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PSYC 320.01: Advanced Psychological Research Methods

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SYLLABUS

Instructor: Dr. Nabil Haddad, Skaggs Bldg 143, Ext. 4521
 Office Hours: TBA
 Texts: 320 Manual (U.C. Bookstore), and APA Manual
 Tests: None
 Assignments: Plenty
 TAs: Marie Middleton and Angela Wheeler (Skaggs Bldg 368, ext. 6514)

This course is intended to give you an appreciation for conducting research. I hope that you will learn how to use the library's resources, how to critique published research, and how to design, conduct and analyze research projects. It is virtually impossible to learn how to think in a certain manner by reading a textbook. Therefore, you will be asked to do some homework, to conduct experiments in class and write the "articles" describing them and, finally, to provide a prospectus for an experiment of your own design.

Homework Assignments:

There will be a number of assignments in this course. They will cover library work, journal exposure, ethics, etc. These will be handed out to you as soon as possible. Each will have a deadline which must be met. Late papers will cost you 10% of the grade for every day you=re late. You will have at least a week to turn in each assignment, therefore no excuses for late work will be acceptable.

In-class Experiments:

We will conduct a number of experiments in class. Some will be designed ahead of time for you. Others will be the product of a class effort. In all cases, you will collect the data, analyze it and write an article on that experiment. The article must conform to the APA format. Each will be graded on a 40-point scale. After grading the first article, we will hold a writing workshop in class and will go over your product. You will have an opportunity to learn from your own mistakes and to rewrite the article--if you wish. The higher grade will count for your grade in the course. After that, each write-up will be final, no workshop will be held, and you will be responsible for seeking individual help when needed.

The 40 points will be assigned according to the following factors:

- | | |
|-------------------------|-------------|
| a) English | - 10 points |
| b) Development of ideas | - 10 points |
| c) APA format | - 10 points |
| d) Accuracy | - 10 points |

These factors will be addressed in class and during the workshop; we will define the criteria for grading each factor. The assignments listed earlier are designed to help you write better reports – as in the workshop. If you take them seriously and if you start reading research articles that you are personally interested in, you should perform well.

Prospectus

You are required to submit a proposed study at the end of the quarter. The topic can be derived from any psychological area of study. However, the study must be an experiment. It cannot be a correlational study or a survey. To aid you in designing an experiment, see the "proposal" section in the manual. It includes the following:

- a) Problem identification and hypothesis testing.
- b) Independent and dependent variables.

You will be required to fill out the proposal's worksheets and turn them in. You will also make an appointment to discuss your work on the project up to that time. No student will be allowed to turn in the final project without first accomplishing these preliminary tasks. I believe--strongly--that a structured approach to designing your experiment will benefit you more than worrying, panicking, procrastinating and attempting to get it down on paper at the last minute.

Finally, you will be assigned a time (15 minutes) during the last two weeks of the semester to present your proposal orally to the class as a whole. The proposal may be altered depending on the feedback you receive at that time from your colleagues in class. The final version will be due at noon of the second day of FINALS WEEK. Like all other assignments in this course, the deadline must be adhered to. Assignments and papers that are handed in late will be penalized at the rate of 10 percentage points per day of delay.

Course Grades:

- A = 90% - 100%
- B = 80% - 89%
- C = 70% - 79%
- D = 60% - 69%
- F = 0 - 59%

- NOTES:
1. Oct. 15 is the last day to drop classes. After that date, no petitions to drop the course will be signed and no Incompletes will be given except in documentable emergency situations.
 2. Students with disabilities have the responsibility to declare their disability to the instructor at the beginning of the course if they require accommodations. Such students have the responsibility to arrange for such accommodations with Disability Services for Students.