**SWS Research Methods in Psychology (PSY 300 - 06)**
Monday, Wednesday, & Friday 12 – 12:50pm, 1320 ASH
Winter 2016

**Instructor:** Ernest Park, Ph.D.
**Office:** 2136 AuSable Hall
**Office Phone:** 331-5062
**Email:** parker@gvsu.edu

I will try to respond to emails within 24 hours if they are received Monday-Friday. See me in person (e.g., during office hours) if you have any questions/concerns that may require a lengthy response. Please be aware that I may not respond to email inquiries that involve information that has already been covered in the syllabus or in class.

**Office Hours:** M, W, & F: 10 – 11am; I can also be available by appointment

**Required Textbooks:**

**Prerequisites:** PSY 101 or HNR 234, STA 215 or STA 312, & WRT 150 (grade of C or better)

*This syllabus is subject to change. Changes (if any) will be announced in class. Students are responsible for keeping informed of any such notices.

**Course Description:** Examination of basic research methods in psychology. Emphasis is 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:** Through lecture and assignments, students will better understand the research process and its importance. Students who master the principles of research methodology will be able to see and explain how abstract constructs can be explored in concrete, measurable ways. By the end of the semester students should be able to evaluate scientific research and be able to appropriately interpret data. With an increased understanding of research methodology, students will be able to think critically about research findings and claims, and be able to clearly express and effectively defend their views. In addition to being a more informed consumer of research, students will also grow as practitioners and be able to formulate hypotheses and develop and design research to test such predictions.

**Basis for grading:**
Exam 1 = 80 points
Exam 2 = 80 points
Exam 3 = 80 points
In-class quizzes = 3 X 5 pts. each = 15 points
Article evaluation = 25 points
Research paper (all components) = 150 points (intro draft = 25 pts.; method draft = 25 pts.; final paper = 100 pts.)
Total possible points = 430 points

Number grade = Earned points/430 X 100 (grades ending with .499 and below will be rounded down, and .50 and above will be rounded up)

**Grading scale:**
A = 94 and above  
C+ = 77-79  
F= 59 and below
A- = 90-93  
C = 73-76
B+ = 87-89  
C- = 70-72
B = 83-86  
D+ = 67-69
B- = 80-82  
D = 60-66
Exams: Exams will consist of multiple choice questions. Students are required to bring their own No. 2 pencils on exam days. Students are responsible for knowing material from the text and any content discussed in class (including content from assigned articles). If an exam is missed due to illness, I must be notified by email within 12 hours of the scheduled exam time and students must be able to provide a doctor’s note to reschedule the exam. If an exam is missed for a reason other than illness, students must contact me at least 48 hours in advance of the scheduled exam time. A valid excuse must be provided and students should wait for approval from me before assuming the excuse is acceptable. Missed exams or failure to comply with these policies will result in a zero on the exam.

In-class quizzes: There will be 4 in-class quizzes throughout the semester. These quizzes will each consist of 5 multiple choice questions that cover any material that has been discussed in the text or in class by the time of the quiz. These will be “pop” quizzes (advanced notice about the quiz will not be provided). To receive credit, students must be in class when quizzes are distributed, and must complete the in-class quiz within the allotted time. To maintain fairness to all, make-up opportunities cannot be granted, but, the lowest quiz grade will be dropped. Since “pop” quizzes will cover any material discussed up to the time the quiz is taken, it is critical for students to arrive to class on time, keep up with the assigned readings, and to remember what has been covered throughout the semester. Class attendance and attentiveness are thus strongly encouraged.

Article evaluation: Each student will read and evaluate a research article. Evaluations will be submitted in essay format (at least two-typed pages, double-spaced). More details and instructions will be provided later in the semester.

Research Paper: Students will write an APA-style research proposal that includes the following sections: introduction, methods, results (proposed analyses), discussion, and references. Students may consult with one another, but all aspects of the paper must be written individually. Rough drafts of the paper’s major components will be required. More details will be provided later in the semester.

Policies:
Late assignments: If an assignment deadline is missed due to illness, I must be notified by email within 12 hours of the scheduled due date and students must be able to provide a doctor’s note. If an assignment is turned in late for a reason other than illness, students must contact me at least 48 hours in advance of the scheduled due date. A valid excuse must be provided and students should wait for approval from me before assuming the excuse is acceptable. Assignments that are not turned in, or are turned in late and fail to meet these regulations will result in a zero.

Academic integrity: The following are statements provided by the university and can be found in the Student Code, Sections, 223.00 and 223.01.

