

Introduction to Research Methods Lab

PSY 214 – Spring 2008

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Class Time: Wed 3:00 – 4:50 pm
Class Location: AB4 205
Office Hours: Mon 1:00-3:00
Thur 11:00-12:00 &
By Appt.

Course Overview:

This course deals with the principles of research methodology and design in psychological research. The content of this course is meant to accompany PSY 234 (Introduction to Research Methods). Credit for this course is 1 credit hour. Whereas PSY 234 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 will provide hands-on experience with all aspects of psychological research including the collection, analysis, and reporting of behavioral data. Each of the lab projects will require you to prepare an APA-style laboratory report. The laboratory reports *MUST* be in proper APA-format and *MUST* be typed (reports will not be accepted unless they are typed). See Blackboard for a sample grading sheet for the laboratory reports. The deadline for lab reports is the beginning of the lab period that they are due. Papers and assignments that are handed in late will have 10% subtracted for each day (or portion of a day) that they are late. In other words, if a paper is handed in 1 hour after class 10% will be subtracted from the grade for that paper. Your grade in this class will consist of APA-lab reports, in-class assignments, and homework assignments which will be given throughout the term.

GRADING

Final Paper = 50%
Sect. Assignments (4) = 40%
Participation, Other work, etc. = 10%

Recommended Text:

- Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association. (5th Ed., 2004). Washington, DC: American Psychological Association.

Lab Schedule:	
Day:	Lab Activity
1/23 (Wed.)	Course Overview/APA Basics
1/30 (Wed.)	Research Ideas and Topics
2/6 (Wed.)	Lit Searches/Articles/Citations (Meet @ Library)
2/13 (Wed.)	Lit Search cont'd/Lit review/*Finalize proposal topic *References Due
2/20 (Wed.)	Writing the Introduction
2/27 (Wed.)	Method Section/Study Design
3/5 (Wed.)	Method Cont'd *Introduction Due
3/12 (Wed.)	<i>No Lab-Spring Break!!</i>
3/19 (Wed.)	SPSS Lesson & Data Analysis Activity (Meet @ Library) *Method Due
3/26 (Wed.)	Writing Results and Analysis
4/2 (Wed.)	Results Cont'd and Discussion
4/9 (Wed.)	Discussion & Appendices *Results Due
4/16 (Wed.)	Writing the Abstract/Discussion Q&A
4/23 (Wed.)	Peer Review/Proposal Q&A, etc.
4/30 (Wed.)	Lab Wrap-Up & Q&A, Grad School Presentation
5/7 (Wed.)	Turn in Final Papers-Good Luck on Finals!

Course Goals:

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

Research Proposal Project: Throughout the course of the semester, students will be taught basic skill in designing an independent research project. In order to best demonstrate understanding of the concepts presented in this course, students will be asked to complete a research proposal on an approved topic of their choice. Proposal writing will be introduced in a cumulative manner over the duration of the semester. It is expected that each student's proposal will be a **minimum of 10 total pages and include a minimum of 8 scholarly sources.**

Section Assignments: Students will also be asked to complete a total of four assignments covering different sections of a research manuscript. These assignments include: References, Introduction, Method, and Results sections. Each section counts roughly 10% of their final grade (40% total).

Participation, etc.: 10% of a student's grade is based on participation (NOT just attendance) and classroom engagement. In order to maximize learning and avoid unnecessary course difficulty in the course, one should be prepared to come prepared and be attentive. Some labs will involve in-class work, which will also be factored into a student's final grade.

Academic Dishonesty:

Students are expected to maintain complete honesty and integrity in the 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 university disciplinary action (Code of Student Conduct and Discipline, Section 5.3, as printed in Student Guidelines) **AND WILL RECEIVE AN IMMEDIATE FAILING GRADE FOR THE ASSIGNMENT AND/OR THE COURSE.** The university and its official representatives, acting in accordance with Subsection 5.32, may initiate disciplinary proceedings against a student accused of any form of academic dishonesty including, but not limited to, cheating on an examination or other academic work that has been submitted, plagiarism, collusion and the abuse of resource materials.

- **Cheating** includes:
 - Copying from another student's exam, laboratory report, assignment, computer files, data listings, and/or programs.
 - Using materials not authorized by the instructor during an exam or other assignment.
 - Collaborating with another student during an exam or in preparing academic work without authorization from the instructor.
 - Knowingly using, buying, selling, stealing, transporting, soliciting, copying, or possessing, in whole or in part, the contents of an unadministered test.
 - Substituting for another student, or permitting another student to substitute for oneself, to take an exam or complete any assignment.
 - Purchasing, or otherwise acquiring and submitting as one's own work any research paper or other writing assignment prepared by another individual or firm.
- **Plagiarism** refers to the use of another individual's work or idea and the unacknowledged incorporation of that work or idea into one's own work offered for credit. If you would like to use someone else's ideas, summarize their work **USING YOUR OWN WORDS and then CITE THEIR WORK** using the accepted American Psychological Association's Guidelines.
- **Collusion** means the unauthorized collaboration with another person in preparing work offered for credit.

Attendance Policy:

Regular and punctual attendance is expected for this course. Each student is allotted 3 absences before a grading penalty is assessed. After 3 absences a 10% deduction of your final grade accumulates with each subsequent absence. If you must miss lab, consult a peer soon after the scheduled lab. You must be in attendance to hand in assignments, participate in in-class assignments, or take exams. In-class activities are *only* provided during class, and thus *cannot* be made up at a later time. Failure to attend class will decrease your grade for each assignment missed. Further, information covered in class will be included in exams. Poor attendance is strongly related to poor grades, so each student is strongly encouraged to attend class regularly. If you must be absent, be sure to arrange for a peer to obtain handouts and/or notes for you. They will not be available from me except on the date initially provided.

Classroom Rules of Conduct:

According to Section 5 of the Student Handbook, students are expected to assist in maintaining a classroom environment that is conducive to learning. Disruptive behavior will not be tolerated. Students who are disruptive to the class may be dismissed from the classroom for their inappropriate behavior and will not be allowed to hand in any assignments due for the remainder of that class. Additionally, students may be withdrawn from the course for repeated disruptive behavior.

Religious Holy Days:

Students have the responsibility of notifying the professor of each scheduled class day that the student will be absent due to a religious holy day. *This must be done not later than the 15th class day.* Students who are absent from class for observance of a religious holy day will be allowed to take an examination or complete an assignment scheduled for that day within one week of returning to class. However, any in-class assignments cannot be made up, but will not count against their other assignment average since the one lowest assignment grade will be dropped.

Notice to Persons with Disabilities:

It is the policy of Sam Houston State University that no individuals otherwise qualified shall, solely by reason of their disability, be excluded from the participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any academic program activity. Students with a disability that may affect their academic performance are expected to arrange for a conference with the instructor as soon as possible. This is done so that appropriate strategies can be considered to ensure participation and achievement opportunities are not impaired since there will be no retroactive accommodation. Furthermore, accommodations will be made **only** to those people who have documented the disability with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) Office in the Student Counseling Center. The number there is 936-294-1720.

The SHSU Writing Center is located in Farrington 111 and is available for assistance should one encounter difficulty in the APA writing process. It is recommended for those students seeking help with format, grammar, improving writing style, etc.

Instructor Evaluations:

Towards the end of the semester, students will be asked to complete a course/instructor evaluation form. I encourage you to be honest in your evaluations. IDEA is the faculty evaluation system used at SHSU.