

# Learning Processes Lab Syllabus

Fall 2019 — 01:830:312:02

Instructor: Andrea Shang  
Email: [andrea.shang@rutgers.edu](mailto:andrea.shang@rutgers.edu)  
Office Hours: By appointment (email/talk to me after class to schedule a time)  
Class meeting time/place: Tuesday, 3:20-6:20pm. Busch Psychology, Room A361  
Textbooks: None, required readings will be posted on Sakai

## I. Course Aims and Outcomes

The aim of this course is to acquaint students with scientific research within the context of learning psychology.

By the end of this course, you will:

- have a basic understanding of the methods and techniques used in animal learning research
- understand the procedures for collecting data in animal learning research
- interpret the results of statistical analyses
- produce an APA-style empirical paper

Additionally, this course has been certified as satisfying four of the Writing and Communication Learning Outcome Goals (including WCR and WCD) of the SAS Core Curriculum. Specifically, students will be able to:

- a) Respond effectively to editorial feedback from peers, instructors, and/or supervisors through successive drafts and revision (WCR);
- b) Communicate effectively in modes appropriate to a discipline or area of inquiry (WCD);
- c) Evaluate and critically assess sources and use the conventions of attribution and citation correctly;
- d) Analyze and synthesize information and ideas from multiple sources to generate new insights.



## II. Course Requirements and Assignments

### 1. Lab reports (600 points)

All lab reports (drafts and final versions) must be computer generated (i.e. typed) and submitted as a word document. They should be written and formatted following APA guidelines, which we will go over in class.

Lab reports must be submitted on Sakai (under the “Assignments” tab) as a Word document.

These are *individual assignments*. The experiments are group activities, but these lab reports are not. Any work submitted by a student in this course for academic credit will be the student’s own work. Copying and turning in someone else’s work as your own – even with their permission – is a form of academic dishonesty. Should copying occur, both the student who copied work *and* the student who gave material to be copied will automatically receive a zero.

Deadlines: All lab reports are due at the start of class (3:20pm) unless otherwise specified.  
Late submissions: 10% of the total points for that report will be deducted for each day it is late. Reports received at 3:30 will be considered a day late.

## 2. Quizzes (3 x50 points each; 150 points total)

Quizzes will be held during the first 15-20 minutes of class at 3 points during the semester. These quizzes will be based on the articles assigned for each experiment. If you are late on the day of a quiz, you will ONLY be allotted the remaining time to complete the quiz. If you arrive after the quiz has finished, you will receive an automatic zero for that quiz.

## 3. Presentations (150 points)

For each experiment, three supporting articles are provided as relevant background information. Students will work in groups to present the relevant information from these articles to their fellow classmates in an **10-15 minute presentation**. HOWEVER, each student in the class is responsible for knowing the information from all three articles. This information will be on the quiz for the relevant experiment. Additionally, these articles are the background reading you will need to be familiar with, in order to write the introduction and discussion sections of your lab reports.

## 4. Attendance/participation (100 points)

Attendance in this class is critical to the success of the experiments, and therefore, mandatory. Class begins promptly **at 3:20pm**. It is your responsibility to arrive on time. Arriving late will not only affect your attendance, but your group's ability to carry out the experiment.

Everyone starts off with 100 attendance points.

Lateness: Arriving late (up to 15 minutes after the start of lab) will result in an automatic 10-point deduction.

Unexcused absence: Arriving more than 15 minutes late will count as an unexcused absence and will result in a 20-point deduction. **An unexcused absence(s) during the data collection period(s) of any experiment will result in a zero for that lab report.**

If you expect to miss class, please use the University absence reporting website <https://sims.rutgers.edu/ssra/> to indicate the date and reason for your absence before the class.

**An absence will be excused only with a note from the Dean's office received within two weeks of the missed class.** You are responsible for any information you miss.

**Tl;dr Don't be late, especially during experiment weeks.**

## 5. Reading/Resources

There is no textbook for this course. Three articles will be provided as background information for each experiment. These will be posted on Sakai. You are responsible for reading these articles before the lab and knowing the information. We will be discussing them in class before the experiments. The information will also be necessary to complete the lab reports.

