

PSY300, Section 11: **Research Methods in Psychology**  
Winter 2017

**Instructor:** Dr. Brent Steffens

**Email:** steffbre@gvsu.edu

**Office:** 2112 Au Sable Hall

**Office Hours:** Monday 2-3:30pm, Tuesday 11:30-1pm, or by appointment

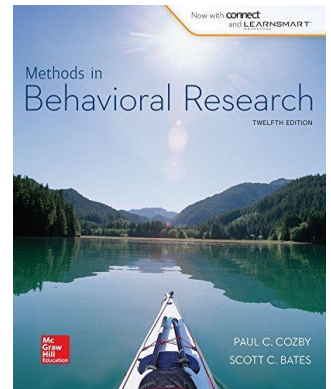
**Office Phone:** 616-331-2407

**Meeting Time:** TTh, 10-11:15am

**Room:** ASH1117

**Required Course Materials**

Cozby, P. C. & Bates, S. C. (2015). *Methods in Behavioral Research*, 12<sup>th</sup> Edition.  
McGraw Hill: New York



**Recommended (but not required):**

American Psychological Association (201). *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association* (Sixth Edition). Washington, D. C.: APA.

**Prerequisites:** PSY 101 or HNR 234, STA 215 or STA 312, & WRT 150 (grade of C or better)

**Course Topic & Learning Outcomes**

The aim of this course is to provide you with the necessary knowledge needed to read, evaluate, and perform psychological research. Across the term, you will learn how to dissect a research article, learn about the considerations and decisions that go into designing psychological research, and how to select and interpret statistical analyses.

This content will be challenging – rather than focusing on the findings and theory of a particular field, we are taking a step back to consider what decisions were made to make the research possible. Still, you will explore a new and interesting approach to the content that you have been reading about in other psychology classes. You may also find that with this knowledge, you are a more critical reader of research, whether it appears in a journal, a press release from a university, or a report in the news.

**Determination of Grades**

TASK		POINTS
Exams	3 exams x 40 pts. each	120 pts.
Assignments	8 assignments x 10 pts. Each	80 pts.
Research Paper		150 pts.
		<b>Total points: 340</b>

**Exams (3 exams x 40 pts. each; 120 pts. total)**

There will be three exams throughout the semester. None of the tests are cumulative, but they will cover information from the class lectures and from the book.

**Assignments (10 pts. each; 80 pts. total)**

Assignments will be given regularly across the semester. These activities target critical components of reading, evaluating, and performing research. Specific details of each assignment will be provided it is assigned. The due dates of each assignment can be found in the schedule at the end of the syllabus. For assignments that are to be completed outside of class, announcements will be made both in class and on Blackboard when they become available and when they are due.

One of these class assignments that must be completed outside of class is a tutorial on plagiarism:

**Plagiarism Assignment:** Each student will complete an online 1-2 hour plagiarism tutorial and test. At the end of the test, there will be a certificate to print. This will be your proof of completion. The tutorial and test can be found at the following website:

<https://www.indiana.edu/~academy/firstPrinciples/index.html>

This website has been created by Indiana University for their own and for others' use. Although there is a brief 5-min self-check quiz available, this will not result in a certificate (be sure to complete the correct quiz). It is in your best interest to take the tutorial seriously. Not only are you required to get a perfect score in order to receive the certificate, but this information will be extremely helpful in writing your own research paper for the course. Your certificate is due no later than: **Thursday, February 2<sup>nd</sup> (in class).**

## Research Paper

Each student is expected to write an APA-style research paper for a research project that addresses one of the questions provided by Dr. Steffens. The goal is for you to experience designing and writing up a research project. You will "conduct" a simple replication and extension of an article by Roediger and Karpickie (2006) on the testing effect, which we will discuss at the beginning of the semester. You will not be collecting actual data – mock data will be provided to simulate data collection. The specifics of the design will be discussed in class; however, the design will consist of a) comparing two groups (must be manipulated) on a dependent variable, and b) correlating that dependent variable with another variable. The paper must include these components:

