

PSY 300 –Research Methods in Psychology  
Fall 2024

**Section 07:** MWF 11:00am-11:50am      AuSable Hall 2107  
**Section 04:** MWF 2:00pm-2:50pm      Lake Superior Hall 229

**Instructor:** Dr. Christopher A. Kurby  
**Office:** ASH 2207  
**Phone:** 331-2418  
**E-mail:** [kurbyc@gvsu.edu](mailto:kurbyc@gvsu.edu)  
**Office Hours:** MWF 10:00 am to 11:00 am or by appointment.

**Required text:** Morling, B (2015). *Research Methods in Psychology: Evaluating a World of Information* (Fourth Edition)  
ISBN-13: 9780393617542

**Recommended texts (but not required):**

American Psychological Association (2001). *Publication manual of the American Psychological Association* (6th Ed.). Washington, D. C.: APA.

**Coarse Description and Learning Objectives:** Experimental and survey methods in psychology. How to think about science and methods. Topics covered include philosophy of science; theory development; measurement; reliability and validity of methods; experimental, quasi-experimental, survey, and qualitative research designs; biases in experimentation; univariate and multivariate data analysis; and research ethics. After completion of this course, a student should improve in critical/scientific thinking, scientific evaluation skills, and scientific writing.

Students who complete the course should be able to:

- Critically evaluate research studies
- Conduct efficient literature searches
- Know how to write scientifically
- Make hypotheses
- Know how to conduct ethical research
- Do good science

**Course format and brief description of kinds of activities used:** This class will be mostly lecture supplemented with discussion and in-class demonstrations and assignments. We will also spend time on writing, critical evaluation of research, data management and analysis. We will work on a research project in class. The course will be heavy on writing and we will also have some lab-based classes about statistics.

**Grading and requirements:** There will be 3 exams, each of which will be composed of multiple-choice questions. Your grade will also be partially made up of your performance on a major research project/writing assignment. We will go through that assignment in

manageable chunks throughout the semester. We will have low-stakes quizzes designed to help you remember key information from that week. You will receive one point for having completed each quiz. However, each quiz will be self-graded in class so that you can see how you are doing. You will also complete some in-class activities, including experimental design and statistics exercises. Your grade at the end of the semester will be determined by summing the number of points you have earned and dividing by the number of points possible. The points will break down as follows:

300 pts – 3 exams (100 pts each)

160 pts – Research/Writing project (total word count approx. 3000-5000 words)

- Idea (5 pts)
- Reference list (10 pts)
- Introduction (10 pts)
- Data collection (10 pts)
- Methods (10 pts)
- Results and Discussion (10 pts)
- Final paper (105 pts)

50 pts – class participation and in-class activities

10 pts – 10 quizzes (1 pt each)

**Grading scale:** I will announce the official grading scale during class further in the semester.

**Academic Honesty:** Violations of the standards of Academic Honesty will be met with severe penalties. Anyone known to be plagiarizing material or copying from another person's exam will receive a grade of zero on that assignment or exam, and possibly an F in the course. Students are particularly urged to familiarize themselves with the provisions of the Code of Student Behavior (online at <http://www.gvsu.edu/studentcode/index.cfm>) and avoid any behavior that could potentially result in suspicions of cheating, plagiarism, misrepresentation of facts and/or participation in an offence. Any offense will be reported to the Chair of the Psychology Department, Dr. Robert Hendersen, who will determine if further action is necessary.

**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.

**Course Description (from GVSU catalog):**

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. Students must complete the course with a grade of "C" or better in order to receive SWS credit.

**Writing Center and Library Knowledge Market:** The Fred Meijer Center for Writing, with locations at the Allendale and Pew/Downtown Grand Rapids campuses, is a peer service 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 an idea, prompt, or draft of your paper along with the assignment sheet to any of the Center's locations. Also, through your Gmail account, you have access to online consultations through Google Docs. 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). Peer support is available for research and speech/presentation through the Knowledge Market, where the Writing Center partners with the Speech Lab and the Peer Research Center.

**Writing instruction:** This course will teach you to write an extended research paper. We will break the process into parts. I will teach you to locate peer reviewed scholarship on a topic, summarize articles, narrow a topic to a debatable question, paraphrase scholars' viewpoints, introduce and analyze direct quotations, and support your own standpoint. At least 4 hours of class time will be devoted to studying the form and function of research papers, moving from topics to questions, distinguishing between a summary, paraphrase, and quote, organizing support for your own viewpoint, editing for conventional comma placement, conferencing with me, and peer review. Initial drafts of selected sections of the research paper will be due preceding the whole draft deadline (deadlines will be announced). Final papers will be assessed using the [Written Communication Skills](#) rubric and holistic criteria for effective research papers in English.