Additionally, you may want to check out the following resources for APA style writing:

<http://www.apastyle.org/>

<https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/560/01/>

## 6. Grading

The maximum total is 1000 points (100%).

Assignment	Maximum Points
Lab Report #1 (Results & Discussion)	150
Lab Report #2 (Intro & Methods)	150
Lab Report #3	300
Quizzes	150 (3 x 50 pts each)
Presentations (article reviews)	150 (2 x 75 pts each)
Attendance/participation	100
<b>Total Points</b>	<b>1000 (=100%)</b>

### III. Academic Integrity and Conduct

#### Cell Phone Usage

It is disrespectful to use your cell phone while your peers or professors are lecturing. If caught using your phone during lab, you will be asked to leave the class and will receive a 0 for that day's participation. For extenuating circumstances (e.g. if you are expecting an important phone call/text), please let me know before the start of class.

#### Plagiarism

**Plagiarism is a violation of academic integrity** and will result in an automatic zero for that assignment. Penalty for violation of the University Code of Student Conduct can also be extended to include failure of the course and University disciplinary action. I will be using Turnitin to check all writing assignments for plagiarism. You are expected to abide by the Rutgers University Code of Student Conduct and Academic Integrity Policy. The policy on academic integrity can be found at <http://academicintegrity.rutgers.edu/academic-integrity-at-rutgers/>

#### Animal Use

***Mistreating or mishandling of the rats will result in a dismissal from the class and an 'F'. There are no excuses and no exceptions.***

## IV. Course Schedule

[This schedule is subject to change. I will announce any changes/updates in class. Updated versions of the syllabus will be posted on Sakai under 'Resources.' It is your responsibility to keep up with any changes.]

Week/Date	Topics	Assignments Due
Week 1 Sep 10	Course Introduction. Scientific Method, APA Overview, Experimental Design. Introduction to Experiment 1: Open Field	Animal Orientation & OSHA surveys.
Week 2 Sep 17	Care and Handling of Lab Animals. Article Presentation example. Introduction to Experiment #1: Open Field (continued). <b>Data collection for Experiment #1: week 1</b>	Read articles for Experiment #1.
Week 3 Sep 24	<b>Quiz #1.</b> APA: Lab Report Overview, Introduction & Methods, Citations. <b>Article Presentations (Exp #1)</b> <b>Data collection for Experiment #1: week 2</b>	Read articles for Experiment #1. <b>Article Presentations</b>
Week 4 Oct 01	Review of Statistics. Review data from Experiment #1. APA: Results, Figures, Discussion. Introduction to Experiment #2: STFP.	
Week 5 Oct 08	APA: Introduction, Methods Introduction to Experiment #2 (continued). <b>Data collection for Experiment #2: week 1</b>	<b>Lab Report #1 due (Results, Discussion, References)</b>
Week 6 Oct 15	<b>Quiz #2.</b> <b>Article Presentations (Exp #2)</b> <b>Data collection for Experiment #2: week 2</b>	Read articles for Experiment #2 <b>Article Presentations</b>
Week 7 Oct 22	No Class (SfN)	
Week 8 Oct 29	Review data from Experiment #2. Introduction to Experiment #3.	<b>Lab Report #2 due (Intro &amp; Methods)</b> Read articles for Experiment #3
Week 9 Nov 05	<b>Data collection for Experiment #3: week 1</b>	
Week 10 Nov 12	<b>Data collection for Experiment #3: week 2</b>	
Week 11 Nov 19	<b>Quiz #3</b> Review data from Experiment 3. <b>Article Presentations (Exp #3)</b>	<b>Article Presentations</b>
Week 12 Nov 26	No class (Thanksgiving)	
Week 13 Dec 03	<i>TBD</i>	
Week 14 Dec 10	No class.	<b>Lab Report #3 due by Monday 5pm on 12/9.</b>