

**Research Methods: PSY300, Spring 2017, section 1 (31186)**  
**Robert Deaner, Ph.D., Associate Professor**

**Office:** 1315 Au Sable Hall

**Office Hours:** M, W, & F 11:15 – 12:00, and by appointment. Walk-ins are welcome, but students with appointments have priority. It is strongly recommended that you email the instructor for an appointment.

**Email:** robert.deaner@gmail.com (recommended and preferred to deanerr@gvsu.edu); always include your full name in the message.

**Phone:** 331-2423 (definitely not recommended; I don't check phone messages.)

**Course time:** M, W, & F; 9:00 to 11:15

**Location: lecture:** 207 PAD; computer classroom: (CC) 114HRY

**Prerequisites (passed already):** PSY101 or HNR234, STA215 or STA312, & WRT150 (C or better)

**Required text:** Stangor, C. *Research Methods for Behavioral Sciences*. New York: Houghton Mifflin. It is acceptable to use either the 2<sup>nd</sup> edition (2004, ISBN 0618312870) or the 3<sup>rd</sup> edition (2006, ISBN 0618705910). They are almost identical. There are also more recent editions which are substantially more expensive; don't bother buying them. The textbook book can be purchased online or from the GVSU bookstore. You only need the textbook, not the SPSS kit or anything else.

**Required computer access:** Many assignments will require access to the internet and Excel. Although we will begin some assignments in class, you should make sure you will have access to these applications for at least four hours per week outside of class, either on the GVSU campus or elsewhere. If you have little experience/skill with Excel, you will need to devote some extra time in developing this.

**Course Description (GVSU catalog's):**

Examination of basic research methods in psychology. Emphasis on the logic of psychological research, the formulation and testing of hypotheses, research design, sampling procedures, data collection and analysis, and ethics of conducting research. This course is designated SWS. Completion of WRT 150 with a grade of C or better (not C-) is a prerequisite. SWS credit will not be given to a student who completes this course before completing the prerequisite. SWS courses adhere to certain guidelines. Students turn in a total of at least 3000 words of writing. Part of that total may be essay exams, but a substantial amount of it is made up of essays, reports, or research papers. The instructor works with the students on revising drafts of papers, rather than simply grading the finished piece of writing. At least four hours of class time will be devoted to writing instruction. At least one third of the final grade in the course is based on the writing assignments.

**Course Objectives (Dr. Deaner's):**

- Become a scientist!
- Think critically and creatively about scientific claims
- Formulate hypotheses and develop measures and designs to test them
- Locate, evaluate, and effectively use primary sources
- Analyze data with descriptive and inferential statistics and represent key results visually
- Engage in articulate expression through effective writing and speaking
- Organize a scientific paper and become facile with a specific discourse format, APA style
- Constructively critique writing of peers
- Articulate ethical concerns about research
- Master key research concepts

**Basis for Grading:**

		<u>Grading Scale</u>	
		94 above	A
<u>Potential Points</u>		90 - 93.99	A-
Autobiographical Sketch	5	87 - 89.99	B+
Computer Labs	60 (3 Labs, 20 pts each)	83 - 86.99	B
Research Paper	115 (all components)	80 - 82.99	B-
Writing Quiz	20	77 - 79.99	C+
Mid-term Exam	100	73 - 76.99	C
Final Exam	100	70 - 72.99	C-
Total Points Possible =	400	67 - 69.99	D+
		60 - 66.99	D
		59.99 & below	F

Number Grade = Earned points/400 x 100 (no rounding up!)

**Autobiographical Sketch (5 pts)**

- **Description** – To make it easier for me to get to know you, your assignment is to create a one page (8½" x 11") mini-autobiography. This mini-autobiography, or sketch, should include your full name, what you like to be called, and your class year. The sketch should also include three other brief items of interest, such as your hometown, your favorite activity, your most unique talent or interest, why you're interested in psychology, or why your family status or background is unusual. It is also suggested that you include personal information directly relevant to this course, such as, "I work 60 hours per week and will never be able to meet the instructor before or after class." The sketch must include, as part of the 1 page, a headshot of yourself – photocopying your student ID is acceptable. **The entire written part should be 80 words or fewer.** The sketch doesn't have to be a work of art; in fact, I'd recommend spending about 5 minutes on it. Briefer is better. The sketch must be typed and handed to me before or after class or during office hours. No emailed sketches will be accepted. To receive credit, it must be turned in by Wednesday May 10<sup>th</sup>, at the latest. Briefer sketches are better than longer ones!

