

Grand Valley State University

Psychology 300-04: Research Methods in Psychology

Professor: Todd Williams

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Office Hours: TR 3:00 – 3:50 (and by appointment)

Appointments are encouraged and can be made via email. Students with appointments will be given priority during office hours. Please indicate the reason for your visit in the email.

Room: *Lecture Days:* PSY300 (02) TR 11:30 The Connection (215)

PSY300 (16) TR 4:00 Lake Superior Hall (227)

Course Description: A general introduction to research methods in psychology. Topics covered include theory development and hypothesis testing; measurement; reliability and validity of methods; experimental, quasi-experimental, and survey research designs; biases in experimentation; univariate data analysis; and research ethics.

Course Objectives: The course is designed to accomplish three main objectives: (1) To teach students how to evaluate real-world claims like those presented in the media (e.g., Does cell phone use increase the frequency of car accidents? Does playing violent video games cause aggressive behavior?); (2) To teach students how to critically evaluate and summarize empirical research findings; (3) To provide students with the basic skills to conduct research in the social sciences.

Course Prerequisites:

PSY 101, STA 215, and WRT 150. You may not take any of these prerequisite courses concurrently with PSY 300.

Required Text:

Mitchell, M. & Jolley, J. (2007). *Research Design Explained* (7th ed). Belmont: Wadsworth

Note that this is an old version of this textbook. I've intentionally chosen an old edition to keep costs down for you. Any version of this text, old or new, will be suitable for this course. I have multiple copies that will be available for loan for those of you looking to keep costs down.

Research articles, supplemental readings, and lecture notes will be posted on BlackBoard.

Recommended Text: (Assignments to be in APA format)

American Psychological Association (2010). *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association*. (6th ed). Washington, DC: Author.

Copies are available in the Zumberge: BF76.7 .P83 2010

*Please DO NOT use pocket or non-APA published versions of this manual. Most have a number of mistakes (this includes some guides that are assigned in writing classes)

Grade Evaluation:

	Description	Weight
Homework	Homework assignments will be assigned throughout the semester. Unless the assignment is very small, you will be given at least 1 week to complete the assignment.	10%
Exams	There will be 3 exams evenly dispersed throughout the course. They may be multiple choice, short or long answer depending on the material being tested. While exams will be focused on the material covered since the last exam, material covered earlier in the course generally serves as a basis for those covered later.	13.33% per exam 40% of total grade.
Research Proposal Draft	This will be a rough draft of your research proposal. It will include a brief literature review and the proposed methods, results, and implications of a two-variable experiment or quasi-experiment. Additional information concerning this assignment will be posted on BlackBoard.	10%
Research Presentation	In groups of two, you will give a 10 minute power point presentation that will summarize and critique a published psychological research article.	10%
Research Proposal	The final draft of your APA style research proposal.	10%
Lab Quiz	In lab exam incorporating SPSS analysis and reporting	10%
Peer Evaluations	Peer evaluation of your presentation and research project partners.	10%

Grades will be determined by adjusting the class average to 76% (B) and assigning letter grades based on the below distribution. Thus, your grade in this class is based on your

performance relative to the rest of the class. Notice that the grading distribution below is much more lenient than what most of you are used to. (this is to avoid ceiling effects in the grading distribution)

This is a *tentative* grade distribution

Rating	Letter Grade	Grade Point Value	Percentage Grades
Excellent	A	4.0	90-100%
Excellent	A-	3.7	85-89%
Good	B+	3.3	80-84%
Good	B	3.0	75-79%
Good	B-	2.7	70-74%
Satisfactory	C+	2.3	65-69%
Satisfactory	C	2.0	60-65%
Satisfactory	C-	1.7	55-59%
Poor	D+	1.3	50-54%
Minimal Pass	D	1.0	45-49%
Failure	F	0	0-44%

Missed Exam/Assignment:

As many of you do not have adequate health coverage I do not require health certificates for absences for missed classes. However, if you miss more than 1 scheduled exam or homework I may require that you to provide a certificate from a certified health professional. *If you miss an exam, you must report your illness to me within 48 hours of the exam/assignment due date.* In the case of a missed exam or assignment, I will either give an extension or have the weight of the missed examination/assignment added to the remaining assignments/exams.

Missed Class: I do not take attendance. This is a university level course and you are adults. While I both appreciate and encourage attendance, I consider this to be a choice that you should feel free to make relative to your life circumstances. Sometimes emergencies happen....I don't feel as though you should be punished for this. That said, you will likely find that in order to do well on my exams, attendance and a fair amount of studying will be necessary. I do ask that if you miss class for a non-legitimate reason that you do not add to my workload by asking me to re-iterate what you missed. For those who do miss class for a legitimate reason I recommend that you ask a peer for their notes, do the readings and come and see me during office hours if you have any questions. Due dates for homework assignments will not be extended for absences (except under extenuating circumstances), so please make sure to consult with a friend in the class to make sure you complete everything on time.

Email/Important Communication:

Please type your name, course number, and section number into the titles of your emails. Emails that have no identifying information make me want to kill myself with a rusty spoon. They increase the difficulty of an already scary and complex world for both of us.

