Grand Valley State University

Psychology 300 (08): Introduction to Research Methods
1310 Au Sable Hall: 2:30 p.m. - 3:45 p.m.

Professor	**Office Hours (Zoom)**
Todd Williams Office: 2313 Au Sable Hall todd_williams@gvsu.edu	Wednesdays 12:00 - 1:00 p.m. For a meeting outside of office hours, please me with your availability. Include your course number and section in your email title.

Please bring a laptop or tablet for class activities.

Course Prerequisites: PSY 101, STA 215, and WRT 150. You may not take any of these prerequisite courses concurrently with PSY 300.

Course Description: A general introduction to research methods in psychology. Topics covered include theory development and hypothesis testing; measurement; reliability and validity of methods; experimental, quasi-experimental, and survey research designs; biases in experimentation; inferential and descriptive statistics; and research ethics.

Objectives: 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 [lab report/case study/peer reviewed article]: identifying the author's target audience, purpose, tone, context, and the ways the textual form and style achieves its function. (2) demonstrate an effective scientific writing process. (3) identify the strengths and weaknesses of their own writing processes. (4) design an empirical study consistent with the standards of psychological science.

SWS: 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 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 (616-331-2922). 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 and Writing Center services and locations can be found on our website.

Evaluation:

	Description	Weight
Assessment 1 Assessment 2 Assessment 3	Multiple Choice and Short Answer	15% each
Assignments / Attendance	TBD Some will be graded, others will be complete/incomplete.	7.5%
Top Hat	Reading and Self-Test Questions	7.5%
Research Project I	Literature Review	15%
Research Project II	Project Proposal	15%
Peer Evaluation	Literature Review Proposal	5% 5%

This is a tentative grade distribution. Class average will be centered to 75%

Rating	Letter Grade	Grade Point Value	Percentage Grades
Excellent	A	4.0	90-100%
Excellent	A-	3.7	85-89%
Good	B+	3.3	80-84%
Good	B	3.0	75-79%
Good	B-	2.7	70-74%
Satisfactory	C+	2.3	65-69%
Satisfactory	C	2.0	60-65%
Satisfactory	C-	1.7	55-59%
Poor	D+	1.3	50-54%
Minimal Pass	D	1.0	45-49%

| Failure | F | 0 | 0-44% |

Absence/Missed Exam/Assignment: Please email within 48 hours with a reasonable explanation to receive an excused absence. Multiple absences may require documentation from a health professional. The weight of the missed exams may be transferred to the final examination.

Academic Integrity: Grand Valley State University is committed to the highest standards of academic integrity and honesty. Students are expected to be familiar with these standards regarding academic honesty and to uphold the policies of the University in this respect. Students are particularly urged to familiarize themselves with the provisions of the Code of Student Behavior (See section 4) and avoid any behavior which could potentially result in suspicions of cheating, plagiarism, misrepresentation of facts and/or participation in an offense.

Accessibility: If there is any student in this class who has special needs because of a learning, physical, or other disability, Please visit Student Accessibility Resources https://www.gvsu.edu/accessibility/

Please introduce yourself in person or by email and inform me how I can best support your learning needs. If you would like physical assistance evacuating this classroom in an emergency, please help me develop a plan to assist you.

Student Academic Success Center: Students who require help in developing strategies for better time management, writing, study or examination skills should contact the Advising Resource Centre (200 STU; https://www.gvsu.edu/sasc/) for free tutoring sessions.
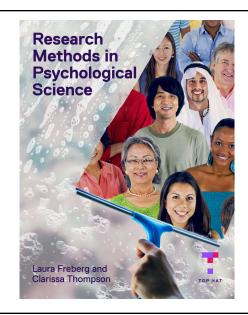
Psych Friends: Peer mentors offer support in key areas like study strategies, exam prep, understanding major requirements, career/grad school planning, and student well-being. Schedule your online or in-person meeting at **gvsu.edu/navigate.**

Technology Requirement: Access to high-speed internet is required to access the text and complete homework assignments

Research Methods in Psychological Science (Freberg & Thompson, 2022) and Tophat Learning Platform.

Research Methods in Psychological Science (Freberg & Thompson, 2022) and **Tophat Learning Platform.**

Please use the GVSU SAVE icon in blackboard to access the course materials.

Please install the TopHat app on your phone.

Lecture slides, readings, homework assignments, videos, popular media and research articles, will be posted in Top Hat. Blackboard will only be used for emergency announcements and grades.