**Computer Labs (3 labs, 20 pts each = 60 pts):**

- **Description:** There will be regular class meetings in computer classrooms. On 3 of these days, students will complete a series of tasks involving data analysis and presentation, mainly using Excel. These labs are designed to help students analyze their data and present their findings for the Archival Research Paper. We will generally be able to complete most, but not all, of the lab tasks during class time. In the event they are not completed during class time, students will complete them on their own time, either in computer classrooms or on personal computers.
- **Make-ups:** Computer labs can be made-up because the assignments will be posted on Bb and the necessary software is available outside of the lab. However, outside of the lab, the instructor generally will not provide detailed instructions to students who missed the initial lab; students should consult their peers if they have questions.
- **Lateness (for all written assignments):** Assignments are due on the date specified on the syllabus. A late lab will be docked 2 points for each day it is late, including holidays and weekends. Lateness penalties for other assignments may be larger.

**Research Paper (115 pts):**

- **Description:** Each student will complete a Research Paper during the semester. The Paper will have a traditional scientific organization (Introduction, Methods, Results, Discussion) and be written in APA style. The instructor will provide the general topic of research, and the students will collect data from online sources. Students may perform their analyses in groups, but they will all write their papers individually. An annotated bibliography and rough drafts of the Paper's major components will be required (see syllabus for dates). Rough drafts will be peer-reviewed, and the instructor will also provide feedback. Part of your grade will involve peer-reviewing the work of others. More details will be provided later in the semester.

**Writing Quiz (20 pts):**

- **Description:** There will be one or more brief quizzes to reinforce key points about how to write a scientific paper.

**Exams (2 exams, 100 pts each = 200 pts)**

- **Exam format:** There will be 2 exams, a Mid-term and a Final. Exams will consist of multiple choice questions. Questions will be drawn from the textbook, additional readings, lectures, and other materials, e.g. videos. The second exam will be cumulative. The instructor will make a study guide available prior to each exam.
- **Make-up exams:** If you miss an exam due to illness, you must provide a doctor's excuse within 24 hours following the scheduled exam time. If you must miss an exam for any reason other than illness, you **MUST** email me with a valid excuse 24 hours in advance to schedule a make-up exam. Failure to notify me in advance will result in a zero on the exam. Please note that make-up exams must be completed outside of regular class time. Because make-up exams are difficult to create, schedule, and administer, at the instructor's discretion, the student's score for the exam may be reduced by up to 20%.

- Other issues: During exams, you will be required to turn off all digital devices, such as cell phones, pagers, and hand-held computers. Any student identified with such a device powered on during an exam will receive an F on the test at the instructor's discretion. Students are responsible for bringing their own #2 pencils to the exams.

### **Blackboard:**

The syllabus, announcements, outside readings, assignments, and grades will be posted on Blackboard. If additional materials are placed elsewhere, e.g. electronic library reserves, I will provide links. I will attempt to make the lecture materials, labs, and other materials available prior to each class, although I cannot guarantee this.

### **Communication**

The instructor will communicate all class announcements in class and via Blackboard email. You are expected to check your email regularly. The instructor will send an announcement with this syllabus prior to the first day of class. If it is the first day of class and you haven't received this email yet, it is your responsibility to figure out why and make sure that you receive future emailed announcements. Announcements will generally remain on Bb throughout the semester. They should be considered as official amendments to the syllabus. Please read the relevant announcement before emailing a question to the instructor.

### **Plagiarism:**

As described by the GVSU Student Code, "Offering the work of someone else as one's own is plagiarism...." "Any ideas or material taken from another source for either written or oral presentation must be fully acknowledged." "Depending on the instructor's judgment of the particular case, he/she may...give a failing grade for the ... entire course."

Simply rearranging the words or substituting synonyms in the original source is still plagiarism. Details about the APA method for citing research will be provided during the course.

Please note that because some aspects of the Archival Research Paper may be designed and conducted in groups, students in the same groups may have very similar Methods and Results sections. However, other sections of the paper should not be highly similar. More details will be provided later in the course.

