

Research Methods in Psychology (PSY300)

Dr. Ellen Shupe

Fall 2020

Class times/locations:

Section 08, T/Th, 11:30-12:45, 121A HHLC

Section 11, T/Th, 1-2:15pm, 121A HHLC

Course readings:

Textbook

Shaughnessy, J.J., Zechmeister, E.B., & Zechmeister, J.S. (2015). *Research methods in psychology* (10th Ed.). Boston, MA: McGraw-Hill.

Other required readings

In addition to the textbook there will be a number of posted readings from other sources, as identified in the schedule and [list below](#).

Introduction to PSY300

Welcome to Research Methods in Psychology, a course providing an introduction to research in psychology, in terms of planning and conducting research and in terms of understanding, evaluating, and writing about the research of others.

Most students find Research Methods challenging and relatively time-consuming, but those who are willing to commit the necessary time and effort not only “get through” the course but earn good grades and learn a great deal. You should **plan to spend 6-8 hours per week on course-related work and to contact me regularly to check in, ask questions, or communicate concerns**. I truly want you to have a good experience and be successful in the course, and I will provide you with support and guidance throughout our time together.

Class Structure & Format

This research methods class uses a hybrid format, which means it has both in-person and online components. The tentative plan for balancing online and in-person instruction is to be in-person for approximately two-thirds of the classes before the Thanksgiving break. Online classes will include both synchronous (i.e., virtual, real-time classes) and asynchronous (i.e., you will cover posted content on your own) formats.

Quizzes, exams, and assignments: Most exams and quizzes will be delivered during in-person classes. Assignments will be submitted online, via Blackboard.

Office hours: In order to limit personal contact, there will be no in-person office hours. Instead you will have the option to “meet” with me virtually via Blackboard Collaborate Ultra or call me at 616-331-2905.

Contingency plan: If GVSU moves to completely online instruction, the class format and requirements will likely change in the following ways:

- **Class sessions.** Class sessions that were originally scheduled as in-person will become online synchronous sessions.
- **Exams, participation, & grades.** The total number of points used to determine grades may change slightly (less than 10% of total). Exams will be replaced with more frequent mini-exams, but quizzes and assignments will not change. In addition to the class sessions, you may be required to participate in discussion boards and/or small group “check-in” meetings with me each week.

Course Content and Objectives

PSY300 provides an introduction to research methods in psychology **from the perspective of a researcher and from the perspective of a “consumer”** of research-related reports. We'll cover a broad range of topics related to each stage of the research process, with a particular emphasis on the logic of research, study design and implementation, and a theory-guided interpretation of results. Among other things, you will be required to develop a detailed understanding of methodology, write reports using APA-style, and demonstrate critical thinking skills.

An important step in the scientific method is transforming data into results, a process that generally requires the use of statistical analyses. **It's important to have a good understanding of basic statistics**, so if you have not successfully completed STA215 you will have a distinct disadvantage in this course.

After researchers complete data analysis, they typically discuss the results and their interpretation of the results in formal scientific reports. To do this successfully they must have strong writing skills and understand formatting and structural issues related to the reports. PSY300 is designed to foster this learning and writing skill acquisition, and as such is designated as an SWS course. **You will be required to do a significant amount of writing**, in the form of in-class exercises, research-related writing assignments, and essay exams and quizzes. For more information about SWS courses, visit [GVSU's SWS website](#) or see the [information below](#).

Course Objectives

Topics covered in the course and methods of evaluation are designed to help you develop knowledge, skills, and abilities related to methods used in psychological research. These include the following:

Knowledge/Understanding	Skills and Abilities
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The 4 types validity & their implications • Importance of theory in the development of hypotheses and interpretation of results • Common methods used in psychological research, and the types of hypotheses & questions they're best suited to address • The effects of confounds and how to prevent them • The NHST approach to hypothesis testing, its limitations, & alternatives • The importance of replication in psychological research • The importance of effect sizes, statistical power, & confidence intervals • The purposes, uses, limitations, and logic of common parametric and non-parametric tests 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify confounds and other common biases in the research process • Conduct a thorough literature search and describe the details of and summarize the essence of research articles • Design an empirical study consistent with the standards of psychological science • Write a well-developed, narrative review in APA-style • Identify strengths and weaknesses in own and other' scientific writing Think critically in reading about and interpreting research reported by others • Think critically in the development of psychological research reports

Instructor Information & Availability

Although my background is in Social and Organizational Psychology, I've taught a number of courses since coming to GVSU, including Advanced Research Methods in Psychology, Industrial/Organizational Psychology, Psychology Capstone, and study abroad courses in Nicaragua and Ireland. Research Methods is one of my favorite courses to teach, and I'm looking forward to our time together.

