

RUTGERS UNIVERSITY
METHOD AND THEORY IN PSYCHOLOGY - 830:255
COURSE SYLLABUS
Fall, 2011

Instructor:	Dr. Charlotte N. Markey	Lecture:	T, Th, 1:30-2:50pm
e-mail:	chmarkey@camden.rutgers.edu		in ARM 219
Office Phone:	856.225.6332		(Note: see schedule for days
Office:	348 Armitage		we do not meet in classroom)
Office hours:	Wed 5:00-6:00pm		

COURSE DESCRIPTION AND OBJECTIVES:

Welcome to Method and Theory in Psychology!

This course provides an introduction to research methods in the field of psychology.

The following topics will be emphasized: the role of scientific inquiry in psychology, research questions, ethics in research, writing in psychology, reliability, validity, and research designs. Upon completion of the course, you should possess an understanding of the fundamental principles and procedures of psychological research. In addition, because this course is a *writing intensive* course, you will have the opportunity to work on developing your writing skills this semester.

REQUIRED READINGS:

- 1) Cosby, P. C. *Methods in Behavioral Research*, 10th Ed. New York: McGraw Hill.
Textbook is available in the Rutgers-Camden bookstore and on the web.
- 2) *American Psychological Association Publication Manual* (6th edition). Washington D.C.: American Psychological Association. (Be sure to get the 6th edition!)
Available in the bookstore or on-line at Amazon.com or BarnesandNoble.com
- 3) Articles are available via the course Sakai web page – consult the course schedule to determine when they should be read.

Please read all assigned readings BEFORE they are covered in class.

GENERAL COURSE REQUIREMENTS:

1) ATTENDANCE, CLASS PARTICIPATION, AND MEETINGS: Class attendance and participation is expected. Most classes will include discussions and/ or exercises designed to increase your understanding of the material and assure your success in this course. Further, you will be expected to turn in worksheets and exercises that we complete in class. If you are not in class, there is no way to complete these assignments; make-ups will not be available. You will also be expected to meet with your instructor during the semester to discuss progress on your research papers and you are required to meet with her *at least once*; you should come to these meetings prepared. Thus, this component of your grade will be based on the following criteria: 1) Did you attend class? 2) Did you contribute to the intellectual climate in class (by listening to the professor and your classmates and participating in discussions and exercises)? 3) Did you turn in all of the worksheets and assignments that we completed in class? and 4) Did you meet with the instructor and prepare for these meetings with questions or the relevant assignment?

2) **EXAMS:** You will be evaluated on your understanding of the material by taking three exams. Each exam will include questions based on the readings and lectures, with an emphasis on material explicitly discussed in class. The third (final) exam will be partially cumulative. Study guides and review sessions should aid in your preparation for the exams. No make-up exams will be given unless arrangements are made **prior** to an exam or proof of necessary absenteeism (e.g., a Dr. note) is provided.

3) **“RESEARCH IN THE REAL WORLD”:** It is an important objective of this class to provide you with the skills necessary to become an informed consumer of research in the “real world.” Thus, during each class we will take some time to discuss how class material relates to research discussed in the media. Students should each sign up for a day to bring in relevant information to class –“Research in the Real World”-- (e.g., a newspaper, magazine article) and present it to the class. This presentation should be very brief (no more than 5 minutes) and relatively informal. If you are not comfortable with presenting, you should talk with the instructor. Additional information about this assignments and a related hand out will be made available in class.

4) **RESEARCH PAPER:** In order to show off your understanding of research and your writing skills, you will complete a research paper. This paper is broken into two main parts (with other minor assignments that will contribute to your paper). First, you will write a literature review paper on a topic of your choosing (this topic needs to be discussed with and approved by the professor). You will receive instruction in class and assigned readings discuss the best way to approach writing a literature review. This part of your paper should be 2-4 pages long (of text) and is due **Tuesday, November 1** in class. This part of the paper will be graded and turned back to you so that it can be revised and included as the introduction to the second part of your paper. The second part of your paper will be approximately 2-4 pages long (of text) and will be a proposal for a research project addressing the topic discussed in the literature review paper you already completed. Thus, the final research paper that you turn in on **Tuesday, December 6th** (in class) will include your first paper (with revisions) as an introduction, a new section discussing the aims of your research project, and a new section discussing the proposed methodology to complete this research project. The final research paper should be in APA style and will be approximately 5-7 pages long (12 font, double spaced, not including the title page and reference page). Additional information about the research paper will be made available in class and in separate handouts.

