

**Syllabus for Psychology 397 – Section 2
Research Methods in Personality and Clinical Psychology
Fall 2011**

Thursdays 3:30-5:20, HH 373 (HH 139 on Sep. 15, 22, Nov. 3; PAS 1237 on Oct. 6)

Instructor: Jonathan Oakman
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Office Hours: Mondays 11-12 am

Course Objectives:

This course is about the research methods used in the scientific study of personality and abnormal psychology (psychopathology). Within the course we will be covering theory, methods and applications through a combination of didactic and experiential learning. You will have opportunities to demonstrate your command of the materials through in-class discussions, a research project, quizzes and a midterm test.

Learning Objectives:

1. To come to a better understanding the strengths and weaknesses of various research designs.
2. To develop critical thinking skills through readings, in-class activities, and written assignments.
3. To demonstrate understanding of clinical research methods in a written research proposal.

Course Format & Structure:

Weekly reading assignments will review basics in research methods, provide a framework for understanding current directions and controversies in the field, as well as the methodological approaches used to address these questions. Assigned readings come from both the textbook and the research literature, and will be available online at the ACE course website. Please be sure to read the assigned papers and textbook chapters prior to attending class. Class time will be divided roughly in half, with the first part of the course devoted primarily to lectures, and the second part either to lecture-related research demonstrations or sessions in the computer lab.

Textbook:

Kazdin, Alan E. (2003). *Research design in clinical psychology (4th edition)*. Boston: Allyn & Bacon.

Evaluation:

Your grade in this course will be based on the following:

1. *Two Midterm Exams:* Midterm tests based on material in the course readings and presented in lectures. The midterms will each be worth 25% of your final grade.
2. *Research Critique:* Drawing upon your knowledge of clinical research methods, you will evaluate the methodological strengths and weaknesses of a published research article. You will be provided with a list of possible articles to critique. You are expected to draw on relevant course material in writing this critique. The critique should be approximately 3-5 pages (double spaced) in length and will be worth 15% of your final grade. Grades for late critiques will be subject to a penalty of ten percent per day until

submitted. Further instruction will be provided on the formatting and expected content of the critique in future lectures.

3. *Research Proposal*: The purpose of this paper is to allow you the opportunity to design a clinical/personality research study on a topic of your choosing. The expectation is that you will utilize the material you learned in class to design a study that addresses your research question. You are required to submit a summary of your theory/hypothesis early in the semester, which will count toward 5 % of your final grade. You will receive feedback from the teaching assistant, which you are expected to incorporate into your study design. You are also provided with the opportunity to submit the method section and results/discussion sections by the dates specified below. You will not be graded on these submissions but will receive feedback from the T.A. so that you can improve the paper before you submit your final draft. Late submissions will not be accepted for any section. However, any section may be submitted before the stated due date. The final paper should be 8-12 pages long double-spaced (not including references and relevant figures). The Final Research Proposal is worth 30 % and late submissions will be penalized ten percent per day. Further instructions on the expected format and content of each section will be provided in future classes.

Outline (theory, hypothesis, references) - Thursday October 13 (5 %)

Draft of Introduction (optional) – Thursday, November 3 (no mark; for feedback only)

Draft of Method section (optional) - Thursday, November 10 (no mark; for feedback only)

Results/discussion (optional) - Thursday, December 1 (no mark; for feedback only)

Final Research Proposal - Thursday, December 15 (30 %)

Breakdown of Marks:

Midterm Test 1	25%
Research Proposal – Theory and Hypotheses	5%
Midterm Test 2	25%
Research Critique	15%
Final Research Proposal	30%

Below is a quick summary of the course.

Week	Date	Readings	Topic	Assignments
1	Sep. 15 HH 139	none	Introduction to the course Review of Personality Theory and History of Clinical Psychology	
2	Sep. 22 HH 139	Kazdin (2003) Chapter 5	Selection of Research Problem & Design (Elizabeth Orr)	Show-and-tell: Research on Sex Addiction
3	Sep. 29	Kazdin (2003) Chapter 2	Internal and External Validity (Elizabeth Orr) Research Trinity and Validity Critique of Research in Psychology	Writing Clinic: Writing an Introduction
4	Oct. 6 PAS 1237	none	Tim Ireland (Library Liaison) Note: Held in PAS 1237	
5	Oct. 13	Kazdin (2003) Chapter 3	Construct and Statistical Conclusion Validity	Show-and-tell: False-Positive Psychology Writing Clinic: Writing a Method Section
6	Oct. 20	Kazdin (2003) Chapter 4	Sources of Artifact and Bias Measurement Introduction to Classical Test Theory	Preliminary Outline with References due Writing Clinic: Writing a Research Critique
7	Oct. 27	none	MIDTERM EXAM 1	
8	Nov. 3 Note: HH 139	Kazdin (2003) Chapter 6, 7	Experimental Research Control and Comparison Groups (Elizabeth Orr)	Draft of Introduction Due (optional) Show-and-tell: Studies of Psychopharmacology
9	Nov. 10	Kazdin (2003) Chapter 9	Observational Research: Case Control and Cohort Designs (Elizabeth Orr)	Draft of Method Section
10	Nov. 17		Measured Variables, Multiple Regression, and Path Analysis	Research Critique is Due Show-and-tell: Research on Self-Certainty (Elizabeth Orr) Writing Clinic: Writing Results and Discussion Sections
11	Nov. 24		MIDTERM EXAM 2	
12	Dec. 1	Kazdin (2003) Chapter 10	Single-Case Designs Course Concluding Comments	Draft of Expected Results / Discussion Due (optional)
	Dec. 15			Research Proposal is Due

UW-ACE:

UW-ACE will be used on a regular basis for the course. In addition to the course outline, you will find lecture slides, assignments, and useful resources on the UW-ACE website. You are advised to check the [UW Home Page](http://www.uwaterloo.ca/) (<http://www.uwaterloo.ca/>) as well as UW-ACE for important announcements should an emergency arise.

