



OTRP online

Office of Teaching Resources in Psychology

EXPERIMENTAL PSYCHOLOGY

PSYCHOLOGY 4100, SECTION 02

SPRING SEMESTER 2005

T, TH 9:30-10:45 AM

LIBRARY, ROOM 011

INSTRUCTOR: Dr. Kimberly Eretzian Smirles
OFFICE: St. James, Room 404
OFFICE HOURS: Monday (2-3pm), Tuesday (3:30-4:30pm), Thursday (11am-12pm),
or by appointment
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REQUIRED TEXTS

Salkind, N. J. (2003). Exploring Research (5th ed.) Upper Saddle River, New Jersey: Prentice Hall.

American Psychological Association (2002). Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association (5th Ed.). Washington, DC: American Psychological Association.

OVERVIEW & OBJECTIVES

As with any science, our knowledge in the field of psychology is obtained through careful observation and research. Most sub-fields in psychology rely on experimentation to understand a phenomenon, with the ultimate goal of controlling it. So, whether you are a clinician, a developmental psychologist, a social worker, or a criminal profiler, you will rely on experimental research to do your work well.

This course will expose you to the process of experimental research in the field of psychology, and provide you with opportunities to actively engage in research from the conception of the topic of focus to the presentation of data to an audience of colleagues. We will take part in many discussions and exercises. Each of these activities will be directed at the following goals: enhancing your critical thinking skills, learning to write in a scientific style, and developing and applying research methodology to real world issues in the field of psychology.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

READING ASSIGNMENTS:

The textbook and assigned readings will be important resources to guide you through the work that you do this semester. They will supplement lectures and help to facilitate class discussions. Therefore, assigned readings are important to your learning and understanding of the course material. You will typically have daily reading assignments. All of the material in the text will not be covered in class, but you are responsible for all of the assigned material. I will also assign additional readings as the semester goes which will assist you in learning about research and writing scientific papers. It is in your best interest to stay on top of the reading assignments. I strongly recommend that you have them completed before class on the day they are listed in the syllabus.

ATTENDANCE AND PARTICIPATION:

Since this course is cumulative by nature, it is imperative that you attend all class meetings. Successful understanding of new material typically requires mastery of earlier material. Therefore, missing class could seriously impede your performance in the overall course.

Absences will affect your grade in the following manner:

- More than 3 absences = loss of one full letter grade (i.e. A => B)
- More than 5 absences = loss of two full letter grades (i.e. A => C)
- More than 7 absences = failing the course (i.e. C- or below)

Being late for class can be considered an absence, depending on HOW late you are or on HOW OFTEN you are "running late" to class. Frequent tardiness will lower your grade. Exceptions to this policy will only be made for severe circumstances (e.g., extended hospitalization); documentation must be provided.

This course is designed to facilitate high levels of interaction and discussion, so active participation is expected. This includes participating in class discussion and group activities. It is **your responsibility** to be an active participant in your education. However, if you are having difficulties, please see me. I cannot be of assistance if I am not aware that there is a problem.

IMPORTANT: To emphasize the need for you to come to class prepared and to engage in your own learning experience, in this course, **I will call on people - even if you do not raise your hand**. Talking about concepts can facilitate better memory and understanding of them, and making connections between methodological issues is crucial to this course.

HOMEWORK:

During the semester, you will complete a variety of homework assignments. Most of the time, you will be bringing the results of your work to class to present, discuss, or use in an in-class activity. Therefore, it is important that you have them done on time; otherwise, your progress in the course will be hindered. Homework assignments are listed in the course calendar (designated by **HW** for "Home Work"). They are due on the date they are listed in the calendar and will count towards **20% of your final grade**.

TESTS:

There will be **2 tests** in this course worth **40% of your final grade** (20% each). They will consist of multiple choice, short-answer, and essays. Both tests will have an applied focus. Any essays will be handed out one week before the test to allow time to prepare. I am willing to look at them up to two days before the test to let you know if your answers are correct.

There are **NO MAKE-UPS** for these exams, unless there is a serious emergency - which requires formal documentation (e.g., doctor's note).

