

Research Methods in Psychology

PSY 15-01 Fall 2023

INSTRUCTOR:

Dr. Haiyan Liu (hliu62@ucmerced.edu)

Office Location: SSM 306A

Office Hours:

- Walk-in: Mondays 12:00 am-1:30 pm or
- By appointment through email
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TEACHING ASSISTANT:

Mr. Ihnwhi Heo Email: ih eo2@ucmerced.edu

Office Hours:

- Zoom: 3 pm to 5 pm
- By appointment: through email

COURSE TIME/LOCATION:

- Scheduled Course Time: MW: 9:30-11:20 AM **in person**.
- Classroom: Office 1 Building **Room: 105**

COURSE DESCRIPTION

Psychology 15 is designed to introduce you to the issues involved in applying methods of scientific inquiry to the field of psychology. Although many of the topics covered in the course are important to all disciplines (e.g., biology, anthropology, business, medicine), general scientific methods are covered with an emphasis on understanding human behavior. Students will develop an understanding of various research-related issues such as ethics, sampling, study design, reliability and validity, data analysis, and the reporting of results. Students will also complete a research proposal in which they will design, conduct, and report the results of a study.

USE OF CATCOURSES

Course materials, such as slides, reading materials, and, syllabus will also be posted on CatCourses. Most notably, all of the weekly homework assignments will be posted on CatCourses each Wednesday (unless otherwise specified). You can only submit an assignment ONCE, but you have quite amount of time to work on it up until the due time. If you have any difficulties with CatCourses (e.g., submitting homework assignments), please contact one of the instructors immediately.

PREREQUISITES

Successful completion of Psychology 010 (with a grade C- or higher).

REQUIRED TEXTBOOK

Nestor, P., & Schutt, R. *Research methods in psychology: Investigating human behavior* 3rd edition. Los Angeles: SAGE Publications. Study Site: www.sagepub.com/nestor3e

RECOMMENDED/OPTIONAL BOOK

Bryan J. Rooney, & Annabel Ness Evans (2019). *Methods in Psychological Research* 4th edition. Los Angeles: SAGE Publications. Study Site: <https://edge.sagepub.com/rooney4e/student-resources-0>

ADDITIONAL MATERIALS

- A standard calculator (it should be able to perform basic calculations as well as square roots and exponents). Graphing calculators will NOT be allowed during exams.
- One scantron:

COURSE LEARNING OBJECTIVES

Students successfully completing this course should:

- Become more informed consumers of research
- Develop a greater appreciation for the scientific method
- Be able to critically evaluate whether claims are strongly supported by scientific evidence
- Consider the ethical issues associated with psychological research
- Learn skills for reading and evaluating psychological research
- Be able to identify and critically evaluate experimental designs
- Be able to select between a correlational study and an experimental study
- Be able to explain the difference between cross-sectional study and repeated-measure study
- Be able to evaluate the validity and reliability of a measurement scale
- Know the basics of APA style
- Design and conduct a study
- Analyze and interpret the results of a study
- Report study results in APA style

COURSE FORMAT

This course is designed to be highly interactive. Although there will be lectures, research methods are learned best through doing. So, class time will also focus on discussion and in-class activities. We will also spend a substantial amount of class time working on a research proposal on a topic of our own. Thus, it is imperative that you attend class (see below for complete attendance policy).

STUDENT EXPECTATIONS

- **Be prepared.** Students are expected to be prepared for class. Students should bring any assignments or assigned readings to class. Students should also bring materials for note-taking. Chapter readings should be completed before class and all assignments are due at the planned time described in the “Tentative Schedule” and the assignment section below.
- **Be here and be on time.** A large amount of material will be covered in this course, so attendance is highly encouraged. Tardiness is incredibly disruptive to the class, so students are also expected to be on time. See the complete attendance/tardy policy in the Attendance section below.
- **Show respect for others.** Students are expected to be attentive and respectful to the instructor and fellow students. To maintain a classroom environment that is considerate of differences and affirming of everyone’s unique experiences, students are expected to be conscientious while in class. Sleeping, talking, allowing one's cell phone to ring, text messaging, or working on assignments for other courses during class is not appropriate classroom behavior. In addition, demeaning or disrespectful behavior toward other students or the instructor will not be tolerated. Students who choose to act in a disrespectful manner during class may lose attendance and/or participation points.
- **In the event of illness,** please notify me ASAP.

ATTENDANCE

Attendance is necessary and required. I don't take attendance because you are a college student and you are here to learn knowledge but not attendance score. Learning by yourself would take much longer than the class time. You would have no idea about the rubrics for the assignments if you miss a lab/discussion session. Your presence during the lecture will directly engage you in the material and help you understand it. This should help you get a better grade.

GRADING

The grading principle is **fair, transparent, and supportive.**

Grading is based on: (1) three exams, and (2) a research proposal splitting into multiple assignments.