Tentative Schedule

August 26/28	
Topic	Reading(s)
Tuesday: Introduction and Syllabus	Syllabus
Thursday: What is Science?	Top Hat: Module 1
September 2/4	
Bjork et al., 2013 reading Due by Class September 2nd	
Tuesday: Effective Learning	Assignment
Thursday: Information Literacy	
September 9/10	
Chapter 1 due Sept 8th (Midnight)	
Tuesday: What is Science?	
Thursday: The Scientific Enterprise	Top Hat: Module 2
September 16/18	

Chapter 2 due Sept 15th (Midnight)	
Tuesday: The Scientific Enterprise Thursday: The Scientific Enterprise	
September 23/25	
Chapter 3 due Sept 22	
Tuesday: Communicating Science Thursday: Communicating Science	Top Hat: Module 3
Self-Test Questions Due Sept 29th (Midnight)	
September 30/October 2	
Tuesday: Ethic /Research Fundamentals Thursday: Assessment 1	Top Hat: Module 4
October 7/9	
Tuesday: Ethics /Research Fundamentals Thursday: Research Fundamentals	Top Hat: Module 4 Top Hat: Module 5
October 14/16	
Tuesday: Research Fundamentals Thursday: Measurement	Top Hat: Module 5 Top Hat: Module 6
Fall Break – October 19-21	
October 23	
Thursday: Measurement	Top Hat: Module 6
October 28/30	
Tuesday: The Standard Normal Thursday: Correlation	
November 4/6	
Literature Review Due November 5	
Tuesday: Observation Thursday: Observation	Module 7
November 11/13	

Tuesday: Assessment 2 Thursday: Surveys	Module 8
<td colspan="2" align="center">November 18/20</td>
Tuesday: Surveys	
Thursday: Independent Groups	Module 9
<td colspan="2" align="center">November 25</td>
<td colspan="2" align="center">Thanksgiving Day Recess November 27 - December 1</td>
Tuesday: Repeated Measures	Module 10
<td colspan="2" align="center">December 2/4</td>
Tuesday: Factorial Experiments Thursday: Experiments	Module 11
<td colspan="2">**Project Proposal Due** December 10, 11:59 p.m.</td>
<td colspan="2" align="center">**Assessment 3** Thursday, December 11, 2:00 p.m. - 3:50 p.m.</td>

Use of Artificial Intelligence (AI) in PSY 300

Generative AI tools (e.g., ChatGPT, Claude, Gemini) can support your learning if used thoughtfully and ethically. The purpose of this course is to develop your own research and scientific writing skills. Inappropriate reliance on AI can stunt your intellectual growth and will not be permitted.

Permitted AI Uses:

- Brainstorming or clarifying ideas (e.g., asking for examples of ethical issues in a proposed study).

- Organizing outlines or improving APA‑style formatting of references.
  *Warning: Current AI models are still not capable of APA 7 formatting without a significant number of errors.

- Obtaining critical feedback on your own writing (e.g., asking how to make a paragraph clearer).

Prohibited AI Uses:

- Using AI to draft or generate any portion of your literature review, presentations, or final proposal.

- Using AI to summarize or synthesize research findings or generate conclusions.

- Copying and pasting AI output into your work without proper revision and attribution.

AI's Limitations:
AI models sometimes "hallucinate" (produce false information), reflect biases, and lack access to full academic sources. All scholarly content must be drawn from and verified with peer-reviewed materials.

Academic Integrity:
All submitted work must reflect your own understanding. Misusing AI (e.g., submitting AI-generated text as your own or failing to disclose AI use) is a violation of GVSU's academic integrity policies and may result in a failing grade and referral to the Office of Student Conduct.

AI Usage Log and Reflection Requirement

For each major project (literature review, presentation, final proposal), you must submit a brief **AI Usage Log and Reflection** documenting how you used AI, if at all. Attach this as an appendix or separate page. Each entry should include:

- **Date of each query:** (YYYY, Month DD)

- **Tool used:** (e.g., ChatGPT, Claude)

- **Exact prompt(s) you entered:** Provide the text of your query or request.

- **Purpose:** What you hoped to accomplish (e.g., "brainstormed search terms," "asked for feedback on APA citation formatting").

- **How you used and verified the response:** (e.g., "AI suggested APA format; I verified with APA 7 manual and corrected errors.")

Your reflection should briefly discuss:

- How AI supported your learning (e.g., clarified a concept, helped brainstorm structure).

- Any problems or inaccuracies AI produced.

- How you ensured the work remains your own.

Example AI Usage Log Entry

Date	Tool	Prompt (exact text)	Purpose	How you used & verified output
2025-03-15	ChatGPT	"What are some ethical issues with deception in experiments?"	Brainstorming section headings	Used ideas to identify key ethics themes; verified with APA ethics code and textbook; did not copy text.
2025-03-20	Claude	"Format these references in APA 7: [list of sources]"	APA formatting check	Compared AI-formatted refs to APA 7 manual; corrected any errors; all final formatting decisions were my own.

Include all relevant queries. If you used AI to revise your writing, submit both the original and final content as part of your log.

Citing AI in APA 7 Format

If you quote or closely paraphrase AI output, include an **in-text citation** and reference entry in APA 7. For example:

● **In-text:** (OpenAI, 2025) or (ChatGPT-4, personal communication, April 10, 2025) depending on context.

● **Reference example:**
OpenAI. (2025, April 10). *Response to "What are some ethical issues with deception in psychology experiments?"* [Large language model]. ChatGPT. https://chat.openai.com/

If you use AI only for brainstorming/feedback without quoting, disclosure in your usage log is sufficient.

Key Reminder: The final writing and analysis must be your own. AI is a tool to enhance—not replace—your scholarly work.