RESEARCH PROJECT:

Your major, cumulative project for this course is an empirical research study. To provide you with experience in research design, data collection, and analysis, you will develop a small study, collect data, and formally present your findings to the class. This project, as a whole, will count towards **30% of your final grade** (including proposal and final paper).

Since this is formal research, the structure, content, and style of your papers will be consistent with any scientific research study you will find in psychology journals. Your writing and structure will adhere to **strict APA format standards**. I will not accept papers that are not in APA style. The due dates for the proposal and final papers are listed in the course schedule.

Research Proposal:

Your first step will be to develop a research proposal, outlining the study that you intend to conduct. Before any data can be collected, proposals must be approved by me for ethical and methodological issues. The proposal will consist of the following:

- (a) a literature review of the relevant work done on your topic of focus (minimum 4 primary sources...meaning empirical research articles),
- (b) specific hypotheses that you will test,
- (c) a thorough description of your planned methodology, including any measures or scales you wish to utilize,
- (d) specific variable or group comparisons you will make in your analyses
- (e) brief discussion concerning the relevance of your study, including any possible limitations

Final Research Paper:

This paper will be the finalized version of your proposal. At this point, you will conduct the study you initially proposed. Therefore, this paper will consist of the following:

- (a) the final draft of the literature review.
- (b) the hypotheses you tested,
- (c) a complete description of your methodology,
- (d) the results you obtained from your analyses of your data, and
- (e) a thorough discussion of the meaning of your results, their implications, any problems with the study, and future directions for research on your topic.

NOTE: Both papers will include proper page numbering, a title page, an abstract, and a reference page, according to APA guidelines.

Individual vs. Group Option:

You have the option to conduct your study alone or with a group (no more than 3). Should you decide to work in a group, you will design and implement your study together. This means you will turn in one research proposal as a group; the group will also give the final presentation. For the final paper, you will turn in a common literature review and methods section. However, **each member will turn in individual results and discussion sections**. Therefore, you will be graded as a group on some aspects of the project, and as an individual on others. Once you have selected your group, you **CANNOT** change the membership. In most workplaces today, group projects are common. You will need to learn to deal with possible interpersonal conflicts and be sure that everyone is carrying their own weight in the project.

RESEARCH PRESENTATION:

You will also formally present your research findings to the rest of the class at the end of the semester. The presentation will be a summary of your study, with time left for questions. It will count towards **10% of your final grade**. I will provide you with more specific criteria and guidance later in the semester. However, your grade will be based upon both content and presentation style.

GRADING SUMMARY

Your final grade will be based on the following value assignments:

HOMEWORK:	20%
TESTS:	40% (2 tests, 20% each)
RESEARCH PROJECT:	30% (including proposal and final paper)
RESEARCH PRESENTATION:	10%
	100%

BASIC GRADING SCALE

A = 93-100	B+ = 87-89	C+ = 77-79	D+ = 65-69	F = below 60
A- = 90-92	B = 83-86	C = 73-76	D = 60-64	
	B- = 80-82	C- = 70-72		

CLASS POLICIES

CLASS ETIQUETTE:

The classroom is meant to be a learning environment. However, learning is inhibited when there is a lack of respect for one another. To better facilitate a beneficial environment for all, I have set a few ground rules.

- **Be on time.** People coming in late disrupts the flow of the class and places them behind in the material covered in class. Our class time is precious and limited, and no one would like to spend that time repeating material for late-comers. Occasionally, being late cannot be helped, and that is fine. But routine tardiness shows a lack of respect for the entire class, and it is unacceptable.

- **Raise your hand when you wish to speak.** There are times when several people want to speak, so some just blurt out their responses. This behavior, especially when repeatedly perpetrated, takes away people's equal access to the classroom forum. If you speak out of turn, you will be ignored.

- **No talking.** Discussions or comments with your neighbors while someone is speaking is disrespectful to us all. If you missed something that was said, let us know and the speaker will repeat it.

- **Any beepers or phones will be turned off or otherwise silenced** during class time.

These rules may seem ridiculously obvious, but I formally stating them to let you know how serious I am about establishing a learning environment built on mutual respect.