**Disability Accommodations:** Any student who requires accommodation because of a physical or learning disability must contact Disability Support Services (<http://www.gvsu.edu/dss>) at 616-331-2490 as soon as possible. It is the student's responsibility to request assistance from DSS. After you have documented your disability, please make an appointment or see me during office hours to discuss your specific needs. Accommodations are always designed to maintain the academic integrity of the course; student with disabilities are held to the same academic standards as all other students. Accordingly, if no additional costs (including staff time) are involved, the instructor will extend such accommodation to anyone who requests them, whether or not

the student has a declared disability. If a requested accommodation requires special equipment, space, personnel, staff time, or other resources beyond those normally available to the class, the accommodation will be offered only if the student has gone through the process that begins by declaring the disability with Disability Support Services.

If you have a disability and think you might need assistance evacuating the classroom and/or building in an emergency situation, please make Dr. Kurby aware, so he can develop a plan to assist you.

**Late assignments:** Assignments can be handed in late, however, late assignments will lose 25% of the total points earned for that assignment every day they are late (i.e., 4 days late = 100% point loss. Weekend days are *included* in the count.). Assignments are to be handed in (uploaded to blackboard) to me by the end of the day (11:59pm) as stated on the syllabus/assignment. Any assignment turned in after that time – even if it is turned in only one minute later than 11:59pm – will be counted as late. Please make sure you that have your assignment completed early enough so that last minute technical errors (e.g., computer/printer malfunction) do not occur. Last minute technical errors will not be accepted as an excuse for why an assignment was turned in late. If a special extenuating circumstance has come up that will cause your assignment to be late, you must speak with me about it as soon as possible after it presents itself.

**Missed exams:** It is your responsibility to set up make-up exams with me if you miss an exam. If you missed an exam and were not excused to do so, you must contact me within 48 hours of the exam date. The only acceptable reasons for missing an exam unannounced or unexcused is family/personal emergency or medical reason. If you had a medical reason that kept you from class that day, then I need medical documentation proving so (e.g., note from physician). I will then give you an opportunity to make up the exam. Missing the exam for any other reason may result in forfeiture of some or all of the points for that exam. If you know you are going to miss an exam for a planned reason (e.g., out of town), let me know beforehand.

**Emergency closings:** If for any reason the university cancels, or if I cancel, class on an exam day (e.g., severe weather), the exam will be moved to the next class meeting.

**Electronic devices:** Please turn off all cell phones, pagers and other electronic devices with audible signals or alarms during class time.

*This course is subject to the GVSU policies listed at <http://www.gvsu.edu/coursepolicies/>*

**(Schedule starts on next page)**

**TENTATIVE COURSE SCHEDULE & READING ASSIGNMENTS**

<b>Week</b>	<b>Topic</b>	<b>Readings</b>
01/08-01/12	Coarse overview, Introduction and Science as knowledge acquisition.	Morling Chapters 1-2 Introduction to research project
01/15-01/19 (no class 01/15)	Science as knowledge acquisition	Morling Chapter 2
01/22-01/26	Claims and causation <b>Research idea due 01/24</b>	Morling Chapter 3
01/29-02/02	Ethics and measurement <b>List of references due 02/02</b>	Morling Chapters 4-5
02/05-02/09	Measurement Scientific writing <b>Exam 1 02/09</b>	Morling Chapter 5
02/12-02/16	Making observations and recording behavior, sampling	Morling Chapters 6-7
02/19-02/23	Sampling, external validity <b>Introduction due 02/19</b>	Morling Chapter 7
02/26-03/01	Correlational research Writing methods sections	Morling Chapters 8-9
03/11-03/15	Multivariate correlational research <b>Research data due 03/13</b>	Morling Chapters 8-9
03/18-03/22	Multivariate correlational research, Experimentation <b>Methods section due 03/18</b> <b>Exam 2 03/22</b>	Morling Chapters 9-10
03/25-03/29	Experimentation Writing Results and discussion	Morling Chapter 10
04/01-04/05	Experimentation	Morling Chapter 11

04/08-04/12	Experimentation <b>Results and Discussion due 04/10</b>	Morling Chapters 11-12
04/15-04/19	Experimentation	Morling Chapters 12-13
04/24 (Wed) <b>Section 07: 10:00 am - 11:50 am</b>  <b>Section 04: 2:00 pm - 3:00 pm</b>	<b>Exam 3 (Final research paper due)</b>	