

**Research Methods
830:355:01**

CLASS INFORMATION:

Fall 2018

MW

3:20-4:40

Tillett 103A

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

INSTRUCTOR:

Lyra Stein, Ph.D.

Email: Lyra@psych.rutgers.edu

Office: Tillett 221

Office Hours: Mondays 1-2pm and Thursdays 12:00-1:00pm

COURSE DESCRIPTION:

Skills you will learn:

- 1) Develop evidence of attaining skill sets desired by employers
- 2) Evaluate the characteristics of potential work settings or graduate school programs to optimize career direction and satisfaction
- 3) Evaluate information based on the reliability, validity, and generalizability of sources
- 4) Demonstrate effective writing for different purposes
- 5) Exhibit effective presentation skills for different purposes
- 6) Collaborate successfully on a group project

In this course, you will learn how the skills you acquire in psychology can help with any profession. You will learn the critical skills to evaluate and analyze what you read. In other psychology courses you may learn what different behaviors are or why they occur. This course is essential for becoming a wise consumer of information from sources such as the media, the government, and corporations. You will also be routinely presented with claims about what "science" has discovered. For example, you will encounter claims that certain foods enhance memory and that video games make people more violent. In this course, you will learn how to critically evaluate research claims. 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 evaluate research in psychology.

- Improve your writing and oral presentation skills by writing and speaking about psychological topics
- Learn to write and revise a 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>

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
<https://app.tophat.com/e/426550>

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 paper for this course. It will also be useful for future coursework and even writing projects after you graduate.

Additional Readings: Some additional readings will be distributed in class and/or on Sakai

INSTRUCTIONAL METHODS:

Lecture: 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, elaboration of some topics with information not provided in the textbook, and in-class exercises.

Quizzes: There will be 5 quizzes which will consist of 20 questions each and will cover 2-3 chapters. 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 a 50 point midterm and 50 point final

Debate: In small groups, you will debate a controversial psychological finding for which there is evidence both for and against. Your debate team will be tasked with reading defending the position, using relevant sources. Each team will begin with a brief opening statement followed by arguments supporting their position. During the debate, each side will need to defend their position against critiques from the opposing team on the limitations of the research. This assignment is designed to help you hone your critical thinking skills and demonstrate your proficiency as a consumer of psychological research. May the best team win!

Group work: Working in groups provides a more realistic experience of how research is conducted, as most research projects involve a highly collaborative effort. There also are valuable lessons to be learned working in groups, as you most likely will have to work with others in your chosen profession. To ensure the group's success and your own, it is important that you work constructively with your group and conduct yourself in a professional manner. Your group will carry out a small survey project testing a correlational hypothesis.

Final Paper: There will be one writing assignment.

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.

Use your group's debate topic as a springboard to analyze a topic in psychology (or choose another topic).

Support your ideas using research articles published in professional journals (that you collect in your group). Search online databases such as Psycinfo, Google Scholar, etc. You should have at least 3 peer-reviewed journal articles.

Present the 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?

ATTENDANCE POLICY:

I will not accept notes for absences as there are more than enough chances to get TopHat points. If you have an extended absence, 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>

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 earned above 100 points.

I will not address Tophat issues more than a week after the class in question.

EXTRA CREDIT:

You will get an extra credit point for every 10 TopHat points over 100.

I will give you a maximum of 20 EC points if your final paper includes a proposed methods section for your topic. This will be discussed in class.

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	100 points (5 x 20 points)
Tophat in-class questions	100 points
Assignments	100 points
Final Paper	100 points
Midterm	50 points
Final Exam	50 points
Debate	50 points

Total Points possible **550**

A: 495-550 points, B+: 468-494 points, B: 440-467 points, C+: 413-439 points, C: 385-412 points, D: 330-384 F: 0-329 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 may be announced in class)

Date	Topic	Reading Due	
W 9/5	Introduction to Class Careers in Psychology The Science of Psychology	Chapter 1	
M 9/10	Cognitive Biases/Internalized beliefs/Cognitive Dissonance		
W 9/12	The Research Process Goals of the Scientific Method	Chapter 2	
M 9/17	Being an Ethical Researcher	Chapter 3	
W 9/19	NO CLASS		Quiz 1
M 9/24	Psychological Tools	Chapter 4	
W 9/26	Qualitative Issues	Chapter 5	
M 10/1	APA Style/ /Critical Evaluation of Evidence		
W 10/3	Work on debate topics-search for articles on your debate		Quiz 2
M 10/8	Observation in Psychology	Chapter 6	

W 10/10	Review for Midterm		
M 10/15	Midterm		Quiz 3
W 10/17	Surveys in Psychology	Chapter 7	
M 10/22	Work on survey project		
W 10/24	Group Designs	Chapter 8	
M 10/29	Group Designs	Chapters 8	
W 10/31	Multigroup Designs /debates	Chapter 9	
M 11/5	Multigroup Designs/debates	Chapter 9	
W 11/7	Within Subjects Design/debates	Chapter 10	Quiz 4
M 11/12	Within Subjects Design/debates	Chapter 10	Survey Due
W 11/14	Factorial Design	Chapter 11	
M 11/19	Factorial Design	Chapter 11	
W 11/21	NO CLASS-FRIDAY SCHEDULE		
M 11/26	Enter data/analysis for surveys		Completed surveys Quiz 5
W 11/28	Work on survey project		
M 12/3	Research methods in different fields of psychology		Survey Project
W 12/5	Work on debate project		
M 12/10	Peer Review for paper		Rough draft
W 12/12	Review for final		
M 12/17			Final Paper Due
12/21 12-3pm	Final		