Students will do original work and will not take or receive the efforts of another person on any test or assignment, use unauthorized resources on quizzes or tests, plagiarize, or give/sell other students papers or assignments not authorized by the instructor. You are responsible for making yourself aware of and for understanding the policies and procedures that pertain to academic integrity. To that end, be sure to familiarize yourself with the GVSU Student Code (Section 223.00 and 223.01) related to academic integrity. Furthermore, be sure to reference sources at all times. If you are uncertain about such an issue prior to submission of an assignment, project, or test, please see me so we can eliminate that uncertainty.

No student shall knowingly plagiarize or copy the work of another person and submit it as his/her own. 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. The language or ideas taken from another may range from isolated formulas, sentences, or paragraphs to entire articles copied from the internet, books, periodicals, speeches, or from the writing of other students. The offering of materials assembled or collected by others in the form of projects or collections without acknowledgement also is considered plagiarism. In short, any student who fails to give credit in written or oral work for the ideas or materials that have been taken from another is guilty of plagiarism.

Disability: If there is any student in this class who has special needs because of a learning, physical, or other disability, please contact me and Disability Support Services (DSS) 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, please make me aware so that the university and I can develop a plan to assist you. It is the student’s responsibility to request assistance from DSS.
Cancelled classes: If the university is closed and classes are cancelled, any scheduled exam will take place the next class meeting (unless you are notified otherwise by me).

Electronic devices: Use of computers in class is permitted only for taking notes. Unless authorized by me, phone and internet activity are not permitted since it is distracting to other students and is disrespectful. Unless authorized by me, any audio/visual recordings during class are not permitted. If you fail to comply to policies you may be asked to leave class.

Students are expected to read the assigned chapter before the first lecture of the week (note: journal articles will also be assigned; announcements will be made in class)

Tentative Schedule

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Assignments Due</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Week 1, Jan. 11</td>
<td>Syllabus, Chapter 1: Introduction</td>
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<td>Chapter 2: Sources of information</td>
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<td>Week 2, Jan. 18</td>
<td><strong>MLK Jr. Day – NO CLASS (Monday)</strong></td>
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<td>Chapter 3: Three claims, Four validities</td>
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<td>Week 3, Jan. 25</td>
<td>Chapter 4: Ethics</td>
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<td>Week 4, Feb. 1</td>
<td>Chapter 5: Identifying good measurement</td>
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<td>Week 5, Feb. 8</td>
<td><strong>Exam 1 (Wed class)</strong></td>
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<td>Writing Instruction (text: APA-Style Reports) (Fri. Class)</td>
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<td>Week 6, Feb. 15</td>
<td>Chapter 6: Surveys and observations</td>
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<td>Week 7, Feb. 22</td>
<td>Chapter 7: Sampling</td>
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<td>Week 8, Feb. 29</td>
<td>Chapter 10: Simple experiments</td>
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<td>Week 9, Mar. 7</td>
<td><strong>SPRING BREAK – NO CLASSES</strong></td>
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<td>Week 10, Mar. 14</td>
<td>Chapter 11: More on experiments</td>
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<td>Week 11, Mar. 21</td>
<td><strong>Exam 2 (Monday Class)</strong></td>
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<td>Chapter 8: Bivariate Correlational research (Wed. Class)</td>
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<td>Week 12, Mar. 28</td>
<td>Chapter 9: Multivariate correlational research</td>
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<td>Week 13, Apr. 4</td>
<td>Chapter 12 – Experiments with more than one IV</td>
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<td>Week 14, Apr. 11</td>
<td>Chapter 13 – Quasi-experiments</td>
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<td>Week 15, Apr. 18</td>
<td>Statistics Review (text): Descriptive and inferential</td>
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<td><strong>Final Research Paper</strong></td>
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<td>Final (Exam 3)</td>
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<td>Wednesday, April 27, 2 - 3:50pm</td>
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Grade Expectations

What Teachers Expect From You After WRT 150

WRT 150 teaches you to find and develop topics, research information and ideas related to your topics, draft and revise essays, seek quality feedback (from classmates, writing consultants from the Meijer Center for Writing, and faculty), document sources, and proofread and edit final drafts. One goal of WRT 150 is to help you develop the ability to guide yourself through this process—not just in WRT 150, but also in all of your college courses and beyond.

After WRT 150, some students forget all the hard work involved with producing quality college-level writing. We want you to live up to your WRT 150 grade in all of your other classes.

WRT 150 grades are based on the product of lots of hard work—final drafts. If you earn a “B” in WRT 150, we believe you are capable of “good” college-level writing IF you work hard at brainstorming, researching, drafting, revising, documenting, and editing your writing. A “B” does not guarantee that you will always produce good writing, of course, just as a “B” in Spanish does not guarantee that you will always speak good Spanish.

You must continue to work hard to produce good writing!

Remember: First or second drafts will likely earn poor grades. On final due dates, college teachers expect final drafts. The same is true of employers: In memos, letters, reports, and other written projects, employers expect final drafts. First drafts won’t cut it!

