RESEARCH METHODS IN PSYCHOLOGY

with Dr. Harrison

PSYC270.001   FA2020

T/Th   4:45-6:00pm (new meeting time)
Location: Zoom

ABSTRACT

Students in this course will work as a class to conduct research projects on a common theme. Students will spend class time (3 lecture hours per week) planing, executing, and writing up the results of this project. Class time will also be used to discuss methodological considerations in psychological research more broadly. 3 credit hours.

TARGET AUDIENCE: Psychology & Neuroscience Majors   PREREQUISITE: PSYC101

Gen Ed (Current): PL
Gen Ed (Start Fall 2021): Natural Scientific Investigation, Research & Discovery, Empirical Lab

1 INTRODUCTION

This course is a required course for all psychology majors. The American Psychological Association (APA) calls for all undergraduate psychology majors to have a good understanding of how research is conducted. For those of you who are interested in conducting research in psychology or a related discipline, this course will provide a solid foundation in research methods. I hope the course illustrates how often you encounter research and provide you with the knowledge and skills to critically evaluate research claims.

2 METHODS

The best way to learn about how research is done is to actually do it. In this course we will conduct guided research projects culminating in our very own APA-style research paper. In preparation for the work in this course, we will be tasked with contributing to class brainstorming sessions online, reading research articles and completing write-ups of the research studies we conduct. Another major component of the course is learning how research in psychology is disseminated, primarily through writing, specifically in APA format (more on this later).

3 RESULTS

By the end of the semester, we will be able to:
1) Identify the major approaches to conducting research in psychology and understand the advantages and disadvantages to these methods.
2) Practice reading research analytically and writing formal APA papers.
3) Research, prepare, conduct and report on the findings of our own quasi-experimental study.
4) Assess the validity of research claims made in academic articles.

4 DISCUSSION

As a part of this course, we will work in groups, make presentations and participate often. We will get out of the course what we put in, and it will go faster and be much more fun if we dive right in! Along the way, I hope to help we develop skills that will benefit you in graduate school and/or the work force.

MEET THE METHODS TEAM!

In addition to me (your instructor), we have four outstanding instructional assistants who will be guiding you through the course and research project. We also have five undergraduate learning assistants (ULAs) who will provide support in the larger class meetings. Get to know us all!

Instructor
Dr. Patrick Harrison
(he/him/his)
241 Davie Hall
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Office Hours: TBD

Instructional Assistant
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Office Hours: TBD

Laney Allen
ULA
(she/her/hers)

MJ Carter
ULA
(she/her/hers)

Maggie Nail
ULA
(she/her/hers)

Curtis Smith IV
ULA
(he/him/his)

Emma Trenchard
ULA
(she/her/hers)

Our job (and joy!) is to help you learn the course material! We want you to succeed and will do everything in our power to help you throughout this course. It does make it easier if we can get to know you. In addition to attending class regularly, please feel free to stop by during office hours.

The course TAs and ULAs may have slightly different policies regarding questions. However, I have no doubt that they are as excited as I am to answer questions you have and to make this course as enjoyable as possible. I ask that you give them the same respect you would give to me. They will post their office hours sometime during the first week of classes.
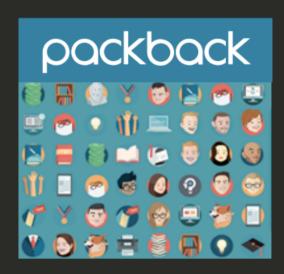
CLASS ORGANIZATION

THE PLAN

PSYC270 (Laboratory Research in Psychology) has undergone a major redesign. In previous semesters, the course had both a "lecture" and "lab" component. In the lecture portion of the class, students learned about methodological issues surrounding experimental, quasi-experimental, and non-experimental design, broadly conceptualized. In lab, students developed experiments to tackle a common theme (e.g., implicit bias). Students' projects were designed, executed, and written primarily in their lab sections under the direction of the course TAs. The re-designed version of the course no longer has TA-supported labs. Therefore, the new PSYC270 (Research Methods in Psychology) will adopt the following structure:

1) Rather than leading lab sections, course IAs will be primarily responsible for being the "scientific reviewers" of the course. The process of peer review is the lifeblood of science. Giving and receiving effective and constructive feedback is a skill. The course IAs are experts in their fields and will be ideal reviewers for student work.

2) Course ULAs will act as "research group leaders", assisting students navigate through the research process. Many of our ULAs have interest in graduate school. Part of being a graduate student is mentoring research assistants. Thus, ULAs in PSYC270 will have the opportunity to practice their mentoring skills with their peers. Although the ULAs will not have grading responsibilities, they are wonderful resources.

3) Students will act as researchers. The best way to learn is to do. My goal is for all PSYC270 students to have the requisite skills to ask research questions, conduct a literature review, form hypothesis, develop methods to test those hypotheses, collect data, analyze data, and provide meaningful interpretation of the results. This sounds like a lot but we will take everything one step at a time. I encourage you to work in small groups (n < 5) to keep up with course material.

