Research Methods in Social Psychology (830:323:01)
Rutgers University – Spring 2018

Tues (LECTURE – Tillett 103B): 12-1:20 Thurs. (LAB – Tillett 205) 12-3

Instructor: **Dr. Steve Kilianski** (skilians@rci.rutgers.edu)
225 Tillett Hall   Phone: 445-4036 (Dept. office)
 Office Hours: M/W 12-2; other hours available by appt. only

Pre-requisite: Quantitative Methods (PSYC 200) *and* Social Psychology (PSYC 321)

Course Description
This is an *advanced* undergraduate-level course covering research methods in *social* psychology. You need to have passed an introductory class in statistics (i.e., quantitative methods) *and* social psychology to be eligible for this course. The course will emphasize the conceptual foundations and methodological approaches used in social psychological research (e.g., hypothesis generation and testing, reliability and validity of assessment instruments, internal and external validity of results, etc.). The course involves lab sessions in which you will acquire the skills necessary for designing and conducting research, analyzing data, and presenting findings. This includes using PsycINFO, creating files and analyzing data in SPSS (Statistical Package for the Social Sciences), and writing scientific papers in APA-format. There will be two written papers in which you report the results of class projects, and a written "fictional" experimental research paper due toward the end of the semester. You will also present the "results" (you make them up – no data will be collected) of that study via a PowerPoint presentation in class. There will also be 2 written examinations, a midterm and a final exam (multiple-choice and short-answer), and several "pop" (i.e. unannounced) quizzes during lecture sessions.

Objectives
(1) Mastery of basic principles underlying empirical research and the scientific method.
(2) A thorough understanding of experimental and non-experimental approaches, and their comparative strengths and weaknesses.
(3) Familiarization with a wide variety of techniques for assessing various social psychological variables - including content analysis, self-report measures, behavioral observation, and reaction time methodologies.
(4) Mastery of the "rules" (both explicit and implicit) for successful scientific writing, and acquiring the skills to evaluate the research of others.
(5) Attaining rudimentary competence in the use of SPSS software and APA style writing.
(6) Advancing your interest in social psychological research and cultivating a passion for psychology as a science.

Class time will involve lectures, demonstrations, small group projects, and research preparation and presentation (in writing and orally). There will be no text required for this course; there may be several outside readings (journal articles). The course is designed incrementally, so that skills learned in one lab assignment are critical for success at subsequent lab assignments. **Students are therefore strongly urged to attend all class sessions - if you anticipate regular absences, this is not the class for you!**

Grading Criteria (300 points possible):
Your final course grade will be based on:
17% In-class assignments (50 points total)
20% 2 research project reports (30 points each - 60 total)
17% Mid-term exam (50 points). Exam will consist of multiple-choice and short answer
       "objective" questions.
17% Final exam (50 points). Exam will consist of multiple-choice and short answer "objective"
       questions.
6% Unannounced quizzes in lecture sessions on assigned readings (20 points)
17% Formal research paper (your individual "fictional" study)   (50 points)
6% In-class presentation (PowerPoint) of your "fictional" study   (20 points)

Final grades will be assigned on the basis of the number of points earned (300 total maximum).
Grades will be assigned according to the following percentages:

Grade	# of Points Required	Percentage	Grade	# of Points Required	Percentage
A	270-300	90% - 100%	**C**	210-225	70% - 74%
B+	255-269	85% - 89%	**D**	180-209	60% - 69%
B	240-254	80% - 84%	**F**	< 180	< 60%
C+	225-239	75% - 79%			

Exams. A midterm and a final exam will be given covering all in-class and outside reading
material assigned. The final will be comprehensive, covering the entire semester. Each exam
will be composed of multiple-choice and short answer objective questions. A make-up exam will
be given only if (1) <u>I am notified in advance via phone or email</u> **and** (2) <u>A documented medical
excuse (from an M.D.) or evidence of death in the family (obituary, funeral notice, religious
service, etc.) is furnished</u>. **Exams will be on 3/8 (Mid-term) and ??? (Final).**

