



UNSW Course Outline

PSYC5111 Evaluating Evidence - 2024

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General Course Information

Course Code : PSYC5111

Year : 2024

Term : Hexamester 3

Teaching Period : KJ

Is a multi-term course? : No

Faculty : Faculty of Science

Academic Unit : School of Psychology

Delivery Mode : Online

Delivery Format : Standard

Delivery Location : Distance Education

Campus : Sydney

Study Level : Postgraduate

Units of Credit : 6

Useful Links

[Handbook Class Timetable](#)

Course Details & Outcomes

Course Description

This course forms part of the Graduate Certificate in Child Development (7419), providing students with knowledge about the characteristics of the scientific method in general, with a particular focus on experimental methodology, experimental design , and data analysis in the

behavioural sciences. It provides a comprehensive foundation in critical thinking, enabling students to understand and critically evaluate published research, and discriminate between evidence-based information and pseudoscience. This includes a background in the design and execution of empirical studies, a basic understanding of statistics and its function in scientific research, the interpretation of experimental findings, and the ability to evaluate conclusions and extrapolate their implications in broader contexts. Students will explore different methodological approaches and data collection and analytic techniques via online lectures and discussion, as well as gaining practical experience in experimental design and the critical evaluation of research. This course is appropriate for students with and without a background in science and is taught entirely online via lectures, tutorials (synchronous and asynchronous options), self-paced learning modules, readings and revision exercises.

Course Aims

This course aims to provide students with foundational knowledge about research methods and statistics in psychology. This includes: different types of research, the concepts of reliability and validity, the critical components of a good experiment, the use of descriptive statistics and the concepts of variability and probability as relevant within this context, and the function of statistics in drawing probabilistic conclusions. It aims to provide the tools necessary to develop systematic, critical, and analytical scientific thinking for its application in broader societal contexts. This includes: understanding and evaluating experimental design and basic statistical procedures, drawing defensible conclusions, assessing the validity of conclusions, and extrapolating from conclusions in order to make inferences and apply principles in other contexts.

Relationship to Other Courses

This course forms part of the Graduate Certificate in Child Development program & is an introductory course required as a pre-requisite before taking intermediate & advanced courses.

Course Learning Outcomes

Course Learning Outcomes
CLO1 : Identify and describe characteristics of the scientific method and psychology as a scientific discipline, including theoretical aspects of research methodology, design, data analysis and interpretation in the behavioural sciences.
CLO2 : Design an experiment, interpret results, and draw appropriate evidence-based conclusions, by applying knowledge of research methodology and statistics in the behavioural sciences.
CLO3 : Critically evaluate sources of information and the quality of evidence they provide by assessing the research methodologies and statistical practices applied, and discriminating science from pseudoscience.
CLO4 : Acknowledge and discuss issues pertaining to experimental and professional ethics in the context of psychological research and its dissemination.
CLO5 : Communicate effectively in written formats to clearly and coherently review the outcomes of empirical research for a broad audience.
CLO6 : Extrapolate from research findings to infer the practical and theoretical implications applicable in broader real-world contexts.

Course Learning Outcomes	Assessment Item
CLO1 : Identify and describe characteristics of the scientific method and psychology as a scientific discipline, including theoretical aspects of research methodology, design, data analysis and interpretation in the behavioural sciences.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Media Article Comparison • Research Study Design • Weekly Quizzes
CLO2 : Design an experiment, interpret results, and draw appropriate evidence-based conclusions, by applying knowledge of research methodology and statistics in the behavioural sciences.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Research Study Design
CLO3 : Critically evaluate sources of information and the quality of evidence they provide by assessing the research methodologies and statistical practices applied, and discriminating science from pseudoscience.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Media Article Comparison • Weekly Quizzes • Research Study Design
CLO4 : Acknowledge and discuss issues pertaining to experimental and professional ethics in the context of psychological research and its dissemination.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Media Article Comparison • Weekly Quizzes • Research Study Design
CLO5 : Communicate effectively in written formats to clearly and coherently review the outcomes of empirical research for a broad audience.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Media Article Comparison • Research Study Design
CLO6 : Extrapolate from research findings to infer the practical and theoretical implications applicable in broader real-world contexts.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Weekly Quizzes • Media Article Comparison

Learning and Teaching Technologies

Moodle - Learning Management System | Blackboard Collaborate

Learning and Teaching in this course

This is a fully online course; all materials, lectures and tutorials are delivered through Moodle.

