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PSYX 120.02: Research Methods I

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Introduction to Psychology Research Methods (Research Methods I)

Psyx 120, Section 02

Course Location and Time

University Hall 210
MWF, 11:00 AM-11:50 AM

Instructor Information

Instructor: Kinsie Dunham
Office: Skaggs Building (SB) 360
Main Psychology Office: SB 143
Email: kinsie.dunham@umontana.edu
Office Hours: Mondays 8:00 am-9:20 am, Wednesdays 9:30am-10:50am, by appointment

Course Goals and Objectives

One of the goals of the course is to help students understand how psychology fits into the larger enterprise of science. We will start with an examination of some of the important characteristics of science: induction and deduction, the importance of theories, the necessity for empirical observations, and the social aspect of science.

We will consider the main methods that psychologists use to gain information about psychological concerns. We will discuss the experimental method, the correlational (relational) method, and some quasi-experimental methods. You will be expected to know the advantages and disadvantages of each method. A technical vocabulary goes with each, and you will be expected to be very well acquainted with the meaning of these terms. Concepts such as internal and external validity, independent and dependent variables, and confounding variables, are used all the time in psychological research, and an understanding of the meaning of the words and *how they are applied* is essential.

Three widely used experimental designs will be discussed; the between-subjects, the within subjects, and mixed designs. The course will also cover “complex” (multi-factorial) designs. You will be expected to be familiar with the characteristics of each and their advantages and disadvantages. You will be expected to be able to construct a graph that represents data in a meaningful way and to know how to interpret graphs of data from both single variable and factorial experiments.

Statistics are an integral part of the research process and you will be exposed to the very basics of descriptive and inferential statistics. Since this is not a course in statistics, you will not be required to memorize formulae or computed values. But you will be expected to know what these statistical tools do for us and how they help us make rational decisions about data.

Most of the course will be devoted to how to do psychological research, but an equally important question is whether to do the research. Is this research ethical? We will consider ethical issues in research throughout the semester. This is an essential aspect of becoming a critical consumer of research. In addition to ethical considerations, this course aims to enable you to understand and assess the value of psychological research. In order to develop these skills, the course will present ample examples of current psychological research and we will engage this research with a critical eye. Your mastery of the topics described above will be assessed on tests using a multiple-choice and short-answer format, as well as on the basis of class participation in daily discussions of clinical topics. The questions will tap your knowledge of the meaning of technical terms and your ability to apply these terms in particular situations.

Recommended Text

Shaughnessy, J. J., Zechmeister, E. B., & Zechmeister, J. S. (2015). *Research Methods in Psychology* (10th ed.). New York: McGraw Hill Education.

The text will serve as a reference for most of the topics covered in class. It will also serve as a resource for definitions for some of the key terms tested in the key terms quizzes. Definitions will be provided explicitly in class.

There will be supplemental readings as well, all of which will be provided on Moodle.

Course Guidelines and Policies

Attendance

Attendance in class is expected. Regular participation in class discussions and engagement in lecture material is necessary to do well in this class. Material tested on key terms quizzes and exams will primarily come from lecture material. Please come to class on time and stay for the entire period. You are responsible for all announcements made in class.

Cell Phones and related technology

Students are expected to practice cell phone and computer etiquette in class. Make sure cell phones and notifications are turned off (or set to silent) during class. Please do not engage in texting or online messaging activity during class. Cell phones use, texting, use of mp3 players, etc. are not permitted during in-class exams. If your technology use becomes a distraction to the instructor or other students, you may be asked to leave the class. Please remember that you are sharing your classroom with other students who each deserve to learn in the best possible environment.

Schedule Changes

This schedule is subject to change. Students are responsible for knowing about changes in assignments and schedules that may be announced in class, on Moodle, or via e-mail.

Disability Modifications

The University of Montana assures equal access to instruction through collaboration between students with disabilities, instructors, and [Disability Services for Students](#). If you think you may have a disability adversely affecting your academic performance, and you have not already registered with Disability Services, please contact Disability Services in Lommasson Center 154 or call 406.243.2243. I will work you and Disability Services to provide an appropriate modification.

