

PSY 300: Research Methods – Fall 2018

Wolfgang Friedlmeier

ASH 2132 (10)
10:00-10:50

ASH 1117 (4)
11:00-11:50

Instructor

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Office hours:

Monday, Friday: 12 pm to 1 pm

Wednesday, Friday: 2 pm to 3 pm

Textbook

Stangor, C. (2015, 5th ed.). *Research methods for the behavioral sciences*. New York: Houghton Mifflin Company. ISBN: 9781285077024

Further Readings

American Psychological Association (2009). *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association* (Sixth Edition). Washington, D.C.: APA.

Readings of specific research articles will be announced in class (see electronic course reserve).

Course Overview

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 completion of this course you should (1) be able to understand and to summarize the essence of research articles, (2) you should be able to write clearly and cogently in a scientific way, and (3) you should have an understanding of how to design an empirical study. A good understanding of basic statistics is a must as some statistical procedures will be presented that afford such basic knowledge.

The course is organized in a way that you get a broad overview about the whole research process in the beginning. Discussing a specific research article may make the different issues of the research process more concrete. Across the semester we will then go through the different steps of the research process in a more detailed way in order to deepen the understanding of each relevant topic.

Beside the textbook you are asked to read and work with several research articles in an intensive way.

SWS Course

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.*

The writing instruction will focus on APA style (running head, titles and subtitles, citation and quotation, references, tables, figures, appendix). Writing instructions will be taught for at least four hours. You will be taught to locate peer-reviewed scholarship in a systematic way. I will teach you to summarize the main theoretical ideas and hypotheses of a research article as well as APA style. You will write a draft of such a summary in APA style. You will get intensive feedback and you will be asked to revise the paper and resubmit an improved version. I will teach you how to write up statistical outcomes into a meaningful result and discussion section. The five written assignments serve the purpose to train and test your writing skills. The word count for each assignment is mentioned below.

Learning Outcomes

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) analyze the writing of a journal article: identifying the author's target audience, purpose, tone, context, and the ways the textual form and style achieves its function.
- (2) describe the details of and summarize the essence of such articles.
- (3) demonstrate an effective writing process, i.e., writing clearly and cogently in a scientific way.
- (4) identify the strengths and weaknesses of their own writing processes,
- (5) design an empirical study consistent with the standards of psychological science.

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

Prerequisites

WRT150, PSY 101 and STA 215

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General Information

Class Attendance is obligatory. It is expected that you inform the instructor about your absence in class in time by email. After more than three absences you need to bring written prove for your reasons of being not in class. If this is not the case, one point of class contribution will be subtracted for each absence.

Withdrawal. The deadline for withdrawing from the class is **October 26, 5 p.m.**, through one of the Student Assistance Centers.

Special Needs. 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 (DSS) at (616) 331-2490. Furthermore, if you have a disability and think you will need assistance evacuating this classroom and/or building in an emergency, please make me aware so that the university and I can develop a plan to assist you. It is the *student's responsibility* to request assistance from DSS.

Academic Integrity. Students will do original work and will not take or receive the efforts of another person on any test or assignment, use unauthorized resources on quizzes or tests, plagiarize, or give/sell other students papers or assignments *not authorized by the instructor*. **You are responsible** for making yourself aware of and for understanding the policies and procedures that pertain to academic integrity. To that end, be sure to familiarize yourself with the GVSU Student Code [Section 223.01] related to academic integrity. **Furthermore, be sure to reference sources at all times.** If you are uncertain about such an issue prior to submission of an assignment, project, or test, please contact the instructor so we can eliminate that uncertainty. **Plagiarism or cheating will result in an F for the course.**

Support for Writing. 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. Additional information about the Knowledge Market (<https://www.gvsu.edu/km/>) and Writing Center services and locations can be found on our website <https://www.gvsu.edu/wc/>. Check the website for access updates schedules and resources. Tell the Writing Consultant you work with that you would like notification of your visit to be sent to your professor.

Research Assistance. Gayle Schaub is the psychology librarian and she can provide you with individualized research assistance for all of your classes. Her office is in the Mary Idema Pew Library on the Allendale campus and she can be reached at schaubg@gvsu.edu or 331-2629. Her psychology library subject guide (<http://libguides.gvsu.edu/psych>) contains links to all of the psychology databases and other specific resources for psychology students.

Assignments

You will be required to fulfill five written assignments (see below) including several parts of an APA style research paper during the course of the semester. Some APA papers will be graded twice: you get points based on the first draft and additional points for the revised version. All assignments (except AS2 and parts of AS5) are turned in by assignment manager through Blackboard. We will devote four hours of class at least to APA style writing instruction. More than half of the final grade in the course is based on writing assignments.

Quizzes

There will be short online multiple choice quizzes for each chapter with five questions. The quiz will test the content of the related chapter in the textbook. You will have about two days after the announcement to answer and submit the questions. The answer time will be limited to 10 minutes.

If you do not participate, you have to bring a written confirmation by the head of the department or by a physician. If you do not bring any document, 0 points will be in your record for the respective quiz.

Exams

There will be two exams during the course of the semester. Each exam is comprised of multiple choice questions.

The midterm exam will be on **Monday, October 10.**

The final exam will be on **Tuesday, December 11, from 12 to 1:50 pm (Section 10);**

Wednesday, December 12, from 10 to 11:50 am (Section 7).

If you do not participate, you have to bring a written confirmation by the head of the department or by a physician. If you do not bring any document, I can decide to give you another written exam (maximal 70% of the points) or to do an oral exam.

Grade Distribution

A	94 - 100%	A-	90 - 94%		
B+	87 - 90%	B	83 - 87%	B-	80 - 83%
C+	77 - 80%	C	73 - 77%	C-	70 - 73%
D+	64 - 70%	D	60 - 64%		
F	60% and lower				

Evaluation and Grading

Your final grade in this class will be based upon the following achievements:

Assignment 1: Theory and hypotheses	30 points	8.7%
Summary of the hypotheses of a research article <i>Word count: 1300 to 1500 for AS1 and AS1r</i>		
Assignment 2: PsycInfo Search	20 points	5.7%
Literature search for a selected topic		
Assignment 3: Reliability test	50 points	14.3%
Construction of a self-report measure, to test the internal consistency of the scale, and to document the results <i>Word count: 1500-2000</i>		
Assignment 4: Methods and Results	50 points	14.3%
SPSS analysis and result documentation <i>Word count: 1700-2500</i>		
Assignment 5: Critical Analysis of Research Articles	30 points	8.7%
Evaluation of research articles		
Quizzes	50 points	14.3%
Class contribution	20 points	5.7%
Midterm Exam	50 points	14.3%
Final Exam	50 points	14.3%

Total **350 points**

Note: This is a preliminary list of tasks and assignments that may still be subjected to change.