

Psychology 209: Fundamentals of Psychological Research

Bellevue College

Spring 2016 | TTh 9:30-11:20 & online | Room A206

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Office location: D100A
Office hours: M-Th 11:30-12:20 and by appointment
Course website: Canvas, accessible through <http://bc.instructure.com>

Required textbook: Morling, B. (2014). *Research methods in psychology: Evaluating a world of information* (2nd ed.). New York: Norton. Please bring your book to class every day.

This syllabus is your guide to the class. If you have questions about the class, **read the syllabus first** before asking me.

INTRODUCTION

Psychology majors must learn the content of psychology, but they also must learn how psychologists know what they know. Fundamentals of Psychological Research is a critical thinking skills class in which the main goal is to help you become a better consumer of information—both in psychology and in the real world. You will learn how to systematically evaluate the validity of different claims that you might encounter in a future psychology textbook, in a psychology research article, in the media, or in casual conversation. This class will also teach you how to plan psychological research that can test different claims. You will learn to articulate the pros and cons of different research choices and plan research that optimizes these pros and cons.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

After completing this class, students should be able to:

- Explain the scientific process and the research methods psychologists and behavioral scientists use in the study of human behavior.
- Apply relevant research and statistical terms, concepts, and principles used in the study of human behavior.
- Evaluate and compare various research methods and designs used to guide and develop research investigations.
- Prioritize and apply ethical principles in the conduct of research.

EXPECTATIONS

My Role as Instructor

I am here to guide you in exploring this challenging and interesting material. I will do my best to make class time interesting, engaging, and enjoyable for everyone. I will use on a variety of methods to promote learning, including videos, discussions, and activities. I will create and enforce a learning atmosphere that is safe, comfortable, and respectful for everyone. I will communicate my expectations clearly and hold all learners to equitable standards. I will welcome questions, comments, and suggestions, and I will adapt to individual needs whenever possible. I may modify this syllabus as needed to accommodate your learning.

Your Role as Learner

Students learn best when they are actively engaged and involved in the learning process. This is an active and interactive course in which you will often learn by discussing and/or doing. You are expected to observe the world, read, write, discuss, and participate. I think of our classroom as a *collaborative learning community* wherein all students can teach and learn from each other. Every time you make a comment or ask a question, you teach something to the rest of us. I challenge you to abandon the traditional passive student role and to get involved with teaching and learning.

Note that this is a fast-paced class in which you will be given a good deal of independence. Consequently, you will need to be responsible for managing your time appropriately, and to contact me in a timely manner if any circumstances arise that interfere with your ability to participate fully in class. I encourage you to **take active responsibility for your education**. Challenge assumptions, and consider the implications and applications of course material. Thinking deeply about the course material will help you understand it better, which will make it more useful now and in the future. This is also a **hybrid** class with a partial online component. You will complete several assignments online outside of class, including online quizzes and discussions, and you will submit and review portions of the final project online. If you do not have access to a computer at home, you can use [the open computer lab in N250](#).

Think about **your goals** for this class. What do you want to gain from this experience? What do you want to leave the class with a better understanding of, or a better ability to do? Write your top three goals here:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

We'll refer back to your goals at the end of the quarter.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Participation [200]

This is an active learning class in which we will be doing examples, exercises, and problems in small groups almost every day. If you miss class regularly, you will not participate in these activities and will not learn what you need to learn to progress in the class. You will be assigned to a **study group** of 3-4 students. Your group will sit together during class to work on in-class activities. In daily class activities, your group may turn in a summary or page of work; all group members who are present on that day will sign the work. You will also occasionally have **homework** to complete, which will be posted on Canvas. No late in-class activity work is accepted, but you can submit homework due on a class day you will miss in the future by submitting it on Canvas to the appropriate assignment drop box. Additionally, we will have weekly **discussion posts** due on Canvas every Friday. You are welcome to submit these early.

Your total score for this category will be based on the percentage of activities, homework, and online discussions completed over the course of the quarter. This works out to roughly 20 points per week.

