

Introduction to Research Methods

PSY 234 – Summer 2008

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Class Time: M-F 8:00 – 9:50 am
Class Location: LDB 216
Office Hours: by appointment

Course Overview:

This course deals with the principles of research methodology and design in psychological research. Therefore, research approaches and methodologies in a wide range of content areas will be discussed. 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. In order to provide you with experience in how research is conducted, you will be given the opportunity to participate in research being conducted in the SHSU Psychology Department. You may earn 3 points that will be added to your final grade in this course. There will also be periodic in-class assignments and homework assignments to get you better acquainted with research methodology and design. 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 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 learn 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 learn specific skills and competencies needed by psychology professionals.
6. Students should learn the skills necessary to find and use scientific resources to answer psychological questions and solve problems.

Grading:

Grades in this course will be based on the following assignments:

Exam #1	=	35%
Exam #2	=	35%
Other Assignments	=	30%

Grades in this course will be based on the following scale:

Class Average:	Above 89.4	89.4 - 79.5	79.4 - 69.5	69.4 - 59.5	Below 59.5
Grade:	A	B	C	D	F

All assignments are expected to be handed in the day that they are due. Any assignment that is handed in late will have 10% subtracted for each day (or portion of a day) that they are late. In other words, if an assignment is handed in 1 hour after class, 10% will be subtracted from the grade for that assignment grade. Your grade in this class will consist of exams, quizzes, in-class assignments, and homework assignments. Periodic quizzes and in-class assignments on the assigned reading material will be given throughout the term. Therefore, be sure that you are current with your reading assignments.

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.

Class & Laboratory Schedule:

<u>Day:</u>	<u>Class Topic</u>	<u>Reading Assignment</u>	<u>Laboratory Activity</u>
6/3 (Tues.)	Research in the Media Discussion	Chapter 1	
6/4 (Wed.)	The Basics of Experimentation	Chapter 7 & 8	Conduct Lab #1, Score data, Questions
6/5 (Thurs.)	The Basics of Experimentation	Chapter 7 & 8	
6/6 (Fri.)	Writing the Research Report	Chapter 16	
6/9 (Mon.)	Writing the Research Report	Chapter 16	Literature Search Lecture
6/10 (Tues.)	Writing the Research Report	pgs 174-180	
6/11 (Wed.)	Data and Measurement	Chapter 13	Lab #1 Literature Search
6/12 (Thurs.)	Analyzing Results	Chapter 14 & 15	
6/13 (Fri.)	Analyzing Results	Chapter 14 & 15	
6/16 (Mon.)	EXAM #1	<i>none</i>	SPSS lecture, Lab #1 Data Analysis
6/17 (Tues.)	Discuss Exam #1	<i>none</i>	
6/18 (Wed.)	Nonexperimental Designs	Chapter 3 & 4	Lab #1 Due, Conduct Lab #2, Questions
6/19 (Thurs.)	Nonexperimental Designs	Chapter 5	
6/20 (Fri.)	Between-Subjects Designs	Chapter 9 & 10	
6/23 (Mon.)	Within-Subjects Designs	pgs 308-319	Lab #2 Analysis, Questions
6/24 (Tues.)	Mixed-Factor Designs	pgs 319-338	
6/25 (Wed.)	Small N Within-Subject Designs	Chapter 12	Lab #2 Questions
6/26 (Thurs.)	Presenting & Publishing Research	<i>none</i>	
6/27 (Fri.)	Ethics in Research	Chapter 2	
6/30 (Mon.)	Ethics in Research	Chapter 2	Lab #2 Due
7/1 (Tues.)	EXAM #2	<i>none</i>	

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. However, no course points are directly linked to class attendance. However, you must be in attendance to hand in assignments, participate in in-class assignments, or take exams. In-class assignments are *only* provided during class, and thus *cannot* be made up at a later time. Although this class will not carry a "failure due to absences" policy, failure to attend class will decrease your grade for each assignment missed. Further, information covered in class will be included in exams. Historically, poor attendance has been strongly related to poor grades in my courses. Thus, 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.