

Scientific Principals of Psychology

Psy 309-60

Fall, 2008

General Course Information:

Instructor: Jillene Grover Seiver, Ph.D

Mailbox: Drop off items with the Secretary in D110 (office closes at 5 pm)

Office hours: by appointment

Voice mail: (425)564-2335

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Text: *Psychologist as Detective, The: An Introduction to Conducting Research in Psychology*, 4/E by Randolph A Smith and Stephen Davis

Text's website: http://wps.prenhall.com/hss_smith_psychologist_4

Prerequisites: Successful completion of a 200-level English course and Math 100 or Mathematics clearance by test.

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.

Learning Outcomes:

At the end of this course, students will be able to:

- Demonstrate an understanding of the purpose, scope and areas of interest of researchers in psychology and how this relates to the other behavioral sciences.
- Identify the scientific progress and research methods psychologists and behavioral scientists use in the study of human behavior.
- Define important research and statistical terms, concepts, and principles used in the study of human behavior.
- State and develop a specific, investigatable problem or issue in psychology.
- Demonstrate the ability to perform an effective literature search and summarization leading to an operationally definable hypothesis.
- Design survey instruments, or otherwise design strategies to gather data appropriate to the defined hypothesis.
- Identify and compare various research methods and designs used to guide and develop research investigations, to select an appropriate design for a research project.
- Perform research investigations at a basic level, using inferential statistical methods, involving at least two factors or variables.

- Analyze the project methodology and the research of others to identify major flaws, confounding variables, rival hypothesis and threats to validity in the project.
- Write a concluding report of the study in APA journal style, providing a clear written interpretation of the findings, following standard practices and procedures for organization and illustration.
- Comprehend and apply ethical principles in the conduct of research.

Course Requirements:

Weekly Quizzes: You will complete 7 weekly quizzes; your top 6 scores will count toward your grade. Each quiz will be worth 45 points.

- The quiz will be administered first thing each class meeting and will be allotted the first 30 minutes of class. If you are late to class, I will still collect your test at 6 pm with the other students' tests.
- Because I will be dropping your lowest score, there will be NO MAKE-UPS for any reason.

“Your Research” Projects: Each week, you'll complete the projects for the week's chapter(s) at the text's website. You'll find the projects by clicking on the current chapter, then selecting “Your Research” on the left-hand menu. There are one, two or three projects for each chapter, and they will be due at the class meeting following the discussion of the chapter(s) in question. For example, the projects for Chapter 1 will be due at the second class meeting. On my website, you'll find a list of corrections to the projects that you'll find at the text's website. Each chapter's project(s) is/are worth 30 points.

Research Proposal: You will prepare and submit a research proposal following the APA format described in the handouts I have provided on my web page (www.collegecontacts.net/jillseiver). Most of the work you do in this class will constitute steps toward this final proposal. The final draft of your proposal will be worth 500 points. Late proposals will be docked 10% per day (weekends included), with no points being earned for proposals submitted after the first Tuesday after the deadline.

Rough Drafts: Twice during the quarter, you will submit rough drafts of sections of your research proposal (first the Introduction and References, then the Method, Results and Conclusion). You will follow the guidelines for each section found on my website under “Guidelines for Rough Drafts.” In addition, I recommend using the “Peer Review Instructions” checklists (also on my website) to help ensure that your draft is covering all the criteria that your peer will be evaluating. You will earn 50 points for each rough draft, on a pass/fail basis. Your rough draft must be submitted on or before the due date in order to earn any points. **ABSOLUTELY NO EXCEPTIONS.** Not only will you lose the 50 points for submitting the rough draft, you'll lose the opportunity to have your paper peer-reviewed. Unless you submit a rough draft, you will not be eligible to peer review another student's rough draft.

