

**Research Methods
830:355:01**

CLASS INFORMATION:

Fall 2015
MTh
10:20-11:40am
SEC 216

On line schedule of classes <http://www.acs.rutgers.edu/soc>

INSTRUCTOR:

Lyra Stein, Ph.D.

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Office: Tillet 313 <http://rumaps.rutgers.edu/?q=tillett+Hall>

Office Hours: Tuesdays 3:10-4:30, Thursdays 12-1:20pm

COURSE DESCRIPTION:

This is an advanced undergraduate class which will prepare you for graduate school in psychology. Psychology is the scientific study of thoughts, feelings, and behaviors. In this course, you will learn the critical skills to evaluate others' research and conduct your own scientific research in psychology. In other psychology courses you may learn what different behaviors are or why they occur. This course is much more important because you will learn how to conduct research about behavior and arrive at those conclusions, and how to think like a psychologist. This course is essential for becoming a wise consumer of information from sources such as the media, the government, and corporations. This course is also essential for becoming a wise producer of research in psychology. However, all of the material covered in this course applies beyond psychology and the university setting, so the course will improve your ability to think critically and logically about any topic that you may encounter in other courses, in job settings, and in your daily life.

COURSE OBJECTIVES:

- Develop your capacity for critically evaluating "scientific evidence" that is communicated in academic journals, the popular press, and other outlets such as reports from government agencies, non-profit organizations, and corporations.
- Sharpen your ability to produce original research in psychology.
- Improve your writing and oral presentation skills by writing and speaking about psychological topics
- Learn to write and revise a research paper in APA style
- Increase your ability to understand and appreciate alternative viewpoints that differ from your own.

CURRENT ACADEMIC INTEGRITY POLICY:

<http://academicintegrity.rutgers.edu> Violations include: cheating, fabrication, plagiarism, denying others

access to information or material, and facilitating violations of academic integrity.

General Academic Integrity Link:

<http://academicintegrity.rutgers.edu/>

Resources for instructors (and students) can be found at:

<http://academicintegrity.rutgers.edu/resources>

Take a 20 minute interactive-tutorial on Plagiarism and Academic Integrity,

<http://www.scc.rutgers.edu/douglass/sal/plagiarism/intro.html>

LEARNING RESOURCES:

Required Materials:

1) Connect with Learn Smart for Shaughnessy, J.J., Zechmeister, E.B. & Zechmeister, J. S. (2014). *Research Methods in Psychology*. (10th ed.), McGraw-Hill. The access code for the etext is cheaper from the publisher site than buying the package from the bookstore.

2) TopHat Monocle in class response system

<https://s3.amazonaws.com/thm-corporate/Support/Guides/Student+Quick+Start+Guide+-W2014-.pdf>

When you register for TopHat, make sure to use your full name as it appears on the roster.

Top Hat course name: Research Methods – F15

Direct URL: <https://app.tophat.com/e/754968>

6-digit course code: 754968

Recommended books:

American Psychological Association. (2009). **Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association (6th ed.)**. Washington, DC: Author.

This book is highly recommended for psychology majors, especially those who plan to go on to graduate school. Make sure to get the second printing of the 6th edition.

Strunk, W., Jr., & White, E. B. (2000). *The elements of style (4th ed.)*. New York: Longman.

This book is a standard reference book for writers. It will be very useful to you as you write your papers for this course. It will also be useful for future coursework and even writing projects after you graduate.

Additional Readings: Some additional readings (some required, some recommended) will be distributed in class and/or on Sakai

INSTRUCTIONAL METHODS:

Lecture: One of the main goals of the lecture sessions is to develop your skills in psychology research. Lectures will provide you with the skills to produce and analyze research. The lecture sessions will include review and explanation of selected textbook material, active learning that will teach you how to critically evaluate others' research and produce high quality original research, elaboration of some topics with information not provided in the textbook, and in-class exercise.

Group Work: Many of the in-class exercises will be group based problem solving vignettes.

