

Method and Theory in Psychology
Fall 2020
345-505 FA221

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Due to COVID, this class will be online only. Lectures will be asynchronous (you can watch them at your convenience, NOT all at the same time. I will be holding OPTIONAL discussion sections each week during the course time. I plan to record these sessions and upload the discussion to the course website. There will also be weekly discussion board threads that will allow you to interact, albeit virtually, with your peers.

Course goals / Learning objectives:

The goal of this course is for you to learn about methodology in the field of psychology. We will learn about basic issues regarding the science of psychology and some general issues regarding how psychologists figure out how to study mind and behavior. We will examine some of the procedural, ethical, practical, statistical, and philosophical aspects of conducting research studies in psychological science broadly construed. We will learn about diverse methodologies and approaches, from ethnography to survey research. We will also focus a lot on writing, as this is a writing intensive course. Much emphasis will be placed on academic writing, how to write in the APA style used by psychologists, and we will emphasize the importance of writing as a 'hub skill' that taps into multiple facets of an individual's life course. . Each student will conduct their own empirical study in which they will develop a research project, collect data, analyze findings, and report results. Also, we will do a peer review in which students will critique each other's work. At the end of this course, students will have the skills required to be both a consumer and producer of research. Practically, this course will prepare students for the capstone course in the psychology department, Experimental Psychology, which uses many of the skills developed in this course.

Course Text:

The text is a FREE online textbook, whose authors made this book available as a creative commons license (like Wikipedia). The link to the pdf of this book can be found on CANVAS, and it is also posted in the resource folder of CANVAS. Note it is a large document and may take some time to download on slow connections.

Link: <https://kpu.pressbooks.pub/psychmethods4e/>

Research Methods in Psychology (4th American Edition) Paul C. Price, Rajiv S. Jhangiani, I-Chant A. Chiang, Dana C. Leighton, and Carrie Cuttler

(Note: Most texts in Methods cost more than \$150 so this is a great deal, consider writing the author a thank you note...) carrie.cuttler@wsu.edu

If you are desperate for a paper copy of the text, you can order a physical copy from Amazon for \$10.

Course requirements: (subject to change before course starts)

There are 5 requirements in this course.

1. Readings from the text.
2. Two Exams = 30% (15% each)

3. Ten quizzes = 20% (2.5% each)
4. Assignments (6 total) = 30% (5% each)
5. 1 research paper (~7-9 pages) = 20% [5% of this is class presentation at end of course]
6. Participation in 2 Experiments (See end of syllabus) MANDATORY PASS FAIL
7. Attendance is mandatory. If you miss more than 4 classes I reserve the right to give you an F for your final grade.

1. Readings from the FREE book and other articles – DUE DAY OF CLASS FOR QUIZ. YOU HAVE TO DO THE READINGS TO GET THROUGH THIS CLASS.

2. Exams:

Two exams: a midterm and final. The final is not cumulative. You will be given a study guide consisting of all the multiple choice **answers** without the **questions** provided (i.e., “1. XXX a. theory b. experiment c. survey d. observational study.” I do this so you will know beforehand EVERYTHING that could possibly be on the exam. On exam day, you get the questions WITH the multiple choice options)

3. Quizzes:

Quizzes will be given once a week. Anything addressed in class or in the readings is fair game. Usually multiple choice but I reserve the right to change that up.

4. Assignments:

You will have 6 assignments in this class. These assignments all lead up to the final paper in this class are an important way you receive feedback for your final paper so they must be handed in on time and in class on paper because I will be writing notes on them (and I do not have a printer at home). Assignments are in the assignments folder.

5. Research Paper:

At the end of the class you will need to combine the assignments into a cohesive research report. This paper will be due toward the end of the semester.

6. Experiments:

Some time ago the Psychology Department decided it would be useful for students to participate in research studies as part of this course. You will have to do two experiments, one of which must NOT be an online study (one must be done in a laboratory). See the end of the syllabus.

