

**Research Methods
830:355:01**

CLASS INFORMATION:

**Fall 2016
MTh
10:20-11:40pm
Tillett 216**

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

INSTRUCTOR:

Lyra Stein, Ph.D.

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Office: Tillett 223 <http://rumaps.rutgers.edu/?q=tillett+Hall>

Office Hours: Mondays 12-1pm and Thursdays 12:15-1:15pm

COURSE DESCRIPTION:

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) Lewandowski, Ciarocco & Strohmets (2015). *Discovering the Scientist Within: Research Methods in Psychology*. Macmillan Higher Education: N
- 2) TopHat Monocle in class response system-see instructions in resources section

Recommended books:

American Psychological Association. (2010). **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 exercises.

Quizzes: There will be 10 quizzes which will consist of 20 questions each and will cover 1 chapter. You will have 1 hour to complete each quiz and you should take the quiz in one setting (you cannot pause and come back later). **Please make sure not to miss the closing date as I will not be able to open the quiz once it has closed**

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

Presentation: For each topic, 2-4 students will be the discussion leaders for the class. This need not be a formal presentation with Powerpoint, but more of a roundtable discussion. You will lead the discussion of the research design and methods, results and the validity of the conclusions.

Final Paper: There will be one major writing assignments.

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.

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. You should have at least 6 peer-reviewed 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?

You will then add a small section on how to design a study which could address the psychological issue presented in your midterm paper. You should include an explanation of your choice of participants, etc. and the methods (strategies) to be applied in 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 TopHat 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.

University attendance policy is at <http://sasundergrad.rutgers.edu/academics/courses/registration-and-course-policies/attendance-and-cancellation-of-class>

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. If it is an in-class exercise, you will receive 4 points for correctness. Your grade for in class responses will be out of 100 points. I will give you an extra credit point for every 10 points received above 100 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 10 response points over 100.

If you win the day's TopHat tournament, you will receive 5 points extra credit.

You can receive 3 extra credit points for summarizing the discussion papers before the discussion date. This should include a summary of both articles and a paragraph addressing which side you believe is more valid based on the evidence presented. This is not a formal writing assignment and should only be about a 1-1/2 double paced pages (does not have to be in APA style). The purpose is for you to come to class familiar with the articles that will be discussed.

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:

Online Quizzes	200 points (10 x 20 points)
Tophat in-class questions	100 points
In class participation	50 points
Discussion Leader	50 points
Paper rough draft	30 points
Final Paper	60 points
Final Exam	60 points

Other assignments 50 points

Total Points possible **600**

A: 540-600 points, B+: 510-539 points, B: 480-509 points, C+: 450-479 points, C: 420-449 points, D: 360-419 F: 0-359 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 (by 10:20 am)
Th 9/8	Introduction to Class Careers in Psychology The Science of Psychology	Chapter 1	
M 9/12	Cognitive Determinants of Questionable Beliefs		
Th 9/15	Motivational Determinants of Questionable Beliefs		
M 9/19	The Research Process Goals of the Scientific Method	Chapter 2	Chapter 1 quiz
Th 9/22	Being an Ethical Researcher	Chapter 3	Chapter 2 quiz
M 9/26	Psychological Tools	Chapter 4	Chapter 3 quiz
Th 9/29	APA Style/ Critical Evaluation of Evidence		Chapter 4 quiz
M 10/3	No Class		
Th 10/6	Qualitative Issues	Chapter 5	
M 10/10	Discussion- Does Facebook Have Generally Positive Psychological Effects?		Chapter 5 quiz

Th 10/13	Observation in Psychology	Chapter 6	
M 10/17	Discussion- Are Today's Youth More Self-Centered?		Chapter 6 quiz
Th 10/20	Surveys in Psychology	Chapter 7	
M 10/24	Discussion- Stereotypes		Chapter 7 quiz
Th 10/27	Group Designs	Chapter 8	
M 10/31	Peer Review		Rough Draft
Th 11/3	Discussion – Mating Preferences		Chapter 8 quiz
M 11/7	Multigroup Designs	Chapter 9	
Th 11/10	Discussion- Learning Styles		Chapter 9 quiz
M 11/14	Within Subjects Design	Chapter 10	
Th 11/17	Discussion- positive psychology		Chapter 10 quiz
M 11/21	Critical Evaluation of statistics		
T 11/22	Discussion - ESP		
Th 11/24	Thanksgiving Break		
M 11/28	Discussion – Expertise and practice		
Th 12/1	Discussion - Mindfulness		
M 12/5	Discussion- fMRI		
Th 12/8	Peer Review		Almost Final Draft
M 12/12	Review		

M 12/19			Final Paper Due
12/20 12-3pm	Final		