

Research Methods
PSY 300
Grand Valley State University
Winter 2021

Online sections: 06, 10 & 14

Course is accessed through GVSU course BlackBoard site

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Office: In the cloud...
Office Hours: Virtual office hours via BB by appointment
Sign up for an office hour time slot using the link in BB

Welcome to PSY 300! Together we will be exploring the methods scientists use to discover new information about the world and thinking about how those methods can be applied to enhance the lives of all people! I love teaching this class and look forward to spending the semester learning together. The point of a syllabus is to give an overview of how that learning will be structured. I have organized the syllabus into the following sections to try to do that in a user-friendly way.

- A. Course content & Learning objectives
- B. How to succeed in PSY 300
- C. Learning Communities and R.E.S.P.E.C.T.
- D. Course organization
- E. Grading procedures
- F. Some useful information & Course schedule
- G. SWS information
- H. Netiquette
- I. Useful Resources

Note: This is an online class and all of the course materials must be accessed through your GVSU BlackBoard site, so log in and click on the link that says "Please start the course here!" when the course becomes available.

A. Course Content and Learning Objectives

GVSU Catalog Course Description

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 the ethics of conducting research. Prerequisites: PSY 101 or HNR 234, and STA 215 or STA 312.

GVSU Course objectives:

By the end of the semester each student 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 (this is an SWS course)
3. design an empirical study consistent with the standards of psychological science

Additional Dueker Course objectives:

By the end of the semester each student will be able to:

1. **be critical consumers of Psychological information and research presented in the general media and the research literature.**
2. understand the basic concepts of validity in measurement
3. know the common research designs used by Psychologists
4. be practiced at determining what research method (and statistical test/s) would be most appropriately used for answering any specific research question
5. understand the ethical principles and obligations associated with research with living organisms
6. understand the scientific method and how to write about it

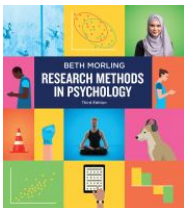
B. How to succeed in PSY 300

Mindset required for course participation and success in PSY 300:

1. Willingness to learn new and challenging material
 - a. If you already knew everything about Research Methods you wouldn't be taking this class.
 - b. Learning requires changing our minds. Be curious. Expect to learn new and sometimes surprising things. We all have assumptions. Expect to have many of your assumptions challenged by scientific data. That is the beauty and the challenge of science!
2. Willingness to practice to attain mastery of material
 - a. Learning requires time and practice.
 - b. If you are signed up for this class then you must want to learn about the scientific method.
 - c. I am an expert on that topic. I will guide your learning. However, I can't do the learning for you just like you (unfortunately) can't do my sit-ups for me.
 - d. So, what is the key for success?...**Do the work!** Practice concepts until you master them.
 - e. All assignments and activities are designed to help you acquire and practice the pertinent knowledge and skills. See below for descriptions of the technology and behaviors that will help you to complete the course work.

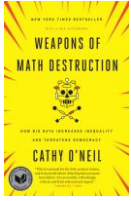
Materials required for course participation and success in PSY 300:

1. Access to the **two required texts:**
 - a. Physical or electronic copies are fine. Just make sure the texts are in a format that you will be comfortable reading.
 - b. You do NOT need to buy access to any extra materials like access codes or MindTap.



Morling, B. (2017) *Research Methods in Psychology: Evaluating a World of Information*. 3rd edition. W. W. Norton & Company. New York, New York. USA.

ISBN: 9780393617542



O'Neil, C. (2016). Weapons of math destruction: How big data increases inequality and threatens our democracy. Crown. New York, New York. USA.

