

Fundamentals of Psychological Research

Psy 209
Fall, 2015

General Course Information:

Instructor: Jillene Grover Seiver, Ph.D

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Classroom: <https://bc.instructure.com>

Text: *How to Think Straight about Psychology* by Keith E. Stanovich

Prerequisites: Psych 100

Course Description:

The study of the methodology and attitudes of psychology irrespective of any special area. Considers techniques for evaluating information, discovering invalid interpretations and uncovering alternative explanations. These are illustrated by reading research articles and classroom discussion of the articles and of popular beliefs.

Course Requirements:

APA Exercises: I have designed three exercises that will help you to get started on your APA Paper. You will find them in Canvas, and they are each worth 5 points.

Weekly Reports: At the Canvas website, you will find the Weekly Reports. These assignments relate to the material that we'll cover in class during each week (readings and my lecture).

You will complete the required assignment, and submit your report to the assignment dropbox prior to the start of the next week's class meeting. Each assignment has very specific instructions, so each assignment will have different potential length and word count. My requirement is that you complete the assignment fully and with insight. Each week's assignment is worth 10 pts.

No late submissions will be accepted for any reason. The dropbox will lock you out when the deadline passes, and I will not accept emailed submissions.

Exams: There will be a midterm and a non-cumulative final on the dates indicated on the Course Calendar. There will be several short answer questions to choose from; you will need to answer a subset (pay attention to the instructions at the beginning of the exam). Each exam will be worth 100 points, and will be allotted 2 hours.

- Exams will be available for one week, and you can complete the exam any time during the week they are open.
- I will not release exams early to accommodate travel, and I will not extend deadlines for any reason other than PERSONAL ILLNESS accompanied by a doctor's note excusing you from work/school for the entire week that the exam is available.
- In short: Plan ahead and do not count on taking the exam right before the deadline.

APA Paper: You will select a topic and write a five page literature review in APA style.

- There are three projects in Canvas that will facilitate your progress. See Canvas for due dates.
- There is a sample literature review in Canvas that will serve as your model for how to write your paper.
- Requirements: You must cite at least 10 peer-reviewed research sources. The detailed guidelines, requirements, and grading rubric are all in Canvas.

- No late submissions will be accepted for any reason. I need time to read the papers before grades are due!

Points Possible:

11 reports @ 10 points each:	110
3 APA exercises @ 5 points each:	15
Midterm/Final 2 @ 100 pts each:	200
APA Paper @ 100 pts:	100
Total possible:	425

Grading Palette:			
A: 4.0	=> 95%	C: 2.0	74-76%
A-: 3.7	90-94%	C-: 1.7	70-73%
B+: 3.3	87-89%	D+: 1.3	67-69%
B: 3.0	84-86%	D: 1.0	64-66%
B-: 2.7	80-83%	D-: 0.7	60-63%
C+: 2.3	77-79%	F: 0.0	<= 59%

Course Calendar

Week	Date	Topic/Event	Chapter
1	9/21	Psychology is alive and well (and doing fine among the sciences)	1
2	9/28	Falsifiability: How to foil little green men in the head	2
3	10/5	Operationism and Essentialism: "But, Doctor, what does it really mean?"	3
4	10/12	Testimonials and case study evidence: Placebo effects and the Amazing Randi	4
5	10/19	Correlation and causation: Birth control by the toaster method	5
6	10/26	Getting things under control: The case of Clever Hans	6
	10/28	Midterm Exam: 8:30-10:20 am	1-6
7	11/2	"But it's not real life!": The artificiality criticism and psychology	7
8	11/9	Avoiding the Einstein Syndrome: The importance of converging evidence	8
	11/11	No Class: Veterans' Day	
9	11/16	The misguided search for the "Magic Bullet": The issue of multiple causation	9
10	11/23	The Achilles' heel of human cognition: Probabilistic reasoning	10
11	11/30	The role of chance in psychology	11
	12/2	APA Paper due in Canvas by 11:59 pm on Wednesday The Rodney Dangerfield of the sciences	12
12	12/7	No Class: Professional Development Day	
	12/9	Final Exam: 7:30-9:20 am	7-12