- Title page
- Abstract
- Introduction (reviews 5 articles, includes gap in literature, hypotheses & predictions)
- Methods
- Results (summarizing analysis from provided data set)
- Discussion
- References

Each of these sections will be discussed throughout the semester. Still, the APA manual will help you with the formatting and structure of the paper. Although students may consult with one another, **all aspects of the paper must be written individually.** Drafts of two sections (introduction, methods) will be submitted for a grade through Blackboard, and students will be given feedback so that changes can be made for the final draft due at the end of the semester. These two drafts will be worth 25 points each, and the final draft will be worth 100 points. Additional details will be given throughout the semester.

**Writing Center.** One valuable resource you can use to help you write the paper is the GVSU Writing Center. The Fred Meijer Center for Writing, with locations at the Allendale and Pew/Downtown Grand Rapids campuses, is 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 a draft of your paper, the assignment sheet, and your questions/concerns to any of the Center's locations. Also, through your Gmail account, you have access to online consultations through GoogleDocs. 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). For more information about our services and locations, please visit our website: <http://www.gvsu.edu/wc/>

(location & hours are on next page)

**ALLENDALE:**

Lake Ontario Hall 120; Monday - Thursday 9:00 a.m. - 6:00 p.m. & Friday 9:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m. & Sunday 2 p.m. - 6 p.m.

Knowledge Market: Mary Idema Pew Library (1st floor) - Sunday - Thursday 6:00 p.m. - 11:00 p.m.

Online via Google Docs - Monday - Wednesday 8:00 p.m. - 12:00 a.m.

**PEW CAMPUS DOWNTOWN**

Knowledge Market: Steelcase Library - Monday - Thursday 11:00 a.m. - 6:00 p.m.

CHS Building 100 - Monday & Thursday 11 a.m. - 2 p.m.

**Grade Assignment Scale:**

Points (%)	Grade	Points (%)	Grade
≥ 93	A	77 – 79.9	C+
90 - 92.9	A-	70 – 76.9	C
87 – 89.9	B+	60 – 69.9	D
83 – 86.9	B	≤ 59.9	F
80 – 82.9	B-		

**Course Guidelines**

The classroom is a special environment in which students and faculty come together to promote learning and growth. It is essential to this learning environment that respect for the rights of others seeking to learn, respect for the professionalism of the instructor, and the general goals of academic freedom are maintained. To create and preserve a classroom atmosphere that optimizes teaching and learning, all participants share a responsibility in creating a civil and non-disruptive forum. Students are expected to conduct themselves at all times in this classroom in a manner that does not disrupt teaching or learning.

1. Class begins promptly at the beginning of the class period. Students should be in their seats and ready to start participating at that time.
2. **For Tests:** If you arrive late for a test that has already started, you may take the test for the remaining amount of time allotted for that test.
3. Students caught cheating will be dealt with severely, in accordance with the Grand Valley State University regulations. Students will not be allowed to retain copies of exam questions.
4. Students will stay until the end of class and will not pack up early, before that time.
5. Students who have to arrive late or leave early for a compelling reason, will inform me of that fact in advance and should be seated close to the door.
6. **PHONES:** TURN YOUR PHONE ON SILENT. Please stay off your phone during class. Come ready to focus for the 75 minute class. It's not all day.
7. Students will pay attention during class: no talking while another classmate or the professor is talking, no reading newspapers, no doing work for other classes. Students who are asked to leave for the day for engaging in these behaviors will do so quickly and quietly.
8. Students are responsible for all material presented in class whether or not they are present. This material includes the lectures, discussions, and activities. Students who miss class should obtain lecture notes and handouts from another student. Please bring these notes to my office hours so I can be most helpful.
9. I am a challenging teacher but provide many opportunities for you to get help. It is your responsibility to ask for help when you need it (e.g., attend office hours, read the book, go to the learning or writing center). If some material is unclear, please let me know. Most of the lectures require you to apply the knowledge learned in class and in readings, so it is critical that you really understand the material. I truly enjoy questions in class – it makes the class more interesting to me and informative to other students. Chances are, if you have a question, others have that same

question but is too shy to ask it. When you do want to ask a question, raise your hand and wait for me to call on you.

