

PSYC*2360*01 INTRODUCTORY RESEARCH METHODS

Course Outline

General Information

Course Title:

PSYC*2360*01 Introductory Research Methods

Course Description:

The objective of this course is to provide fundamental information about how scientific research is conducted in the field of psychology.

Lectures and in-class activities will focus on important concepts and issues related to the methods and procedures used in both experimental and non-experimental research.

Credit Weight:

0.50

Academic Department (or campus):

Department of Psychology

Semester Offering:

F15

Class Schedule and Location:

FALL 2015, ALEX 200, Mondays & Wednesdays 6:00PM - 6:50PM

Instructor Information

Instructor Name: Dr. M. Gloria González-Morales

Instructor Email: mggonzal@uoguelph.ca

Office location and office hours:

MacKinnon Extension, 3002

Mondays: 3:00 PM – 5.00 PM

GTA Information

GTA Name: TBA

GTA Email: TBA

GTA office location and office hours: TBA

Course Content

VISION

My vision for the end of the semester is that you should be able to ***understand psychological research and how it is conducted.***

Specific Learning Outcomes:

Moreover, the more exciting learning outcomes are that

1. you will understand how research is developed ***in diverse scientific disciplines,***
2. you will also be able to ***think critically about it.***

This means that with this course you will be well equipped to understand, analyze and evaluate the content of other courses in Psychology and other adjacent areas.

More specifically these are 5 learning outcomes that will serve as the scaffold or skeleton to build your ability to critically evaluate scientific knowledge:

3. You will ***collaborate*** effectively with your peers to ***share methodological knowledge*** and practice ***communication*** and ***analytical*** skills
4. You will generate ***constructive feedback*** and apply it to improve your and others' academic work
5. You will be able to ***communicate*** effectively about psychological research by ***understanding*** previous research, ***analyzing*** it and ***synthesizing*** it.
6. You will ***compare*** and ***evaluate*** previous research to ***justify*** and ***support*** your ***research questions and hypotheses***
7. You will ***design*** the most appropriate ***methodology*** to examine your research questions.

Lecture Content:

Lecture content will be based on the textbook and it will be structured according to this sequence:

- Introduction to Research / Research Hypotheses
- Measures
- Reliability and Validity
- Surveys and Sampling
- Hypothesis Testing and Inferential Statistics
- Correlational Research Designs
- Experimental Research: One-Way Designs
- Experimental Research: Factorial
- Experimental Control and Internal Validity
- External Validity
- Quasi-Experimental Research Designs
- Naturalistic Methods

- Ethics in Research
- Research Project in-class sessions

LECTURE SLIDES

You will have access to the lecture slides before the class session. These slides are very clear and tightly related to the textbook chapter. This means that you can read the content of each session before coming to class. Doing this will facilitate the learning experience.

Reading the content before class is important because I will not cover all the content of the chapter in class. I will guide the lecture by the rule of three. Humans can only process 4 concepts at a time... therefore I will try to focus lecture time in the three main concepts of the chapter.

IN-CLASS LEARNING ACTIVITIES

Active learning activities will be used to review these concepts and to work actively in learning related to them. Come to class ready to participate and engage in the activities.

Active learning is an essential tool in my teaching. I use class sessions to facilitate interactive learning in which we learn from each other and our peer learners. During the lecture I expect you to participate in the active learning activities, ask anything you do not understand or comment on anything that you are interested in. For me, active learning at class is essential because:

- 1) it helps connect the content of the class with your experiences,
- 2) it allows you to feel authorship of your learning during our sessions
- 3) it motivates you to work with the course material and come to class

Active learning exercises during class sessions are formative assessments that are not graded but help you to actively construct your learning. For example:

- 1) you will pause to collect your thoughts after complicated concepts are explained
- 2) you will discuss with a peer the pros and cons of a specific methodology
- 3) you will work in jigsaw groups to learn about different types of research methods
- 4) we will create human distributions to understand hypothesis testing
- 5) we will debate about ethical dilemmas in psychological research
- 6) you will share with a peer how a video clip clarifies a complicated concept
- 7) you will find video clips and online resources to present in class
- 8) you will put in practice some experiments
- 9) you can tell the class which activity will work to actively learn a concept or skill

Google is encouraged! Use Google to find information about concepts that you do not understand or you are interested in further exploring.

Seminars:

You will attend and participate in 10 seminars, seminar sessions are cancelled on the first week of classes and the 5th week of classes (October 12th week). During the seminars you will work in the following **collaborative learning activities**.

- Find out the structure of psychology journal articles
- Create research questions and hypotheses
- How to write a research proposal introduction
- Team building and team contracts
- Discussion and critique of research projects
- Presentation of method proposal and constructive peer feedback

These activities are designed for you to develop the course learning outcomes and apply the content learned during lectures. Participation in these activities will be graded. During the seminars we will also work on the following **independent learning activities**. These activities will be used to evaluate the learning outcomes:

RESEARCH PROJECT

The research project is designed to develop the following skills:

- conducting an independent literature search
- reading journal articles
- summarizing journal articles
- generating research questions and hypotheses
- designing a study that will test your hypotheses.