WHAT YOU WILL NEED TO SUCCEED

For online discussion and participation, we will need access to Packback, an online curiosity community where we can be fearlessly curious and ask BIG questions about how what we're studying relates to life and the real world.

Participation is very important to me and writing amazing questions and answers on Packback will help us develop writing skills necessary for any career path. It will also reinforce the imperative skill of justifying thoughts and claims with credible evidence- and then citing the evidence!

Create an account by navigating to https://questions.packback.co and clicking "Sign up for an Account" then enter our class community's lookup key into the "Looking to join a community you don't see here?" section in Packback at the bottom of the homepage.
Community Lookup Key: ef18ebbc-228d-487b-af62-886d44b1f67f

Packback is available through the bookstore for $25.00

We will also need access to SPSS. SPSS is the software we will be using in this course to analyze data. You can access it for free through Virtual Lab or Virtual Computing Lab (https://sils.unc.edu/it-services/remote-access/its-virtual-lab).

We use SPSS extensively in the course. If you choose to purchase it you can get it here (specific instructions for purchase are posted on Sakai): http://www.onthehub.com/spss/
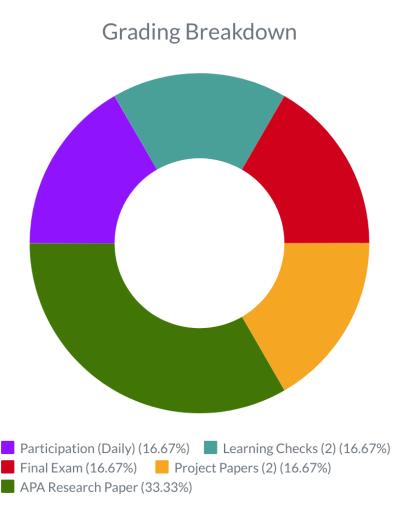
ASSESSMENT

This is a challenging course and I have high expectations for us. I also expect us to do well. In order to evaluate the ways you contribute to class, I have set up five areas where we can earn points.

PARTICIPATION (50 points total) Both attendance and participation are very important to me. I know this is a large class and you may not feel comfortable sharing out in our large sessions, but you will have plenty of opportunities to earn participation points throughout the semester. First, I ask that you participate on PACKBACK. For each unit of the class (Introduction, Methods, Results, Discussion) and the Final Paper, I ask that you post one (1) question and answer (2) questions for a total of FOUR QUESTIONS and EIGHT RESPONSES. Your participation on Packback will count toward 50 of the participation points available. More information will be provided in class.

Overall, this component of the course will be worth 50 points (16.67% of the total grade).

Grading Breakdown

- Participation (Daily) (16.67%)
- Learning Checks (2) (16.67%)
- Final Exam (16.67%)
- Project Papers (2) (16.67%)
- APA Research Paper (33.33%)

Percentage	Grade	Percentage	Grade	Percentage	Grade
93%+	A	80-82.99%	B-	65-69.99%	D+
90-92.99%	A-	77-79.99%	C+	60-64.99%	D
87-89.99%	B+	73-76.99%	C	below 60%	F
83-86.99%	B	70-72.99%	C-		

LEARNING CHECKS (50 points total) Your basic understanding of the course material will be assessed on two learning checks worth 25 points each (50 points total, 16.67% of the overall grade). Think of these as little quizzes to make sure you are understanding the material

FINAL EXAM (50 points total) Your understanding of the basic course material will be assessed on one cumulative exam worth 50 points (16.67% of the overall grade). The learning checks will form the basis of this final.

PROJECT PAPERS (50 points total) You will get a chance to work on your final paper in phases. Starting with the literature review (APA-style introduction section followed by the methods and results sections), you will work on the individual sections of the paper. More details will be provided. Each paper (two overall) will be worth 25 points (50 points total, 16.67 % of your overall grade). There will not be a project paper for the discussion section but you will be able to use these project papers to help craft the final research paper. Late penalty of one point per day.

FINAL RESEARCH PAPER (100 points total) Finally, you will submit a final APA-style paper comprised of the three section papers (plus a discussion) and formatted accordingly More details on the final project will be provided. This final project will be worth 100 points (33.33% of the overall grade). Late penalty of five points per day.

POLICY NOTES

ATTENDANCE POLICY

No right or privilege exists that permits a student to be absent from any class meetings, except for these University Approved Absences:
1. Authorized University activities
2. Disability/religious observance/pregnancy, as required by law and approved by Accessibility Resources and Service and/or the Equal Opportunity and Compliance Office (EOC)

Significant health condition and/or personal/family emergency as approved by the Office of the Dean of Students, Gender Violence Service Coordinators, and/or the Equal Opportunity and Compliance Office (EOC).

ACCESSIBILITY RESOURCE AND SERVICE

If you have a documented disability and wish to discuss academic accommodations, please contact me within the first two weeks of the term.

