Rutgers University

Introduction to Psychological Science

56:830:510

Course Syllabus

**Fall, 2013**

Instructor: Dr. Sean DuffyLecture: Wed, 6:00-8:40pm

e-mail: seduffy@camden.rutgers.edu Classroom: ARM Something or other (207)

Cell Phone: 2158054327

(text me, don’t call, I never answer) Office hours: Wed, 5:00-6:00pm

Office: 343 Armitage and by appt.

**Course Description and Objectives:**

This first-semester course has two components:  a classroom component and a laboratory component in which students work with their faculty adviser.  The classroom component provides an overview of research practices in psychological science, with particular emphasis on reading, understanding, and reviewing the psychological literature, and a review of research methods and statistical analysis. Students will gain research experience via an apprenticeship with a faculty member and will write a critical review of the literature related to their potential thesis research.

**Required Readings:**

All of the readings for this course will be available via library reserve and the sakai class web page. If you

do not have a copy of the APA manual (6th edition), you should purchase one.

Please read all assigned readings before they are covered in class.

**General Course Requirements:**

**1) Attendance and Class Participation:** Class attendance and participation is expected. Because this class is a seminar (i.e., I will not usually be lecturing, rather we will all discuss the relevant topics), much of the learning that will take place this semester will be *in the classroom*. Thus, this component of your grade will be based on the following criteria: (1) Did you attend class? and (2) Did you contribute to the intellectual climate in class (by listening to the professor and your classmates and participating in discussions and exercises) and (3) were you prepared for class discussions? 50% of this component of your grade will be determined by me, and 50% by your peers via a end of semester peer evaluation.

**2) Reading Notes and Discussion questions and discussion leader:** Because each class will involve a discussion of the assigned readings, it is important that we all come to class prepared. In order to facilitate this preparation, you will be expected to turn in “evidence” that you have completed the readings in the form of *1-2 pages* of review notes and *at least* two discussion questions. Keep in mind that many readings are assigned as examples of particular methods. Learning all the content is not necessary; pay attention to the topic to be discussed in class as you read the articles. As you read through the assignments, make note of questions you have that might be interesting for us to discuss as a class (you do not need to have the answers to these questions, rather think of issues that are provocative and important for us to discuss; these should NOT be yes/no questions or questions with answers easily identified in the readings). These notes and questions are due each Tuesday at 11pm via the Sakai course web page.

Also, for the topics weeks, each of you will have to serve as discussion leader on one of the topics. We will do a sign up sheet in the third week of class where you choose the topic you want to cover.

**3)** **Research Apprenticeship:** Each week you are expected to work as an apprentice to your adviser for four hours. Ideally, you will meet in person with your adviser each week and discuss research related tasks for you to engage in across the week. This apprenticeship is not only an important component of this course, but of your graduate school experience at Rutgers. Learning about research in this “hands on” way will allow you to know whether or not you want to pursue a research thesis as part of your graduate studies. It will also provide your adviser with an opportunity to gauge your research aptitude. Your performance during this semester will determine whether or not your adviser (with the assistance of a committee) will allow you to pursue a thesis. We will discuss your experiences working in your adviser’s lab during class and you are expected to log your hours/ work each week.

**4) Literature Review Paper:** We will spend time in class discussing writing in psychology and the development of possible thesis research ideas. Towards the end of class, you are expected to submit a literature review paper that examines a research topic relevant to your adviser’s research and your potential thesis topic. This paper should be in APA style (6th Edition) and should include a title page, abstract, 5-page literature review, and references.

**5) Final Presentation** At the end of this course, you will be expected to integrate your research apprenticeship experiences with our class readings and discussions in a presentation. Using a powerpoint presentation, you will review some of the key things you learned from your adviser during the semester and relate these to topics covered in class. This presentation should be approximately 5 minutes long, with additional time provided for questions and discussion.

6) GRE Quizzes and FINAL GRE Many of you want to go on to Ph.D. programs. Even if not, having a large vocabulary size as well as understanding some basic mathematics will serve you well in life. Whether it is understanding a text, or using the Pythagorean Theorem to determine how much flooring to purchase in an odd-sized room, you will be well served by learning new vocabulary and math skills. Each week, we will have a 10 question vocabulary quiz from a list of words provided in the resource folder, and toward the end of the semester, math problems. And at the very end of the course, you will take a practice GRE test.

**Grading:**

Grades will be computed as follows:

Participation 10%

Class outlines/ discussion leaders 10%

Research Apprenticeship 40%

Literature review paper 20%

Final Presentation 10%

GRE Quizzes 10%

Final GRE 10%

Course Schedule

The following is a ***tentative*** schedule for this course. Dates may change slightly depending on our ***actual*** progress in covering the material. Readings are available via library reserve and/or sakai.

