

PSY300, Section 16: **Research Methods in Psychology**
Fall 2016

Instructor: Dr. Brent Steffens

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Office: 2112 Au Sable Hall

Office Hours: Tuesday 10-11:30am, Wednesday 10-11:30am, or by appointment

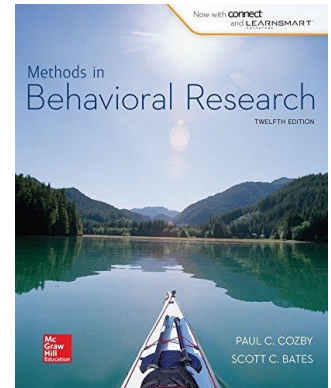
Office Phone: 616-331-2407

Meeting Time: MWF, 2-2:50pm

Room: ASH2119

Required Course Materials

Cozby, P. C. & Bates, S. C. (2015). *Methods in Behavioral Research*, 12th Edition.
McGraw Hill: New York



Recommended (but not required):

American Psychological Association (201). *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association* (Sixth Edition). Washington, D. C.: APA.

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

Course Topic & Learning Outcomes

The aim of this course is to provide you with knowledge about the critical components of performing psychological research. We will discuss ethics, research design, measurement, selecting and interpreting statistical analyses, and writing a manuscript. The goal of this class is to give you an understanding of the tools that are at your disposal when conducting research. This can be challenging – rather than focusing on the findings and theory of a particular field, we are taking a step back to consider what decisions were made to make the research possible. Still, you will gain exposure to a new and interesting way to approach the content that you have been reading about in other psychology classes. You may also find that with this knowledge, you are a more critical reader of research, whether it appears in a journal, a press release from a university, or a report in the news.

Determination of Grades

TASK		POINTS
Exams	3 exams x 40 pts. each	120 pts.
Assignments	2 assignment x 10 pts. 4 assignments x 15 pts. each	80 pts.
Research Paper		150 pts.
		Total points: 340

Exams

There will be three exams throughout the semester. None of the tests are cumulative, but they will cover information from **the class lectures and from the book**. A study guide will be posted about 1.5-2 weeks before each exam date.

Assignments (70 pts. total)

Assignment 1: Email Assignment (10 pts.): Each student is responsible for sending me a professional email. My email address is at the top of this syllabus. Your email should include 1) information regarding your career interest in the field of psychology (or related field), 2) one personal story that has

inspired you on this path, and 3) your topic for your research paper. Although I am fairly relaxed about professional titles, please use this opportunity to practice the right way to address a professor. This is a critical skill to have as you head toward requesting letters of recommendation and other communications. If you are unsure about how the email should look, the following website can help:

<http://www.wikihow.com/Email-a-Professor>

This email should be received by me no later than: **Wednesday, September 7th (email by 5:00pm)**

Assignment 3: Plagiarism Assignment (10 pts.): Each student will complete an online 1-2 hour plagiarism tutorial and test. At the end of the test, there will be a certificate to print. This will be your proof of completion. The tutorial and test can be found at the following website:

<https://www.indiana.edu/~academy/firstPrinciples/index.html>

This website has been created by Indiana University for their own and for others' use. Although there is a brief 5-min self-check quiz available, this will not result in a certificate (be sure to complete the correct quiz). It is in your best interest to take the tutorial seriously. Not only are you required to get a perfect score in order to receive the certificate, but this information will be extremely helpful in writing your own research paper for the course. Your certificate is due no later than: **Friday, September 23rd (in class)**

Assignment 2, 4, 5, 6: Content Assignments (15 pts. each): There will be three assignments throughout the semester that will either be completed in class or outside of class. These activities target critical components of reading, evaluating, and performing research. Specific details and due dates will be provided later (see tentative schedule below for general due dates). For assignments that are to be completed outside of class, announcements will be made both in class and on Blackboard when they become available and when they are due.