All materials in this course are intended to be accessible. If you have any trouble with accessing any course material, please let me know, or you can contact [Disability Services for Students](#).

Add/Drop

Through the first fifteen (15) instructional days of the semester, students may use [CyberBear](#) to drop courses. For courses dropped by the fifteenth instructional day, no fees are charged and courses are not recorded. Monday, September 17th is the last day to drop, change a section, or change grading options without a drop/add form. After this date, a grade of "WP" or "WF" will appear on the transcript. Petitions to drop will be granted only in documentable emergency cases. Note that course failure, in and of itself, does not constitute an emergency. Please plan accordingly.

Incompletes

Departmental and University policies regarding Incompletes do not allow changing "Incomplete" grades after one year after an "I" has been granted.

Academic Honesty

All students must practice academic honesty. Academic misconduct is subject to an academic penalty by the course instructor and/or a disciplinary sanction by the University.

Plagiarism or cheating of any kind will not be tolerated. Plagiarism is stealing or passing off the ideas or words of another as one's own without properly crediting the source. This behavior is unethical and a violation of the [Student Conduct Code](#). Evidence of either plagiarism or cheating may result in an automatic "F" for that assignment and a deduction of 40 points from the final grade. The instructor also reserves the right to assign an "F" as a final grade if either cheating or plagiarism occurs.

Student Conduct Code

All students need to be familiar with the [Student Conduct Code](#).

Psychology Department Information

The website for the [Department of Psychology](#) has important information pertaining to psychology major and minor requirements, admission requirements, Psych 100, supervised research, etc. If you are a psychology major, or are thinking about becoming one, this is important information for you to review. In addition, the website provides links to sites with information on graduate school admissions, graduate programs, and careers in psychology. If you are at all interested in pursuing graduate study or employment in psychology, you can use these links as a starting place for your research on programs.

Moodle Online System

Course announcements, additional class materials, and discussion forums will be on the [Moodle](#) site. There you will find a copy of this syllabus, additional readings, key term quizzes, and portals for unloading homework assignments. I will also post suggestions for optional readings if you are interested in further information about a particular topic, as well as relevant websites and other resources. [IT Central Help Desk](#): 243-4357 (8am-5pm).

Be sure to use your official UM e-mail address with Moodle. You will need to have and use a university e-mail address and to check it regularly; students must use a university e-mail address in electronic correspondence for this course.

Grading

Your grade in this course is based on a total of 500 points.

This is made up of two midterm exams, worth 50 points each; six key term quizzes, each worth 15 points, plus a 10 point bonus for completing all 6 quizzes on time; twenty brief Homework Assignments, each worth five points; lecture attendance points, taken randomly throughout the semester; review day attendance, worth 10 points each; and a final project, worth 100 points. Extra credit may also be earned through participating in psychology research studies through SONA. See below for more details on enrolling in SONA.

Criteria	Points
Lecture Attendance (5 points per lecture, randomly taken 16 times)	80pts
Review Day Attendance (10 points each)	20pts
Exam 1 & 2 (50 points each)	100pts
Check-In Quizzes 1 - 6 (15 points each, 10 points for completing all 6 on time)	100pts
Homework Assignments 1- 20 (5 points each)	100pts
Final Project	100pts

Grade Scale

The grade scale in this class uses “plus” and “minus” grades. Note that a grade of C or better is needed for required Psychology courses. However, be sure to ask your specific academic advisor what is grade is required to be considered passing, as this varies by department and degree plan.

Grade	Percentage \geq	Points for GPA computation	Course Total Points Required
A	93	4.0	500 - 465
A-	90	3.7	464.5 - 450
B+	87	3.3	449.5 - 435
B	83	3.0	434.5 - 415
B-	80	2.7	414.5 - 400
C+	77	2.3	399.5 - 385
C	70	2.0	384.5 - 350
D	60	1.0	349.5 - 300
F	59 or lower	0	299.5 - 0

Attendance

Attendance is essential to learning new material, and therefore will be taken randomly throughout the semester. Students must remain throughout the entire lecture in order to receive attendance points (i.e., leaving early will result in 0 attendance points of that lecture). Additionally, each student who attends review day lectures will receive 10 points each. Attendance points cannot be made up without an approved, documented excuse. See Make-Up Policy section for more information.

