send, or receive messages on cell phones or other electronic devices when in the classroom. Respect your classmates by muting your cell phone. It is inappropriate to speak while others are speaking. Inappropriate behavior in the classroom shall result in a directive to leave class.

Students who are especially disruptive also may be reported to the Dean of Students for disciplinary action in accordance with university policy.

Disabilities: It is the policy of Sam Houston State University that individuals otherwise qualified shall not be excluded, solely by reason of their disability, from participation in any academic program of the university. Further, they shall not be denied the benefits of these programs nor shall they be subjected to discrimination. Students with disabilities that might affect their academic performance are expected to visit with the Office of Services for Students with Disabilities located in the Counseling Center. They should then make arrangements with their individual instructors so that appropriate strategies can be considered and helpful procedures can be developed to ensure that participation and achievement opportunities are not impaired.

SHSU adheres to all applicable federal, state, and local laws, regulations, and guidelines with respect to providing reasonable accommodations for students with disabilities. If you have a disability that may affect adversely your work in this class, then I encourage you to register with the SHSU Counseling Center and to talk with me about how I can best help you. All disclosures of disabilities will be kept strictly confidential. NOTE: No accommodation can be made until you register with the Counseling Center.

Religious holidays: Section 51.911(b) of the Texas Education Code requires that an institution of higher education excuse a student from attending classes or other required activities, including examinations, for the observance of a religious holy day, including travel for that purpose. Section 51.911 (a) (2) defines a religious holy day as: "a holy day observed by a religion whose places of worship are exempt from property taxation under Section 11.20...." A student whose absence is excused under this subsection may not be penalized for that absence and shall be allowed to take an examination or complete an assignment from which the student is excused within a reasonable time after the absence.

University policy 861001 provides the procedures to be followed by the student and instructor. A student desiring to absent himself/herself from a scheduled class in order to observe (a) religious holy day(s) shall present to each instructor involved a written statement concerning the religious holy day(s). The instructor will complete a form notifying the student of a reasonable timeframe in which the missed assignments and/or examinations are to be completed.

Visitors in the classroom: Generally visitors are not allowed in the classroom. Exceptions may be made on a case by case basis.

Tentative Schedule:

DATE	ASSIGNMENT	CHAPTER
16-Jan	Introduction	
18-Jan	Experimental Psychology	1
21-Jan	No class- Martin Luther King Day	
23-Jan	Basics of Experimentation	7 & 8
25-Jan	Basics of Experimentation	7 & 8

28-Jan	Basics of Experimentation	7 & 8
30-Jan	Basics of Experimentation	7 & 8
1-Feb	Basics of Experimentation	15
4-Feb	Writing Research Reports	16
6-Feb	Writing Research Reports	16
8-Feb	Writing Research Reports	16
11-Feb	Writing Research Reports	16
13-Feb	Writing Research Reports	16
15-Feb	Writing Research Reports	16
18-Feb	Writing Research Reports	16
20-Feb	EXAM 1	
22-Feb	Data and Measurement	13
25-Feb	Data and Measurement	13
27-Feb	Analyzing Results	14
29-Feb	Analyzing Results	14
3-Mar	Analyzing Results	14
5-Mar	Analyzing Results	14
7-Mar	Nonexperimental Research Methods	3
10-Mar	No class- Spring Break (3/10- 3/15)	
17-Mar	Nonexperimental Research Methods	4
19-Mar	Nonexperimental Research Methods	4
21-Mar	No class- Good Friday	
24-Mar	Nonexperimental Research Methods	5
26-Mar	EXAM 2	
28-Mar	Between-Subjects Designs	9 & 10
31-Mar	Between-Subjects Designs	9 & 10
2-Apr	Within-Subjects Designs	11
4-Apr	Within-Subjects Designs	11
7-Apr	Mixed-factor Designs	11
9-Apr	Mixed-factor Designs	11
11-Apr	Small N Designs	12
14-Apr	Small N Designs	12
16-Apr	EXAM 3	
18-Apr	Presenting and Publishing Research	
21-Apr	Presenting and Publishing Research	
23-Apr	Presenting and Publishing Research	
25-Apr	Ethics	2
2-May	Ethics	2
5-May	Ethics	2
7-May	Review	
9-May	No class- Study Day	
12-May	FINAL EXAM (check University schedule)	