

PSY 300 – 04 – Research Methods in Psychology (SWS)

Fall 2025, Online, Asynchronous

THIS SYLLABUS IS SUBJECT TO CHANGE. Changes will be announced via email and/or Blackboard Ultra.

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(Email is the best way to reach me. If you put **your class number (300) and section number (04)** in the subject line of your email, you typically receive a response within 1-2 business days. If you don't put your class number and section number in the subject line of your email, it will take longer time to receive a response.)

Office Hours:

- **Monday & Wed 10:00am -11:00am & Fri 11:50am -12:50pm** in person/over Zoom at ASH 2110
(Please click the following link to schedule your appointment for a time slot **at least one-day in advance**:
<https://calendly.com/wangyin-gvsu>)
- Please email me and we can discuss other possibilities if the office hours do not work for you.

Required Textbook and Materials:

- *Research Methods in Psychology, (4th ed; Beth Morling, 2021)- ISBN: 978-0-393-89370-0*
- Laptop, tablet, desktop, or other electronic device that connects to the internet.
- Additional materials will be posted on Blackboard Ultra

Recommended:

- *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association, 7th Edition* (available at the library)

Course format: This course is online, asynchronous so we will not meet face-to-face. Each week, lecture slides and a series of recordings will be posted on Blackboard Ultra. Readings, materials, and assignments will be also posted on Blackboard Ultra.

Course description: The world is awash in research and claims, but how can you tell which research and claims to believe? This course will teach you to look at the world like a research psychologist. You will learn basic research methods in psychology, including the ethics of conducting research, the logic of psychological research, the formulation and testing of hypotheses, different types of research designs, sampling procedures, data collection and analysis. In addition to learning to be a critical consumer of research, this course will strengthen your ability to communicate about the research with training in writing and presentation like a psychologist.

Learning Objectives: Upon successful completion of this course, students will be able to:

- 1) Describe the details of, and summarize the essence of, research articles.
- 2) Design an empirical study consistent with the standards of psychological science.
- 3) Write and present clearly and cogently in a scientific way.

Course Evaluation:

Assignments (220 points):

- **Pre-Test Survey** (10 points for completing): You will complete the survey in the 1st week.
- **Syllabus Quiz** (10 points): You will complete a short syllabus quiz in the 1st week of class.
- **Introduction Discussion Board** (10 points): By the end of 2nd week of class, students will complete a short introduction discussion board post. The goal of this assignment is simply to allow students to introduce themselves so that we can all get to know one another.

- **Office Hour Meeting (20 points):** You will be required to meet your instructor **at least once** during the semester in person/over Zoom. Each one-to-one meeting will be 15 minutes during office hours (Please click the following link to schedule your appointment for a time slot at least one-day in advance: <https://calendly.com/wangyin-gvsu>).
- **Psych Friends Mentorship Program (20 points):** You are also required to attend a 30-minute one-on-one meeting with a Psych Friends mentor during **Weeks 8–10** in person/over Zoom to help you revise the Mini Literature Review paper and prepare the Response Letter based on feedback from Dr. Wang. Please see Bb for more details and the sign-up link.
- **Lab Reports (150 points):** There will be 3 lab reports due over the course of the semester. Each of the 3 lab reports will be worth 50 points. A late submission will be marked down by 50%.

Exams (100 points * 3 = 300 points): There will be **THREE** within semester exams. Each exam will consist multiple-choice and short-answer questions over the course of the semester. Exams will be completed through Blackboard Ultra using **LockDown Browser**. Exams should only be taken using a desktop or laptop computer to avoid problems using LockDown Browser. At the beginning of the semester, you will have an opportunity to practice using LockDown Browser for 5 extra credits (by Sep 14th). It is highly recommended that you participate in this. On the week of the exam, the exam will be made available on **Wednesday at 8:00am**, and you will have until **Friday at 11:59 pm** to complete the exam. Exams are to be taken independently without the use of notes, lecture slides, textbook, or other class materials. Collaborating with others or using class materials for the exams is considered cheating and students caught cheating will be given a 0 and the university will be notified for further disciplinary actions. Please note that due dates are firm and attempts at exams will not be allowed after the deadline.

ATTENTION: Exams will be in the 4th, 7th and 13th week, please take it punctually.

