



PSYC 3010/Research Methods in Psychology

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Class: MWF 10am, 124 Harvey

Student hours: 232 Harvey: 9-10am & 12-1pm MW, 10-11am Th

I have appointments throughout the day on Calendly: <https://calendly.com/jslattery176/30min> – or just drop by!

Zoom: <https://pennwest-edu.zoom.us/j/5588638289>

Email: jslattery@pennwest.edu

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Best way of getting me? Just drop by. I respond to email quickly. No response in 24 hours? Try again; I missed it!

Welcome! I'm glad you're here! I want this place to be a safe place for people of all ages, backgrounds, beliefs, ethnicities, genders, sexual identities, races, religions, and other visible and invisible differences. Together, we can create a respectful, welcoming, and inclusive place for all of us to work and learn in.

I hope you will enjoy learning about research methods as much as I enjoy discussing these issues. I look forward to working with you this semester!

What will I learn in this course?

Course description: *Examines research strategies for understanding psychological phenomena. Students formulate and evaluate research hypotheses, systematically collect data, organize and statistically analyze data, identify confounds and alternate explanations of findings, and prepare research reports using APA style. (3 cr.)*

What this means to me: The world is awash in research and claims, but how can you tell which research and claims to believe? This course will teach you to look at the world like a research psychologist. You will learn how to identify the claim in a research study, as well as how to tell if the claim is likely to be true or valid. We will work to understand different types of research designs, the types of claims made based on those designs, and the strengths and weaknesses of those designs. In addition to learning to be a critical consumer of research, this course will strengthen your ability to communicate about the results of research with training in writing like a psychologist.

Research is formalized curiosity. It is poking and prying with a purpose. – Zora Neale Hurston

What are our student learning outcomes (SLOs)?

Intro to Psychology and Statistics are requirements for this course; knowledge gained in other Psychology courses will be useful but is not required. You must earn at least a C- in this course for it to count for the psychology major. This course meets both Writing Intensive and Applied Method competencies.

All assignments and in-class exercises are designed to help you achieve the following learning objectives; specific SLO/assignment relationships can be found on assignments. If you engage fully in class activities, by the end of the semester you should be able to:

1. Recognize the merits of the scientific method and understand how to formulate testable hypotheses in Psychology.
2. Test research hypotheses using appropriate statistical methods.
3. Discriminate among experimental, quasi-experimental, and correlational studies.
4. Create and interpret tables and graphs of collected or predicted data.
5. Determine when research can support causal claims and identify threats to causal claims.
6. Apply the ethical guidelines to research in psychology.
7. Use two important tools important to the discipline of psychology: the PsycINFO literature search engine and APA style for formatting and citing research papers.
8. Construct arguments clearly and concisely from evidence-based psychological concepts and theories.

How will we meet these outcomes?

Text. We will use Beth Morling's *Research Methods in Psychology* (4th ed.). You don't need to purchase a new copy with Inquizitives; instead, choose the option – paper or ebook – that works best for you. The ebook is least expensive, but not everyone reads well in this format. **I will have a copy of the text available in the library.** We will also use Morling's [Everyday Research Methods](#) blog, which will be linked from the weekly module in D2L.

D2L. This syllabus, assignments, grades, and more are available on D2L. Please check D2L regularly; I grade rapidly, leave considerable feedback on assignments, and frequently post updates and reminders under Announcements.

Pro Tip: Check out the Brightspace Pulse app to stay on track. Calendars on the syllabus and D2L will help, too.

Exams and optional quizzes. One of the best ways of learning something is to test yourself – teaching someone else is another excellent strategy (McGuire, 2015). With this in mind, we will have weekly optional quizzes, which will help you keep on track with the course and help you assess your understanding of the material. It might be tempting to complete quizzes with your book open. While doing so may help you earn a good score on the quiz, it won't help you learn the material covered in the chapter (Lang, 2016). Instead, I would recommend that you read and study beforehand, take the quiz, and consider those areas where you struggled more. You have 15 minutes to take each quiz and can take each twice. *All quizzes are optional and don't count toward the grade.* Exams will include both multiple choice and short answer questions.

At least 10% of material on later exams will come from earlier chapters, as there are themes that we keep returning to over the course of the semester. This “interleaving” – mixing it up – strengthens your learning and recall (Lang, 2016). Don't just set “old material” aside, mix it up!

Homework assignments and study guides. These are difficult ideas to learn – and exciting ones. Although I will give you a list of terms to pay attention to, your assignments, quizzes, Everyday Research Methods blogs, and clicker questions are “study guides” to help you learn and apply the ideas from this course. Assignments, rubrics, and SLOs can be found on D2L.

Some assignments will require working with classmates (i.e., Operationalizing aggression, Do people who have moved prefer shopping at chain stores?, and Do we remember words better if we process them deeply?). You each bring strengths to your work; your overall success will depend on each other. Teamwork is an important skill to develop.