Chapter Quizzes [200]

For the most part, I will not be lecturing in class on material that is also in the textbook. Instead, you will be required to study the textbook ahead of time and take chapter quizzes on the material on Canvas. Each quiz is a random selection of 10 items from a pool of items and will be available on the course website at least one week before the day we start activities based upon that chapter. **Quizzes are due by the start of class on the day we start covering that chapter.** This format requires you to learn the basic material in the textbook before you come to class for activities. Late quizzes will be penalized by 20% per day. You can retake each quiz once and the highest score will count toward your grade. To be eligible for a retake, the first attempt *must* be completed on time. The second attempt must be completed no later than the end of the day (11:59pm) *after* we complete coverage of that chapter in class.

Exams [300]

The midterm exam (100 points) and cumulative final exam (200 points) will be in short-answer format and will cover information from both the text and in-class lecture and discussion. Questions will be similar to those from in-class activities and homework. Both exams will be given in class. Make-up exams are permitted in rare circumstances with documentation and at instructor's discretion.

Research Proposal [300]

Throughout the quarter, you will build an APA style research proposal in which you propose a topic of study, state a hypothesis, and explain the methods you would use to conduct this study and the results you would expect to find. (You will not need to actually conduct the study.) This assignment will consolidate most of what you will learn in this course. Portions of the paper will be due online throughout the quarter. As members of a *collaborative learning community*, you will also provide “peer reviews” of your classmates’ paper drafts (and have your drafts reviewed as well). A full guide to and rubric for this proposal is available separately from this syllabus.

GRADES

Final grades are based on a possible 1000 points as allocated below. It is your responsibility to earn the grade you want. I will use Canvas throughout the quarter to post grades so that you can keep track of your progress. Incompletes are only given under extreme circumstances, and at the sole discretion of the instructor.

Grading Category	Points	Percent	Grade	Percent	Grade
Participation	200	93%+	A	73-76.4%	C
Chapter Quizzes (10)	200	90-92.4%	A-	70-72.4%	C-
Exams (2)	300	87-89.4%	B+	67-69.4%	D+
Research Proposal	300	83-86.4%	B	63-66.4%	D
<i>Total</i>	<i>1000</i>	80-82.4%	B-	<63%	F
		77-79.4%	C+		

COMMUNICATION

Canvas: The Course Website

This course uses Canvas, BC’s learning management system, as a supplement to face-to-face time. Canvas will be used for weekly quizzes, communication, downloading materials, and submitting assignments. Plan to check it regularly, and use it for all communication about the class. I will respond to all messages within 24 hours on weekdays. Weekend responses may take longer; please plan accordingly. Visit Canvas at: <http://bc.instructure.com>.

Email Communication

Please use standard professional guidelines for all written communication, including using a formal greeting, writing in complete sentences, and signing your name. Your email should do one of the following:

1. Ask a short, clarifying (e.g., yes/no) question whose answer cannot be found in the syllabus
2. Request to meet at a time other than during my scheduled and posted office hours, and include at least two days and times you are available for this meeting

Anything else that does not fall into one of these two categories (e.g., asking me to explain a concept or assignment) should be discussed with me in person during my office hours. No appointment is required to meet during office hours.

Great email:

Dear Prof. Kirkland:
I missed our PSYC 209 class last Tuesday, and after reading the book and discussing the material with my study group, I still have a few questions that I would like to talk to you about. I have class during your office hours, but I am free Tues and Thurs after 2:30 PM. Please let me know when you are available.
Thank you,
Alex Johnson

Terrible email:

Hey so I missed class all week and I was wondering if you could tell me if I missed anything important?? Also I can’t take the final tmrw bc I’m going to Vegas. O ya and can I turn in that one homework from like three weeks ago? I forgot to do it! Haha! Thx!!!! ;) -a

COURSE POLICIES

Guidelines for Discussion

- When the class is engaged in lecture and whole-class discussion, please **raise your hand** to contribute your opinion or ask a question. While discussion is encouraged and will be solicited, side comments are distracting in a small class. If you feel tempted to whisper comments to a classmate, consider contributing to the whole-class discussion instead, or writing your comments to share later. You will have many opportunities to share your ideas in groups.
- If you find yourself contributing frequently, I may call on other people instead to get a variety of perspectives.
- In an academic setting, everyone has the right to express different views in a respectful atmosphere. Please be considerate of your classmates.