ISBN: 9780553418835

2. Access to **technology**, including:

- a. a desktop or laptop computer (This course cannot be completed with only a phone or tablet.)
- b. reliable internet access multiple times a week
- c. a web cam and microphone
- d. Software: (instructions for how to get free access to all software listed here can be found in the resources section)
 - i. BlackBoard
 - ii. Microsoft office (excel, word, powerpoint)
 - iii. Google suite (e.g., google sheets)

Note: There is a GVSU Online/Hybrid orientation training available in BB that you are required to complete as your first assignment for the class. Find the link in your BB course list and get many of your technology questions answered. Be sure to save a PDF copy of your completion certificate so you can upload it for credit.

Behaviors/skills required for course participation and success in PSY 300:

Really, there is only one: **Engage!** What do I mean by that?

1. **Engage** with the other humans in the class:

- a. This is an online class, but there are lots of people involved.
- b. Use the forums, emails and group sessions to interact with other folks in the class in respectful (see respect section) and helpful ways.
 - i. I have merged the BB sites for three sections of 300 into one so that we can create an online community with many diverse voices and experiences to share with each other.
- c. Participate in Wednesday small group activity sessions
 - i. All students will be assigned to a small group in the second week of class and will (virtually) meet with that group during the Weds. synchronous course meeting time.

2. **Engage** with the course materials

- a. Access the course BB site multiple times each week.
 - i. There will be three, consistent deadlines per week (Tuesday, Wednesday & Sunday) with time sensitive assignments due at each
- b. Take the time to read the textbooks and supplemental readings.
 - i. I chose them for a reason. I promise not to give you busy work.
- c. Take the time to watch the videos – recorded lectures and supplemental videos

- i. I will post recorded lectures for each topic where I will go beyond what is in the textbook and provide additional information and examples for important course concepts. I don't rehash information from the textbook. I know you can read.
- ii. I will also post or link to videos available on the web or through the library (e.g. TED talks) when those videos can help enhance your learning.
- d. Expect to spend between 8-10 hours a week (outside of group meeting time) working on this class each week.
 - i. Some weeks the time required might be shorter or longer, depending on your interest and speed, but I have tried to pace it all consistently.
 - ii. Time alone isn't enough though. Learning requires S.W.E.E.T.:
 - Sleep (8 hours really matters!)
 - Water
 - Exercise
 - Eating
 - Time

Taking care of your physical needs allows for healthy engagement in the complex material we will be studying. Please be mindful of your physical needs. Prioritize sleep (that's why it is first on the list) because it has strong effects on memory and cognitive function. If at any time in the semester you are struggling to meet basic physical needs (e.g. access to nutritious food, shelter, a safe place to sleep) please contact me ASAP and I will help connect you to available supports so that you can be healthy and safe and able to engage with this course.

C. Learning Communities and R.E.S.P.E.C.T. (can you hear the singing?)

We will be working together to create a meaningful learning community this semester. People learn best when they feel safe and respected. So, I want to set some respect ground-rules/expectations for how we (prof. and students) will demonstrate respect for the learning community during this course:

1. **Academic Honesty.** Academic honesty and integrity are expected from all students at all times.
 - a. Academic dishonesty is defined as an attempt to obtain or to help another student obtain a grade higher than what is honestly earned – this includes getting information about exams or assignments from students in an earlier or previous section of the course. Do not assume that any assignment for this course is a group assignment unless I specifically tell you that it is. Anything you turn in to me, whether a written assignment or an exam, needs to be your own, individual work. It is your responsibility to properly cite all sources in your written work and to avoid plagiarism.
 - b. An occurrence of academic dishonesty will result, minimally, in failure of the course and a recommendation for University judicial action. It is every student's responsibility to avoid even the appearance of cheating.
 - c. For more information about academic honesty please see the GVSU student code because this course is subject to the GVSU policies listed at <http://www.gvsu.edu/coursepolicies/>.