**Date Topics to be Discussed Readings/ Assignments**

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| --- | --- | --- |
| Week 1  Sept 4 | Introduction and Orientation to our Psych Grad Program  Graduate School Etiquette  What does thesis research “look like”?  What does the comprehensive exam look like?  Intro to Round Robin with the faculty. | Find an article by a faculty member, find the thesis components from the your thesis in a nutshell. |
| Week 2  Sept 11 | Faculty Student Round Robin where you meet all of the faculty / Reception. | Thesis Track: Read and summarize two articles that your provisional adviser has published (confer with your adviser about which to select); be prepared to discuss  Content Track: Read and summarize two articles that a faculty member here wrote in an area of your greatest interest |
| Week 3  Sept 18 | Why we need (good) science.  Film: Harmony of the World, from COSMOS | Goldacre, 2010, Ch 10, Ch 12; Bearman, 2010; Dominus, 2011  GRE Words 1 & 11 |
| Week 4  Sept 25 | Why we don’t need bad science: Recent controversies and problems. | Measuring the Prevalence of Questionable  Research Practices With Incentives for  Truth Telling (John et al)  NYTimes article on Dietric Stapel 2013  Stroeb Scientific Misconduct 2012  Nine Circles of Scientific Misconduct  GRE Words 2 & 12 |
| Week 5  Oct 2 | Topics: Social Psychology | “Mechanisms of Social Cognition” Frith  “The Antecedents and consequences of human behavioral mimicry” Chartrand and Lakin  “The evolutionary origin of friendship” Seyfarth  GRE Words 3 & 13 |
| Week 6  Oct 9 | Topics: Developmental Psychology | “Learning from others: Children’s Construction of Concepts.” Gelman  “Socialization within the family” Grusec  “The adaptive Brain: Aging and Neurocognitive Scaffolding”  GRE Words 4 & 14 |
| Week 7  Oct 16 | Topics: Personality Psychology / Health | “Personality Development Over the Lifespan” McAdams  “Personality: The Universal  and the Culturally Speciﬁc” Heine & Buchtel  “Health Psychology: The  Search for Pathways between  Behavior and Health” Leventhal HEALTH PSYCHOLOGY: Mapping Biobehavioral Contributions to Health and Illness**Annual Review of Psychology** Guide to PhD  (need to post these. This may be too much reading for this day…we’ll revisit later.)  GRE Words 5 & 15 |
| Week 8  Oct 23 | Topics: Cognitive Psychology | “Causal Learning and Inference  as a Rational Process: The  New Synthesis” Holyoke  “Heuristic Decision Making” Gigerenzer  “Grounded Cognition” Barsalou  GRE Words 6 & 7 |
| Week 9  Oct 30 | Topics: Abnormal Psychology | “ATale of Two Systems: Co-occurring mental health and substance abuse in Adolescents” Hawkins  “Delusional Belief” Coltheart  “Psychological Perspectives  on Pathways Linking  Socioeconomic Status  and Physical Health” Matthews  GRE Words 8&9 |
| Week 10  Nov 6 | Topics: Physiological Psychology | “Shifting Gears: Seeking New Approaches for Mind/Brain Mechanisms” Gazzaniga  “Synesthesia” Ward  “Color Perception” Elliot |
| Week 11  Nov 13 | Topics: Cultural / Diversity Psychology | “Culture, Mind and the Brain” Kitayama & Uskul  “Child Development in the  Context of Disaster, War,  and Terrorism: Pathways  of Risk and Resilience” Masten  “Social Cognitive  Neuroscience: A Review  of Core Processes” Lieberman |
| Week 12  Nov 20 | Presentations: What you’ve learned so far in the lab | ***Note, no class on Nov 27 due to Thanksgiving*** |
| Week 13  Dec 4 | GRE Test Day | ***Literature Review Papers Due*** |

**General Course Policies:**

1. This class will be most rewarding for you if you are an active participant in class and view this experience as a collaborative enterprise. To this end, throughout the semester you are encouraged to communicate with your professor (during class and during office hours) and are expected to keep up with all readings and assignments.
2. Additional information about this class, and a copy of the syllabus is available on the Sakai web page (sakai.rutgers.edu). Being unaware of course requirements and expectations is not an excuse for failing to complete any of the assignments in this course.
3. If you are in class, you will be expected to be attentive, participate, stay the entire class time, and be prepared for any activities and exams scheduled for that day. Your attendance in this course is voluntary.
4. If you miss a class, you are expected to obtain class notes from a classmate and to stay on top of any of the activities/ discussions missed. It is your responsibility to become informed of any announcements made in class.
5. If you miss class, you should obtain notes from a classmate and read the relevant readings. Classes are designed to aid in your understanding of the assigned readings, focus you on the most important material, and offer an opportunity to further your understanding through class discussion. (In other words, power point slides are not a substitute for class attendance and participation thus will not be available outside of class.)
6. Academic dishonesty will NOT be tolerated. Academic dishonesty includes (but is not

limited to) cheating on exams and plagiarism. Students caught participate in academic dishonesty will receive a score of zero on the relevant assignment. In addition, instances of academic dishonesty will be referred to the Scholastic Conduct Committee. Sanctions for academic dishonesty range from failing an assignment to failing a course or expulsion from the University. For additional information about Rutgers’ policies concerning academic dishonesty refer to: <http://teachx.rutgers.edu/integrity/policy.html>.

1. For disability accommodations, please call the Disability Services Coordinator Associate Dean Thomas DiValerio, (856) 225-2663, [tdivaler@camden.rutgers.edu](mailto:tdivaler@camden.rutgers.edu) ,  
   Campus Center, Room #326. Students who require special accommodations should also contact the instructor within the first few days of class.