Technology in the Classroom

Cell phones should be *silenced* and put away before class. **Please do not use your phone during class.** Students whose cell phones ring, who send or receive texts, check email/social networks, or who wear ear buds during class time will not receive participation credit for that day. In addition, research has shown that using laptops to take notes in class results in *worse* learning of the material compared to the traditional pencil-and-paper method. For this reason, I encourage you not to bring your laptop to class.

Punctuality

- **Please be on time for class.** Our classes are short, so every minute counts. Arriving late breaks the flow of the class and causes a distraction. If you are late, your participation score for that day will be reduced by up to 5 points.
 - If you must arrive late, please do not disrupt class by walking through the middle of the room.
 - If you need to leave before class is over, make arrangements with me ahead of time and sit near the door.
- **Please do not pack up to leave early.** I will always let class out on time. Packing up your things during the last few moments of class is distracting to everyone and may result in missing important information.

Attendance

You are expected to manage your own time and priorities. If you miss any class session, consult the schedule to see what topics were covered. You are responsible for obtaining notes and information on any in-class announcements from fellow students. **Do not contact me to ask if you missed anything important.** Of course you did. Every class is important. If you have questions concerning the missed class that you are unable to answer yourself *after reviewing a classmate's notes*, please see me during office hours for clarification.

A Note on Multitasking

Research shows that when we do more than one thing at a time, we're not actually doing them simultaneously. Instead, we're shifting our attention from one thing to another. During that shift, we lose focus, and it takes effort to refocus on the new task. In fact, some research shows that the more often we "multitask," the more distracted we are by irrelevant information, and the worse we are at concentrating. *Limit the temptation to multitask* in class, and you'll do better.

RESOURCES FOR SUCCESS

Office Hours

Come to office hours with questions. Office hours are a set time I have set aside specifically to talk about the class. My door is open and **I am *always* available during office hours – no appointment needed.** Just stop by! See times and location listed at the top of this syllabus.

Textbook Study Tools

- Each chapter ends with a short quiz and several "Learning Actively" exercises. Quiz yourself on the material and complete any "Learning Actively" exercises we don't do together in class for additional practice.
- There are several resources on the publisher's website, [StudySpace](#), and on the author's blog, [Everyday Research Methods](#).

Academic Success Center

Free drop-in tutoring is available both in person and online through the Academic Success Center (D204). Check the schedule here: <http://www.bellevuecollege.edu/asc/tutoring/schedules/psychology/>. You may also find it useful to seek support from the Writing Lab for help crafting your final research proposal: <http://bellevuecollege.edu/writinglab/>.

Counseling Center

You can make an appointment for [academic counseling](#) in the Student Success and Counseling Center (2nd floor B building) for help with study skills or test anxiety: 425-564-2212. The Counseling Center also provides free short-term counseling for a wide range of other issues, ranging from stress and depression to relationship problems to sexual assault and other forms of abuse.

Multicultural Services

MCS specializes in assisting students of color, LGBTQ students, and refugee and immigrant students, but all BC students are welcome to use MCS's services free of charge. MCS is really wonderful at helping all students feel comfortable and welcome at Bellevue College. They will help integrate you into the life of our College. MCS can help with a wide variety of personal and professional challenges, from figuring out how to pay for college and secure childcare for kids, to personal counseling and advising. Stop by their office in B233 or call them at (425) 564-2208.

TRiO Student Support Services

This department provides excellent academic support for students who have limited incomes, documented disabilities, or who are the first in their families to attend college. Students who join TRiO are given close and intensive academic advising, lessons in study skills, tutoring, and overall support not only as students but as human beings. Learn more by stopping by B233 or visiting the website at <http://bellevuecollege.edu/TRiO/>.