The best ways to contact me are via email or telephone, or by posting a message on our Blackboard discussion board. Please **use the discussion board to post general questions**, so others in the class will be able to read the questions, and **use email for questions and concerns that are more specific to you**.

I typically check my email and the discussion board daily and respond to messages within 24 hours. If for some reason you do not receive a response from me within 48 hours, feel free to email a follow-up message. I'll hold virtual office hours several times a week, and I'll be available to meet at other times by appointment.

Instructor Information

Dr. Ellen Shupe
Email: shupee@gvsu.edu
Phone: (616) 331-2905

Virtual Office Hours

Monday	10-11am
Tuesday	10-11am
Thursday	4-5pm

Class Policies & Expectations

Above all, I want students in my classes to learn in an environment free of inequity, and bias, and I try hard to treat all students fairly and with respect and dignity. In my experience, the vast majority of students behave in a similarly highly respectful manner and treat their education as an important opportunity to expand their perspective, skills, and knowledge. However, occasionally a student will say or do something that is dishonest or disrespectful. Because this may hurt others and jeopardize their learning process, it's important for all students to follow class and university policies.

Communicating respect. Consistent with GVSU's commitment to inclusion and equity I work hard to establish and maintain a climate that welcomes and affirms the contributions of all students. Although you obviously don't have to agree with everyone in the class or with me, you are required to treat others with dignity and respect. This includes communicating in a way that acknowledges and validates others. Misunderstanding in interpersonal communication is common – particularly in online contexts and in written communications – due to the perception of anonymity, and a lack of body language, intonation, and gestures that communicate meaning and context. Keep this in mind as you offer comments and examples in the virtual classroom and when you post written comments in a public forum.

Health-related precautions. The evidence is clear that social distancing and [face coverings are a crucial part of keeping coronavirus at bay](#). GVSU requires students and faculty to practice social distancing and to wear face coverings in the classroom. Students who have forgotten their face coverings may get a disposable mask at a campus office. Students who are not able to wear a face covering due to a medical condition should [contact Disability Support Services \(DSR\)](#) to discuss their individual situation.

All students are required to complete a [health self-assessment](#) before attending in-person classes. If you are sick or have had exposed to someone suspected or known to be infected with COVID-19, please contact the GVSU COVID-19 Resource Center at 833-734-0020, as described [here](#), for instructions. Now more than ever it's important to monitor your health, and steer clear of others if you suspect you may have the virus (please err on the side of caution!)

Academic integrity. At GVSU we believe that “academic honesty and integrity are fundamental to a community of scholars” and that academic dishonesty “compromises the integrity of university grades, and scholarship and research” ([GVSU Policy, STU 4.0](#)). Thus, in PSY300 you are expected to do your own work and to not engage in any form of academic dishonesty. This includes 1) taking or receiving help from others during exams or quizzes; 2) attempting to pass off someone else's work as your own; 3) using ideas, sentences, or phrases from a source without proper citation; 4) copying part or all of another student's answers on assignments; 5) completing part or all of an assignment for another student; and 6) submitting part or all of an assignment that has been previously graded or is being submitted concurrently for another

course. Cheating and plagiarism are likely to result in a zero on the relevant exam, quiz or assignment, reported to the Chair of the Psychology Department, and documented in your student record. If you are unsure if a specific action in this course constitutes a breach of academic integrity, please discuss it with me. If you want more information about what is considered academic dishonesty at GVSU, see [GVSU's guidelines](#).

The use of electronic devices during in-person classes. Because research suggests the use of electronic devices in the classroom often interferes with learning, I strongly discourage the use of laptops, surface computers, tablets, cell phones, and other devices during class sessions. If you believe using a tablet or other device is important to your learning, please plan to sit in the back row of the classroom or make other arrangements.

Disability support. Your success in this course is important, and I want to ensure that students with a diverse range of abilities are provided with a positive learning environment that provides them with the same opportunity to learn. If you require formal accommodations, please contact me early in the term so we can work together to make appropriate arrangements. If you encounter difficulties in this course that interfere with your learning, please let me know, and if you think you may benefit from formal accommodations, contact GVSU's Office of Disability Support Resources (gvsu.edu/dsr/) at (616)331-2490 or dsrgvsu@gvsu.edu.

Other university policies. In addition to the policies described above, you'll be expected to comply with other course-related policies at GVSU (<http://www.gvsu.edu/coursepolicies/>).

Course Requirements and Grading Criteria

Quizzes & exams

You will have [four 5-point quizzes](#) over material not formally covered in class sessions. You will also have [four exams](#) over material covered in class and in course-related readings and narrated videos. Three of the exams will be worth [40 points](#) and will take place during in-person classes. The fourth exam will be an online exam worth [20 points](#); it will take place during the last week of classes. The quizzes will consist of free response questions, and the exams will consist of a mix of multiple choice and free response questions.