2. **Respectful Communication.** Communicating with other members of the learning community is good!
 - a. We will maintain a respectful atmosphere during all class activities for all students (and professors) regardless of age, gender, favorite type of music, ethnicity, sexual orientation, learning ability, or driving skills. By that I mean (a) respectfully attending to the contributions that others make in the class and (b) consciously examining your own contributions to ensure that they are respectful to others around you. Because this class is happening online, I have created a list of netiquette expectations (see resources) to guide online communications.
 - b. If you experience a lack of respect at any point during this class, please contact me, and I will work with you to address the problem. Students who are consistently disrespectful towards the classroom community will be dropped from the course.

3. **Communicating with Prof D.** Being responsive is respectful. I try to respond to student questions as quickly as possible during business hours (and often other times too, but don't count on me being awake at 2 a.m. to answer a last-minute question 😊).
 - a. Questions about the course or assignments
 - i. The fastest way to get a question about the course or assignment answered will be to post to the course ANSWER board in BB. I am subscribed to the board and will get a notification when there is a new post.
 - ii. Using the ANSWER board allows other members of the class to learn from your question and possibly to answer your question sooner than I would be able to.
 - b. Questions specific to your own, personal circumstances
 - i. Send me an email – dueker@gvsu.edu, or schedule an appointment (use the link in BB)
 - ii. I have lots of filters on my email account to try to weed out spam. Student emails are less likely to get lost in those filters if they have your name and course number listed in the topic line of the email.
 - iii. I don't purposely ignore anyone so if you haven't heard back from me within one business day, (48 hours on weekends) then assume I didn't get the message. Please check to be sure that you included all of the correct information in the topic line and email me again or schedule a virtual appointment.

4. **Respect for the health and safety of the GVSU community**
 - a. This class is fully online so there is no risk of COVID infection through any course activities, but we are all part of the larger GVSU community. Some folks are living there, many folks are on campus for work or other classes. GVSU is working hard to try to create the safest campus possible given the pandemic. Please be sure to follow all GVSU health & safety policies (see link under resources).
 - b. Please fill out the GVSU online self-assessment form each day (whether you are physically going in to any campus that day or not) so that GVSU can monitor possible COVID exposures and facilitate testing and contact tracing. The link is at the top of the main GVSU home Page and looks like this:

D. Course Organization

The course materials will all be posted to the course BB site. (Be sure to check out the posted BB tour!)

Important BB site areas:

Weekly Modules:

Course Materials (e.g.; lecture videos, readings etc.) and activities (e.g. assignments & quizzes) will be organized into weekly modules. Weeks run from Monday to Sunday.

- Weekly modules will become available each Monday morning.
 - Each module will have a master overview/checklist of all materials and assignments for the week to help you keep track of your progress.
- Each weekly module will have three units (fewer units for partial weeks).
 - Unit 1: Materials and individual activities.
 - All Unit 1 assignments and quizzes due by Tuesday at 11:59 pm EST.
 - Unit 2: Materials and activities for synchronous group meetings.
 - All Unit 2 group reports & assignments due by Weds. at 11:59 pm EST.
 - Unit 3: Materials and individual activities.
 - All Unit 3 assignments and quizzes due by Sunday at 11:59 pm EST.

Whole-Class Discussion Boards:

Everyone across all the sections has access to these boards. They are a place to ask questions, share ideas and learn from each other. Remember all Netiquette rules when you are posting to these boards. Some boards to look for:

- The ANSWER board – the best and fastest place to request clarification about assignments and course materials
- The TECH issues solutions board – if you are struggling with a tech issue that someone else in the class might be able to help you with, post your question here.

Groups & Users:

You will spend lots of time in your small groups so that you can get to know some of the other people in the class and support each other as you learn the material.

- Your group will have a private discussion board and BBcollaborate virtual room to use for completing group assignments and activities. Use “Users & Groups” link in BB to access.

E. Grading Procedures

I expect that everyone will make a genuine effort to participate in the course, engage with the material and complete their work in a timely fashion. That is how learning happens.

Sometimes, life is messy though. especially during a pandemic.

- Computers and internet access can sometimes not work.
- People get sick.
- We are sometimes overwhelmed by work and family obligations.
- There is a PANDEMIC going on.