The course will be delivered over six weeks, covering six major topic areas. The major topics will be delivered in Weeks 1 to 6, with a new topic presented each week. Students are expected to engage with all materials delivered each week. There will be a combination of formative and summative assessments throughout the course. The expected level of engagement is 18-19 hours per week, including preparation for the “secured” quizzes and written assessments.

Each week students can expect the following:

Lectures will be digitally recorded. Links to the lecture recordings will be available on the course web page. Lecture slides will be also available on the Moodle course page. There will be 6 x 20-minute lectures covering the main concepts for each topic presented each week.

Online Tutorials will be held in weeks 1-6. There are six (6), two (2) hour tutorials delivered through Blackboard Collaborate on the Moodle course page each week. All tutorials will be live streamed for synchronous participation and recorded for asynchronous participation, should a student be unable to join the synchronous tutorial at the designated time. Students will be able access the recorded tutorials for the remainder of the course. Tutorial discussions are based on lecture content and readings. In order to participate in class discussions, you will need to prepare for tutorials by reviewing the available materials.

Online activities: Each week there will be a range of online activities, including revision quizzes and interactive learning modules using a range of adaptive learning platforms (e.g. H5P, textbook resources). These activities will allow students to explore the topics of the week in greater depth and engage informative assessment and revision opportunities.

The formative topic revision quizzes available for students provide an opportunity to evaluate understanding of course material on a weekly basis. Timely completion of the weekly quizzes will assist students in gaining a clear understanding of each topic so that this knowledge can be built on in future content. **NB: These formative quizzes do not contribute to the student's final grade and are not to be confused with the "secured weekly quizzes".**

Readings: Each week there will be assigned readings that cover the major topic of the week. Students will need to complete the readings in order to prepare for the online tutorials. In addition, as part of this preparation students are encouraged to post one comment/discussion point on the Discussion Forum and reply to the comment of at least two other students in the course (**4.5 hours**).

The Discussion Forum connects students in the course and provides a platform for students to discuss of weekly content, revision, or topics of interest with each other. Regular engagement in the Discussion Forum will help students gain an understanding of the material, critique the contributions of fellow students, and help develop written communication skills.

The Q and A Discussion Forum provides students with an opportunity to question and clarify the concepts and ideas mentioned in the lectures. Students are strongly encouraged to engage with this forum by posting questions or comments, and reading, answering, or replying to other

students' posts to enhance understanding of the content, critical thinking, and written communication skills.

Additional Course Information

The [Program Guide](#) contains School policies and procedures relevant for all students enrolled in the Graduate Certificate in Child Development, such as:

- Attendance requirements
- Assignment submissions and returns
- Assessments
- Special consideration
- Student code of conduct
- Student complaints and grievances
- Equitable Learning Services
- Health and safety

It is expected that students familiarise themselves with the information contained in this guide.

The course Moodle page contains lectures, tutorials, content topic materials, assessment materials, and any updated information. You are expected to check Moodle regularly. You are also expected to regularly check your UNSW email. All news and announcements will be made on the "Announcements" forum on the Moodle page and/or by email. It is the student's responsibility to check Moodle and their student emails regularly to keep up to date.

Given that the course content and all assessable components are delivered online, it is the responsibility of the student to ensure that they have access to a computer with a stable internet connection and a browser capable of handling the features of the Moodle eLearning website and any of its content. There will be no special consideration granted due to internet connection or computer issues arising from personal technical issues. If an internet disconnection takes place during an assessment/exam, there will be no way of changing a mark and these will be allocated according to the progress that was saved. To help students establish whether their computer/internet access is suitable for the online exam/s, a test quiz is available. This quiz will not contribute to final marks and will be able to be completed multiple times in order to test computer/internet connection prior to assessments/exams.