GRADING:

Grades will be computed as follows:

Attendance and participation	15%
1 st Exam	15%
2 nd Exam	15%
3 rd Exam (Final)	20%
“Research in the Real World” Presentation	3%
Research Paper (includes all parts)	32%

COURSE SCHEDULE

The following is a *tentative* schedule for this course. Dates may change slightly depending on our *actual* progress in covering the material. * unless otherwise indicated, chapter readings refer to the Cozby text

Week 1: Introduction to Method and Theory in Psychology

Thurs., Sept. 1	Course introduction Why study research methods?	Chapter 1*
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Week 2: Psychology as a Science

Tues., Sept. 6	Ways of knowing Critical thinking	Chapter 1
Thurs., Sept. 8	NO CLASS – Campus is on Mon meeting schedule	

Week 3: Science and Research Questions

Tues., Sept. 13	Pseudoscience Public knowledge of research (read reserve readings before class!)	Reserve readings: Miller (1969), Bushman & Anderson (2001)
Thurs., Sept. 15	Developing research questions	Chapter 2

Week 4: Searching the Literature

Thurs., Sept. 20	Doing literature searches <i>Meet in the computer lab BSB 336</i> <i>Meet with the professor this week to discuss research paper topics</i>	Chapter 2
Tues., Sept 22	Doing literature searches <i>Meet in the computer lab BSB 336</i>	Chapter 2

Week 5: Ethics

Tues., Sept 27	Ethics in research	Chapter 3
Thurs., Sept. 29	Ethics in writing, plagiarism, academic honesty Review for Exam 1 <i>Research paper topics and references due</i>	Chapter 3 APA manual p. 12-20

Week 6: Writing in Psychology

Tues., Oct. 4	<i>Exam 1, Chapters 1-3 and Reserve Readings</i>	
Thurs., Oct. 6	Writing a research paper	Appendix A, Reserve reading: Bem (1987)

Week 7: Writing in Psychology

Tues., Oct. 11	How to summarize and write <i>Meet in the Library computer lab BSB 336</i>	Appendix A, APA Manual Chapter 1 and 2
Thurs., Oct. 13	Writing skills	APA Manual Chapter 3

Week 8: Variables

Tues., Oct. 18	Independent and dependent variables <i>Summaries of articles for paper due</i>	Chapter 4
Thurs., Oct. 20	No class	Chapter 4

Week 9: Variables; Reliability

Tues., Oct. 25	Variables, measurement, tables, and basic statistics	Chapter 12; APA manual p. 125-167 (look over)
Thurs., Oct. 27	Reliability and validity of measurements <i>Meet with the professor this week to discuss research papers</i>	Chapter 5

Week 10: Reliability and Validity; Survey Research

Tues., Nov. 1	Reliability and Validity Research Paper 1 Due	Chapter 5
Thurs., Nov 3	Conducting Surveys Review for Exam 2	Chapter 7

Week 11: Nonexperimental Designs

Tues., Nov. 8	<i>Exam 2, Chapters 4, 5, 7, 12, Appendix A, APA Manual and Reserve Readings</i>	
Thurs., Nov. 10	Case studies and Archival Research	Chapter 6

Week 12: Observational Methods and Experimental Design

Tues., Nov. 15	Observational Research, begin Experiments <i>Draft of "Aims" section of paper 2 due in class, bring two copies</i>	Chapters 6, 8
Thurs., Nov. 17	Basic Experiments	Chapter 8, 9

Week 13: Basic Experiments

Tues., Nov. 22	Discuss and do a basic experiment, Write a method section	Chapter 9, Reserve readings: Placebo article; Rosenthal (1994)
Thurs., Nov. 24	<i>Thanksgiving – no class</i>	

Week 14: Factorial experiments

Tues., Nov. 29	Factorial designs <i>Draft of Paper 2 due in class (bring 2 copies)</i>	Chapter 10
Thurs., Dec 1	Factorial Designs, An example	Chapter 10

Week 15: Quasiexperiments and The Limits of Science

Tues., Dec. 6	Quasiexperiments and a review of designs <i>Paper 2 Due</i>	Chapter 11
Thurs., Dec. 8	The limits of science	Chapter 14, Reserve: Markey (2008)