7. Participation:

One of the ways I increase participation is by having a common shared course document on google documents where you can all edit and add to so that in case you miss class you will have information discussed in class available to you. The page can be found here.

<https://docs.google.com/document/d/1hS1z9oi716U6d-IGrW-5X0QFu2gc0EdG-jdoKeBeGhQ/edit?usp=sharing>

Class Rules

Grades: The typical...

90+ A, 85-89.99 B+, 80-84.99 B, 75-79.99 C+, 70-74.99 C, 60-69.99 D, Below 60 F.

General Rules

Before emailing about a class absence, I want to note that I do not need to know about the minor details of your lives that prevent you from showing up. Don't get me wrong – I wish you the best in everything, in health and success, etc, it is impossible for me to keep track of who comes to class and why they miss class. I just don't need to read the reasons from every student why you could not show up.

But do not miss class. There is no good reason to miss class – this class is in late afternoon, you have all day to figure out how to get to campus. But there is a lot that goes on in class that you need to know, so your absence is unfortunate and a loss for your education.

And if you do miss class, and there was a quiz, you will not be able to make it up after the fact. My quizzes are like my notes – they happen spontaneously and once the moment is over it is over forever. No make ups. I will drop your lowest 2 quiz/homework grades, so if you miss one, realize I am a nice guy who is giving you a break by dropping your lowest scores. But you cannot come to my office and ask to take a quiz you missed.

Do not call my work phone number. Please email me at seduffy@scarletmail.rutgers.edu instead. I do not check my office phone often at all.

Of course, certain major events might warrant a discussion with me. A major illness, or a major accident, or an adverse life event that will impact your attendance for weeks of time might be worth telling me about. But for the sort of thing that will force you to miss a single class, it probably will not do much to let me know about it. But something chronic, please see the disability office/coordinator who can arrange accommodations. I'm kind of legally bound that I cannot offer extensive accommodations without a letter from that office.

Classroom behavior:

I am not going to tell you that you cannot take notes on your laptop but realize if you are snapchatting through class you will learn very little from being in class.

CANVAS

I use CANVAS for distributing materials, grading, and general announcements. Please use CANVAS, or learn how to use it.

Use your Rutgers Email

When I email the class, I use the list that the Registrar gives me. I **cannot** change this list, and it is your responsibility to either use your Rutgers email account or set up your Rutgers account so that you receive emails in your personal account. If you use some other account, such as givcivdkh@yahoo.com, you may not receive my emails, and you will definitely not receive pity from me. There is a legal reason for this. I **do not** know if your account “angel96@strangeremail.com” is you or someone pretending to be you, or a relative, or a hacker. So use your official Rutgers email or contact me through CANVAS. I delete messages that are not from a secure Rutgers source.

Academic Honesty:

You are expected to read and understand rules regarding academic misconduct. Ignorance of these rules will not be accepted as an excuse for academic misconduct. **If you are found cheating on**

exams or plagiarizing on your paper, you will receive a failing grade for the paper and I will report you to the Office of Academic Affairs. Period. I offer no exceptions to this rule, ESPECIALLY ignorance of what plagiarism is. Rutgers maintains a website with specific guidelines concerning academic honesty. You are expected to read and understand all of these rules: <http://fas.camden.rutgers.edu/faculty/faculty-resources/academic-integrity-policy/>

Class cancellations:

In the event of a natural disaster (e.g., snow storm, earthquake, tsunami) class may be cancelled. In the case of bad weather, check your email to be sure that I have not cancelled class. (See above section on using your Rutgers email)

Incompletes / Pass – No-credit:

Granted ONLY under unusual situations.