Research Paper

Each student is expected to write an APA-style research paper for a research project that they have designed. The goal is for you to experience designing and writing up a research project. You will select the conditions for the study, what to measure, and a made up data set will be provided for your analysis. The design should be simple – comparing two groups (must be manipulated) on a dependent variable, and a correlation between two variables (one of which is the dependent variable that the groups were compared on). The paper must include these components:

- Title page
- Abstract
- Introduction (reviews 5 articles, includes gap in literature, hypotheses & predictions)
- Methods
- Results (summarizing analysis from provided data set)
- Discussion
- References

The APA manual will help you with the formatting and structure of the paper. Although students may consult with one another, all aspects of the paper must be written individually. Drafts of two sections (introduction, methods) will be submitted for a grade through Blackboard, and students will be given feedback so that changes can be made for the final draft due at the end of the semester. These two drafts will be worth 25 points each, and the final draft will be worth 100 points. Additional details will be given throughout the semester.

Writing Center. One valuable resource you can use to help you write the paper is the GVSU Writing Center. The Fred Meijer Center for Writing, with locations at the Allendale and Pew/Downtown Grand Rapids campuses, is available to assist you with writing for any of your classes. Writing

consultants, who are fellow GVSU students, are trained to help you with all stages of your writing process, from brainstorming to organizing to editing your papers. Simply bring a draft of your paper, the assignment sheet, and your questions/concerns to any of the Center's locations. Also, through your Gmail account, you have access to online consultations through GoogleDocs. The Center's services are free and you can drop in and work with a consultant or make an appointment, either through our website or by calling the Center (331-2922). For more information about our services and locations, please visit our website: <http://www.gvsu.edu/wc/>

ALLENDALE:

Lake Ontario Hall 120; Monday - Thursday 9:00 a.m. - 6:00 p.m. & Friday 9:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m. & Sunday 2 p.m. - 6 p.m.

Knowledge Market: Mary Idema Pew Library (1st floor) - Sunday - Thursday 6:00 p.m. - 11:00 p.m.

Online via Google Docs - Monday - Wednesday 8:00 p.m. - 12:00 a.m.

PEW CAMPUS DOWNTOWN

Knowledge Market: Steelcase Library - Monday - Thursday 11:00 a.m. - 6:00 p.m.

CHS Building 100 - Monday & Thursday 11 a.m. - 2 p.m.

Grade Assignment Scale:

Points (%)	Grade	Points (%)	Grade
≥ 93	A	77 – 79.9	C+
90 - 92.9	A-	70 – 76.9	C
87 – 89.9	B+	60 – 69.9	D
83 – 86.9	B	≤ 59.9	F
80 – 82.9	B-		

Course Guidelines

The classroom is a special environment in which students and faculty come together to promote learning and growth. It is essential to this learning environment that respect for the rights of others seeking to learn, respect for the professionalism of the instructor, and the general goals of academic freedom are maintained. To create and preserve a classroom atmosphere that optimizes teaching and learning, all participants share a responsibility in creating a civil and non-disruptive forum. Students are expected to conduct themselves at all times in this classroom in a manner that does not disrupt teaching or learning.

1. Class begins promptly at the beginning of the class period. Students should be in their seats and ready to start participating at that time.
2. **For Tests:** If you arrive late for a test that has already started, you may take the test for the remaining amount of time allotted for that test.
3. Students caught cheating will be dealt with severely, in accordance with the Grand Valley State University regulations. Students will not be allowed to retain copies of exam questions.
4. Students will stay until the end of class and will not pack up early, before that time.
5. Students who have to arrive late or leave early for a compelling reason, will inform me of that fact in advance and should be seated close to the door.
6. **PHONES:** TURN YOUR PHONE ON SILENT. Please try to stay off your phone during class. If you are constantly staring at your phone (above the desk, below the desk, I can ALWAYS tell), I will tell you to put the phone away. If I have to keep reminding you, I will ask you to leave. I reserve the right to change this policy to NO PHONES. Please, come ready to focus for the 50 minute class. It's not all day.
7. Students will pay attention during class: no talking while another classmate or the professor is talking, no reading newspapers, no doing work for other classes. Students who are asked to leave

for the day for engaging in these behaviors will do so quickly and quietly.