The project must be typed and should adhere to APA format guidelines. It is expected that the body of your research project (introduction, method, and discussion sections) will be between 5-6 typewritten pages. This does NOT include the title page, abstract, reference section, or any tables or figures. More specific information about the assignment will be provided in additional documentation

First round of research project: Research proposal (team assignment: two student researchers)

The research proposal must include the introduction including the hypotheses. Each member of the team should come up with their own research questions and hypotheses. This first round will be returned to you after being graded. You will use the **constructive feedback** to improve the research proposal and to write the final research project. This improvement will be taken into account when grading the second round.

We will provide you with a more specific description of the assignment along with the rubric to be used to grade it

Second round of research project: Final research project (individual assignment)

The final research project is an individual assignment. On your own you work on the improved introduction and hypotheses, method and discussion. We do not have time to collect data and therefore the results section will be missing. The discussion will be written as if the results section was included.

We will provide you with a more specific description of the assignment along with the rubric to be used to grade it.

THE “I LOVE PSYCHOLOGY?” BLOG (TEAM AND PEER REVIEW ASSIGNMENT)

Write a blog entry to explain in lay terms a Psychology (or Social Science) study published in a scientific journal. This means that you have to use an easy to understand language for the normal person without advanced academic knowledge.

The blogger team is formed by 3-4 students who are bloggers and also reviewers of the entries. As reviewers you will have to come up with a rubric to assess and critique each other's work.

WRITING: Each member of the blogger team finds a scientific study (Psychology or Social Science study published in a scientific journal), reads it, discusses it with at least one blogger in the team to fully understand it, and writes, using the rubric, a half page summarizing the research question and the main findings. This half page is submitted to the team (through PEAR, an electronic system of submission and peer review).

REVIEWING: Each blogger becomes now a reviewer of the work of the rest of the team. Using the rubric and specific comments you will provide constructive feedback for two articles. The numeric feedback from two reviewers will comprise 50% of the grade in this assignment (individual grade for the blog entry).

RESUBMITTING AND CREATING THE BLOG: Bloggers resubmit their revised work to the team and get the 3-4 blog entries ready to be published in the blog. You have autonomy to design your blog. You may want to name the blog according to the topics of your entries or according to a creative/interesting title related to Psychology or Social Science. Once ready, you submit the link to the blog to PEAR.

OTHER BLOGGERS GRADE YOUR BLOG: Bloggers from other teams will read your blog online and sign in PEAR to rate it. The overall rating that the other bloggers gives to your blog will comprise the other 50% of this assignment grade (group grade for the blog).

Have you thought about GROUP WORK? Why may group work be important?

How I am going to help with group work?

We will learn techniques for working in groups effectively (e.g., team building) before this assignment.

A MATCH-UP GAME.

Which learning activities cover which learning outcomes/objectives? There can be more than one arrow per outcome and activity.

LO1. You will understand how research is developed in diverse scientific disciplines	Exams
LO2. You will be able to think critically about scientific research.	In class active learning activities
LO3. You will collaborate effectively with your peers to share methodological knowledge and practice communication and analytical skills	“I love Psychology?” Blog
LO4. You will generate constructive feedback and apply it to improve your and others’ academic work	Seminar collaborative learning activities
LO5. You will be able to communicate effectively about psychological research by understanding previous research, analyzing it and synthesizing it.	Research proposal
LO6. You will compare and evaluate previous research to justify and support your research questions and hypotheses	Final Research Project
LO7. You will design the most appropriate methodology to examine your research questions.	

Can you discuss with other people in the class how you will accomplish these outcomes in progression? Can you find a scaffolding structure?

Course Assignments and Tests:

Assignment or Test	Due Date	Contribution to Final Mark (%)	Learning Outcomes Assessed
1 st midterm exam	October 19 th , 2015	25%	LO1, LO2
Research proposal (Review of the topic Research question Hypothesis)	October 21 st , 2015	10%	LO1, LO2, LO3, LO5, LO6
Collaborative Learning Activities	Participation in seminar classes (specific dates TBA)	5%	LO3, LO4, LO5
Blog	November 13 th , 2015	10%	LO3, LO4, LO5
2 nd midterm exam	November 18 th , 2015	25%	LO1, LO2
Final research project Introduction Research Question Hypothesis Method Discussion	December 4 th , 2015	25%	LO1, LO2, LO3, LO5, LO6, LO7

Additional Notes (if required):

Given time constrictions, the final mark of the final research project will not be delivered until the final grade submission.

Exams format is 30 Multiple choice (4 choices) questions

Final examination date and time:

There is not final examination. The final assignment is the final research project.

SETTING GOALS

Those who succeed in this learning experience will be those who reflect on the learning objectives, set clear goals and try their hardest to meet their own goals (e.g., engage in active learning during classes, complete all assigned work).