3 exams (300 pts, 66:67% of the final grade)

- There will be three in-class exams during the regular semester. The time and place of the exams are described in the “Tentative Schedule”
- Exam material will come from the textbook and from lecture materials. Each exam is worth 100 points.
- Students must work **ALONE** on exams (see section on Academic Integrity for consequences of violations).
- Make-up exams will be given to students who can demonstrate that they missed the exam due to the most extreme of circumstances (e.g., illness with doctor’s notice). The following are some examples that are **NOT** considered extreme circumstances:

- My house is expiring, I need to take my final exam earlier in order to move out of Merced at an earlier time.
 - I need to work and have no time to take the exam.
 - It is my friend's birthday, and I must attend the party.
 - I have another appointment.
 - I forgot the time.
- If you miss an exam, you must notify the Professor **at least 2 days** in advance and schedule a make-up exam. The notification after the regular time of an exam will NOT be considered for a make-up.
 - If you are sick or have another emergency on the day of the exam, you must notify the Professor as soon as possible.
 - **Appropriate documentation MUST be provided** before you can make up the exam and the ability to make up an exam is determined solely by the Professor on a case-by-case basis: I reserved the right to refuse make-up exams.
 - Note that depending on the circumstances of the make-up exam, I reserve the right to give a make-up that consists entirely of written problems in the place of multiple-choice items.
 - Exam materials will come from the textbook and from lecture materials. All exam dates are listed on the course tentative schedule. Should you be absent on such a class day, you are responsible for finding out the materials.

Research proposal/assignments(150 pts, 33:3% of the final grade):

The assignments are designed to practice your ability to conduct research and develop your scientific writing abilities. Guidelines and details of completing each assignment will be posted on CatCourses and discussed on Wednesdays.

- There is a strict policy of **NO makeup homework assignments** throughout the semester, also **NO late work will be accepted**.
- If you have any concerns over the grade received for a specific assignment, please contact the instructional team within **48 hours** after the grade is released, otherwise, you are assumed to agree with the grade.

The nine assignments are listed below:

- Assignment 1 (10pts): Research Ideas
- Assignment 2 (15pts): Proposal Article
- Assignment 3 (15pts): Main Article Summary
- Assignment 4 (20pts): Article with Notes
- Assignment 5 (15pts): Previous Operationalization
- Assignment 6 (30pts): Introduction-Reference Sections
- Assignment 7 (15pts): Appendix with Reference
- Assignment 8 (20pts): Method Section
- Assignment 9 (10pts): Submission of the Entire Proposal

Extra Credits:

- Active Participation Points (APPs): Class participation is crucial to your own learning. To encourage class participation, 1 APP will be awarded to students who answer questions in each lecture. APPs will only be awarded to a student who raised a hand and was individually called by the professor and clearly answers a question individually. Apps won't be recorded for review sessions. Students need to come to the professor immediately after class to record their APPs. Apps won't be recorded through email or any other form after the professor leaves the classroom. Apps won't be recorded during class breaks. If a student leaves class early, their APPs won't be recorded.
- Course Evaluation Points (CEPs): 3 extra points will be given to every student if the response rate of the course evaluation is over 90%.

Final grade: (total points)/450

Letter Grade	Percentage	Letter Grade	Percentage
A+	97~100%	C+	77~79.99%
A	93~96.99%	C	73~76.99%
A-	90~92.99%	C-	70~72.99%
B+	87~89.99%	D+	67~69.99%
B	83~86.99%	D	63~66.99%
B-	80~82.99%	D-	60~62.99%
		F	<60%

Incomplete Grade in Course

A grade of “I” (Incomplete) will be assigned only at the discretion of the instructor and only in the event of extraordinary circumstances. A written request must be led and a written approval granted before the Incomplete may be taken.

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

Students should be familiar with University policies on academic honesty. A general code of conduct for the University of California can be found at:

<http://www.ucop.edu/ucophome/coordrev/ucpolicies/aos/uc100.html>.

- Basically, do not cheat or plagiarize. This will earn you a very uncomfortable meeting with the professor of the course and a ZERO on the exam/assignment.
- There is NO exception to this rule!!
- Students who are caught cheating on an in-class quiz and/or an exam will be immediately asked to leave the class. The cheating incident will be reported to the Undergraduate Dean of Students, and a zero will be given for the score of the quiz/exam.
- Note that this policy will be upheld equally for people trying to copy work and for people trying to help others.

- If you have questions about this policy and/or the consequences listed above, please see the professor as soon as possible.

USE OF ELECTRONIC DEVICES IN CLASS

The use of wireless electronic devices (e.g., laptops, smart phones, iPod, etc.) is a privilege and not a right. If even a single student is being disruptive while texting, emailing, playing games, reading, on Facebook, etc. during class, then the entire class must put away all electronic devices for the remaining class session (including laptops). These devices can be used as learning tools (e.g., to take notes with or follow along on the slides), but any personal use of these devices is strictly prohibited during class time.

STUDENTS WITH SPECIAL NEEDS

University of California, Merced is committed to creating learning environments that are accessible to all. If you anticipate or experience physical or academic barriers based on a disability, please feel welcome to contact me privately so we can discuss options. In addition, please contact Student Accessibility Services (SAS) at (209) 228-6996 or disabilityservices@ucmerced.edu as soon as possible to explore reasonable accommodations. All accommodations must have prior approval from Student Accessibility Services on the basis of appropriate documentation.

If you anticipate or experience barriers due to pregnancy, temporary medical condition, or injury, please feel welcome to contact me so we can discuss options. You are encouraged to contact the Dean of Students for support and resources at (209) 228-3633 or <https://studenta.airs.ucmerced.edu/dean-students>.