In the case that you are notifying me about a medical condition, absence, or other important aspect of the course, please do so via email. I will always provide a confirmation note that I have received these types of email within 24 hours. If I have not done so, assume that I have not received your email and send another.

Student Responsibilities:

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY: Grand Valley State University is committed to the highest standards of academic integrity and honesty. Students are expected to be familiar with these standards regarding academic honesty and to uphold the policies of GVSU in this respect. Students are particularly urged to familiarize themselves with the provisions of the *Code of Student Behaviour* (online at <http://www.gvsu.edu/studentcode/index.cfm>) and avoid any behaviour which could potentially result in suspicions of cheating, plagiarism, misrepresentation of facts and/or participation in an offence. Academic dishonesty is a serious offence and can result in suspension or expulsion from GVSU. No student shall represent another's substantial editorial or compositional assistance on an assignment as their own. Furthermore, no student shall submit in any course or program of study, without the written approval of the course instructor, all or a substantial portion of any academic writing, essay, thesis, research report, project assignment, presentation or poster for which credit has been obtained by the student or which has previously been or is being submitted by the student in another course or program of study at GVSU or elsewhere. All forms of dishonesty are unacceptable at GVSU. Cheating, plagiarism and misrepresentation of facts are serious offenses. Anyone who engages in these practices will receive a grade of zero for the exam or paper in question and no opportunity will be given to replace the grade or redistribute the weights. Any offense will be reported to the Dean of the CLAS who will determine the disciplinary action to be taken.

EXAMS: Students will not be allowed to begin an examination after it has been in progress for 30 minutes. Electronic equipment is not to be brought to exam.

CELL PHONES: Cell phones are to be turned off during lectures. Cell phones are not to be brought to exams.

STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES: 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 (Room 200 STU; 616 331 2490). Furthermore, if you have a physical disability and think you will need assistance evacuating this classroom and/or building in an emergency, please make me aware so that I can develop a plan to assist you.

ACADEMIC SUPPORT CENTRE: Students who require additional help in developing strategies for better time management, writing, study or examination skills should contact the Advising Resource Centre (200 STU).

Disclaimer: This syllabus is subject to change. Any changes will be announced in class.

<i>Tentative Lecture Schedule & Assigned Readings:</i>		
<i>Week 1</i>		
August 28	<i>Science, Psychology, and Society</i> What is science? Is psychology a science?	Assigned Reading: Syllabus Mitchell & Jolley (Chapter 1)
August 31	<i>Variables and Variability</i>	Mitchell & Jolley (Chapter 2)
<i>Week 2</i>		
September 7	<i>Psychology Information Literacy</i>	Mitchell & Jolley (Chapter 3) **Class will be held in LIB 001 Lab (basement of Zumberge)
<i>Week 3</i>		
September 12	<i>Generating Research Ideas and Hypotheses</i>	Mitchell & Jolley (Chapter 4)
September 14	<i>Experimental Methods I</i> Hypothesis Testing Central Limit Theorem	Mitchell & Jolley (Chapter 5 & 6)
<i>Week 4</i>		
September 19	<i>Experimental Methods II</i> Control and Randomization Sources of Variance	Mitchell & Jolley (Chapter 9)
September 21	<i>Experimental Methods III</i> Between and Within Subjects Designs	Mitchell & Jolley (Chapter 10)
<i>Week 5</i>		
September 26	Exam # 1	

September 28	Factorial Designs II	Mitchell & Jolley (Chapter 11 & 12)
Week 6		
October 3	Factorial Designs II	Assigned Reading: Mitchell & Jolley (Chapter 13)
October 5	<i>Survey Methods I</i> (Overview)	Research Proposal Draft Due Shaughnessy, Zechmeister & Zechmeister (Chapter 5)
Week 7		
October 10	Survey Methods II (Item design)	
October 12	Survey Methods III (Sampling)	
Week 8		
October 17	Exam #2	
October 19	Correlation and Regression	David Kenny (Chapter 6 and 7)
Week 9		
October 24	T-Tests and Oneway ANOVA	Christensen (Chapter 14) Part I
October 26	Two way ANOVA <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sum of Squares • Mean Squares • Interactions 	Christensen (Chapter 14) Part II
Week 10		

October 31	<i>Matched Pairs, Within Subjects and Mixed Designs</i>	Mitchell & Jolley (Chapter 13)
November 2	Exam #3	
Week 11		
November 7	Lab 1	
November 9	Lab 2	
Week 12		
November 14	Lab 3	
November 16	Lab 4	
<u>FALL BREAK!!! November 22-26</u>		
Week 13		
November 28	Lab Quiz	
November 30	Research Presentations	
Week 14		
December 5	Research Presentations	
December 7	Research Presentations	
December 13/14	<p>GVSU policy dictates that instructors require their students to appear in person at the scheduled final exam period, even if no final exam is administered.</p> <p>Thus, you will be required to submit PAPER copies of your final research projects AND PEER EVALUATIONS in person at the beginning of the final exam period.</p>	<p>PSY300 (02) Wednesday, December 13 12:00-1:50</p> <p>PSY300 (16) Thurssday, December 14 4:00-5:50</p>

** You are responsible for understanding the content of the assigned reading), regardless of whether this content is discussed in class.*