Research projects and reports. Two research projects are planned. Each one will require data
collection, data entry, and data analyses. You will learn the necessary skills for each project
during class meetings. These projects will also require a paper. All papers will be written in APA
style. Guidelines for each paper will be available on the network drive in the lab and on the
Sakai site. On project 2, which will be conducted in small groups, you will turn in only one paper
per group. **Research project reports are due on 3/1 and 4/10.**

Final research paper. The assignment requires generating an idea for an experiment
(specifically, testing an hypothesis derived from social psychological theory), deciding how
variables will be assessed and manipulated (specifically, the independent variable),
operationalizing the dependent variable(s), providing a statistical analysis of the results, then
discussing their implications, the limitations of the research, and future issues to be explored.
*You will not have to collect and analyze real data - you will make up your results as if you had
done the study.* This assignment will require that you do outside reading (your report should cite
at least five articles not assigned otherwise in the class) and that you write up your proposal in an
APA style research report (length: approximately 10-12 pages). A more specific description of
this assignment will be distributed later in the course. You are encouraged to turn in at least one

preliminary draft to me for review and comment, although this is not required. **Final papers are due on 5/5.**

Final research presentation. Taking the results from your final project, you will present the work in class. This will be analogous to a conference paper presentation. You will be allotted 15 min. to introduce your topic, review your hypotheses and their foundation, explain your method, present your results, and discuss their implications and the research limitations. You must use PowerPoint presentation software, and include at least one chart illustrating your results. **Presentations will be done during the last 2 weeks of the semester and I will assign your dates/times. Your grade will be based on your classmates' and my ratings of your presentation.**

Late assignments. Late assignments will LOSE 1 POINT for each calendar day (including Saturdays and Sundays) that they are late (unless you have made alternative arrangements with me). Also, please note that class attendance is very strongly correlated with success in this course. Although it is possible to "make up" the lab assignments, past students have found this extremely difficult and it's a major inconvenience for me as well.

Key Readings (available on Sakai under "Resources")

Wiederman, M. W. (1993). Evolved gender differences in mate preferences: Evidence from personal advertisements. *Ethology and Sociobiology*, *14*, 331-352.
Cohen, F., Solomon, S., Maxfield, M., Pysczynski, T., & Greenberg, J. (2004). Fatal attraction: The effects of mortality salience on evaluations of charismatic, task-oriented, and relationhip-oriented leaders. *Psychological Science*, *15*, 846-851.
Haiken, W, Kallaur, D., & Lewy-Neumann, O. *The reliability and validity of the Pledge of Allegiance Attitude Assessment Scale (PAAAS)*. Unpublished manuscript submitted in fulfillment of course requirement. Rutgers University, Summer 2004.
Bargh, J. A., & Chartrand, T. L.(1999). The unbearable automaticity of being. *American Psychologist, 54*, 462-479.

Optional Reference Manual

Publication Manual (6th edition). Washington, DC: American Psychological Association. (An example of the latest APA format is available on the network drive in 205 and on Sakai under "Resources"). There a plenty of websites that effectively summarize the rules of APA format and provide examples, so you don't need the manual.

Recommended Materials

A flash drive that will allow you to save files and easily exchange them with classmates. You can also retain or distribute files as email attachments or store them via "cloud-based" services.

COURSE OUTLINE AND SCHEDULE

Module 1: The Foundations of Empirical Research

LECTURE 1   Course Introduction & Review of Syllabus
1/16

LAB 1   Can Psychology be a Science? Fundamental Issues
1/18   PsycINFO & IRIS - Complete Worksheet **(5 pts)**
                   SPSS overview

LECTURE 2   Principles of Statistics - Samples & Populations and levels
1/23   of measurement. Descriptive vs. Inferential Statistics. Basic principles of
                   reliability and validity.

LAB 2   Measurement and Descriptive Statistics
1/25   SPSS LAB I (**5 points**)

LECTURE 3   Inferential Statistics: The Chi-Square and the T-test
1/30   The null hypothesis, p-values, degrees of freedom, etc.