Disability Resource Center

The Disability Resource Center serves students with a wide array of learning challenges and disabilities. If you are a student who has a disability or learning challenge for which you have documentation or have seen someone for treatment, and if you feel you may need accommodations in order to be successful in college, please contact the DRC as soon as possible. The DRC office is located in B132 or you can call the reception desk at (425) 564-2498.

- Deaf students can reach the DRC by video phone at (425) 440-2025 or by TTY at (425) 564-4110.
- Please visit the [DRC website](#) for application information into the program and other helpful links.
- [Autism Spectrum Navigators](#) (ASN): if you are a student with a documented autism spectrum disorder, there is an additional access program available to you. Contact asn@bellevuecollege.edu or (425) 564-2764. ASN is located in the Library Media Center in D125.
- If you are a person who requires assistance in case of an emergency situation, such as a fire, earthquake, etc., please meet with me to develop a safety plan within the first week of the quarter.

Procedures and Guidelines of the Social Science Division

Please see [Canvas](#) for a full list of the procedures and guidelines of the [Social Science Division](#).

COURSE SCHEDULE

WEEK	M	TUESDAY	W	THURSDAY	FRIDAY: ONLINE DISCUSSIONS DUE
1	4	APRIL 5 Introduction Psychology is a Way of Thinking (1)	6	7 Quiz: ch. 1 NO CLASS: Instructor at conference	8 Discussion: Introductions, Class Goals, and Background Knowledge
2	11	12 Quiz: ch. 2 Sources of Information (2) Community Building	13	14 Sources of Information (2)	15 Discussion: Literature Search & APA Style
3	18	19 Quiz: ch. 3 Three Claims, Four Validities (3)	20	21 Three Claims, Four Validities (3) Basic Statistics	22 Discussion: Peer Review
4	25	26 Quiz: ch. 4 Research Ethics	27	28 Quiz: ch. 5 Measurement (5)	29 RP: Introduction Discussion: Create a Survey
5	MAY 2	3 Quiz: ch. 6 & 7 Surveys & Observations (6)	4	5 Activity: Behavioral Observations Sampling (7)	6 RP: Peer Review Intro Discussion: Midterm Exam Review (ch. 1-7)
6	9	10 Midterm Exam	11	12 Quiz: ch. 8 Bivariate Correlations (8)	13 RP: Method Discussion: Midterm Exam Results
7	16	17 Bivariate Correlations (8)	18	19 Quiz: ch. 9 Multivariate Correlations (9)	20 RP: Peer Review Method Discussion: TBD
8	23	24 Multivariate Correlations (9)	25	26 Multivariate Correlations (9)	27 RP: Results Discussion: TBD
9	30	31 Quiz: ch. 10 Simple Experiments (10)	JUNE 1	2 Simple Experiments (10)	3 RP: Rough Draft Discussion: Poster Presentation

WEEK	M	TUESDAY	W	THURSDAY	FRIDAY: ONLINE DISCUSSIONS DUE
10	6	7 RP: Peer Review Rough Draft (in class) Multivariate Experiments (12)	8	9 Quiz: ch. 12 pp. 343-359, 370-373 ONLY Multivariate Experiments (12)	10 RP: Revision Plan Discussion: TBD
11	13	14 RP: Poster Presentation Final Exam Review (ch. 1-10, 12)	15	16 Final Exam 9:30-11:20	17 RP: Final Draft Discussion: What I Learned

This schedule is subject to change with notice at instructor's discretion. Any changes will be announced in class.

Quiz/Assignment/Exam Submission Instructions:

- All quizzes and assignments listed on this schedule are available online (Canvas) and should be submitted on Canvas by class time on the due date.
- Other homework and activities will be completed and/or submitted in class. You may submit homework online ahead of time if you know you will miss class. In-class activities will be posted after class for your learning but will not be available to submit online for credit.