

RUTGERS UNIVERSITY
INDEPENDENT STUDY
COURSE SYLLABUS
Spring, 2016

Instructor: Dr. Charlotte N. Markey
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Class meeting: Wed 12:15-1:00pm approx.
in the Healthy Development
Lab, B-21-C, unless otherwise
indicated

COURSE DESCRIPTION AND OBJECTIVES:

The independent study course provides an advanced look at research for students interested in pursuing graduate school and/or a career in research. By working on various projects, students will have the opportunity to learn about the planning and design of research projects, data collection, data entry and preparation, data analyses, and the presentation of research findings. Upon completion of the course, students should possess an advanced understanding of the fundamental principles and procedures of psychological research. Students do NOT need to have experience doing research to be a research assistant in the Healthy Development Lab. However, it is expected that you will have already taken, or will be currently enrolled in, Research Methods, Method and Theory, or Experimental Psychology.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS:

In order to involved in research in the Healthy Development Lab during fall semester 2016, you should be aware of the following requirements.

- 1) In order to earn 3 course units, you are expected to complete 9 hours of work per week (3 hours per course unit). Every week at our lab meetings I will collect your time sheets for the previous week (hard copies please). It is your responsibility to complete your required hours or contact Dr. Markey if you need additional work to do. There is an excel "template" on the lab Sakai page that should be used for keeping track of your hours. This file will add up your hours as you enter them. Please print this out for me each week.
- 2) We will have lab meetings approximately every other week on Tuesdays. Please set this hour or so aside and plan to attend meetings unless otherwise instructed. This will count towards your weekly time commitment (1 hour). One lab meeting per semester can be missed, as long as a reasonable excuse is provided. Missing more than one lab meeting will negatively affect your grade (a grade of "A" will be dropped to "B+", "B+" dropped to "B", etc).
- 3) In order to be involved in research in the Healthy Development Lab, you will need to be trained to do various tasks. All students are expected to participate in a variety of tasks; be sure to talk with Dr. Markey or the other research assistants if you need to be trained on additional tasks. Before participating in data collection, you need to complete the human subjects certification test on the Rutgers web.
- 4) Each time we meet you will be expected to turn in the following things (instructions for completing these tasks will be provided during lab meetings):
 - 1) your time sheet
 - 2) a NEW journal article related to topics we study in the lab (body image, eating, dieting, obesity, weight stigma, relationships, health, etc.)
 - 3) a 2 sentence summary of the article you find from a reputable journal (e.g., Health Psychology, J of Health Psychology, Body Image, International Journal of Eating Disorders, Obesity, etc.)OR
 - 4) an article about topics we study in the lab from the NY Times, US News and World Report, LA Times, or other reputable popular source of information.

5) a 2 sentence summary of the popular news article.

- 5) You will be required to turn in a brief paper (approx. 2 pages) at the end of the semester. Most likely this will entail a reflection on your experiences in the lab, but assignments will be tailored to the interests of each student. This will count towards your weekly time commitment.

GRADING:

Grading in this course is based primarily on your completion of the required hours of work (dependent on the number of units you are enrolled in). I will keep track of your hours and we will discuss how you are doing in completing your required hours throughout the semester. Completion of your required hours and performance that is at least satisfactory will earn you a grade of approximately a “B.” In order to earn an “A” in this course, you need to be extremely reliable and helpful in completion of the central activities (mentioned above) that the lab will be involved in this semester. Any unexcused absences from lab meetings will result in a lowered grade. Any failure to complete responsibilities associated with participants in our research this semester (e.g., not showing up to collect data) will dramatically lower your grade. If you are irresponsible in dealing with participants on more than one occasion you will be asked to drop this course. Grades will roughly be computed as follows:

Completion of required hours	50%
Attendance at lab meetings	10%
Lab “homework” (see above)	10%
Regular participation in data collection	10%
Quality of work, conscientiousness, etc.	20%

LAB TASKS:

- Attend weekly meetings
- Take Human Subjects test
- Conduct literature searches; write article summaries
- Regular lab homework re: finding new and popular articles and summarizing them
- Learn how to take anthropometric measurements (height/weight)
- Collect data for various studies
- Data entry/cleaning
- Manage lab email and social media for Dr. Markey
- Book promotion
- Electronic app content development

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT ACTIVITIES:

- Work on short- and long-term academic and career goals
- Work on graduate school/job applications (personal statement, resume)
- Consider membership in professional association (e.g., APA, APS)
- Research/ public health campaigns on campus
- Poster presentation at local/regional conference *
- Apply for grants to support lab and personal research projects *

*Not all students will have the opportunity to present research findings or apply for grants. Participation in these activities will depend on length of time in the lab and level of student ability/commitment.