Writing assignments

Literature review and related assignments. Your most substantial writing assignment will be a [35 point literature review](#), a systematic review of the formal literature on theory and research related to a specific topic. Early in the semester you will choose a topic, and in subsequent weeks you will work under the guidance of Prof. Shupe to organize and write the literature review. Your literature review must be written in APA style and incorporate at least 10 primary sources, including at least eight peer-reviewed articles. In addition to the literature review itself, you will have three assignments designed to help you plan and write the review: a [mini-analysis report \(10 points\)](#), a [literature analysis and introduction \(20 points\)](#), and a [detailed outline \(20 points\)](#). Grades on the assignments will be based on writing quality (e.g., grammar, clarity, organization, and coherence), appropriateness and completeness of content, and APA style. Although not mandatory, it is a good idea to submit drafts of the papers to Prof. Shupe for feedback. Instructions and rubrics for the assignments will be posted on Blackboard and discussed in class. Late papers will be accepted up to three days after the deadline. Except in the case of an emergency, 10% of the total possible points will be deducted for each day a paper is late.

Critical evaluation assignments. There will also be [two assignments](#) requiring you to critically evaluate descriptions of psychological theory and/or research found in the popular media. The assignments will be worth [5 and 10 points](#); instructions and rubrics for the assignments will be posted and discussed in class.

Participation

Over the course of the semester you will earn up to [25 points](#) for class participation. Each week you will be able to earn a participation point for doing one the following: 1) attending an in-person class, 2) virtually attending a synchronous class with your video on, or 3) having a 5-10 minute virtual "check in" meeting with Prof. Shupe. In addition, each student will be asked to participate in two virtual meetings with Prof. Shupe to discuss their work on the writing assignments. Participation in each of these virtual meetings will be worth 5 points representing your participation in virtual classes and these out-of-class meetings.

Note: The number of assignments, quizzes, exams, and/or participation may be adjusted at the discretion of Prof. Shupe. If adjustments are made, they will likely result in a loss or gain of fewer than 30 points.

Grade Determination

Semester grades will be based on 4 quizzes (worth 20 points), 4 exams (worth 140 points), 4 related writing assignments (worth 85 points), 2 critical evaluation assignments (worth 15 points), and participation (worth 25 points), for a total of 285 points. Grades will be determined using the grading scale below.

<u>Grade</u>	<u>Percentages</u>
A	92.5-100%
A-	90-92%
B+	87.5-89.5%
B	82.5-87%
B-	80-82%
C+	77.5-79.5%
C	72.5-77%
C-	70-72%
D+	67.5-69.5%
D	60-67%
F	0-59.5%

Tentative Schedule

Week 1			
9/1	Format Topics	In person class Intro. to PSY300 Critically evaluating research	
9/3	Format Topic Preparation	In person class Psychological science Read Ch.1 in textbook	
9/4		<i>Drop/add deadline</i>	
Week 2			
9/8	Format Topic Preparation	In person class The role of theory Read Ch. 2 in the textbook	Critical evaluation 1 due
9/10	Format Topics Preparation	Online, synchronous (real-time) class Writing: Types of APA style reports; Reviews & replications Read posted reading on reviews & replications (Stangor, 265-72)	
9/11		<i>Deadline for Credit/No credit requests</i>	
Week 3			
9/15	Format Topics Preparation	In-person class, with quiz Writing: APA style of writing; Ethical issues & practices Read posted ethics reading (Passer pp.72; 76-89)	Quiz (Ethics)
9/17	Format Topic Work	In-person class Reliable & valid measures Read posted reading (Stangor, pp. 90-101) Watch narrated Powerpoint video Complete practice exercise	
Week 4			
9/22	Format Topic Preparation	In-person class Reliable & valid measures (cont.) Read posted reading (Stangor, pp. 90-101)	
9/24	Format	In-person exam (40 points)	Exam 1
Week 5			
9/29	Format Topic Preparation	In-person class Common measures (self-report) Read pp. 158-171 in the textbook	
10/1	Format Topic Work	Online, asynchronous (independent) Common measures (observational, archival, & trace) Read pp. 93-97 & 107-114 in the textbook Watch narrated Powerpoint video Answer practice questions	