The Moodle forum should be the first line of contact with the Course Convenor (meeting requests, personal or Equitable Learning Support matters can be sent by email in the first instance). Due to the online nature of the course, under no circumstances are specific exam/quiz questions/answers to be discussed in online forums or via email. Such matters can only be

discussed during in person virtual appointments with the Course Convenor.

NOTE: THIS COURSE REQUIRES SIGNIFICANT WEEKLY ASSESSABLE ENGAGEMENT THROUGH MOODLE. Students are expected to engage with all materials delivered each week. There will be a combination of formative and summative assessments throughout the course. The expected level of engagement is on average 18-19 hours per week (in the 6-week term). Average engagement levels are as follows: (a) 2 hours of engagement with the lecture content (6 x 20-minute lectures per week); (b) Tutorial attendance, 3 hours per week including preparation for the tutorial discussion. Note we recommend that you complete the synchronous tutorial, however completion of the recorded asynchronous tutorial will also be accepted; (c) 4.5 hours to complete the assigned activities, including revision modules; (d) 4.5 hours to complete the assigned weekly readings that accompany the content for each lecture topic; (e) 4-5 hours to complete the weekly assessments (secured quizzes) and prepare for the major assessments.

Under no circumstances will employment be accepted as an excuse not to meet expectations for class participation or assessments. Remember, the term times are very short, so it is your responsibility to ensure that you do not fall behind with the ongoing assessment demands of the course.

Tutorial Attendance: Attendance and participation in tutorials is compulsory. All tutorials will be delivered in an online mode, through Blackboard Collaborate. Given that this is a fully online course, it is understood that some students may be unavailable at the designated live tutorial time. Therefore, students will be required to participate in the tutorial in either a synchronous (as the tutorial is streamed live) or asynchronous (via a recorded version of the tutorial) format.

NB: Engagement with online tutorials and timely completion of asynchronous online tutorials is essential in accordance with UNSW Assessment Implementation Procedure.

It is expected that students are aware of UNSW Assessment policy and understand how to apply for special consideration within the framework of the Graduate Certificate special consideration policies and procedures if they are unable to complete an assignment/exam due to illness and/or misadventure.

Assessments

Assessment Structure

Assessment Item	Weight	Relevant Dates
Media Article Comparison Assessment Format: Individual	20%	Due Date: Sunday Week 3
Research Study Design Assessment Format: Individual	30%	Due Date: Sunday Week 5
Weekly Quizzes Assessment Format: Individual	50%	Due Date: Sunday each week

Assessment Details

Media Article Comparison

Assessment Overview

You will be given examples of a research article and media piece (e.g. newspaper article) to critically evaluate. You will be asked to identify and describe a number of concepts presented in the research methods lectures, including: the research question and hypotheses, experimental design, independent and dependent variables, and confounding variables. Finally, you will be asked to compare and critically evaluate the conclusions drawn in media piece relative to the research article making specific reference to research methods concepts and ethical considerations. This assessment will be due in Week 3, and feedback will be provided in the form of a marked rubric and comments from your tutor.

Course Learning Outcomes

- CLO1 : Identify and describe characteristics of the scientific method and psychology as a scientific discipline, including theoretical aspects of research methodology, design, data analysis and interpretation in the behavioural sciences.
- CLO3 : Critically evaluate sources of information and the quality of evidence they provide by assessing the research methodologies and statistical practices applied, and discriminating science from pseudoscience.
- CLO4 : Acknowledge and discuss issues pertaining to experimental and professional ethics in the context of psychological research and its dissemination.
- CLO5 : Communicate effectively in written formats to clearly and coherently review the outcomes of empirical research for a broad audience.
- CLO6 : Extrapolate from research findings to infer the practical and theoretical implications applicable in broader real-world contexts.

Assessment Length

1000 words

Assignment submission Turnitin type

This assignment is submitted through Turnitin and students do not see Turnitin similarity reports.