Quizzes and blogs are optional, but highly recommended. There are also many more case examples in each set of lectures than we can reasonably get through. Use these to help you learn and apply the material more effectively. I grade rapidly, generally within one week.

Pro Tip: The research strongly suggests that active learning strategies, while taking more time than passive ones, are also more effective. I have built a number of active learning strategies into this course.

Class attendance and participation. We're a community: your presence matters to the success of this course and to your learning. Your active involvement enriches your learning and that of your classmates. As a result, your fellow students and I expect you will come to class regularly, read the material carefully before class, actively help your classmates learn, and listen to your classmates' questions and answers. I'll do the same.

As class participation is an important part of this class, you will gain up to 20 pts. if you attend regularly (3 or fewer absences other than university-sanctioned events, athletics, or the military) and are active, thoughtful, and involved in our class. *Respond to and ask questions!* Migraines, sick children, car problems, funerals are part of your three free absences. In other words, use these absences wisely. Coming late or leaving early may cause you to be marked absent. If I am ill or believe I have COVID, I will post under Announcements what we will do that day (either an activity or a Zoom link).

How much time should I set aside to work on this course?

For every credit a course is worth, federal law requires a student to spend 3 hours each week working on the course. For a 3-credit course, that would be 9 hours, including time in class. Since we're in class 2.5 hours each week, plan on spending 6.5 hours outside of class working on your assignments. Five 3-credit classes is considered a full-time load. Since each 3-credit class requires 9 hours of time each week, 5 classes times 9 hours each equals 45 hours per week.

Let's talk!

What might you do? Introduce yourself, get to know me better, help me get to know you, develop or sharpen your study skills, go deeper into the material, get help with content or assignments, consider ideas that aren't discussed in class, or discuss ways to cope with college and life.

Why? Because we all are better together, supporting each other. Because it's more fun. Because we're curious.

Can things be turned in late?

Late assignments – when accepted late – will receive a 10% penalty. Make-ups for in-class exams can be arranged up until the date of the exam. If you miss an exam without talking to me beforehand, you will receive a 10% penalty. This is fair to people who took the exam or completed the assignment on time and who, presumably, would have done better with several extra days' preparation. Bottom line, punctuality is an important and valued skill in the real world.

What will help me do well in this class?

- **Put time and energy into this course.** For a 300-level course, you should plan on spending a minimum of 2-3 hours outside of class for every hour you spend in class, an additional 6-9 hours on this course each week.
- **Read the text *before* coming to class.** Our class time will be lecture/discussion based. When you read the chapter first, you'll have a better understanding of class material, and you will get more out of class. In fact, McGuire (2015) says that reviewing 10 minutes before and after every class can make a big difference!
- **Attend class and participate.** Attending class is essential to doing well. We will discuss ideas not in your book, work through examples, and work together on projects, which will make the material come alive.
- **Quiz yourself.** The quizzes will help you become familiar with the test format, practice the material – and succeed! I don't give you the answers, because thinking about errors seems to improve understanding (Lang, 2017).
- **Get involved!** As you read the text or listen to class discussions, make it interesting and become involved! Relate the ideas to the world around you. Actively read the material by thinking about, applying, and using it. Consider whether you understand the ideas well.
- **Get together with other students to study.** Helping someone else learn is an excellent way to learn yourself and is necessary for several of your assignments (McGuire, 2015). And, if you get lost along the way, it's helpful to have folks who can help you out. Besides, it's fun and can increase your motivation for the course.
- **Stay on track with your group!** Some of your projects require you to work with others. Students who are present, active, and taking responsibility for group tasks generally do better. Students tend to be intolerant of peers who are absent – even for good reasons! – or who don't respond to group texts, emails, or phone calls. Google Docs and Zoom can help you work together, even when life isn't cooperating.

Let's talk ethics...

Many of you plan on entering one of the helping professions (e.g., psychology, criminal justice, nursing). Given this, it is especially important for us to begin practicing ethical behavior. This means using thoughtfully engaging with the material, coming to class prepared, talking about people in respectful manners, and listening to and respecting other ideas. This doesn't mean that you need to agree with everyone else—you may often disagree—but you need to find ways to disagree respectfully and professionally (e.g., using good verbal and nonverbal listening skills, backing up your opinions with strong evidence).

In turn, I promise to listen carefully, encourage critical thinking about the topics we discuss, and work toward a safe, thoughtful, and respectful classroom. I will consider other explanations of data and stay current in my reading of the literature.

What about Turnitin and plagiarism?