LAB 3   Using Inferential Statistics to draw conclusions
2/1   The Chi-Square and the T-test
                   SPSS LAB II (**5 points**)

Module 2: Project #1-Content Analysis of Personal Ads: A Replication Study

LECTURE 4   Non-Experimental Methods
2/6   READ: **Wiederman, M. W. (1993). Evolved gender differences in
                   mate preferences: Evidence from personal advertisements**

LAB 4   Systematic Observation & Content Analysis
2/8   Enter content analysis data in SPSS - I will provide results and statistics
                   for the entire class. **Paper is due 3/1 (30 points**): Write up Introduction,
                   Method, Results, and Discussion (implications of research and limitations)
                   in APA style. YOU CANNOT MISS THIS CLASS SESSION.

LECTURE 5 2/13	More Inferential Statistics: Correlations and Within-Subjects T-tests

LAB 5 2/15	SPSS T-test and Correlation Exercise (**5 points**) Review of APA format and style

<u>Preparation for next session</u>:
Think about an attitude issue you want to assess, and at least one group-based characteristic (e.g., gender, race, political ideology) and/or individual difference variable (e.g., personality trait such as self-esteem, gender role, authoritarianism, extraversion, neuroticism, religiosity, etc.) that you think might be related to the attitude being assessed. Also, think about behaviors that might be related to scores on your attitude instrument. Your objective is to test the validity (e.g., known-groups, convergent, criterion, etc.) of the attitude scale you will develop. **Review Haiken et al. PAAAS scale development and testing paper.**

Module 3: Project #2 -- Design and Analysis of Self-Report Measures

LECTURE 6 2/20	Self-Report Measures: Concepts, Approaches, Assessing their validity

LAB 6 2/22	Self-Report Methods - Reliability and Validity Construct and Select Measures for Project 2 (Small Group Project - Phase I). Obtain data from at least 10 respondents each and bring completed items to the next lab (10/16) **YOU CANNOT MISS THIS CLASS SESSION**.

LECTURE 7 2/27	There will be no class on this date so that you can complete data collection

LAB 7 3/1	Analyze results from Project # 2 (Phase II). Build SPSS data file, code and enter data. <u>Assignment (**30 points**)</u>: Write up Introduction, Method, Results, and Discussion in APA style. **Paper is due 4/10.** **YOU CANNOT MISS THIS CLASS SESSION.** **Project 1 paper is due today!**

LECTURE 8   Review for Midterm Exam.
3/6

MIDTERM EXAM   Multiple-choice and short-answer objective questions
3/8

<u>**Module 4: Experimental Methods**</u>

LECTURE 9   Analysis of Variance (1-way and Factorial) - Main and Interaction Effects.
3/20

LAB 9 (3/22)   Analysis of Variance (1-way and Factorial) - Main and Interaction Effects
                   Discuss Research Proposal Ideas. ANOVA with SPSS (**5 points**)

                   For next class on 11/4: Formulate a research hypothesis concerning
                   something of interest to you. Think about how you would test that
                   hypothesis (specifically via an experiment) and **write up an informal 1-
                   page proposal to be submitted on 11/4 (5 points).**

LECTURE 10   Experimental Design: Using mixed designs and multiple DVs to test
(3/27)   a hypothesis**.**
                   READ:**Cohen et al. "Fatal Attraction" study – Be prepared to discuss
                   their design, method, and results, and re-analyze their original data.**

LAB 10 (3/29)   Understanding and Critiquing an Experiment
                   Mixed Factorial ANOVA and Chi-square exercise using Cohen et al. data
                    (**5 points**)

LECTURE 11   Principles of multiple regression and factor analysis.
(4/3)

LAB 11 (4/5)   Multiple Regression Analysis & Factor Analysis in SPSS: Advanced
                   analytic tools in empirical social science research**. (10 points)**

LECTURE 12   Research Methods in Social Cognition
4/10   Priming and Automatic Processing.
                   Prior to class read: **Bargh & Chartrand (1999)** *The Unbearable
                   Automaticity of Being*
                   Project 2 papers are due!!

LAB 12 (4/12)   21st Century Research Methods: Implicit Attitude Assessment &
                       Neurophysiological Techniques
                       IAT Lab Exercise **(5 pts.)**

LECTURE (4/17)   **Research Presentations**

LAB   (4/19)   **Research Presentations**

LECTURE (4/24)   **Research Presentations**

LAB (4/26)   Prep for final exam, final project papers and finish any remaining
                       presentations

5/5	**FINAL PROJECT PAPERS DUE**

TBA	**FINAL EXAM**