

# PSY300: Research Methods in Psychology

Section 08 4-5:15pm (1117 ASH)

Section 12 2:30-3:45pm (1117 ASH)

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## Instructor

Dr. Ellen Shupe  
2218 ASH  
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[shupee@gvsu.edu](mailto:shupee@gvsu.edu)

## Office hours & schedule

In-person office hours: T/Th 1:30-2:30pm (2218 ASH)

Virtual meetings by appointment (Schedule an appointment [here](#))

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## Course readings

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

A set of posted readings (see schedule and list below for more information)

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## Course Content & Objectives

PSY300 is an introductory course in research methods in psychology. It provides an introduction to research in terms of planning and conducting research and in terms of understanding, evaluating, and writing about the research of others. In other words, it approaches research **from the perspective of researchers and from the perspective of “consumers”** of research-related reports. **Welcome to the course!**

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 the 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](#).

Most students find the course challenging and relatively time-consuming, but those who are willing to commit the necessary time and effort not only “get through” it but earn good grades and learn a great deal. I recommend that you **plan on spending 6-8 hours** outside of class time each week on course-related work.

Other tips for doing well in the course:

- Come to all classes, and participate
- Ask questions (it will benefit you and other students who may have similar questions)
- Keep up with the readings and assignments
- Review material from classes and readings early & often
- Don't put off writing assignments; if possible, turn in drafts and ask for feedback
- When you review material & study for tests, use deep processing (go beyond simply reading notes & readings); for example, test yourself, look for links to other material we've covered; and think of examples & applications
- Meet with me regularly to check in, ask questions, and/or communicate your concerns (I truly want you to learn and have a good experience in the class!)

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

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## Contacting Prof. Shupe

Please feel free to contact me if you have any questions, clarifications, or concerns. The best ways to contact me outside of class time are via email ([shupee@gvsu.edu](mailto:shupee@gvsu.edu)) or by posting a message on our Blackboard discussion board. 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. Please use the discussion board to post general questions, so others in the class will be able to see the questions and answers, and contact me by phone or email if you have questions that are more specific to you. If you would like to speak to me about something urgent, you may call my office (616-331-2905). The call will be forwarded to my cell phone and identified as a GVSU call, so I won't see your phone number.

I always encourage students to meet with me outside of class because it helps them get to know me and provides a good way to ask questions or get clarifications. Please plan to meet with me - I look forward to getting to know you! I have regular in-person office hours on Tuesdays and Thursdays, and I'll have virtual appointment times nearly every day. Each week I'll post a two week schedule of my office hours and appointment times using Google Sheets, the link to which is available [here](#) and on our class Blackboard site.

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## Class Format, Technology Requirements, & Support

This is an in-person, classroom-based course. Although I do not plan to record the class sessions or offer a virtual class at this time, I will remain flexible to accommodate illness and emergency-related student needs. If you find yourself in difficult circumstances, please let me know as soon as possible. I strive to be compassionate and fair – especially given the craziness of the past 18 months – because I think everyone deserves to be able to do their best work in the class.

The course materials will be available through the Blackboard online course management system, accessible through the main content area of our class Blackboard site. To log in to Blackboard, open your web browser and go to <http://mybb.gvsu.edu>. Virtual office hours will be conducted via Blackboard Collaborate Ultra, and Google Docs or email will be used for scheduling appointments with me. Should we need to conduct virtual classes, we will use Blackboard Collaborate Ultra. Given the course's reliance on Blackboard (and the uncertainty of the COVID pandemic!), I highly recommend that you have dependable access to high speed internet; a computer with a sound card and speakers; and an operating system that meets current Blackboard requirements (Windows 8.1 or above; OS 10.14 or above). If you run into problems accessing Blackboard or have questions about using it, please contact me, see [GVSU's Student Guide to Blackboard](#) or contact [GVSU's Information Technology Office](#).

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/](http://gvsu.edu/dsr/)) at (616)331-2490 or [dsrgvsu@gvsu.edu](mailto:dsrgvsu@gvsu.edu).

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## Course Requirements & Evaluation

### Literature review and related assignments (88 points)

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, using APA style. Early in the semester you will choose a topic, and in subsequent weeks I will help guide you as you plan, organize, and write the paper. In addition to the literature review itself, you will have four assignments designed to help you plan and write the review, including the **"Article summary and analysis" (8 points)**, the **"Review plan" (15 points)**, the **"Introduction and first content area" (15 points)**; and the **"Second content area and conclusion" (15 points)**.

Grades on the literature review and related assignments will be based on writing quality (e.g., grammar, clarity, organization, and coherence), appropriateness and completeness of content, and the use of 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.

### Tests & quizzes (200 points)

You will have **five tests** over material covered in the class and readings. Four of the tests will take place during the semester, and the fifth will take place during finals week. Each test will be worth **35 points** and will consist of a mix of multiple choice and free response questions. You will also have **six 5-point quizzes** covering topics discussed in assigned readings. Quizzes will consist of free response questions, and the lowest quiz grade will be dropped at the end of the semester. Make up tests and quizzes will be given in the case of emergencies and urgent situations. Please make arrangements for make-ups before the day of the regularly scheduled tests, whenever possible.