Learn Smart: There will be 11 Learn Smart assignments. Research indicates that pretests and posttests increase memory consolidation for class material. The Learn Smart questions are combined with the etext- as you read the etext, the relevant sections are highlighted and then you will be asked a series of questions. Depending on how many questions you get correct, this should take no longer than 20 min. However you may be presented with more questions if you get a majority incorrect the first time around. You can stop and start the Learn Smart assignments as your leisure-they are not timed. If you complete all of the questions, you will get full points.

Exams: There will be one 60 point multiple choice final exam at the end of the course.

Presentation: For each topic, 2-3 students will be the discussion leaders for the class. You will present the assigned papers. This need not be a formal presentation with Powerpoint, but more of a roundtable discussion. You will present an evaluation of the research design and methods, results and the validity of the conclusions. You will then open a discussion to the class and pose questions which you think will stimulate discussion.

Midterm Paper:

The paper should be 4-6 pages (not including title page or references). Use APA style formatting for: Title page, Headings, Citations (Author, Year), and References.

Have a clear stance on a topic in psychology that was not formally discussed in class. This is NOT a summary paper-you should evaluate the research in all of your journal articles. See list for ideas.

Support your ideas using original research articles published in professional journals. Search online databases such as Psychinfo, Medline, Google Scholar, etc. Of the at least 8 reliable sources you need, MOST (6) should come from scientific journal articles.

Present scientific evidence to support your view. Comment on the reliability and validity of the research methods used to support your view, and point out any alternative interpretations of the research results. Example: Is there an obvious bias in the research?

Final Paper: You will extend your midterm paper and design a study to address the issues covered in your midterm paper.

The paper should be 8-10 pages (not including title page or references). Use APA style formatting for:

Title page, Headings, Citations (Author, Year), and References.

Support your ideas using original research articles published in professional journals. Search online databases such as Psycinfo, Medline, Google Scholar, etc. Of the at least 12 reliable sources you need, MOST (10) should come from scientific journal articles.

The purpose of this assignment is to “consolidate” your learning from this course. The intent is for you to use this assignment to design a study which could address the psychological issue presented in your midterm paper. Your research proposal should include the following: 1) an explanation of the “problem” to be studied; 2) your research questions; 3) a review of the literature that contextualizes the “problem” and identified gaps in the literature your study hopes to fill in; 4) the methodological lenses and frames you are bringing to your research; 5) explanation of your choice of participants, etc. and the methods (strategies) to be applied in your study. Also: gaining access, your role as researcher and how you are going to deal with ethical and power issues pertaining to your study.

Do not leave lecture early: Besides distracting your fellow students, when I hear people leaving or packing their bag, I become very distracted. I lose my train of thought and will have to stop the lecture until the noise ceases. [P.S.: I understand that occasionally people must miss part of a class. **If you intend to do so, please sit in the back** so you won’t distract everyone

ATTENDANCE POLICY:

I will not accept notes for absences as there are more than enough chances to get clicker points even missing 4-5 classes. If you have an extended absence for more than 6 class periods, please talk with me.

Legitimate reasons for absence include, but are not limited to, death in the immediate family, religious observance, academic field trips, participation in an approved concert or athletic event, direct participation in university disciplinary hearings, and jury duty.

Nevertheless, the student bears the responsibility for fulfilling all course expectations in a timely and responsible manner. If you miss an exam or are absent from class, please go to the Deans Office <http://deanofstudents.rutgers.edu/> and present your evidence of absence and bring the Dean’s note to me.

Part of your grade will be based on participation, therefore make sure you have read all of the assigned readings and are ready to discuss the issues.

IN-CLASS RESPONSE SYSTEM:

The TopHat response system will allow for interactive class participation. When a question is presented on the PowerPoint during lecture, you will answer and receive 1 point for each question answered whether correct or not. You will receive another 1 point for correct multiple choice questions and 4 points for correct open ended questions. Your grade for in class responses will be out of 150 points. I will give you an extra credit point for every 5 points received above 150 points.

I will not address Tophat issues more than a week after the class in question. It is your responsibility to make sure your points show up on the Tophat site within a week of each class period. Please do not contact me with clicker concerns more than a week

after the class with missed clicker responses.

EXTRA CREDIT:

You will get an extra credit point for every 5 response points over 100

ACCOMMODATIONS:

Appropriate accommodations will be made for students with disabilities.