Disability accommodations:

Rutgers University welcomes students with disabilities into all of the University's educational programs. In order to receive consideration for reasonable accommodations, a student with a disability must contact the appropriate disability services office at the campus where you are officially enrolled, participate in an intake interview, and provide documentation: <https://ods.rutgers.edu/students/documentation-guidelines>. If the documentation supports your request for reasonable accommodations, your campus's disability services office will provide you with a Letter of Accommodations. Please share this letter with your instructors and discuss the accommodations with them as early in your courses as possible. To begin this process, please complete the Registration form at <https://webapps.rutgers.edu/student-ods/forms/registration>.

And the link:

<https://success.camden.rutgers.edu/disability-services>

SCHEDULE

Week 1: Intro to the course / Basics on psychology

TU SEPT 1: Intro and background

TH Sept 3: Scientific Method

Readings: CH 1: Psychological Science

Week 2: More on the scientific endeavor

TU SEPT 8 : Doing a lit search

Readings: CH 2

TH SEPT 10: Reading: Cargo Cult Science (Feynman)

Week 3: Writing in Psychology

TU SEPT 15: Intro to scientific writing /APA style/ YOUR RESEARCH PROJECT

Readings: CH 11

TH SEPT 17: Continued

Readings:

Duffy and Verges – It matters a hole lot

***Assignment 1 due ***

Week 4: Ethical issues with research on humans and animals

TU SEPT 22: Ethics in Psychology

Readings: CH 3
TH SEPT 24: Continued

Week 5: Theoretical and Empirical Constructs

TU SEPT 29: Reliability and Validity

Readings: CH 4

TH OCT 1: Group discussion about your research projects / critique

***Assignment 2 due ***

Week 6: Methods that rely on randomization

TU OCT 6: Experimental Research

Readings: CH 5

TH OCT 8: continued

Week 7: Methods that do not rely on randomization

TU OCT 13: Non-Experimental Research

Readings: CH 6

TH OCT 15: Continues

***Assignment 3 due ***

Week 8: EXAM

TU OCT 20: Exam Review / Wrap up of unfinished business

TH OCT 22: Exam 1

Week 9: Statistics week – a general intro to BASIC stats

TU Oct 27: Descriptive Statistics

Readings: Ch. 12

TH Oct 29: Inferential Statistics

Readings: Ch. 13

Week 10: Surveys and related procedures

TU NOV 3: Survey research

Readings: Ch. 7

***Assignment 4 due ***

TH NOV 5: Continued

Week 11: More complicated procedures

TU NOV 10: Quasi-experimental

Readings: CH 8

TH NOV 12: Factorial Research

Readings: CH 9

***Assignment 5 due ***

Week 12: The future: Replication crisis and the future of psychology

TU NOV 17:

Readings: Ch 14

TH NOV 19

Week 13:

TU NOV 25: There will be sign up

***Assignment 6 due ***

NO CLASS WED

Week 14: Presentations of your projects

M DEC 1: Presentations

W DEC 3: Presentations

Week 15: Exam 2

M DEC 8: Exam review

W DEC 10: Exam 2

Final Paper due

Subject Pool Policy

The Psychology Department of the Camden Faculty of Arts & Sciences has established a policy that students enrolled in Introduction to Psychology (830:101) must either participate as subjects in psychological research activities or complete a designated alternative activity. This policy is designed to enhance students' understanding of the nature of psychological research and to support the research activities of the faculty. At the present time, the research participation option for Introduction to Psychology requires completion of a total of 4 hours worth of credits for participating in research studies (but only 3 if you complete them without missing appointments). The designated alternative activity consists of writing a paper on some aspect of the psychological research process associated with a psychology-related topic. This option must have the prior approval of the instructor, be on a topic selected by agreement between the instructor and the student, and be five (5) pages in length, typed and double-spaced, with appropriate documentation. (Please review the campus policies on plagiarism at <http://academicintegrity.rutgers.edu>, if you are not familiar with them). Failure by a student to satisfy the requirement before the end of the semester, either by completion of 4 hours worth of experiments or by writing an acceptable paper, will result in the student receiving no credit for 10% of the course OR in the student receiving a grade of "Incomplete" ("IN") for the course (as determined by the course instructor). This "Incomplete" will only be bestowed based on prior arrangement with the instructor, and can only be removed by the student's fulfillment of the requirement. Unless prior arrangements are made with the instructor, all the work needed to remove an "Incomplete" grade should be finished before the start of the following semester.