Research Study Design

Assessment Overview

You will work with your tutor to define a research question based around a set of descriptive statistics (Week 3-4). You will then develop a research proposal for an experimental study to investigate your chosen research question. This will include an introduction to the study (in which you provide justification for the study design based on the existing descriptive data), an outline of the experimental design (aims, hypotheses, operationalised dependent and independent variables) and proposed method for data collection (procedure for group allocation, experimental manipulation, and measurement). You will need to present and summarise the provided descriptive data as part of their justification. This assessment is designed for you to apply practical skills in research methods and statistical analyses. It is due in Week 5, and feedback will be provided in the form of a marked rubric and comments from your tutor.

Course Learning Outcomes

- CLO1 : Identify and describe characteristics of the scientific method and psychology as a scientific discipline, including theoretical aspects of research methodology, design, data analysis and interpretation in the behavioural sciences.
- CLO2 : Design an experiment, interpret results, and draw appropriate evidence-based conclusions, by applying knowledge of research methodology and statistics in the behavioural sciences.
- CLO3 : Critically evaluate sources of information and the quality of evidence they provide by assessing the research methodologies and statistical practices applied, and discriminating science from pseudoscience.
- CLO4 : Acknowledge and discuss issues pertaining to experimental and professional ethics in the context of psychological research and its dissemination.
- CLO5 : Communicate effectively in written formats to clearly and coherently review the outcomes of empirical research for a broad audience.

Assessment Length

1500 words

Assignment submission Turnitin type

This assignment is submitted through Turnitin and students do not see Turnitin similarity reports.

Weekly Quizzes

Assessment Overview

You will be required to complete 6 timed quizzes designed to be taken as closed-book exams. These quizzes will assess your knowledge of the content of the lectures and readings. The quizzes will be held in weeks 1-6 and will cover content presented in the week they are released. The quizzes form part of a cumulative assessment; of the 6 quizzes completed, the best 5 scores will contribute towards the 50% total weighting (10% each quiz). Each quiz will comprise 20 multiple-choice questions. You will receive automated online feedback in the form of marks and question answers once each quiz is closed.

Course Learning Outcomes

- CLO1 : Identify and describe characteristics of the scientific method and psychology as a scientific discipline, including theoretical aspects of research methodology, design, data analysis and interpretation in the behavioural sciences.
- CLO3 : Critically evaluate sources of information and the quality of evidence they provide by assessing the research methodologies and statistical practices applied, and discriminating science from pseudoscience.
- CLO4 : Acknowledge and discuss issues pertaining to experimental and professional ethics in the context of psychological research and its dissemination.
- CLO6 : Extrapolate from research findings to infer the practical and theoretical implications applicable in broader real-world contexts.

Assessment Length

20 MCQ; 20 min

Assignment submission Turnitin type

Not Applicable

General Assessment Information

Special Consideration: Students who experience circumstances outside of their control that prevent them from completing an assessment task by the assigned due date due can apply for Special Consideration. Special Consideration applications should include a medical certificate or other documentation and be submitted via myUNSW within 3 days of the sitting/due date.

Important note: UNSW has a “fit to sit/submit” rule, which means that if you sit an exam or submit a piece of assessment, you are declaring yourself fit to do so and cannot later apply for Special Consideration. This is to ensure that if you feel unwell or are faced with significant circumstances beyond your control that affect your ability to study, you do not sit an examination

or submit an assessment that does not reflect your best performance. Instead, you should apply for Special Consideration as soon as you realise you are not well enough or are otherwise unable to sit or submit an assessment.

Once your application has been assessed, you will be contacted via your student email address and advised of the official outcome. If the special consideration application is approved, you may be given an extended due date. For more information about special consideration, please visit: <https://student.unsw.edu.au/special-consideration>.

Alternative assessments: there will be no alternative assessments due to the intensive nature of the course. Please refer to the Graduate Certificate in Child Development (7419) Program Guide for policies and procedures relating to misadventure.

Supplementary examinations: Students may apply for a supplementary exam, providing that this is not an ongoing issue. If students are unable to engage in all aspects of the course for two weeks or longer, the student will be required to submit an application to withdraw from the course without penalty. Please refer to the Graduate Certificate in Child Development (7419) Program Guide for policies and procedures relating to misadventure.

