

PSY300

Research Methods in Psychology (Winter 2021)

Instructor: Jerry S. Fisher, Ph.D.
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Office hours (online): Thursday Evenings 6 - 8pm & by appointment

Optional Texts:

American Psychological Association (2019) Publication manual of the American Psychological Association (7th Ed.). Washington, DC: American Psychological Association.

Course Objectives:

The primary purpose of Research Methods is to introduce you to the processes and methods used in scientific studies in psychology. The course will focus on each stage in the progression of a research project, including developing research questions and hypotheses, testing hypotheses, analyzing and interpreting data, writing up results, drawing appropriate conclusions, and communicating the findings. Also inherent in the class format is the study of ethical issues in research and learning to critically evaluate empirical work in journal articles and books.

Learning Goals:

The aim of this course is to acquaint students with basic research methods in psychology while exploring practical, theoretical, and ethical issues regarding research design and its implementation in psychology. Upon successful completion of this course students will be able to:

1. describe the details of and summarize the essence of research articles.
2. write clearly and cogently in a scientific way.
3. design an empirical study consistent with the standards of psychological science.

Course Format:

This is an online asynchronous course where you will be asked to watch the lecture material and complete the online homework and writing assignments by their due dates. All this content will be made available to you through Blackboard and our personal class webpage (<https://jerryscottfisher.net/GVSUMethods.html>). Additionally, there will be three exams that should be completed at a specific date and time (I will give some flexibility on scheduling these times if a personal need arises, but a delay of over 24 hours from the scheduled date and time will require an official documentation such as a physician's note).

The preferred method of communication for this class is through email and our live evening sessions on Thursday evenings from 6 - 8pm. I plan to respond to every email within 48 hours (but it will likely be much quicker than that).

Grade Breakdown and Scale:

Your grades will be based on weekly homework assignments (50 points total), three exams (25 points each), and three writing assignments (25 points each). This adds up to 200 total points. Your letter grade will be based on the proportion of these points that you receive (see the Grade Scale). The homework assignments and the exams are based on the lecture content. The writing assignments fulfill the SWS designation of this class and are intended to emulate the various sections of an APA style manuscript.

Grade Item	Points
Homework	35
Exam 1	30
Exam 2	30
Exam 3 (Final)	30
Annotated Bibliography	10
Introduction	25
Methods and Results	25
Discussion	15
Total	200

Grade Scale:

Grade	Percent		
A	94-100%	C+	78-79%
A-	90-93%	C	72-77%
B+	88-89%	C-	70-71%
B	82-87%	D	60-69%
B-	80-81%	F	0-59%

Grading is NOT on a curve. Your percentage will be rounded to the nearest integer (e.g., 87.4 → 87 or 87.5 → 88). In the interest of fairness, I will follow this rule strictly for all students.

SWS

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. Students may receive SWS credit for taking the course as Credit/No Credit provided the student passes the course with a "Credit" grade.

Schedule (Note: This schedule is subject to change)

Date	Lecture	Writing Due Dates
Week 1 Jan 19-22	Scientific Method Overview	
Week 2 Jan 25-29	Concepts, Variables, and Hypotheses; APA Formatting	
Week 3 Feb 1-5	Two Sample Designs	
Week 4 Feb 8-12	Representing Data and t Tests; Writing Introduction Section	Annotated Bibliography Due (Feb 12 th)
Week 5 Feb 15-19	Review and Exam I	
Week 6 Feb 22-26	Factorial Designs	
Week 7 Mar 1-5	ANOVA, Correlation, and Regression; Writing Methods and Results Sections	Introduction Due (Mar 5 th)
Week 8 Mar 8-12	Quasi-Experimental and Developmental Designs	
Week 9 Mar 15-19	Validity	Method, Results Due (Mar 19 th)
Week 10 Mar 22-26	Review and Exam II	
Week 11 Mar 29-Apr 2	Bias; Writing Discussion Section	
Week 12 Apr 5-9	Reproducibility and Ethics	Method (revised), Results (revised) Due (Apr 9 th)
Week 13 Apr 12-16	Evaluating Research	
Week 14 Apr 19-23	Online Research and Review	Introduction (revised) and Discussion Due (Apr 23 rd)
Week 15 Apr 26-30	Exam III (Final Exam)	

GVSU Course Policies:

This course is subject to the GVSU policies listed at <http://www.gvsu.edu/coursepolicies>. At this website you can find all policies related to such topics as academic integrity, disabilities, inclusion, and discrimination. Please note that you are responsible for knowing and following the policies that are listed here. It is a good idea to read through them to familiarize yourself with them.

Note that violations of the academic integrity policy, including plagiarism or cheating on exams, will result in the student earning a failing grade for the assignment. If the violation is severe, the student will fail the course.

In the Event of Illness:

Make up exams and extensions to the writing deadlines will be available in the event of illness. If such an event happens, please provide me with official documentation, such as a physician's note.