Homework Assignments

A key aspect of this course is learning how to apply lecture material to real world examples. Therefore, a large portion of points for this course will be earned from thoughtfully completing homework assignments. Homework assignments will be given during lecture, and posted to Moodle the same day. Homework assignments are to be turned into the appropriate Moodle portal on time, typically a week after being assigned. No late homework assignments will be accepted. All due dates will be announced in class and posted to Moodle. Please check the course schedule for assignment dates as well as due dates for homework assignments.

Check-In Quizzes

There will be six Moodle quizzes covering key terms and concepts from the previous lectures. Each quiz will be worth fifteen points. You have two chances to take each check-in quiz; only your highest score

will count towards your grade. These quizzes will close at 11:59:59pm on the day they are due and cannot be made up or taken late. Each submission is limited to 1 hour. Key Terms lists will be posted on Moodle and definitions will be an explicit part of the lectures. Be sure to study and understand all concepts discussed in lecture as well in order to be successful in these quizzes. If you complete all six of these quizzes on time, you will receive 10 points towards your course total. *Please note these 10 points are included in the total course grade, and are not extra credit points.*

Exams

There will be 2 midterm exams. All of the exams are worth 50 points and consist of multiple-choice, fill-in-the-blank questions, and short answer essay questions. The information tested on exams will draw heavily from lectures as well as from the readings.

There are no make-up examinations for individual exams except in cases of true, documentable emergencies. Arrangements to miss an exam must be made before the time of the exam.

Final Project

There is also a final project, worth 100 points, in lieu of a final exam. Details will be forthcoming later in the semester.

Extra Credit

Up to 10 extra credit points can be earned by participating in psychology research through SONA. Each SONA credit is worth 1 extra credit point. Be sure to assign SONA credits to Psyx 120.02 in order to receive extra credit. Additionally, make yourself aware of SONA deadlines, as the website closes prior to the end of the semester.

SONA Sign-Up

How to Create a SONA Account

1. Signing up for studies occurs via SONA (an online sign-up system). To sign up, you will need to create an account online.
2. Visit [Psychology Research Sign-Up System](#)
 - a. When creating a SONA account, be sure you use your umontana e-mail address as your username (if your umontana e-mail address is jane.doe@umontana.edu, you would enter jane.doe); *if you do not do this properly, then you will not get the account information.* As a result, your research credits will not be counted.
 - i. EXAMPLE:

Email: jane.doe@umontana.edu

Username: jane.doe

- b. Be sure you enter the right course section number (02), or else you may not be properly credited.

How to Sign Up for SONA Studies

3. Signing up and checking studies is easy; simply check the Department of Psychology's SONA page. Each experiment has a different name. Once you have participated in a specific experiment, you may not sign up for any other experiment with the same name. If you do, you will only receive credit for the first experiment.
 - a. Your credit will be tracked via the online system – you will be awarded credit for participation within 72 hours of participating by the researcher who was in charge of the study. If you check your credit and it has not been awarded in a timely fashion, contact the experimenter listed as the contact on the study to resolve this conflict. At the end of the term, your instructor will automatically get your credits from the online system.