8. Students are responsible for all material presented in class whether or not they are present. This material includes the lectures, discussions, and activities. Students who miss class should obtain lecture notes and handouts from another student. Please bring these notes to my office hours so I can be most helpful.
9. I am a challenging teacher but provide many opportunities for you to get help. It is your responsibility to ask for help when you need it (e.g., attend office hours, read the book, go to the learning or writing center). If some material is unclear, please let me know. Most of the lectures require you to apply the knowledge learned in class and in readings, so it is critical that you really understand the material. I truly enjoy questions in class – it makes the class more interesting to me and informative to other students. Chances are, if you have a question, others have that same question but is too shy to ask it. When you do want to ask a question, raise your hand and wait for me to call on you.
10. Civility in the classroom and respect for the opinions of others is very important in an academic environment. It is likely you may not agree with everything that is said or discussed in the classroom. When speaking, use courteous, respectful language and keep comments and questions relevant to the topic at hand.
11. Students have a responsibility to themselves, their fellow classmates, and the professor to be prepared and to participate in classroom discussions. Learning is an interactive process.
12. Students are also responsible for being aware of all assignments, exam dates, and other course scheduling information.

I will feel no compunction reminding you about violation of rules and will ask you to leave if you negatively influence the learning environment.

Class attendance. It is expected that you notify me by email about your absence before the class has started. I teach content that may go beyond what is in the book, and this material will be on the exams. It is therefore critical that you regularly attend class in order to learn this content.

Receiving assistance. If you are in need of accommodations due to a learning, physical, or other disability you must present a memo to me from Disability Support Resources (DSR), indicating the existence of a disability and the suggested reasonable accommodations. If you have not already done so, please contact the Disability Support Resources office (4015 JHZ) by calling 331-2490 or email to dsrgvsu@gvsu.edu. Please note that I cannot provide accommodations based upon disability until I have received a copy of the DSR issued memo. All discussions will remain confidential.

Course Recommendations

Be proactive. Act *early* in the semester if your grades are falling below what you hoped for. There is NOTHING you can do to increase a poor grade to a better one the week before finals. Grades ARE FINAL at the end of term.

Team work. I strongly encourage students to exchange contact information with 1-2 students. You are responsible for all material presented in class, so if you miss a day please get in contact with another student to ask for their notes.

Check your email. Whenever a new announcement, or other notice is posted to Blackboard, an email is sent to your GVSU G-ID email account ([Hyperlink to GVSU Email](#)). I would advise checking your email at least once a day to make sure you do not miss any important updates.

Nourishment. You are welcome to eat a snack or sip a beverage during class if it helps you get there on time or focus. Please be considerate of classmates in your choices (e.g. no noisy / messy / smelly food).

Course Dates
Tentative Fall 2016 Semester Schedule

Dates	Topics	Chapters in Methods in Behavioral Research	Assignment Due
August 29	Class Overview/Syllabus & Scientific Understanding of Behavior	1	
August 31, September 2	Hypothesizing, Predicting, & Theory	2	
September 5	NO CLASS: Labor day		
September 7, 9, 12	Ethics	3	Assignment 1: Email Due 9/7
September 14, 16	Writing in APA Format		Assignment 2 Due: Article Structure
September 19, 21, 23	Methodological Components & Considerations	4	Assignment 3: Plagiarism Due 9/23
September 26, 28, 30	Observational Research	6	
October 3	Monday, October 10: Exam 1 (chapters 2, 3, 4, 6)		
October 5, 7, 10	Description & Correlation	12	Draft of Introduction Due 10/10
October 12, 14, 17	Survey Design & Measurement	5	
October 17, 19, 21	Survey Design & Measurement cont'd	7	Activity 4 Due: Surveys
October 24, 26, 28, 31	Experimental Research	8	Activity 5 Due: Correlation vs. Causality
November 2, 4, 7	Experimental Research cont'd	9	
November 9	Wednesday, November 16: Exam 2 (chapters 12, 5, 7, 8, 9)		
November 11, 14, 16	Inferential Statistics	13	Draft of Methods Section Due 11/14
November 18	NO CLASS: Conference		
November 21	Complex Experimental Designs	10	
November 23, 25	NO CLASS: Happy Thanksgiving!		
November 29, 30, December 2	Complex Experimental Designs cont'd	10	Activity 6 Due: Understanding Graphs
December 5, 7, 9	Single-case & Quasi-Experimental Designs	11	Final Draft of Paper Due 12/9
December 12	Monday, December 12, 2-3:50pm: Exam 4 (chapters 13, 10, 11)		