All work submitted through this course should be your original work, generated for the express purpose of completing the requirements of this course. All papers submitted in this course may be screened for originality using plagiarism detection software. Academic dishonesty will not be tolerated. Consider the following definitions:

Cheating. The use of unauthorized materials, information, ideas, study aids, etc., in any academic exercise. May include, but is not limited to: copying answers from another student's exam; using notes, books, or other resources

for an exam when not expressly permitted to do so; using electronic devices when not expressly permitted to do so; fraudulently obtaining or sharing an exam; submitting a term paper or other assignment written by someone else; plagiarizing the work of others; submitting the same term paper or other assignment to more than one instructor without obtaining prior permission to do so; or having someone else take an online course or online exam for you.

Plagiarism. The representation of another's work as your own (including that of an AI), without proper credit and/or citation. When an individual submits work that includes the words, ideas, or data of others, the source of that information must be acknowledged through complete, accurate and specific references, and if verbatim statements are included, through quotation marks or other accepted citation practices.

Additional violations of academic integrity may be found in PennWest's Policy AC059: [Academic Integrity](#), which also includes potential sanctions faced by the student for violations of the policy.

Pro Tip: Prevent plagiarism by tracking your use of others' words and ideas, but also by checking your work in Turnitin (there's a video in D2L to help you). If you have time before the due date and identify a problem, you can revise and resubmit. There is a 10% penalty for revisions after the due date.

What is PennWest University's policy on confidentiality?

Pennsylvania Western University and its faculty are committed to assuring a safe and productive educational environment for all students. In order to comply with the requirements of Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 and the university's commitment to offering supportive measures in accordance with the new regulations issued under Title IX, PennWest requires faculty members to report incidents of sexual violence shared by students to the university's Title IX Coordinator, Amy Salsgiver [salsgiver@pennwest.edu]. The only exceptions to the faculty member's reporting obligation are when incidents of sexual violence are communicated by a student during a classroom discussion, in a writing assignment for a class, or as part of a university-approved research project. **Faculty members are obligated to report sexual violence or any other abuse of a student who was, or is, a child (a person under 18 years of age) when the abuse allegedly occurred to the person designated in the university's Protection and Supervision of Minors on Campus Policy.**

Information regarding the reporting of sexual violence and the resources that are available to victims of sexual violence are available on the [Office of Social Equity and Title IX](#) website.

Bottom line: If someone hurts you, there are people who will listen to and help you. If you can, come talk to me after class or during my office hours. If you can't, send me an email. I will support you and help you get the support you need in whatever ways I can. I care. PennWest cares.

If you need accommodations for a documented disability

Pennsylvania Western University of Pennsylvania offers services to meet the accommodation needs of students with many types of disabilities. The Office for Students with Disabilities provides services to students based upon documentation of a disability and a request for accommodations based on this disability. Please refer to PennWest's [Reasonable Accommodations for Students with Disabilities Policy](#) for additional information. This policy complies with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973.

How are grades determined?

You can determine your grade by comparing points earned with the following scale (742 pts available). Student Learning Outcomes are identified on assignments. You must earn a C- in order to receive credit for this course within the major. Plus and minus grades will be given for the bottom and top 2% of a grade scale (e.g., 88 and 89% will earn a B+, 90 and 91% an A-).

Assignment	Points	Total	SLOs
Quizzes (14)	0	0	1, 3, 5, 6, 7, 8
Assignments (14)	2-50	342	1 - 8
Tests (4)	100	400	1 - 8

Grade	Points earned
A	668 and up
B	594 - 667
C	519 - 593
D	445 - 518
F	444 and down

Because your participation in class matters – to your learning and the class process – you will gain up to 20 pts. extra credit if you attend regularly (3 or fewer absences) and are active, thoughtful, and involved in our class. Ask questions! Respond to mine!

I would be happy if our class received only As and Bs. and will be happy to help you when you need it. If you want more help, make an appointment with the Center for Student Success (x2249). If you have test anxiety or if this course raises issues that you want to work on, call the Counseling Center (x2255).