Full disability policies and procedures are at <http://disabilityservices.rutgers.edu/>

Students with disabilities requesting accommodations must follow the procedures outlined at <http://disabilityservices.rutgers.edu/request.html>

EVALUATION:

Evaluations are based on:

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|--------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| Learn Smart online assignments | 220 points (11 x 20 points) |
| Tophat in-class questions | 150 points |
| In class participation | 50 points |
| Discussion Presentation | 50 points |
| Midterm Paper | 60 points |
| Final Paper | 60 points |
| Final Exam | 60 points |
| Other assignments | 30 points |

Total Points possible **800**

A: 720-800 points, B+: 680-719 points, B: 640-679 points, C+: 600-639 points, C: 560-599 points, D: 480-559, F: 0-479 points

I grade on a point system, not a percentage system. I will not change a grade once assigned, so please do not make the request.

LECTURE TOPICS AND READING:

****(All dates are approximate and changes will be announced in class)****

| Date | Topic | Reading Due | Assignment Due |
|--------|-----------------------|-------------|----------------|
| Th 9/3 | Introduction to Class | Chapters 1 | |
| | Careers in Psychology | | |

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| | The Science of Psychology | | |
| T 9/8 | Evaluating Research in the Media Goals of the Scientific Method | Chapter 2 | LS Chapters 1 & 2 |
| Th 9/10 | APA Style Library Research Plagiarism | Chapter 13 | LS Chapter 13 |
| M 9/14 | No Class | | |
| Th 9/18 | Observation | Chapter 4 | LS Chapter 4 |
| M 9/21 | Group presentation- Does Facebook Have Generally Positive Psychological Effects? | | |
| Th 9/24 | Misconceptions in Psychology | | |
| M 9/28 | Survey research | Chapter 5 | LS Chapter 5 |
| Th 10/1 plagiarize | Group presentation- Are Today's Youth More Self-Centered? | | |
| M 10/5 | Independent groups design | Chapter 6 | LS chapter 6 |
| Th 10/8 | Group presentation-ESP | | |
| M 10/12 | Repeated Measures Design | Chapters 7 | LS chapter 7 |
| Th 10/15 | Group presentation- Decision Making | | |
| M 10/19 | Peer Review | | Rough draft |

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| Th 10/22 | Case Studies | Chapter 9 | LS chapter 9 |
| M 10/26 | Group presentation-Autism | | Mid-term Papers due in dropbox |
| Th 10/29 | Quasi-experiments | Chapter 10 | LS chapter 10 |
| M 11/2 | Data Analysis | Chapter 11 | LS chapter 11 |
| Th 11/5 | Group presentation-personality | | |
| M 11/9 | Data Interpretation | Chapter 12 | LS Chapter 12 |
| Th 11/12 | Group presentation-learning and memory | | |
| M 11/16 | Critical Evaluation of statistics | <p>Simmons, J. P., Nelson, L. D., & Simonsohn, U. (2011). False-positive psychology undisclosed flexibility in data collection and analysis allows presenting anything as significant. <i>Psychological science</i>, 22(11), 1359-1366.</p> <p>Beall, A. T., & Tracy, J. L. (2013). Women Are More Likely to Wear Red or Pink at Peak Fertility. <i>Psychological Science</i>, 24(9), 1837-1841.</p> | |
| Th 11/19 | fMRI | Huettel, S. A. (2012). Event-related fMRI in cognition. <i>Neuroimage</i> , 62(2), 1152-1156. | |
| M 11/23 | Group presentation-fMRI | | Assignment of evaluation of Beall & Tracy (2013) using Simmons et al. (2011)-30 points |
| Th 11/26 | NO CLASS | | |
| M 11/30 | Issues in Social Psychology | | |

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|-------------------|--------------------------------|--|----------------------------|
| Th 12/3 | Group presentation-Stereotypes | | |
| M 12/7 | Peer review | | Rough Draft of Final Paper |
| Th 12/10 | Review for final | | |
| M 12/14 | | | Final Paper Due |
| W 12/16 12-3pm | Final | | |

List of Readings:

Does Facebook Have Generally Positive Psychological Effects?