What are your specific goals? For example, what is the grade you want to obtain?

Based on your goal, what are the things you need to do to achieve it?

Course Resources:

Required Texts:

**Stangor, C. (2011). Research Methods for the Behavioral Sciences (4th ed.)
Wadsworth, Cengage Learning.**

A customized version of this text, with an additional appendix will be available to purchase. The only difference between the texts is the added appendix.

Other Resources:

Additional readings will be accessible through D2L/Courselink. The results of assignments and examinations will also be posted on D2L/Courselink.

Course Policies

Grading Policies

All assignments are to be submitted by the due date (due time is 11.59 pm) using CourseLink Dropbox or Pear System (depending on the assignment). Assignments submitted in any other way will not be accepted. Marks will be docked for exceeding the page limit (5% per half page) and for late submissions (5% per day including weekends). If you submit your assignment one day late, this means that your maximum attainable grade on the assignment will be 95% instead of 100%.

All deadlines have a grace period of 48 hours. This means that there will not be docked marks if you submit before the extra 48 hours period expires. Please, do not treat the grace period as the deadline, because it is not. The deadline is a hard deadline and the grace period is in place to account for potential difficulties and life events that can occur at the time of the hard deadline.

Emails asking for late submission during the grace period are not needed and **will not be answered**: just submit within the grace period. CourseLink will say that it is late, but if it is within 48 hours of the deadline is within the grace period and it is not late.

No extensions over the grace period will be given. You can submit the assignment after the grace period has expired, however your mark will be docked for late submissions (5% per day including weekends). This policy is in place to guarantee fairness for all students.

Course Policy regarding use of electronic devices and recording of lectures:

Electronic recording of classes is expressly forbidden without consent of the instructor. When recordings are permitted they are solely for the use of the authorized student and may not be reproduced, or transmitted to others, without the express written consent of the instructor.

University Policies

Academic Consideration

When you find yourself unable to meet an in-course requirement because of illness or compassionate reasons, please advise the course instructor in writing, with your name, id#, and e-mail contact. See the academic calendar for information on regulations and procedures for

Academic Consideration:

[Academic Consideration, Appeals and Petitions](#)

Academic Misconduct

The University of Guelph is committed to upholding the highest standards of academic integrity and it is the responsibility of all members of the University community, faculty, staff, and students to be aware of what constitutes academic misconduct and to do as much as possible to prevent academic offences from occurring.

University of Guelph students have the responsibility of abiding by the University's policy on academic misconduct regardless of their location of study; faculty, staff and students have the responsibility of supporting an environment that discourages misconduct. Students need to remain aware that instructors have access to and the right to use electronic and other means of detection. Please note: Whether or not a student intended to commit academic misconduct is not relevant for a finding of guilt. Hurried or careless submission of assignments does not excuse students from responsibility for verifying the academic integrity of their work before submitting it. Students who are in any doubt as to whether an action on their part could be construed as an academic offence should consult with a faculty member or faculty advisor.

The Academic Misconduct Policy is detailed in the Undergraduate Calendar:
[Academic Misconduct Policy](#)

Accessibility

The University of Guelph is committed to creating a barrier-free environment. Providing services for students is a shared responsibility among students, faculty and administrators. This relationship is based on respect of individual rights, the dignity of the individual and the University community's shared commitment to an open and supportive learning environment. Students requiring service or accommodation, whether due to an identified, ongoing disability or a short-term disability should contact the Centre for Students with Disabilities as soon as possible.

For more information, contact CSD at 519-824-4120 ext. 56208 or email csd@uoguelph.ca or see the website: [Student Accessibility Services Website](#)

Course Evaluation Information

Please refer to the [Course and Instructor Evaluation Website](#) .

Drop date

The last date to drop one-semester courses, without academic penalty, is Friday, November 6th, 2015. For regulations and procedures for Dropping Courses, see the Academic Calendar:
[Current Undergraduate Calendar](#)

Additional Course Information

EXPECTATIONS ABOUT EMAIL COMMUNICATION

I prefer that you come to office hours to ask your questions.

I will answer emails during office hours because this is the time allocated for helping you with questions and clarification.

As a general rule, I will do my best to answer emails within 48 hours of reception of the email.

I do not check or answer emails on Saturdays or Sundays. Therefore if I receive an email on Thursday at 8.00 pm, I will try to answer by Monday at 8.00 pm or earlier.

If the answer to your question can be found in any of the documentation or information available in CourseLink I will send you the following automatic email:

“This information is explained in detail in the documentation available in CourseLink. Please, come to my office hours to further clarify orally.”

THE INSTRUCTOR RESERVES THE RIGHT TO SUPERSEDE ANYTHING IN THIS SYLLABUS WITH SUBSEQUENT ANNOUNCEMENTS (WHICH MAY BE VERBAL, ON PAPER, BY EMAIL OR ON COURSELINK).