

PSYC BC2137 - SOCIAL PSYCHOLOGY LAB

Barnard College
Department of Psychology
Spring 2023

Course details

Professor: Dr. Rob Brotherton (rbrother@barnard.edu)

Office hour: Monday 10-11AM, Milbank 415M

Section 001 time & venue: Wednesday 10:10-1PM, Milbank 410

Section 002 time & venue: Wednesday 1:10-4:00PM, Milbank 410

Lab overview

This lab is designed to offer experience participating in, reading, critiquing, and proposing research addressing social psychological phenomena. The lab will usually be taken concurrently with PSYC-BC2138 Social Psychology Lecture, and will expand upon the methodological and analytic issues introduced there, as well as giving you the opportunity to explore in greater depth a topic of your choosing from within (or beyond) those covered in the lectures by proposing your own original research project.

Structure of the semester

In the first half of the course you'll be finding, reading, and summarizing published research papers that may be relevant to your project, and working up a rough proposal. In class we'll demonstrate and analyze the methodological and analytic approaches commonly employed in social psychological research, giving you the foundation upon which to build your research proposal.

In the second half of the course you'll draft each section of your proposal paper in turn before submitting the final report. In class we'll focus on refining your proposed methodology and constructing an effective research paper.

Class format & participation

Labs are substantially more interactive and discussion-based than the traditional lecture format, and depend on everyone's participation. If you have questions, thoughts, or ideas you want to share, feel free to do so at any time (while keeping within the bounds of polite conversation, obviously—don't interrupt or talk over other people! But do feel free to respond to others without having to raise your hand or wait to be called on). Everyone will get the most out of this lab when the discussion can develop organically and everyone feels free to be part of the conversation if & when they have something to add.

Your active participation across the semester will therefore contribute a substantial portion of your grade. More information on forms of participation will be provided in class and the lab manual.

The research proposal

The final paper for this lab will be a complete Research Proposal paper. Producing this will be an iterative process; each assignment will build on the previous ones until by the end of the semester you have a complete research proposal paper. More information on expectations for the research proposal will be provided in class and the lab manual.

Workload

As a general rule for the amount of time students should expect to commit to classes, the college suggests three hours per week in or outside of class per credit. Since this class is worth 1.5 credits, that corresponds to 4.5 hours per week, split between time in the classroom and time spent completing the associated assignments.

Though there are weekly assignments, each is designed to be manageable enough to complete in the allotted time (indeed, it is only by having small weekly assignments that we are able to build towards a substantial piece of work by the end of the semester).

Final Grades

Your final letter grade for the course is a product of your scores for each assignment, weighted as indicated in the class schedule, and determined according to the following boundaries:

| | | | | | | | | | | | |
|----------------|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|-----|
| Letter grade: | A+ | A | A- | B+ | B | B- | C+ | C | C- | D | F |
| Numeric score: | 97 | 93 | 90 | 87 | 83 | 80 | 77 | 73 | 70 | 60 | <60 |

Course policies

Attendance & timeliness

In-person attendance of each lab session is expected, except in emergencies. Normally it is departmental policy to remove students who miss more than two sessions from the course; however, given ongoing revisions to college-wide health-related policies, exceptions may be made. If you are feeling unwell, you should not come to class and notify me of nonattendance before class if possible. When you are attending, please arrive on time for class. Frequent lateness will impact your participation grade.

Assignment deadlines & late policy

Assignments are listed in the class schedule next to the class session to which they correspond. Most assignments are due at 5pm the day after class. All assignments relate to your project proposal—the idea is to build this major piece of work incrementally over the course of the semester. The 5pm next-day deadline is necessary to allow time to provide substantive feedback to everyone in advance of the next assignment.

A grade penalty of 5 points will be applied for each day (or part thereof) that an assignment is late (up to a maximum of 6 days; work not submitted before the next lab will receive a score of zero). For example, if your work is A+ quality but is submitted a day-and-a-half late, you will only receive a B+. Due to time constraints, you may also not receive feedback on late work.

This policy is intended to incentivize timely submission while easing the stress of genuine emergencies. When things come up that prevent timely submission you can prioritize accordingly, knowing that a small penalty on one assignment for this lab will not tank your final grade.

Use of laptops / other devices

You will be provided with a printed lab manual for reference and note-taking in class. Laptops will not be required and should not be used unless you have some exceptional need, which should be discussed with me in advance. Cell phones should be silenced.

Academic integrity

Students are expected to follow the Barnard Honor Code, available at <https://barnard.edu/honor-code>.

Note that even though you may collaborate in lab and on the research proposal, you may not collaborate on written assignments. You must write your own reports.

Academic accommodations and general wellness

It is always important to recognize the different pressures, burdens, and stressors you may be facing, whether personal, emotional, physical, financial, mental, or academic. The faculty and administration recognize this, and are prepared to provide assistance to students in need. I encourage you to seek advice from your advisor, Dean, the [Center for Accessibility Resources & Disability Services \(CARDS\)](#), or [Barnard Health & Wellness](#) as needed. Please let me know of any issues you wish to share with me that you feel are impacting your ability to complete the course to the best of your ability. Though it isn't always easy, it is better to proactively seek help rather than letting problems build up.

Class schedule

| Date | Lab topic | Assignment | % |
|-------|---|---|----|
| 01/18 | No lab first week of classes | Note: Most assignments are due 5pm the day after class. Exceptions are noted. | - |
| 01/25 | Introduction & Overview | Class participation (no submission; graded across the semester) | 15 |
| 02/01 | Project planning | Paper summary 1 | 5 |
| 02/08 | Ethics & design | Paper summary 2 | 5 |
| 02/15 | Measuring social psychological constructs | Paper summary 3 | 5 |
| 02/22 | Correlational designs | Paper summary 4 | 5 |
| 03/01 | Experimental designs | Brief lit review | 5 |
| 03/08 | Experimental designs continued | Brief project proposal | 5 |
| 03/15 | Spring Break | - | - |
| 03/22 | Writing the Introduction section | Introduction draft | 5 |
| 03/29 | Finalizing methods | Method draft | 5 |
| 04/05 | Reporting results | Planned Analysis draft | 5 |
| 04/12 | Interpreting findings | Discussion draft | 5 |
| 04/19 | Presentations | Presentation (submit slide before class) | 5 |
| 04/26 | Final paper workshop | Final paper | 30 |