Tentative Schedule

Unit 1: Setting the foundation		
Dates	Topic, Readings and Resources	Assignments
8/21 – 8/25	<i>Psychology is a way of thinking</i> Chapter 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 8/25: Take the Divergent Association Task twice and post your screenshots. Keep track of your scores. (5 pts) ▪ Due 9/12: Complete the CITI Training (30 pts) ▪ Chapter 1 quiz (opt.)
8/28 – 8/30	<i>Sources of information: Why research is best and how to find it</i> Chapter 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 9/3: Correct these APA References (12 pts.) ▪ Everyday Research Methods blog: <i>Evidence-based parenting interventions</i> (opt.) ▪ Chapter 2 quiz (opt)
9/1 – 9/8	<i>Three claims, four validities: Tools for consumers of research</i> Chapter 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 9/10: Three claims, four validities (18 pts) ▪ Everyday Research Methods blog: <i>Evidence-based tips for well-being during a pandemic</i> (opt.) ▪ Chapter 3 quiz (opt)
9/11 – 9/13	<i>Ethical guidelines for psychology research</i> ▪ Chapter 4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 9/12: Complete the CITI Training (30 pts) ▪ Everyday Research Methods blog: <i>The ethics of "the Facebook experiment"</i> (opt.) ▪ Chapter 4 quiz (opt) ▪ 9/13: Test 1, mc and take home (Chapters 1-4, 100 pts)
Unit 2: Samples and surveys		
9/15 – 9/20	<i>Identifying good measurement</i> ▪ Chapter 5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 9/23: Operationalizing "aggression" (complete in pairs, 25 pts) ▪ Everyday Research Methods blog: <i>How do you count sea turtles?</i> (opt.) ▪ Chapter 5 quiz (opt)
9/22 – 9/29	<i>Surveys, observations and sampling: Describing what people do</i> ▪ Chapters 6 and 7 ▪ Dean (2022)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 9/26: Post a poll or survey that you found on the Discussion Bd, identifying strengths/weaknesses. Focus on the questions asked or the sample used rather than the results. (10 pts) ▪ 9/29: America's Complex Relationship with Guns (23 pts) ▪ Due 10/11: Begin working with your group on "Do people who have moved frequently prefer shopping at chain stores?" This assignment is on pp. 234-236 of Morling, Chapter 8 (50 pts) ▪ Everyday Research Methods blog: <i>A serendipitous study of long-term memory in birds</i> (opt) ▪ Chapters 6 and 7 quizzes (opt) ▪ 10/2: Test 2, mc and take home (Chapters 5-7, 100 pts)

Unit 3: Basic research approaches		
10/2 – 10/9	<i>Bivariate correlational research</i> Chapter 8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 10/6: Happy ALF! Work on collecting your data! ▪ Everyday Research Methods blog: <i>Mothers' friendships are good for babies' brains</i> (opt.) ▪ Chapter 8 quiz (opt)
10/11-10/16	<i>Multivariate correlational research</i> Chapter 9	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 10/11: Turn in "Do people who have moved frequently prefer shopping at chain stores?" Attach your printout of your statistics! Gather at least 10 participants per person in your group. (50 pts) ▪ 10/18: Does Body Image Play a Role in Risky Sex? (23 pts.) ▪ Everyday Research Methods blog: <i>Cuter kids get higher grades</i> (opt.) ▪ Chapter 9 quiz (opt.)
10/18-10/30	<i>Introduction to simple experiments</i> ▪ Chapter 10	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 10/20: No class, I'll be at a conference! Work on your experiment! ▪ 11/2: Begin working with your group on "Do we remember words better if we process them deeply?" This assignment is on pp. 316-321 of Morling, Chapter 10 (50 pts) ▪ Everyday Research Methods blog: <i>Does this font make me look conservative?</i> (opt.) ▪ Chapter 10 quiz (opt.) ▪ 10/30: Test 3, mc and take home (Chapters 6-10, 100 pts)
Unit 4: Experiments and more		
11/1 – 11/8	<i>More on experiments: Confounding and obscuring variables</i> Chapter 11	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 11/2: Turn in "Do we remember words better if we process them deeply?" Attach your printout of your statistics! Gather at least 10 participants per person in your group. (50 pts) ▪ Everyday Research Methods blog: <i>Testing a COVID drug: Design flaws and ethical lapses</i> (opt.) ▪ Chapter 11 quiz (opt.)
11/10-11/15	<i>Experiments with more than one independent variable</i> Chapter 12	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 11/16: Social Facilitation of Eating (42 pts.) ▪ Everyday Research Methods blog: <i>How we spot leadership potential of men and women</i> (opt.) ▪ Chapter 12 quiz (opt.)
11/17-11/27	<i>Quasi-experiments and small N designs</i> Chapter 13	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Class on Monday and Tuesday this week! Happy Thanksgiving! ▪ 11/28: Start School at 8:30? (44 pts) ▪ Everyday Research Methods blog: <i>Be quiet! Psychological effects of noise</i> (opt.) ▪ Chapter 13 quiz (opt.)
11/29 – 12/1	<i>Replication, transparency, and real-world importance</i> Chapter 14	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 11/29 10am: Replication survey. Turn in a screenshot of your result screen and describe what you learned. (5 pts) ▪ 12/1 10am: <i>p</i>-hacking demo. Turn in a screenshot of your result screen and describe what you learned. (5 pts.) ▪ 12/1: Does Behavioral Activation work? (26 pts bonus, which can help compensate for a missing or weak assignment) ▪ Everyday Research Methods blog: <i>Delay of gratification (marshmallow study replication)</i> (opt.) ▪ Chapter 14 quiz (opt) ▪ W12/6, 8am: Test 4, mc and take home (Chapters 10-14, 100 pts)