Week 6			
Virtual small group meetings with Prof. Shupe to discuss writing assignments			
10/6	Format Topic Preparation	In-person class, with quiz Descriptive methods: Surveys Read pp. 135-157 in the textbook	Quiz (O, A, T measures)
10/8	Format Topic Work	Online, asynchronous (independent) Descriptive methods: Naturalistic observation Read pp. 97-106 in the textbook Watch narrated Powerpoint video Answer practice questions	
Week 7			
10/13	Format Topic Preparation	In-person class, with quiz Experimental methods Read Ch. 6 in the textbook	Quiz (Nat. observation)
10/15	Format Topic Preparation	Online, asynchronous (independent) Experimental methods (cont.) Read Ch. 6 in the textbook Watch narrated Powerpoint video Answer practice questions	
Week 8			
10/20	Format	In-person exam (40 points)	Exam 2
10/22	Format Topic Preparation	In-person class Repeated measures designs Read pp. 235-236 in the textbook	
Week 9			
10/27		No class – independent work on writing assignment	
10/29	Format Topic Preparation	In-person class Complex designs Read pp. 243-253 in the textbook	Lit. analysis/ intro. due
Week 10			
Virtual one-on-one meetings with Prof. Shupe to discuss literature review			
11/3	Format Topics Preparation	In-person class Quasi-experimental methods; Program evaluation Read Ch. 10 in the textbook	
11/5	Format Topic Work	Online, asynchronous (independent) Describing single variables Read posted “describing single variables” reading (Price et al., pp. 231-239) Watch narrated Powerpoint video Complete practice exercise	
Week 11			
11/10	Format Topic Preparation	In-person class, with quiz Describing relationships Read posted “describing relationships” reading (Price et al., pp. 240-246)	Quiz (Price pp. 231-39)
11/12	Format Topic Work	Online, asynchronous (independent) NHST approach and alternatives Read pp. 379-386 in the textbook Watch narrated Powerpoint video Answer practice questions	

Week 12			
11/17	Format Topic Preparation	In-person class NHST approach and alternatives (cont.) Read Ch. 12 (pp. 379-386 only) in the textbook	Detailed outline due
11/19	Format	In-person exam (40 points)	Exam 3
11/20		Deadline for course withdrawal	
Week 13			
11/24	Format Topic Preparation	In-person class <i>t</i> -tests Read posted reading on <i>t</i> -tests (Wilson, 2005)	
11/26		No class - Thanksgiving break	
Week 14			
		Individual meetings with Prof. Shupe to discuss literature review (optional, but recommended)	
12/1	Format Topic Preparation	Online, synchronous 1-way ANOVAs Read pp. 392-406 in the textbook	
12/3	Format Topic Preparation	Online, synchronous 2-way ANOVAs Read pp. 407-413 in the textbook Complete practice exercise on 1-way ANOVAs	
Week 15			
12/8	Format Topic Preparation	Online synchronous Review Complete practice exercises	Literature review due
12/10	Format	Online synchronous exam (20 points)	Exam 4
Finals Week			
12/15 (T)		Critical Evaluation 2 Assignment due	

Posted Readings

Passer, M. (2013). *Research methods: Concepts and connections* (1st Ed.). New York, NY: Worth.

Price, P.C., Jhangiani, R., & Chiang, I.A. (2015). *Research methods in psychology: Second Canadian edition*. <https://opentextbc.ca/researchmethods/>

Stangor, C. (2015). *Research methods for the behavioral sciences* (5th Ed.). Belmont, CA: Wadsworth.

Wilson, J.H. (2005). *Essential statistics*. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Pearson Education.

Useful Resources & Contacts

Online and hybrid courses pose unique challenges, but there are a number of sources that are available to help you navigate those challenges. Please don't hesitate to use them, as soon as you need (or think you may need) help.

Tutoring Center (free online tutoring and drop-in sessions for many GVSU courses/subjects)

Web: <http://www.gvsu.edu/tc>

Email: tutoring@gvsu.edu

Phone: (616) 331-3451

IT Helpdesk (for help with Blackboard, Collaborate, Zoom, etc.)

Web: <http://www.gvsu.edu/it>

Email: helpdesk@gvsu.edu

Phone: (616) 331-2101 and (855) 435-7488 (Toll-free)

Tips for Successful Learning in Online Classes

<https://www.gvsu.edu/library/km/tips-for-online-learning-43.htm>

Disability Support Resources

Web: <http://www.gvsu.edu/dsr>

Email: dsrgvsu@gvsu.edu

Phone: (616) 331-2490

Writing Center (for online help with writing)

Web: <http://www.gvsu.edu/wc>

Phone: (616) 331-2922

Email: dsrgvsu@gvsu.edu

Library & Knowledge Market Help

Samantha Minnis, Library Liaison for Psychology

Email: minniss@gvsu.edu

Online help with research and library resources

Web: <http://www.gvsu.edu/library>;

<https://www.gvsu.edu/library/library-online-services-88.htm#help>

Additional Information Related to SWS Courses

Requirements

As with other SWS courses, completion of WRT 150 with a grade of C or better (not C-) is a prerequisite for PSY300. 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.

Resources available at GVSU

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. The Center's services are free and you can drop in and work with a consultant or make an appointment, either through their 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/library/km/>) and information about Writing Center services and locations can be found at <http://www.gvsu.edu/wc/>