

Advanced Methods in Personality/Social Psychology Psychology 301, Spring 2013

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218 Severance

Office Hours: MW 11:00 – 12:00, and by appointment

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Course Description

This course is an introduction to the conduct of research in the overlapping disciplines of social and personality psychology. Although it is impossible to examine every aspect of this topic in a single semester, I have chosen several projects that will expose you to a representative sample of the theoretical, methodological, and ethical issues that characterize research in these areas. The goals of the laboratory are: 1) to engage you in the process involved in planning, conducting, analyzing, and reporting research in personality and social psychology; 2) to provide you with experience in the statistical analyses of psychological data using the SPSS statistical software; and 3) in general, to help you to feel more confident as a researcher.

Readings

There is a text that is required reading for this course. There will be a series of journal articles that you will be required to read, which will be essential for your planning of the research project that you will be engaged in.

Text: Dana S. Dunn (2009). *Research Methods for Social Psychology*.

Articles

Course Requirements

This course comprises a number of interrelated and multifaceted requirements. These are outlined below, and more detailed information concerning each will be provided in the form of handouts and classroom discussion.

Group Research Project

The major project that you will be working on will be a semester-long group research project. Your group will be assigned a hypothesis and will: a) plan a study to test the hypothesis; b) run subjects, collect data, and input data into an SPSS data file; c) analyze and interpret the data; and d) prepare an APA-style report of the study. Responsibility for the first two tasks will be shared equally among group members, thereby greatly reducing the individual workload. The analysis and interpretation of the data will be done individually. Regarding the APA-style research report, the writing of the methods

section will be a group effort, while the Introduction, Results, and Discussion sections will be individual projects.

Class Participation

This course is *not* a lecture course. Its purpose is to engage you to think about, discuss, and implement research ideas. The success of the course depends vitally upon the degree to which you are *actively involved* with it. Ideally, the class should function as a research group in which ideas are freely presented and critically examined in order to improve their quality and yield. Class participation will play a significant role in the determination of final grades.

Grading

APA-style Research Project	
Introduction (I)	50
Method (G)	35
Results (I)	50
Discussion (I)	35
Group Project Presentation I (G)	15
Group Project Presentation II (G)	20
Class Participation	45

Grades will be assigned in the following manner:

245-250 A+	195-199 C+	000-149 F
231-244 A	181-194 C	
225-230 A-	175-180 C-	
220-224 B+	170-174 D+	
206-219 B	155-169 D	
200-205 B-	150-154 D-	

The Honor Code and Confidentiality

The Oberlin Honor Code will be in effect as usual in this course. Because this course involves research with human participants, special ethical issues arise that are not usually encountered in lecture courses. As a member of this lab, you are an *investigator*, and your activities should be in conformity with APA guidelines with respect to ethical principles. In particular, it is extremely important that information obtained from research participants, whether through questionnaires or other means, be kept confidential both during the semester and afterward. **Failure to protect a subject's confidentiality is unethical and will constitute a serious violation of the Honor Code.**

Class Schedule

WEEK 1	M 2/4	Introduction and Overview
	W 2/6	Studying Social Psychology Reading: Ch 1
	F 2/8	Developing Research Topics in Social Psychology Reading: Ch 2
WEEK 2	M 2/11	Project Ideas
	W 2/13	Basic Research Design Group Assignments Reading: Ch 4
	F 2/15	Research Discussion
WEEK 3	M 2/18	Introducing a Difference Reading: Ch 7
	W 2/20	Measuring What Happens: Dependent Variables Reading: Ch 8
	F 2/22	Research Discussion
WEEK 4	M 2/25	Conducting Social Psychological Experiments: Practical Matters Reading: Ch 10
	W 2/27	Validity & Realism in Research Reading: Ch 9
	F 3/1	Research Discussion
WEEK 5	M 3/4	Developing Questionnaires and Surveys Reading: Ch 6
	W 3/6	Ethical Issues in Social Psychological Research Reading: Ch 3
	F 3/8	Research Discussion
WEEK 6	M 3/11	IRB Proposals Due
	W 3/13	Group Presentations
	F 3/15	Group Presentations
WEEK 7	M 3/18	Dress Rehearsals: Preliminary Run Methods Section Due
	W 3/20	Dress Rehearsals: Preliminary Run
	F 3/22	No Class Meeting
SPRING BREAK		
WEEK 9	M 4/1	Launching the Study/Data Analysis Reading: Ch 11
WEEK 10 to WEEK 11	[Run the study (no class)]	
WEEK 12	W 4/24	Discussion of Projects/Writing It Up Reading: Ch 12
	F 4/26	Writing It Up
WEEK 13	M 4/29	Alternatives to Experimental Research Reading: Ch 5

W 5/1 Field Demonstration
F 5/3 Research Discussion

WEEK 14 M 5/6 Group Presentations
W 5/8 Group Presentations
F 5/10 Retrospective View

FINAL: Research Papers are due by Wednesday, May 15, by 4:30 p.m.