Policy for missed exams. Students must take exams as scheduled in this syllabus in person. Students with documentations that can substantiate legitimate reasons for missing a scheduled exam could be given make-up exams consisting of essay questions. Please notify me by email **as soon as you can**. Students without legitimate reasons for missing any scheduled exams in this syllabus will receive “0”.

Research Projects (480 points): Late submission will result in a deduction of 5 points per day):

- **Mini Literature Review (120 points):** Each student will **individually** complete a mini literature review on a topic chosen from the research topic list (which will be provided in the 2nd week). Once your research topic is chosen, I will provide you with a small collection of papers for your reference to do literature review. You are welcome to search as many relevant papers of the topic as you find interesting. The review will include at minimum 5 research articles and will be approximately 1000 – 1200 words in length (~ 3–4 pages double-spaced, 1” margins, 12 pt. font without title page and references). The literature review is an essential part of final proposal paper and students will incorporate it into research proposal.
- **Research Proposal and Presentation (360 points; Choose one of the following options: Individual OR Group Project):**
 - 1) Individual Project: Each student will complete an individual APA-style research proposal (approx. 2,000–3,000 words; ~7–9 double-spaced pages, excluding title page, abstract, and references). The process includes:
 - **Response Letter (40 points):** submit a response letter addressing each comment and feedback received on your Literature Review paper. This must be completed before incorporating the literature review into your Draft Proposal.
 - **Draft Submission (60 points):** Submit a draft proposal **on time** to receive instructor feedback. Full points are awarded for on-time, complete submissions.

- **Final Submission (160 points):** Revise your draft based on feedback and submit the final version of proposal for grading.
 - **Presentation (100 points):** Record a **10-minute presentation** of your proposal.
 - **Extra Credit:** You may include an **Analysis Plan** section outlining your anticipated data analysis strategy for up to **20 extra credit points**.
- 2) Group Project (3-4 students): Each group will collaboratively complete an APA-style research proposal (~4,000–5,000 words; approx. 14–16 double-spaced pages, excluding title page, abstract, and references). The process includes:
- **Response Letter (40 points):** submit a response letter addressing each comment received on each group member's individual Literature Review paper. This must be completed before integrating the literature review into your group Draft Proposal.
 - **Draft Submission (60 points):** Submit a **complete draft** of your group research proposal on time in order to receive instructor feedback. Full points are awarded for complete and timely submissions.
 - **Final Submission (160 points):** Revise your draft based on feedback and submit a final version of proposal for grading.
 - **Presentation (100 points):** Record a **15-minute presentation** of your group proposal.
 - **Peer Evaluation:** Each group member will complete a **peer evaluation** assessing their teammates' contributions to the **Draft Proposal, Final Proposal, and Group Presentation**. Your peer evaluation score will account for **60 of the 360 total points** for the group project.
 - **Extra Credit:** You may include an **Analysis Plan** section outlining your anticipated data analysis strategy for up to **20 extra points**.

Grading:

As indicated above, credit for this course will be based on student performance in these areas. You can track your grades here:

Student Assignments:	Points Possible:
Pre-test survey (for completion)	10
Syllabus test	10
Introduction Discussion Board	10
Office Hour Meeting (15 mins/person)	20
Psych Friends mentorship (30 mins/person)	20
Lab Reports	
#1	50
#2	50
#3	50
Exams	
#1	100
#2	100
#3	100
Research Projects	
• <i>Mini Lit Review</i>	120
• <i>Response Letter</i>	40
• <i>Draft Proposal (for completion)</i>	60
• <i>Final Proposal</i>	160
• <i>Research Presentation</i>	100
Extra Credit (Analysis Plan + Lockdown browser practice)	[up to 25]
Total Points Earned	1000

Grading scale to determine your final grade for the course:

Grade:	Percentage :	Points Needed:
A	93% and above	at least 925
A-	90% - 92%	at least 895
B+	87% - 89%	at least 865
B	83% - 86%	at least 825
B-	80% - 82%	at least 795
C+	77% - 79%	at least 765
C	73% - 76%	at least 725
C-	70% - 72%	at least 695
D+	67% - 69%	at least 665
D	63% - 66%	at least 625
F	62% or lower	624 or fewer

Course Schedule:

	Dates	Topic	Readings & Assignments
Week 1	Aug 25, 27, 29	- Class Overview - Scientific Research	Syllabus Quiz (due by 8/31) Pre-test survey (due by 8/31)
Week 2	Sep 3, 5	- How Scientists Work? - How To: Read an Empirical Article	Read: Ch. 1 & Ch. 2 Select a Research Topic & Form the group Introduction Discussion on Bb (due by 9/7)
Week 3	Sep 8, 10, 12	- Hypothesis Development - Writing workshop I: Literature Review	Turn in the Research Topic & Group List (due by 9/14) Lab #1 (Critique Scientific Articles) (due by 9/14)
Week 4	Sep 15, 17, 19	- Three Claims, Four Validities - Review Study Guide for Exam 1	Read: Ch. 3 Exam #1 (Ch. 1-3) (due by 9/19)
Week 5	Sep 22, 24, 26	- Ethical Guidelines - APA style - Plagiarism	Read: Ch. 4 Lab #2 (Plagiarism & APA style) (due by 9/28)
Week 6	Sep 29, Oct 1, 3	Reliability & Validity	Read: Ch. 5 & Ch. 6 Mini Literature Review (due by 10/5)
Week 7	Oct 6, 8, 10	- Sampling & Generalization - Review Study Guide for Exam 2	Read: Ch. 7 Exam #2 (Ch. 4-7) (due by 10/10)
Week 8	Oct 13, 15, 17	- Correlational Research - Writing workshop II: Research Proposal & Examples	Read: Ch. 8 & Ch. 9
Week 9	Oct 22, 24	Simple Experiments I	Read: Ch. 10
Week 10	Oct 27, 29, 31	- Simple Experiments II - Confounding and Obscuring Variables	Read: Ch. 10
Week 11	Nov 3, 5, 7	Factorial Designs	Read: Ch. 12 Response Letter & Research Proposal Draft (due by 11/9)
Week 12	Nov 10, 12, 14	Writing workshop III: Research Proposal Comments & Suggestions	Lab #3 (Experiment design) (due by 11/16)
Week 13	Nov 17, 19, 21	- Study Guide for Exam 3 - Quasi-Experiments	Read: Ch 13 Exam #3 (Ch. 8-12) (due by 11/21)
Week 14	Nov 24	Statistics	Read: Statistics Review
Week 15	Dec 1, 3, 5	Writing workshop IV: Analysis Plan & Presentation	Research Proposal Final (due by 12/7)
Final Week		Record and Submit Final presentations	Proposal Presentation (due by 12/10)

Drop deadline – grade of “W” – Nov 7 by 5:00 pm

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

Academic Integrity: Academic integrity often feels ambiguous, as the specific behaviors that are considered misconduct vary somewhat across disciplines and courses. My guiding principle is that **I want to know what YOU have learned in this course.** Behaviors that facilitate your learning the material are acceptable; behaviors that make it appear as if you have learned the material when you have not are unacceptable. Behaviors that create the appearance of an unfair advantage or allow others to question whether you have really learned the material, such as having access to unapproved materials during a quiz/exam, are also unacceptable.

Students are expected to work within GVSU's Code of Student Conduct. Please see <http://www.gvsu.edu/studentcode/> for more information and familiarize yourself with these policies regarding dishonorable conduct. **No matter how mild or severe the cheating, it is entirely unacceptable, and I will enforce the current policies fully.**

Plagiarism: As described by the GVSU Student Code, "Offering the work of someone else as one's own is plagiarism..." "Any ideas or material taken from another source for either written or oral presentation must be fully acknowledged." **"Depending on the instructor's judgment of the particular case, he/she may...give a failing grade for the ... entire course."** Simply rearranging the words or substituting synonyms in the original source is still plagiarism. Details about the APA method for citing research will be provided during the course.

GVSU Save Program and Textbook Information

Our course is participating in the GVSU SAVE program. This means your course textbook will be delivered to you via a link on the course's Blackboard page. You should have received a "Welcome Email" from Verba/VitalSource that explains the GVSU SAVE program. You have been charged for your course material on your GV student account. The deadline to opt-out of the SAVE program is Friday, Sept 8th for normal 15-week courses. Please be aware, if you opt-out you will be responsible for purchasing the required course material on your own.