The **deadline** for completing the research participation requirement or the alternative paper requirement is the last day the class meets during the regular semester.

Benefits of Participating. By participating as a subject in research, you will contribute in a small way to increasing our understanding of psychological processes. You will have an opportunity to gain some direct experience of what psychological research involves, and you may acquire a better understanding of some of the issues and topics you are studying in your course. You will be able to give your own insights and comments to the experimenter and perhaps suggest ways to improve the methods or alternative ways to think about the task. Finally, the research project may simply be interesting to do.

Where to sign up. Sign-up for participation is handled online at the website

1. Go to <https://rutgerscamden.sona-systems.com/>
2. Hit Request account on the right side of the screen.
3. Fill in your first and last name
4. For UserID, pick something you will remember
5. Use your Rutgers email address in the email address window. You could use other email addresses, but it is easiest if you use your Rutgers account
6. Enter your student ID
7. Enter your date of birth
8. Cell phone is optional, but will help with getting a reminder about a study (if you choose to prefer this)
9. Select the course you are enrolled in. All courses for the current semester are listed with their respective instructor names.
10. Hit Request account

You will now receive an email with a temporary password. Use your UserID and password to log into the system. On the first page, you will see a description of some policies, click Yes at the bottom of the page. You are now in the system. You could change your password on this page and view available studies. The rest of the system should be pretty straightforward, but contact the participant pool administrator at r.vanderwel@rutgers.edu if you experience any issues.

Once registered, you can see what experiments are available and sign up to participate in any of them. Each posted experiment includes a brief description of the study, its location, the number of credit hours you will receive, and available appointment times. To participate in a study, simply sign up for an available time.

Sign-up responsibility. Students who sign up for a particular time are responsible for fulfilling their commitment. If you must cancel your appointment, notify the experimenter at least 24 hours before the scheduled session; the telephone number will be provided with the description of the study. You may be subject to a penalty of additional required time for completing this requirement if you fail to notify the experimenter in a timely manner.

Experimenters also have a responsibility. Should an experimenter fail to show up within 15 minutes of the scheduled session, the student will receive full credit for that session. To receive credit, make a note of the study, the date, the time, and the name of the experimenter and give this information to the secretary in Room 301 on the same day that the experimenter did not show up. At times, students may be called by experimenters requesting participation in a particular experiment. In such cases, several available times will be discussed and such calls will be at least 24 hours prior to any agreed upon session.

Credit for participation. When a student arrives at an experimental session, he or she will be provided further information on the nature of the experiment and the procedures to be used and may be asked to sign a consent form. When the experiment is over, the experimenter will ask you to write your name and id # on the master list that will be turned in to the research pool coordinator. You may check at any time on the Experimetrix website to see that you have received credit for your participation. If you find you did not receive credit for an experiment in which you participated, please contact the department secretary in Room 301.

Participant safeguards. Please be assured that you will not be asked to participate unknowingly in research that is detrimental to your physical or psychological health. All research projects must be approved by an institutional review board (IRB) before they can be posted. The IRB screens

proposed research carefully to be sure it is safe and justified. In addition, you are entitled to refuse to participate in a study if you find it personally objectionable or feel it is harmful to you. Obviously, we do not expect you to sign up for studies if you object to them, based on their descriptions. Conversely, you would normally be expected to complete a study if you sign up for it. However, you may only find out while you are participating that you have serious objections to further participation. In such a case, you are free to terminate your participation without prejudice or penalty, and you will receive credit for participation. If you have further questions or concerns, please refer them to your instructor or to Dr. van der Wel (r.vanderwel@rutgers.edu), who is serving as the coordinator of the psychology research subject pool this semester.