All of this is real. So, I have planned for “**grace**” throughout the course and in the grading. Look for the **purple** text throughout the syllabus to find the **grace policies** for different types of assignments. This

grace is designed to help you weather the bumps and minor surprises that are part of everyone's lives without getting derailed from your learning in this class. Your health and your family's health should always be your priority. Please reach out as soon as possible if you have circumstances needing significant accommodation beyond what these **grace** policies provide and I will work with you to determine how to move forward.

Credit for this course will be based on student performance in these areas:

	% final grade
Quizzes	20%
Group work	15%
Weekly Individual Assignments	15%
Individual Project Pieces	15%
Exam 1	10%
Exam 2	10%
Cumulative Final Exam	15%
<hr/>	
Total	100%

Quizzes

There will be many short quizzes across the semester because frequent testing promotes learning.

- Quizzes will have questions from all assigned materials – readings, videos and activities.
- Quizzes are timed. They are open book and open note.
- Quizzes are not open collaboration. You may **not** consult with any other person in real-life or virtually during a quiz nor may you discuss quizzes/quiz questions with any other person until after the quiz deadline has passed.
- Quizzes must be completed by the specified deadline and may not be taken after a deadline has passed.
- **Grace:** Each quiz can be taken twice (questions will vary) and the highest grade will be used for evaluation purposes.
- **Grace:** The lowest quiz score will be dropped from final grade calculations.

Group work

Synchronous group work is a large component of this course. Participation is mandatory.

- Every student will be assigned to their permanent small group in the second week of classes.
- Group meetings/activities will use BBcollaborate (accessed through the class BB site) and will be recorded.
 - Recordings will be used to confirm participation, to help students who are ill with COVID to catch up after they recover, and to help students get comfortable with the recording process to prepare for the final project presentation.
- Plan to attend your group meeting every week at the assigned Wednesday time unless the schedule says differently (see course schedule). Be on time - which means you should start the login process a few minutes before start time.
- Written descriptions of all group assignments/activities will be posted in the weekly learning module and sometimes there will be a quick video explanation posted as well.
- Students may join the group meeting using voice and video or just voice.
- Missed group activities can not be made up because the group experience cannot be recreated.
- **Grace: The lowest group activity score will be dropped from final grade calculations.**

Individual Assignments

Individual assignments designed to promote understanding and application of course concepts will be given throughout the semester. These might include reflections on assigned readings or videos, web and library searches etc. Assignments are crafted to help students master specific content at specific points in the course so it is important to complete them on time to get the maximum learning benefit.

- Specific written descriptions of all assignments will be posted in the weekly learning modules and sometimes there will be a quick video explanation as well.
- Assignments must be completed by the specified deadline and may not be accepted after a deadline has passed.
- **Grace: The lowest individual assignment grade will be dropped from final grade calculations.**

Project

As the culminating project for this class you are going to write a proposal for a research study to address a specific question about human behavior that is interesting to you and that has the potential to benefit folks in the local community.

- There will be lots of steps to this project. Some parts will be individual and others will happen during group work.
- The instructions for each step will be included in weekly module units spread across the second half of the course (because you need to learn some stuff before you start!)
- You will communicate your final project as a written proposal (this is an SWS class) and as a poster presentation (see below) to share with your fellow classmates.
- **Grace: Late submissions of individual project pieces will be accepted for feedback and grading with a small grade penalty. If individual project pieces are not ready in time for group activities that require those pieces then you will not receive credit for that group activity.**

Exams 1 & 2

Preparing for exams by reviewing course material helps to solidify understanding of course content. There will be two regular exams for the class. The exams will contain Multiple Choice questions and might include essay or other types of application questions as well.

Cumulative Final exam

Cumulative exams help to improve student long-term retention and understanding of course materials and will be available during the final exam period determined by the registrar.