### Flexibility

One thing we've all learned from life during a pandemic is that we must be flexible and expect some unpredictability and bumps along the way. It's possible that the number and format of assignments, quizzes, and tests will be modified in response to factors related to the pandemic, social events in our nation or larger community, and/or technological problems or other issues related to the class. I will only make a change to the schedule or requirements if there is a good reason to do so, and I will try to provide plenty of time for you to adjust your schedule to accommodate the change. It's unlikely any changes would increase or decrease the overall number of possible points by more than 10%.

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## Grade Determination

Semester grades will be based on 5 tests (worth 175 points), 5 quizzes (worth 25 points), and a literature review and related writing assignments (worth 88 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%

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## Class Policies & Expectations

**Professionalism & respect.** In order to learn at their potential, students need to feel as if they are heard and respected in and outside of the classroom. Thus, maintaining a climate that is inclusive and respectful is not only socially responsible and ethical, it is key to a successful learning experience. We live in a time of incredible divisiveness, stress, and loss, when personal attacks and the public expression of strong emotions have become more and more commonplace. It is particularly important, therefore, that we use considerate language and behavior toward one another, and that we make a conscious effort to affirm the contributions of all. We have different beliefs, values, and opinions, but we are all members of the same GVSU community. Although you obviously don't have to agree with everyone in the class or with me, you will need to treat others with dignity and respect. This includes communicating in a way that acknowledges and validates others.

**The use of electronic devices during class.** Because research suggests that cell phones used during class often interferes with learning, they will not be allowed. Please remember to silence your phone and put it away before class begins. Research suggests that we generally remember more when we take notes by hand, so I also discourage the use of laptops and tablets during class. However, if you know you generally learn better when you type notes, you may use a laptop or tablet. If you decide to use an electronic device for note-taking, please sit near the back of the classroom, to minimize the disruption to others. Finally, please do not engage in any audio and/or video recording of classes unless you have explicit permission from Prof. Shupe.

**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 tests; 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](#).

**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/>).

## Tentative Schedule

Week 1		
8/31	<b>Topics</b>	<b>Intro. to PSY300; Critically evaluating research</b>
9/2	<b>Topic</b> Preparation Quiz/Assignment	<b>The scientific method; Intro to psychological science</b> Read Ch.1 in the textbook None
Week 2		
9/7	<b>Topic</b> Preparation Quiz/Assignment	<b>The role of theory</b> Read Ch. 2 in the textbook None
9/9	<b>Topics</b> Preparation Quiz/Assignment	<b>1) Reviews &amp; replications; 2) Writing: Types of APA style reports</b> Read posted reading on reviews & replications (Stangor, 265-72) <a href="#">Quiz (The role of theory; Ch. 2)</a>
Week 3		
9/14	<b>Topics</b> Preparation Quiz/Assignment	<b>1) Writing: APA style of writing; 2) Ethical issues &amp; practices</b> Read posted ethics reading (Passer pp.72; 76-89) <a href="#">Lit. review assign: Article summary &amp; analysis due</a>
9/16		<b>Test 1</b>
Week 4		
9/21	<b>Topic</b> Preparation Quiz/Assignment	<b>Reliable &amp; valid measures</b> Read posted reading on reliability and validity (Stangor, pp. 90-101) None
9/23	<b>Topics</b> Preparation Quiz/Assignment	<b>1) Reliable &amp; valid measures (cont.); 2) Writing: Issues &amp; practice</b> Read posted reading on reliability and validity (Stangor, pp. 90-101) None
Week 5		
9/28	<b>Topic</b> Preparation Quiz/Assignment	<b>Common measures (self-report)</b> Read pp. 158-171 in the textbook <a href="#">Quiz (Reliable &amp; valid measures)</a>
9/30	<b>Topics</b> Preparation Quiz/Assignment	<b>1) Writing: Issues; 2) Common measures (observational, archival, trace)</b> Read pp. 93-97 & 107-114 in the textbook <a href="#">Lit. review assign: Review plan due</a>
Week 6		
10/5	<b>Topic</b> Preparation Quiz/Assignment	<b>Descriptive methods: Surveys</b> Read pp. 135-157 in the textbook <a href="#">Quiz (Self report; Observational, archival, trace)</a>
10/7	<b>Topic</b> Preparation Quiz/Assignment	<b>Descriptive methods: Naturalistic observation</b> Read pp. 97-106 in the textbook None
Week 7		
10/12		<b>Test 2</b>
10/14	<b>Topic</b> Preparation Quiz/Assignment	<b>Experimental methods</b> Read Ch. 6 in the textbook None
Week 8		
10/19	<b>Topic</b> Preparation Quiz/Assignment	<b>Experimental methods (cont.)</b> Read Ch. 6 in the textbook <a href="#">Quiz (Experimental methods)</a>
10/21	<b>Topics</b> Preparation Quiz/Assignment	<b>1) Repeated measures designs; 2) Complex designs</b> Read pp. 220-228 and pp. 243-253 in the textbook <a href="#">Lit. review assign: Introduction and first content area due</a>