### **Lies and Lame Excuses:**

"The Internet Dog Ate My Homework" is not a valid excuse! Occasionally, a student who receives a zero on an assignment because they didn't submit it claims, weeks later, that they actually uploaded the assignment to Bb. (Curiously, this is almost always a student who is on the verge of failing the course.) The student says they are sure they submitted it and have no idea why the professor didn't see it on Bb. Just so you know: every click you make on Bb is recorded and can be retrieved for instructors by the GVSU Bb administrators. So these excuses can be easily revealed as lies. Yes, in some cases, a student might have tried to upload something and failed. However, it is a student's responsibility to wait for the screen message confirming that something has been successfully uploaded/submitted. Once it's uploaded, the instructor will always be able to view it. Furthermore, it is a student's responsibility to monitor their grades in Bb; I grade things in a timely manner, so if a student has submitted an assignment and not received a grade within one week of the due date, they should ask questions then, not several weeks later.

Students have offered Dr. Deaner many other lame excuses besides the "internet dog". He does not appreciate excuse-making or reward it.

### **Accommodations for Students with Disabilities:**

If there is any student in this class who has special needs because of learning, physical or other disability, please contact me or Disability Support Resources (DSR) at 616.331.2490. Furthermore, if you have a disability and think you will need assistance evacuating this classroom and/or building in an emergency situation, please make me aware so I can develop a plan to assist you.

### **Laptop Policy**

Laptop computers are permitted for taking notes. You should not surf the web, edit facebook pages, twitter, email or work on other projects. Such activities will distract you, your peers, and the instructor. You will be asked to put your computer away or leave the class if you do not use it in accordance with this policy.

### **Fire / Emergency**

Fire: Immediately proceed to the nearest exit during a fire alarm. Do not use elevators.  
 Emergency: More information is available on the University's Emergency website located at <http://www.gvsu.edu/emergency>

### **Canceled Classes**

Unless the instructor emails you otherwise, if classes are canceled at the university, any exam will take place at the next class meeting.

### **Course Schedule:**

This is a provisional schedule, meaning dates will change based on time constraints, unanticipated events, and the instructor's discretion. However, every effort will be made to make sure there will be no changes to the exam dates, assignment due dates, the grading scheme, or the topics covered. When the instructor makes changes, he will communicate them in class and via announcements on Bb.

### **Provisional Schedule**

<b>Date</b>	<b>Lecture Topic / Activities</b>	<b>Assignments Due</b>
May 8 – Mon	Discussion of Reading; Chpt 1 – Intro to Research	
May 10 – Wed	Chpt 1 cont.; <b>CC – data coding</b>	Biographical sketch
May 12 – Fri	Chpt 3 – Ethics; Chpt 2 – Developing the Hypothesis	
May 15 – Mon	Chpt 2 cont.; Chpt 4– Measures	Email data before class
May 17 – Wed	Chpt 4 cont.; <b>CC – choose topic &amp; begin research</b>	
May 19 – Fri	Chpt 5 – Reliability & Validity; Workshop Intros I	
May 22– Mon	Workshop Intros II; <b>CC – Lab 1: Reliability</b>	
May 24 – Wed	Chpt 5 cont.; Chpt 6 – Surveys & Sampling;	
May 26– Fri	Peer Review Intros; Exam Review	Draft Intros; Lab 1
May 29 – Mon	<b>Memorial Day Recess</b>	
May 31– Wed	<b>Midterm Exam</b> ; Chpt 8 – Hypothesis Testing	
June 2 – Fri	Exam Review; Chpt 8 cont.; Workshop Methods	
June 5 – Mon	Chpt 9 – Correlational Designs; <b>CC – Lab 2: Chi-square</b>	
June 7 – Wed	Chpt 9 cont.; Peer Review Methods;	Draft Methods
June 9 – Fri	Chpt 10 - One-Way Designs; Workshop Results & Discussion	Lab 2
June 12 – Mon	Chpt 10 cont.; <b>CC – Lab 3: T-test</b>	
June 14 – Wed	Draft Results & Discussion; <b>CC – No Lab: work on Results</b>	Draft Results & Discussion
June 16 – Fri	TBA; Chpt 11	Lab 3
June 19 – Mon	TBA; Exam Review	
June 21 – Wed	<b>Final Exam</b>	<b>Lit Critique</b>