Final Exam Schedule:

Section 06 (MWF 1pm) - Monday, April 26, 12:00 pm - 1:50 pm

Section 10 (MWF 11 AM) - Wednesday, April 28, 10:00 am - 11:50 am

Section 14 (MWF 10 AM) - Monday, April 26, 10:00 am - 11:50 am

Grading Scale

B+	87-89	A	93-100	A-	90-92
C+	77-79	B	83-86	B-	80-82
D+	67-69	C	73-76	C-	70-72
		D	63-66	F	62 or lower

* I reserve the right to adjust this scale downward if I see the need. I follow scientific rounding rules.

F. Useful things to know

1. Submitting course materials:
 - All course assignments and materials must be submitted through BB. Emailed assignments will not be accepted.
 - Pay attention to the instructions for submitting materials to BB. Attach a file when asked or copy and paste text when asked.
 - When I try to grade in BB some formats won't work (e.g. .pages) So, for each assignment I will post a template in a format that will be gradable. Be sure to use the templates and to save them in the same format that I share them in (e.g. .doc or .pdf). **If you submit assignments in unreadable formats I will be unable to grade them and you will receive a 0.**
 - You are required to keep an electronic copy of all work (individual or group report) that you submit to me.
 - Get in the habit of creating all assignments and discussion board posts in a separate, savable document outside of BB first.
 - Then you can either directly submit the document or copy and paste the information into BB while always retaining your own copy of the assignment.
 - When you submit an assignment to BB you should get a receipt. If you don't have a receipt, it didn't work.

If you need special accommodations for accessing any of the materials for this class (e.g. testing) please let me know and I will work with you and Disability Support Resources (DSR) to set up the necessary accommodations to support your learning. Before I can discuss accommodations, you must present a memo to me from 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.

- Any changes or updates to assignments/grading/schedule or other course materials will be posted as announcements in the course BB site.
- The tentative course schedule is below and reflects the two “break days” in the semester. Note – the order of concepts won’t change, but the exact timing might change based on interest/pace of the class.

Week	Exams	Module Topics (Text chapter)	Synchronous Meeting
Jan 20-24		Start-up	None
Jan 25-31		What is science (1)	Small group
Feb 1-7		Scientific Discourse & Sources (2)	Small group
Feb 8-14		Validities (3)	Small group
Feb 15-21		Ethics & Characteristics of Sound Measurement (4,5)	Small group
Feb 22-28		Characteristics of Sound Measurement (5)	Small group
March 1-7	Exam 1	Sampling & Surveys (6,7)	Small group
March 8-14		Understanding data: Descriptive stats review	None
March 15-21		Understanding data: Choosing a statistical test	Small group
March 22-28		Correlational methods (8,9)	Small group
March 29-April 4		Correlational methods (8,9)	Small group
April 5 - 11		Experimental Methods (10)	Small group
April 12-18	Exam 2	Experimental Methods (11,12)	Small group
April 19-25		Quasi-experimental methods (13)	Project Presentations
April 26-May 1	Cumulative Exam		

G. SWS Information

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.

H. Netiquette

Netiquette Guide Mashup (wisdom culled from many sources!)

- Read before you start typing.
 - Check whether someone already asked or answered your question.
 - Check the syllabus or course materials for an answer.