Seven Steps to a Final Draft

Set a Timeline. Whether you have two months or two hours, you should divide your available time and make a plan. Try dividing your time into four equal blocks for planning, drafting, revising, and editing. Conducting research and consulting with others can happen during all four time blocks. Your goal should be to complete a first full draft by the midpoint of your allotted time. That will allow time for revising and editing.

Clarify Your Goals. Make sure you fully understand the assignment. Talk to people—friends, classmates, professors—about your plans and ideas. Do some background reading and research. Make an appointment with your professor and describe your plans. Are you on the right track?

Check Your Resources. If you need to conduct surveys or experiments, contact people for interviews or field work, or do library research, do it early! Check the library website for resources related to your course, field, or general subject. Talk to a librarian. Talk to your professor.

Get a Draft Done Early. The earlier you complete your first full draft, the more time you’ll have to improve that draft by re-thinking, re-researching, re-organizing, and re-wording.

Visit the Meijer Center for Writing (120 LOH). The trained consultants can help you at any stage of your writing process—from brainstorming to final editing. You should plan to visit the Center several times for each major writing project. www.gvsu.edu/wc

Check Style and Documentation Requirements. If your project includes research, you will need to cite and document your sources. Make sure you know which “style sheet” your professor wants you to follow. If you are unsure what constitutes plagiarism, check with your professor.

Save Time for Final Editing. This can be the most crucial step. Follow the suggestions on the back of this sheet.
Focus and Development:

Is the topic clearly indicated in the title and opening paragraphs?
Is there a clear focus, stance, or purpose introduced early on?
Is the focus maintained throughout the piece of writing? Is the ending focused on the same goal as the beginning?
Are the main and supporting ideas supported with details, evidence, examples, and explanations?
Are there lingering questions that have been unanswered, or have all of the loose ends been neatly tied up? Have you satisfied a “critic” of your ideas?

Mechanics:

Have you run a spell-check of the document? Have you double-checked to make sure all proper nouns and technical terms are spelled correctly and consistently?
Have you checked each sentence for correctness? Try reading the whole draft backward, sentence by sentence, to allow you to focus on each sentence individually. Check for sentence fragments, comma splices, fused sentences, and mixed constructions.
Is your grammar correct? Check for subject-verb agreement, pronoun-antecedent agreement, and misplaced or dangling modifiers.
Have you used commas appropriately? Double-check the most common uses of commas: 1) after introductory phrases, 2) before concluding phrases, 3) around interrupting phrases, 4) before a conjunction joining two independent clauses, and 5) between items in a series.
Have you checked all of your plurals and possessives for proper use of the apostrophe?
Have you checked for problems with other forms of punctuation: colons, semi-colons, hyphens, dashes, periods, and question marks?

Organization:

Is there an overall pattern to the paper? Is that pattern previewed early on so that the reader knows what to expect in the paper?
Is that pattern clear, sensible, natural? If you made a paragraph-by-paragraph outline of the existing draft, would the outline move along easily and sensibly?
Do you provide helpful transitions from one part of the paper to the next? How do you do it—with headings? with transition sentences at the beginning of new sections? both?
Are the individual sections or paragraphs themselves well organized? If you read sections and paragraphs individually, do they read as unified wholes—as mini-papers on a particular topic?

Style and Expression:

Does the “voice” behind the writing sound appropriate to the topic, course, and discipline? Does the writing sound smart, educated, well informed, and confident? Are your readers likely to be impressed by your “presence” in the essay?
Are the sentences smooth, fluid, natural, and varied? Are they easy to read out loud?

Documentation (when appropriate):

Are outside sources properly introduced, cited, and documented?
Have you checked your citations against the guidelines of the particular style sheet your professor wants you to follow (APA, CSE, IEEE, MLA, etc.)? Have you avoided plagiarism?
Have you placed quotation marks around all phrases and sentences that you have lifted directly from outside sources?
Have you cited the sources of all ideas and information, including ideas and information that you have paraphrased or summarized from sources?
Have you correctly formatted all book titles, periodical titles, newspaper titles, website titles, and article titles? Should they be italicized, underlined, or put into quotation marks? Should some words be capitalized?
Have you correctly formatted the appropriate references list at the end of the paper? Is it properly numbered or alphabetized? Are the entries properly indented? Is the page titled correctly—as “Works Cited,” “References,” “Bibliography,” or whatever is called for in your particular style sheet?

If you have special troubles with spelling, grammar, punctuation, or documentation, review a good handbook or website:

Purdue’s Online Writing Lab (OWL):
http://owl.english.purdue.edu/
Punctuation Made Simple:
http://chuma.cas.usf.edu/~olson/pms/
The Diana Hacker Website:
http://dianahacker.com/bedhandbook/