For the instructions to opt-out, and more information about the program visit the GVSU SAVE website at: <https://lakerstore.gvsu.edu/gvsusave>

If you have any questions or are experiencing any issues, please contact lakersave@gvsu.edu

How to Access the Textbook:

GO TO BLACKBOARD

- Click on "GVSU Save" on our PSY 300 BlackBoard course (tab on left side).
- Click on link "GVSU Save Course Materials". This will take you to your GVSU Save Bookshelf.
- Select "Read Now" for our textbook. From here you will be able to navigate to specific chapters/pages.
- You DO NOT need a code and you DO NOT need to enter any payment information (this is all taken care of through the GVSU SAVE program. Contact the Laker Store at lakersave@gvsu.edu for more info, if needed).

Important GVSU Resources

Student Resources: GVSU offers a variety of support for students. These include assistance with basic needs (such as food, housing, and laptops), academic support (such as tutoring and career advice), and wellness resources (such as health/mental health and opportunities to become more engaged with other students).

Here is a link to some of the resources currently available to students:

<https://www.gvsu.edu/care/campus-resources-15.htm> Please do not hesitate to reach out to me if you have any questions or if you are looking for a certain type of support. If I do not know the answer, I will try to find someone who does.

Disability Support Resources: If you need academic accommodations because of a learning, physical, or other disability, please contact Disability Support Resources at 331-2490 to develop a plan of assistance that you can provide to me.

University Counseling Center: The University Counseling Center (UCC) provides personal, career, and group counseling to GVSU students free of charge. Furthermore, the UCC offers many self-help resources to students, including personal development assistance in dealing with issues of depression, loneliness, and how to manage stress, as well as study skill assistance such as test taking strategies, tips on how to successfully speak in front of a classroom, as well as guidance in writing research papers. For more information please visit: <http://www.gvsu.edu/counsel/> The UCC is located at 204 Student Services, Phone: 331-3266, Email: gvcounsel@gvsu.edu

Psych Friends: If you feel you could use some extra help/guidance/support in any academic domain or for your well-being, please consider scheduling an appointment with a mentor through Psych Friends. Psych Friends mentors are upper-level undergraduate peer mentors who are trained to provide support in many areas including: effective study and time management techniques, exam preparation and reflection skills, comprehension of the psychology and behavioral neuroscience major requirements, tips for engaging in the field, strategies for education continuation, methods for maintaining physical and mental health.

Schedule an appointment here: <https://www.gvsu.edu/navigate> Questions?

Email: psychfriends@gvsu.edu



Fred Meijer Center for Writing:

Program information: <https://www.gvsu.edu/wc>

Appointment scheduling: <https://www.gvsu.edu/bookit/>

Contact: virtualwc@mail.gvsu.edu - (616) 331-2922

Main Location: Lake Ontario Hall, Room 120 (Allendale)

Satellite Locations: Mary Idema Pew Knowledge Market (1st floor) and Steelcase Knowledge Market (Devos Building A)

Online: Virtual writing support is available during all hours of operation for both drop-ins and scheduled appointments. Email support is also available (provided within 72 hours of submission).

The Fred Meijer Center for Writing provides writing assistance to all GVSU students, on any type of project and at any stage of the process. The Writing Center employs both undergraduate and graduate writing consultants from across majors and disciplines. Consultants are trained to help writers brainstorm, organize, or develop their ideas; and they can help writers edit their own work and document sources correctly. The Center's services are free, and students can work with an idea, assignment prompt, or draft of their paper.

Writing Center services are available in-person and online for both drop-ins and scheduled appointments. In-person support is available at our physical locations, however hours vary by location so please check [Book It](#) and our program website for up-to-date information - [gvsu.edu/wc](https://www.gvsu.edu/wc). Online support and appointment scheduling can be accessed via Book It (<https://www.gvsu.edu/bookit/>) where students can virtually drop-in and/or schedule an online or in-person appointment. Both appointments and drop-ins are available during all service hours: (Mon-Thurs 9 a.m.-11 p.m., Friday 9 a.m.-3 p.m., Sunday 2 p.m.- 11 p.m.).

Supplemental Writing Skills: 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. Students may receive SWS credit for taking the course as Credit/No Credit provided the student passes the course with a "Credit" grade.