All course assessments have been designed and implemented in accordance with [UNSW Assessment Policy](#).

The APA (7th edition) referencing style is to be adopted in this course. Students should consult the publication manual itself (rather than third party interpretations of it) in order to properly adhere to APA style conventions. Students do not need to purchase a copy of the manual, it is available in the library or online. This resource is used by assessment markers and should be the only resource used by students to ensure they adopt this style appropriately: [APA 7th edition](#).

Grading Basis

Standard

Requirements to pass course

Students must attain a final grade of at least 50/100 to pass this course.

Course Schedule

Teaching Week/Module	Activity Type	Content
Week 1 : 6 May - 12 May	Lecture	Topic: Pseudoscience and the Scientific Method
	Tutorial	Online discussion of W1 content
	Other	Weekly readings Weekly activities/formative quiz
	Assessment	Week 1 Quiz: Due 11:59pm Sunday Work on Assessment 1: Media article comparison
Week 2 : 13 May - 19 May	Lecture	Topic: Reliability and Validity
	Tutorial	Online discussion of W2 content
	Other	Weekly readings Weekly activities/formative quiz
	Assessment	Week 2 Quiz: Due 11:59pm Sunday Work on Assessment 1: Media article comparison
Week 3 : 20 May - 26 May	Lecture	Topic: Types of Scientific Research
	Tutorial	Online discussion of W3 content
	Other	Weekly readings Weekly activities/formative quiz
	Assessment	Week 3 Quiz: Due 11:59pm Sunday Assessment 1 Media article comparison: Due 11:59pm Sunday
Week 4 : 27 May - 2 June	Lecture	Topic: Descriptive Statistics
	Tutorial	Online discussion of W4 content
	Other	Weekly readings Weekly activities/formative quiz
	Assessment	Week 4 Quiz: Due 11:59pm Sunday Work on Assessment 2: Research Study Design
Week 5 : 3 June - 9 June	Lecture	Topic: Comparisons vs. Inferences
	Tutorial	Online discussion of W5 content
	Other	Weekly readings Weekly activities/formative quiz
	Assessment	Week 5 Quiz: Due 11:59pm Sunday Assessment 2 Research Study Design: Due 11:59pm Sunday
Week 6 : 10 June - 16 June	Lecture	Topic: Inferential Statistics
	Tutorial	Online discussion of W6 content
	Other	Weekly readings Weekly activities/formative quiz
	Assessment	Week 6 Quiz: Due 11:59pm Sunday

Attendance Requirements

Students are strongly encouraged to attend all classes and review lecture recordings.

General Schedule Information

Each week this course typically consists of 2 hours of online lecture material, 2 hours of online tutorial classes (synchronous and asynchronous options), and 1-2 hours of online activities.

Students are expected to spend additional time each week to complete self-determined study, and work on assessments, readings, and exam preparation.

Course Resources

Prescribed Resources

There is no prescribed textbook for this course. There are optional, supplementary readings and activities relating to each set of lectures and tutorials that will be made available on Moodle.

Recommended Resources

[UNSW Library](#)

[Academic skills](#)

[ELISE](#)

[Turnitin](#)

[Student Code of Conduct](#)

[Academic integrity and plagiarism](#)

[Email policy](#)

[UNSW Anti-racism policy statement](#)

[UNSW Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Policy](#)

Course Evaluation and Development

At the end of term students are strongly encouraged to complete the myExperience survey to provide feedback on the course and teaching. This feedback is used to improve the learning experience of future students.

Staff Details

Position	Name	Email	Location	Phone	Availability	Equitable Learning Services Contact	Primary Contact
Program director	Stephanie Roughley				By appointment	Yes	Yes
Administrator	Deliana Freky				By appointment	No	No

Other Useful Information

School Contact Information

For GD Psych courses (PSYC5001 - PSYC5010), please email: gdpsychology@unsw.edu.au.

For GCChildDev courses (PSYC5111 - PSYC5116), please email: gcchilddev@unsw.edu.au