Week 16: Summary and Review

Tues., Dec. 13	Summary of the course <i>Review for Exam 3 (Final), Partially Cumulative</i>	
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FINAL EXAM: DEC. 20, 2:00-5:00PM

GENERAL COURSE POLICIES:

- 1) This class will be most rewarding for you if you are an active participant in class and view this experience as a collaborative enterprise. To this end, throughout the semester you are encouraged to communicate with your professor (during class and during office hours) and are expected to keep up with all readings and assignments.
- 2) Additional information about this class, and a copy of the syllabus is available on the instructor's web page (<http://www.crab.rutgers.edu/~chmarkey/home.html>) and the course Sakai web page (sakai.rutgers.edu). Being unaware of course requirements and expectations is not an excuse for failing to complete any of the assignments in this course.
- 3) If you are in class, you will be expected to be attentive, participate, stay the entire class time, and be prepared for any activities and exams scheduled for that day. You will be asked to leave class if you do any of the following:
 - ~Talk on your cell phone (turn phones off!)
 - ~Text on your cell phone
 - ~Open your lap top computer or blackberry
 - ~Pass notes to classmates
 - ~Sleep

You attendance in this course is voluntary. If you do not wish to be in class or prefer to do any of these activities instead of being in class, then you should leave.
- 4) This is a writing intensive class. You will be expected to spend a lot of time writing, revising, and discussing your writing with your professor this semester. In order to help you in the writing of your papers, a number of "mini assignments" are listed on the syllabus. The completion of these will contribute towards your final paper grade.
- 5) ***Power point slides presented in class will not be available*** except in class (i.e., these will NOT be posted on the web). If you miss class, you should obtain notes from a classmate and read the textbook. Note that the majority of material discussed in class (approx. ~85%) is in the textbook or other readings. Course lectures are designed to aid in your understanding of the assigned readings, focus you on the most important material, and offer an opportunity to further your understanding through class discussion. (In other words, power point slides are not a substitute for class attendance and participation thus will not be available outside of class.)
- 6) If you miss a class, it is your responsibility to become informed of any announcements made in class. Further, while class worksheets/ exercises will **not** be accepted late, it will increase your understanding of class material (and help you to prepare for exams) if you complete them.
- 7) No make-up exams will be given unless arrangements are made **prior** to an exam or proof of necessary absenteeism (e.g., a Dr. note) is provided. If you unexpectedly miss an exam due to exceptional circumstances (e.g., a serious car accident), it is your responsibility to contact the instructor within 24 hours of the exam to discuss the possibility of a make-up exam. You may also contact the department secretary, in the case of an emergency at 856-225-6520. Any make-up exam is likely to differ from the exam the rest of the class takes and will typically be in essay format.

- 8) Academic dishonesty will NOT be tolerated. Academic dishonesty includes (but is not limited to) cheating on exams and plagiarism. Students caught participate in academic dishonesty will receive a score of zero on the relevant assignment. In addition, instances of academic dishonesty will be referred to the Scholastic Conduct Committee. Sanctions for academic dishonesty range from failing an assignment to failing a course or expulsion from the University. For additional information about Rutgers' policies concerning academic dishonesty refer to: <http://teachx.rutgers.edu/integrity/policy.html>.
- 9) For disability accommodations, please call the Disability Services Coordinator Dean Thomas DiValerio, (856) 225-2663, tdivaler@camden.rutgers.edu , Campus Center, Room #326. Students who require special accommodations should also contact the instructor within the first few days of class.

Readings on Reserve:

- 1) Miller, G. A. (1969). Psychology as a means of promoting human welfare. *American Psychologist*, 24, 1063-1075.
- 2) Bushman, B. J. & Anderson, C. A. (2001). Media violence and the American public. *American Psychologist*, 56, 477-489.
- 3) Bem, D. J. (1987). Writing the empirical journal article. In: E.P. Zanna, & J. M. Darley (Eds.), *The compleat academic: A practical guide for the beginning social scientist* (pp. 171-201). Washington, DC, US: American Psychological Association.
- 4) Rosenthal, R. (1994). Interpersonal Expectancy Effects: A 30-year perspective. *Current Directions in Psychological Science*, 3, 176-179.
- 5) Talbot, M. (1999). The placebo prescription. *The New York Times Magazine*.
- 6) Markey, C. N. (2008). *Why I care about research and you should too (In spite of its limits)*. Unpublished Manuscript.