LATE ASSIGNMENTS:

You will be allowed to hand in **ONE** assignment late without penalty. However, the assignment is to be **no later than 3 days**, and I must be notified of this by the time the assignment is due. This applies to reaction papers and journal assignments. All other late assignments will be penalized. For **each** day an assignment is late, **5 points** will be deducted from the final grade of that assignment. I totally understand that the semester can get hectic. However, allowing yourself to fall too far behind will only hurt you. This policy is designed to help keep you motivated to finish on time while also giving a little room for unforeseen circumstances (e.g., illness, an exam in another class).

CHEATING & PLAGIARISM:

Cheating and plagiarism are **very serious offenses** and have **severe consequences**. Emmanuel College's definitions for cheating and plagiarism are specifically outlined in the Academic Integrity Policy.

Policy: Incidents of cheating and plagiarism **will result in the following:** (a) failure of the assignment or test, (b) notification of your Academic Advisor, and (c) notification of the Academic Dean. If I deem the offense is serious enough, I may also exercise my option to fail you for the **entire course**. **Do not test me on this one.** Cheating and plagiarism not only hurt your own learning experience, but they are also disrespectful to your fellow classmates who did complete their own work.

COURSE CALENDAR

DATE: TOPIC	ASSIGNMENT/DUE DATE:
1/20	Introduction & Overview
1/25	Overview of the role of research Salkind, Ch. 1 and Ch. 2 (21-26, 32-38)
1/27	Developing research ideas and finding sources Salkind, Ch. 3 (pgs. 39-60, 68-77) Library Workshop
2/1	Ethics & experimenter bias Salkind, Ch. 3 (pgs. 61-67), On Reserve: Zimbardo, "The Stanford Prison Experiment"
2/3	Discussion On Reserve: Fisher, "Relational Ethics in Psychological Research: One Feminist's Journey" Freyd & Quina, "Feminist Ethics in the practice of science: The contested memory controversy as an example" *NOTE: Both articles are in the book <u>Practicing Feminist Ethics in Psychology</u> , by Brabeck, which is on reserve for this course HW: For each article, write a 1/2 page summary and a 1/2 page reaction to the issues raised.
2/8	Hypotheses & sampling Salkind, Ch. 2 (pgs. 27-31), Ch. 4
2/10	Measurement Salkind, Ch. 5 and Ch. 6
2/15	Application & Discussion Salkind, Ch. 7 (147-153) HANDOUTS: Morawski, "The measurement of masculinity and femininity" HW: Measurement assignment (TBA) HW: Write 1/2 page summary and 1/2 page reaction to the Morawski article
2/17	TEST #1
2/22	Non-experimental methods Salkind, Ch. 9, 10
2/24	Application & Discussion Readings TBA HW: Select any non-experimental, empirical study and provide a critical analysis of the method (You will turn in the article with the analysis).

3/1	Experimental methods	Salkind, Ch. 11 & 12
3/3	Application & Discussion	Readings TBA HW: Select any experimental, empirical study and provide a critical analysis of the method (You will turn in the article with the analysis).
3/7-3/11	SPRING BREAK!	
3/15	Writing Procedure & Methods	Salkind, Ch. 12 (pg. 241), Ch 13 (pg. 254)
3/17	Group/Individual Meetings	
3/22	Descriptive Statistics	Salkind, Ch. 7 (154-166) RESEARCH PROPOSALS DUE
3/24	Inferential Statistics	Salkind, Ch. 8
3/29	Introduction to SPSS	Salkind, Appendix A
3/31	TEST #2	
4/5	SPSS Continued....	
4/7	Writing results and discussion	
4/12	Group/Individual Meetings	
4/14	Workshop: Data analyses	HW: Summarize the specific analyses you will use to test your hypotheses on your research projects, and what variables/measures will be included. Bring enough copies for the entire class
4/19	Guest Speaker - TBA	
4/21	Presenting scientific research	
4/26	RESEARCH PRESENTATIONS	
4/28	RESEARCH PRESENTATIONS	
5/3	RESEARCH PRESENTATIONS	Last Day of Class
5/5	FINAL RESEARCH PAPERS DUE BY 10AM	