Course Schedule

Date	DOW	Lecture Topics	Assignments
8/27	M	Syllabus Day: Best Day of the School Year	
8/29	W	Topic 1: Introduction and Ethics <i>HW#1 Assigned</i>	
8/31	F	Topic 1: Introduction and Ethics	
9/3	M	Labor Day - No Class	
9/5	W	Topic 1: Introduction and Ethics	<i>HW #1 Due (Assigned 8/29)</i>
9/7	F	Topic 1: Introduction and Ethics <i>HW #2 Assigned</i>	
9/10	M	Topic 2: Basics of Research Methodology <i>HW #3 Assigned</i>	Check-In Quiz Due: Topic 1
9/12	W	Topic 2: Basics of Research Methodology	
9/14	F	Topic 3: Constructs <i>HW #4 Assigned</i>	<i>HW #2 Due (Assigned 9/7)</i>
9/17	M	Topic 3: Constructs <i>HW #5 Assigned</i>	<i>HW# 3 Due (Assigned 9/10)</i>

9/19	W	Topic 4: Measurement	Check-In Quiz Due: Topics 2 & 3
9/21	F	Topic 4: Measurement	<i>HW #4 Due (Assigned 9/14)</i>
9/24	M	Topic 4: Measurement <i>HW #6 and #7 Assigned</i>	<i>HW #5 Due (Assigned 9/17)</i>
9/26	W	Topic 5: Observational Research	
9/28	F	Topic 5: Observational Research	
10/1	M	Topic 5: Observational Research	<i>HW #6 and #7 Due (Assigned 9/24)</i>
10/3	W	Review Day	Check-In Quiz Due: Topics 4 & 5
10/5	F	Section 1 Exam: Ethics, Basic Research Methodology, Constructs, Observational Research, and Measurement	
10/8	M	Topic 6: Relational Research <i>HW #8 Assigned</i>	
10/10	W	Topic 6: Relational Research	
10/12	F	Topic 6: Relational Research <i>HW # 9 Assigned</i>	
10/15	M	Topic 7: Small-N Designs <i>HW #10 Assigned</i>	<i>HW #8 Due (Assigned 10/8)</i>
10/17	W	Topic 7: Small-N Designs	
10/19	F	Topic 7: Small-N Designs <i>HW #11 Assigned</i>	<i>HW #9 Due (Assigned 10/12)</i>
10/22	M	Topic 8: Quasi-Experimental Methods <i>HW #12 Assigned</i>	Check-In Quiz Due: Topics 6 & 7 <i>HW #10 Due (Assigned 10/15)</i>
10/24	W	Topic 8: Quasi-Experimental Methods	

10/26	F	Topic 8: Quasi-Experimental Methods <i>HW #13 Assigned</i>	<i>HW #11 Due (Assigned 10/19)</i>
10/29	M	Topic 9: Experimentation <i>HW #14 Assigned</i>	<i>HW #12 Due (Assigned 10/22)</i>
10/31	W	Topic 9: Experimentation	
11/2	F	Topic 9: Experimentation	<i>HW #13 Due (Assigned 10/26)</i>
11/5	M	Topic 9: Experimentation <i>HW #15 and #16 Assigned</i>	<i>HW #14 Due (Assigned 10/29)</i>
11/7	W	Review Day	Check-In Quiz Due: Topics 8 & 9
11/9	F	Section 2 Exam: Relational Research, Small-N Design, Quasi- Experimental, and Experimental Designs	
11/12	M	Veteran's Day- No Class	
11/14	W	Topic 10: Complex Designs	<i>HW #15 and #16 Due (Assigned 11/5)</i>
11/16	F	Topic 10: Complex Designs	
11/19	M	Topic 10: Complex Designs <i>HW #17 and #18 Assigned</i>	
11/21	W	Travel Day: No Class	
11/23	F	Gobble, Gobble: No Class	
11/26	M	Topic 11: Applied Methods <i>HW #19 Assigned</i>	<i>HW #17 and #18 Due (Assigned 11/14)</i>
11/28	W	Topic 11: Applied Methods	
11/30	F	Topic 11: Applied Methods <i>HW #20 Assigned</i>	

12/3	M	Topic 12: Consuming Research Articles	Check-In Quiz Due: Topics 10 & 11 <i>HW# 19 Due (Assigned 11/26)</i>
12/5	W	Topic 12: Consuming Research Articles	
12/7	F	Topic 12: Consuming Research Articles	<i>HW #20 Due (Assigned 11/30)</i> Final Project Due: 12/11