<b>Week 9</b>		
<b>10/26</b>		<b>No class – Fall Break</b>
<b>10/28</b>	<b>Topic</b> Work Quiz/Assignment	<b>Complex designs (cont.)</b> Read pp. 243-253 in the textbook None
<b>Week 10</b>		
<b>11/2</b>		<b>Test 3</b>
<b>11/4</b>	<b>Topic</b> Preparation Quiz/Assignment	<b>Quasi-experimental methods &amp; program development</b> Read Ch. 10 in the textbook None
<b>Week 11</b>		
<b>11/9</b>	<b>Topics</b> Preparation  Quiz/Assignment	<b>1) Describing single variables; 2) Describing relationships</b> Read “Describing single variables” reading (Price et al., pp. 231-239) Read “Describing relationships” reading (Price et al., pp. 240-246) <a href="#">Quiz (Quasi-experiments &amp; program development)</a>
<b>11/11</b>	<b>Topics</b> Preparation Quiz/Assignment	<b>1) Describing relationships (cont.); 2) NHST approach and alternatives</b> Read pp. 379-386 in the textbook <a href="#">Lit. review assign: Second content area and conclusion due</a>
<b>Week 12</b>		
<b>11/16</b>	<b>Topic</b> Preparation Quiz/Assignment	<b>NHST approach and alternatives</b> Read pp. 379-386 in the textbook None
<b>11/18</b>		<b>Test 4</b>
<b>Week 13</b>		
<b>11/23</b>	<b>Topic</b> Preparation Quiz/Assignment	<b>t-tests</b> Read posted reading on t-tests (Wilson, 2005, Ch. 8)
<b>11/25</b>		<b>No class - Thanksgiving break</b>
<b>Week 14</b>		
<b>11/30</b>	<b>Topic</b> Preparation Quiz/Assignment	<b>Analyses &amp; results: 1-way ANOVAs</b> Read pp. 392-406 in the textbook <a href="#">Lit. review assign: Complete literature review paper due</a>
<b>12/2</b>	<b>Topic</b> Preparation Quiz/Assignment	<b>Analyses &amp; results: 2-way ANOVAs</b> Read pp. 407-413 in the textbook <a href="#">Quiz (t-tests &amp; 1-way ANOVAs)</a>
<b>Week 15</b>		
<b>12/7</b>	<b>Topics</b> Preparation Quiz/Assignment	<b>1) Analyses &amp; results: 2-way ANOVAs; 2) Chi-square tests</b> Read posted reading on chi-square analyses (Wilson, 2005, Ch. 13) None
<b>12/9</b>	<b>Topic</b> Preparation Quiz/Assignment	<b>Review</b> Do practice exercises None
<b>Finals Week</b>		
<b>12/14 (4pm)</b>		<b>Test 5, Section 08</b>
<b>12/16 (2pm)</b>		<b>Test 5, Section 12</b>

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## Sources for Posted Readings

- Passer, M. (2013). *Research methods: Concepts and connections* (1<sup>st</sup> 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* (5<sup>th</sup> Ed.). Belmont, CA: Wadsworth.
- Torraco, R.J. (2016). Writing integrative reviews of the literature: Methods and purposes. *International Journal of Adult Vocational Education and Technology*, 7, 62-70.
- Wilson, J.H. (2005). *Essential statistics*. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Pearson Education.
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## 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)

Online: <http://www.gvsu.edu/tc>  
Email: [tutoring@gvsu.edu](mailto:tutoring@gvsu.edu)  
Phone: (616) 331-3451

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

Online: <http://www.gvsu.edu/it>  
Email: [helpdesk@gvsu.edu](mailto:helpdesk@gvsu.edu)  
Phone: (616) 331-2101 and (855) 435-7488 (Toll-free)

### Tips for Successful Learning in Online Classes

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

### Disability Support Resources

Online: <http://www.gvsu.edu/dsr>  
Email: [dsrgvsu@gvsu.edu](mailto:dsrgvsu@gvsu.edu)  
Phone: (616) 331-2490

### Writing Center (for online help with writing)

Online: <http://www.gvsu.edu/wc>  
Phone: (616) 331-2922  
Email: [dsrgvsu@gvsu.edu](mailto:dsrgvsu@gvsu.edu)

### Library & Knowledge Market Help

Online: <http://www.gvsu.edu/library>;  
<https://www.gvsu.edu/library/library-online-services-88.htm#help>  
Email: [minniss@gvsu.edu](mailto:minniss@gvsu.edu) (Samantha Minnis, Library Liaison for Psychology)

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## 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/>