The Accessibility Resource and Service (CB#7214 SASB – North, Suite 2126) will provide you with information and review appropriate arrangements for reasonable accommodations. You can contact them at: 919-962-8300 or accessibility@unc.edu.

COUNSELING AND PSYCHOLOGICAL SERVICES

CAPS is strongly committed to addressing the mental health needs of a diverse student body through timely access to consultation and connection to clinically appropriate services, whether for short or long-term needs. Go to their website: https://caps.unc.edu/ or visit their facilities on the third floor of the Campus Health Services building for a walk-in evaluation to learn more.

UNIVERSITY TESTING CENTER

The College of Arts and Sciences provides a secure, proctored environment in which exams can be taken. The center works with instructors to proctor exams for their undergraduate students who are not registered with ARS and who do not need testing accommodations as provided by ARS. In other words, the Center provides a proctored testing environment for students who are unable to take an exam at the normally scheduled time (with pre-arrangement by your instructor). For more information, visit http://testingcenter.web.unc.edu/.

HONOR CODE

Academic Integrity: By enrolling in this class, you have agreed to adhere to UNC's Honor Code. If you have any questions about the code, refer to: http://advising.unc.edu/for-faculty/academic-policies-and-procedures/unc-honor-code/.

STATEMENT OF INCLUSION

It is personally important to all of us that ALL students are able to succeed in this course regardless of race/ethnicity, sexuality, gender identity, age, ability, income, religion, background, etc. First and foremost, we require all my students to respect every person in our class. If you ever feel that your right to learn and participate in this course has been violated by us or any of your peers, please do not hesitate contact us.

As your instructional team, we affirm our commitment to:
• respect the dignity and essential worth of all individuals
• promote a culture of respect throughout the university community
• reject bigotry, discrimination, violence, or intimidation of any kind
• practice personal and academic integrity and expect it from others
• promote the diversity of opinion. ideas, and backgrounds that is the lifeblood of the university

UNC-Chapel Hill safe zone

...can we talk?

thrive @CAROLINA

SCHEDULE

Schedule subject to change <u>with</u> notification*

DATE	TOPIC	GOALS	IMPORTANT DATES
Week 1	**Getting to Know the Course and Each Other**	Get through FWOC!	
T 8/11	Course Introduction		
Th 8/13	Project Planning (Overall)		
Week 2	**Hypothesis Development and Knowledge**	Have a tangible, evidence-based hypothesis for the course project	
T 8/18	History of Scientific Psychology		
Th 8/20	Literature Review		
Week 3	**Ethical Issues in Psychological Research**	Start a working, APA style document for your introduction section	
T 8/25	Ethical Guidelines		
Th 8/27	Project Planning (Introduction)		
Week 4	**Design in Psychological Research**	Create an outline of your introduction section	LEARNING CHECK I (T 9/10, 3:30pm)
T 9/1	Research Design Basics		
Th 9/3	Project Workshop (Introduction)		
Week 5	**Types of Research Designs**	Fill in the introduction outline and complete the introduction	
T 9/8	Survey Research Design		
Th 9/10	Project Planning (Methods)		
Week 6	**Types of Research Designs**	Brainstorm ideas for testing our hypotheses	PROJECT I DUE (INTRODUCTION) (T 9/15, 5pm)
T 9/15	Non-Experimental Design		
Th 9/17	Designing Our Studies		
Week 7	**Types of Research Designs**	Develop study materials for testing our hypotheses/outline methods section	
T 9/22	Experimental Designs		
Th 9/24	Designing Our Studies		
Week 8	**Types of Research Designs**	Fill in the outline to create a working methods section	LEARNING CHECK II (Th 10/1, 3:30pm)
T 9/29	Quasi-Experimental Design		
Th 10/1	Project Workshop (Methods)		
Week 9	**Design and Results**	Collect data for the course project	
T 10/6	Choosing the Correct Test(s)		
Th 10/8	Data Collection		
Week 10	**Design and Results**	Develop a data analysis plan and results outline	
T 10/13	Choosing the Correct Test(s)		
Th 10/15	Project Workshop (Results)		

SCHEDULE

Week 11 Design and Results
T 10/20   Choosing the Correct Test(s)
Th 10/22   Project Workshop (Results)

Fill in results section template with appropriate statistics

Week 12 Issues Impacting Validity of Results
T 10/27   Threats to Validity
Th 10/29   Threats to Validity

Make substantive interpretations of the project results

PROJECT II DUE
(Methods & Results)
(T 10/29, 5pm)

Week 13 Issues Impacting Validity of Results
T 11/3   Threats to Validity
Th 11/5   Project Workshop (Discussion)

Complete the discussion section

Week 14 Communicating in APA-Style
T 11/10   How to Use APA Style
Th 11/12   Project Workshop (Discussion and Final Paper)

Finalize formatting for the final paper

Week 15 Review
T 11/17   Final Exam Review Game

Prepare for finals!

FINAL PROJECT DUE
(11/17) 5pm

Exam Week
TBD

FINAL EXAM DUE