10. Civility in the classroom and respect for the opinions of others is very important in an academic environment. It is likely you may not agree with everything that is said or discussed in the classroom. When speaking, use courteous, respectful language and keep comments and questions relevant to the topic at hand.
11. Students have a responsibility to themselves, their fellow classmates, and the professor to be prepared and to participate in classroom discussions. Learning is an interactive process.
12. Students are also responsible for being aware of all assignments, exam dates, and other course scheduling information.

I will feel no compunction reminding you about violation of rules and will ask you to leave if you negatively influence the learning environment.

**Class attendance.** It is expected that you notify me by email about your absence before the class has started. I teach content that may go beyond what is in the book, and this material will be on the exams. It is therefore critical that you regularly attend class in order to learn this content.

**Receiving assistance.** If you are in need of accommodations due to a learning, physical, or other disability you must present a memo to me from Disability Support Resources (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](mailto: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.

### Course Recommendations

**Be proactive.** Act *early* in the semester if your grades are falling below what you hoped for. There is NOTHING you can do to increase a poor grade to a better one the week before finals. Grades ARE FINAL at the end of term.

**Team work.** I strongly encourage students to exchange contact information with 1-2 students. You are responsible for all material presented in class, so if you miss a day please get in contact with another student to ask for their notes.

**Check your email.** Whenever a new announcement, or other notice is posted to Blackboard, an email is sent to your GVSU G-ID email account ([Hyperlink to GVSU Email](#)). I would advise checking your email at least once a day to make sure you do not miss any important updates.

**Nourishment.** You are welcome to eat a snack or sip a beverage during class if it helps you get there on time or focus. Please be considerate of classmates in your choices (e.g. no noisy / messy / smelly food).

*Course Dates*  
***Tentative Winter 2017 Semester Schedule***

Dates	Topics	Chapters in Methods in Behavioral Research	Assignment Due
January 10	Introduction to Class & Reading Research	1	
January 12	Self-explanation & Identifying Hypotheses		Handbook & Read Roediger & Karpickie (2006b)
January 17	Theory & Hypotheses	2	Read Roediger & Karpickie (2006a) Excerpt / Hypothesis & Predictions Assignment
January 19	Writing an Introduction & APA Format		Research question decision; Article Summary of Related Article
January 24	<b>Literature Search Workshop: Meet in LIBRARY, lab LIB001 (lower level of library)</b>		Lit search keywords
January 26	APA format continued & Ethics	3	
January 31, February 2	Methodological Components & Considerations	4	February 2: Plagiarism Assignment
February 2, 7	Observational research	6	
February 9	<b>Thursday, February 9: Exam 1 (chapters 2, 3, 4, 6)</b>		
February 14, 16	Description & Correlation	12	February 17 by 11:59pm: Draft of Introduction
February 21	Writing a Methods Section & APA Format		
February 23	Survey Design & Measurement	5	
February 28, March 2	Survey Design & Measurement cont'd	7	March 2: Survey Assignment
March 7, 9	<b>NO CLASS: Spring Break!</b>		
March 14, 16	Experimental Research	8	March 17 by 11:59pm: Draft of Methods Section
March 21, 23, 28	Experimental Research cont'd	9	March 23: Correlation vs. Causality Assignment
March 30	<b>Thursday, March 30: Exam 2 (chapters 12, 5, 7, 8, 9)</b>		
April 6	Writing Results & Discussion Sections & APA Format		
April 6, 11	Inferential Statistics	13	
April 13, 18	Complex Designs	10	April 18: Graphing Assignment
April 20	Single-case & Quasi-Experimental Designs	11	February 21 by 11:59pm: Final Draft of Paper
April 26	<b>Wednesday, April 26: 8-9:50am: Exam 3 (chapters 13, 10, 11)</b>		