- c. Make sure you are responding to the current posts in a discussion forum and not resaying what someone else already posted.
2. Read what you typed before you post it.
 - a. It is always a good idea to write anything you are considering posting to the course site in a word processing program first. That way you can easily check for typos & save a record of your work.
 - b. Avoid the use of YELLING (using all capital letters) and sarcasm (because it always backfires).
 - c. Written communication doesn't have any nonverbal cues to it, so consider judicious use of emoticons to help clarify your intent.
 - d. If you wouldn't say it in person then don't post it.
3. Do a quick **T.H.I.N.K.** test before you post anything:
 - i. **T.** Is it **true**/accurate?
 - ii. **H.** Is it **helpful**?
 - iii. **I.** Is it **intelligible**?
 - iv. **N.** Is it **necessary**?
 - v. **K.** Is it **kind**?
 - b. If the answer to any of these is NO, then **think** carefully about how you can change the post to better fit the situation.
4. Discussion is about ideas not identities
 - a. Discussing ideas is fun. Be sure to do it in a scholarly and respectful manner. For example, credit (cite) other people's ideas using either a scientific citation (if it is a scholarly article) or if you are referring to something that another person posted earlier, quote a few key pieces of their response so that other folks understand what post you are referring to.
 - b. Feel free to disagree with ideas in a scholarly way. Acknowledge the valid points in your classmate's argument and present your own. Don't badmouth, mock or attack other people.
5. Respect the privacy of the class learning community.
 - a. This isn't a public website. Do not post information from the class BB site to public websites.
 - b. Respect other people's privacy. Don't share any classmate's information with anyone else and don't spam classmates with non-course related messages or advertising.
6. "Please" and "Thank you" are wonderful phrases.
7. No one is ever required to turn their camera on.
 - a. During synchronous activities some folks might prefer to use audio only. That is fine!
8. Give folks grace.
 - a. If you are offended by something someone typed or said, consider that you might have misunderstood their intentions. Give them the benefit of the doubt.
 - i. You can decide to let it go.
 - ii. You can decide to engage them and ask what they actually meant.
 - iii. You can decide to check in with Prof D about it.

I. Useful GVSU Resources.

All GVSU resources are free and available to ALL students (online and face-to-face) so don't hesitate to reach out and ask for help!

Help with **technology**: Check with the GVSU IT Helpdesk

<https://www.gvsu.edu/it/>

[\(616\) 331-2101](tel:(616)331-2101)

[\(855\) 435-7488](tel:(855)435-7488) (Toll-free)

helpdesk@gvsu.edu

Help with **writing**: Check out the GVSU Writing Center

<https://www.gvsu.edu/wc/undergraduate-student-support-65.htm>

Help with **stress** management: Check out the GVSU Counseling Center

Free, confidential, individual and group appointments (virtual and IRL) available to all students.

<https://www.gvsu.edu/counsel/>

Help with **Financial Difficulties**

GVSU remains committed to supporting you through the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic and is here to help you in times of financial need, including assisting with accessing technology requirements. Financial hardship funds are available to help student's meet their basic needs, and help cover educational costs (such as housing, food, textbooks and technology) that a student could not otherwise pay out of pocket. Please visit the GVSU Special Circumstance & Financial Hardship Requests web page for more information.

<https://www.gvsu.edu/financialaid/financial-hardship-requests-226.htm>

Helpful GVSU **policies** (e.g. anti-harassment policy) can found here:

<https://www.gvsu.edu/policies/>

Helpful **librarians** and consultants!

<https://www.gvsu.edu/library/> - Just click on the "Ask a question" button.

In addition to many online resources, the GVSU University Libraries has 3 campus locations where you may access library materials: Mary Idema Pew Library Learning & Information Commons (Allendale campus), Steelcase Library (Grand Rapids campus), and Frey Library (Grand Rapids, Center for Health Sciences).

Liaison librarian: Each department has a designated librarian to support your research needs.

Samantha Minnis is our liaison librarian for Psychology. Her email is minniss@gvsu.edu and her phone number is (616) 331-2751. You are welcome to contact her or make an appointment.

Knowledge Market: Our highly trained student consultants work one-on-one or in small groups to help with your library research, writing, or oral presentations. For information about the Knowledge Market or to make an appointment, visit www.gvsu.edu/library/km.

Helpful information about **COVID safety procedures** at GVSU:

Lakers Together Protecting Each Other Handbook

<https://www.gvsu.edu/tools/cloudstore/files/uploads/D9AB3936-FA4C-F689-3CB4686A1F337223.pdf>

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

Thanks for reading all the way to the end!!!!!! 😊