Gonzales, A. L., & Hancock, J. T. (2011). Mirror, mirror on my Facebook wall: Effects of exposure to Facebook on self-esteem. *Cyberpsychology, Behavior, and Social Networking*, 14(1-2), 79-83.

Kross, E., Verduyn, P., Demiralp, E., Park, J., Lee, D. S., Lin, N., ... & Ybarra, O. (2013). Facebook use predicts declines in subjective well-being in young adults. *PloS One*, 8(8), e69841.

Are today's youth more self-centered?

Trzesniewski, K. H., Donnellan, M. B., & Robins, R. W. (2008). Do today's young people really think they are so extraordinary? An examination of secular trends in narcissism and self-enhancement. *Psychological Science*, 19(2), 181-188.

Twenge, J. M., Konrath, S., Foster, J. D., Keith Campbell, W., & Bushman, B. J. (2008). Egos Inflating Over Time: A Cross-Temporal Meta-Analysis of the Narcissistic Personality Inventory. *Journal of Personality*, 76(4), 875-902.

ESP

Bem, D. J. (2011). Feeling the future: experimental evidence for anomalous retroactive influences on cognition and affect. *Journal of personality and social psychology*, 100(3), 407.

Ritchie, S. J., Wiseman, R., & French, C. C. (2012). Failing the future: three unsuccessful attempts to replicate Bem's 'retroactive facilitation of recall effect. *PloS one*, 7(3), e33423.

Decision Making

Byrne, K. A., & Worthy, D. A. (2013). Do narcissists make better decisions? An investigation of narcissism and dynamic decision-making performance. *Personality and Individual Differences*, 55(2), 112-117.

Youssef, F. F., Dookeeram, K., Basdeo, V., Francis, E., Doman, M., Mamed, D., ... & Legall, G. (2012). Stress alters personal moral decision making. *Psychoneuroendocrinology*, 37(4), 491-498.

Autism

Koegel, R. L., Vernon, T. W., & Koegel, L. K. (2009). Improving social initiations in young children with autism using reinforcers with embedded social interactions. *Journal of autism and developmental disorders*, 39(9), 1240-1251.

Kuhn, D. E., Hardesty, S. L., & Sweeney, N. M. (2009). Assessment and treatment of excessive straightening and destructive behavior in an adolescent diagnosed with autism. *Journal of Applied Behavior Analysis*, 42(2), 355-360.

Personality

Paulhus, D. L., & Williams, K. M. (2002). The dark triad of personality: Narcissism, Machiavellianism, and psychopathy. *Journal of research in personality*, 36(6), 556-563.

Vernon, P. A., Villani, V. C., Vickers, L. C., & Harris, J. A. (2008). A behavioral genetic investigation of the Dark Triad and the Big 5. *Personality and Individual Differences*, 44(2), 445-452.

Learning and Memory

Schäble, S., Poeggel, G., Braun, K., & Gruss, M. (2007). Long-term consequences of early experience on adult avoidance learning in female rats: role of the dopaminergic system. *Neurobiology of learning and memory*, 87(1), 109-122.

fMRI

Lieberman, M. D., Berkman, E. T., & Wager, T. D. (2009). Correlations in social neuroscience aren't voodoo: Commentary on Vul et al.(2009). *Perspectives on Psychological Science*, 4(3), 299-307.

Vul, E., Harris, C., Winkielman, P., & Pashler, H. (2009). Puzzlingly high correlations in fMRI studies of emotion, personality, and social cognition. *Perspectives on psychological science*, 4(3), 274-290.

Stereotypes

Jussim, L., Cain, T. R., Crawford, J. T., Harber, K. & Cohen F. (2009). The Unbearable Accuracy of Stereotypes. Prepared for *The Handbook of Prejudice, Stereotyping, and Discrimination*. Nelson, T. D. (Ed.). CRC Press.

Rudman, L. A., Greenwald, A. G., Mellott, D. S., & Schwartz, J. L. (1999). Measuring the automatic components of prejudice: Flexibility and generality of the Implicit Association Test. *Social Cognition, 17*(4), 437-465.