Peer Reviews: You will serve as a reviewer for one of your classmate's rough drafts of the sections of their research proposal. You will give feedback based upon the questions provided in the Peer Review assignment (found in the "Peer Review Instructions" link on our class website). You will earn 50 points for each review; late reviews will lose 10% per day. This is a pass/fail assignment; if you do it on time, you'll earn full credit. Your classmate wants your feedback, so please complete it conscientiously, and on time.

Poster Presentation of Research Proposal: You will create a poster presentation of your research proposal (see Appendix A of the text for directions on doing this, as well as the class website for photos of previous students' posters). Your presentation is worth 200 points. You will sign up for your presentation day on the date indicated on the course calendar. You must present on the day for which you've signed up. **NO EXCEPTIONS.** If you aren't in class on the sign-up day, I'll assign you a day, and it's up to you to find out from me what date you've been assigned.

Attendance: It is expected that you will attend lectures, but it is not required. Of course, there's a quiz and assignments due every class meeting, so I expect you to attend at least the first hour of every class.

Even though I will not track attendance, your assignments must be turned in on time, and you are responsible for any announcements made in class. This syllabus is quite comprehensive, and the dates are carved in stone. However, if some act of nature occurs and a change must be made, you are responsible for gaining knowledge of any change which is announced in class.

Points Possible:

6 quizzes at 45 points each:	270
14 projects at 30 points each:	420
2 rough drafts at 50 points each:	100
2 peer reviews at 50 points each:	100
Final research proposal:	500
Poster presentation of proposal:	200
Total possible:	1590

Grading Palette:

A	=> 95%	C	74-76%
A-	90-94%	C-	70-73%
B+	87-89%	D+	67-69%
B	84-86%	D	64-66%
B-	80-83%	D-	60-63%
C+	77-79%	F	<= 59%

Calendar of Events

Week	Date	Topic/Event	Chapter
1	9/23	The Science of Psychology	1
2	9/30	Projects for Chapter 1 are due by 5:30 p.m. Quiz for Chapter 1	1
		Research Ideas, Critiquing Research, and Hypotheses Ethics in Psychological Research	2 3
3	10/7	Projects for Chapters 2 & 3 are due by 5:30 p.m. Quiz for Chapter 2 & 3	2 & 3
		Writing and Assembling an APA-Format Research Report <u>Discuss rough drafts: Come with specific questions</u>	14
4	10/14	Projects for Chapter 14 are due by 5:30 p.m. Quiz for Chapter 14	14
		Nonexperimental Methods I Nonexperimental Methods II <i>Rough Draft Intro & References due</i>	4 5
5	10/21	Projects for Chapter 5 are due by 5:30 p.m. Quiz for Chapters 4 & 5 <i>Peer reviews due</i>	4 & 5
		The Basics of Experimentation I The Basics of Experimentation II	6 7
6	10/28	Projects for Chapters 6 & 7 are due by 5:30 p.m. Quiz for Chapters 6 & 7	6 & 7
		Internal and External Validity Using Statistics to Answer Questions <u>Discuss rough drafts: Come with specific questions</u>	8 9
7	11/4	Projects for Chapter 8 & 9 are due by 5:30 p.m. Quiz for Chapters 8 & 9	8 & 9
		Designing. . . Experiments with Two Groups Designing. . . with more than Two Groups <i>Rough Draft Method, Results & Conclusion sections due -- include SASE so I can mail your draft back with comments</i>	10 11
8	11/11	NO CLASS: Professional Development Day	
9	11/18	Projects for Chapters 10 & 11 are due by 5:30 p.m. Quiz for Chapters 10 & 11	10 & 11
		Designing. . . Experiments with Multiple Independent Variables Alternative Research Designs <u>Discuss final research proposals: Come with specific questions</u>	12 13
10	11/25	Projects for Chapters 12 & 13 are due by 5:30 p.m.	12 & 13

		Quiz for Chapter 12 & 13 <i>Research Proposal Due</i>	
		<u>Discuss Poster preparation</u>	
11	12/2	<u>Poster Presentations of Research Proposals</u>	