E-Mail Communication:

The preferred methods of e-mail communication with your instructors and teaching assistants are:

- (1) messages to e-mail addresses listed on the front of this course outline, or
- (2) messages through the course account in UW-ACE.

It is your responsibility to check e-mail regularly for important and time sensitive messages. You should use your UW account for all e-mail correspondence to UW personnel for reasons such as identification, reliability, and security. Note that higher priority may be given to e-mail received from UW accounts versus other accounts such as hotmail, yahoo, etc. See "[Official Student Email Address](http://www.adm.uwaterloo.ca/infocist/emailuse.html)" for further details:
<http://www.adm.uwaterloo.ca/infocist/emailuse.html>

The Official Version of the Course Outline:

If there is a discrepancy between the hard copy outline (i.e., if students were provided with a hard copy at the first class) and the outline posted on ACE, the outline on ACE will be deemed the official version. Outlines on ACE may change as instructors develop a course, but they become final as of the first class meeting for the term.

Students with Disabilities:

The Office for Persons with Disabilities (OPD), located in Needles Hall, Room 1132, collaborates with all academic departments to arrange appropriate accommodations for students with disabilities without compromising the academic integrity of the curriculum. If you require academic accommodations to lessen the impact of your disability, please register with the OPD at the beginning of each academic term.

Accommodation due to Illness or Bereavement:

Students who are requesting accommodation for course requirements (assignments, midterm tests, final exams, etc.) due to illness should do the following:

- seek medical treatment as soon as possible and obtain a completed UW Verification of Illness Form: http://www.healthservices.uwaterloo.ca/Health_Services/verification.html
- submit that form to the instructor within 48 hours.
- (preferably) inform the instructor by the due date for the course requirement that you will be unable to meet the deadline and that documentation will be forthcoming.

In the case of a missed final exam, the instructor and student will negotiate an extension for the final exam which will typically be written as soon as possible, but no later than the next offering of the course.

In the case of a missed assignment deadline or midterm test, the instructor will either a) waive the course component and re-weight remaining term work as he/she deems fit according to circumstances and the goals of the course, or b) provide an extension.

In the case of bereavement, the instructor will provide similar accommodations to those for illness. Appropriate documentation to support the request will be required.

Students who are experiencing extenuating circumstances should also inform their academic advisors regarding their personal difficulties.

Concerns About the Course or Instructor (Informal Stage):

We in the Psychology Department take great pride in the high quality of our program and our instructors. Though infrequent, we know that students occasionally find themselves in situations of conflict with their instructors over course policies or grade assessments. If such a conflict arises, the Associate Chair for Undergraduate Affairs (Dr. Colin Ellard) is available for consultation and to mediate a resolution between the student and instructor. Dr. Ellard's contact information is as follows:

Email: cellard@uwaterloo.ca
Ph 519-888- 4567 ext 36852

A student who believes that a decision affecting some aspect of his/her university life has been unfair or unreasonable may have grounds for initiating a grievance. See Policy 70 and 71 below for further details.

Academic Integrity, Academic Offenses, Grievance, and Appeals:

Academic Integrity: in order to maintain a culture of academic integrity, members of the University of Waterloo community are expected to promote honesty, trust, fairness, respect and responsibility.

Discipline: A student is expected to know what constitutes academic integrity, to avoid committing academic offenses, and to take responsibility for his/her actions. A student who is unsure whether an action constitutes an offense, or who needs help in learning how to avoid offenses (e.g., plagiarism, cheating) or about 'rules' for group work/collaboration should seek guidance from the course professor, academic advisor, or the Undergraduate Associate Dean. When misconduct has been found to have occurred, disciplinary penalties will be imposed under Policy 71 - Student Discipline. For information on categories of offenses and types of penalties, students should refer to Policy 71 - Student Discipline, <http://www.adm.uwaterloo.ca/infosec/Policies/policy71.htm>

Grievance: A student who believes that a decision affecting some aspect of his/her university life has been unfair or unreasonable may have grounds for initiating a grievance. Read Policy 70 - Student Petitions and Grievances, Section 4, <http://www.adm.uwaterloo.ca/infosec/Policies/policy70.htm>

Appeals: A student may appeal the finding and/or penalty in a decision made under Policy 70 - Student Petitions and Grievances (other than regarding a petition) or Policy 71 - Student Discipline if a ground for an appeal can be established. Read Policy 72 - Student Appeals, <http://www.adm.uwaterloo.ca/infosec/Policies/policy72.htm>

Academic Integrity website (Arts): http://arts.uwaterloo.ca/arts/ugrad/academic_responsibility.html

Academic Integrity Office (UW): <http://uwaterloo.ca/academicintegrity/>

A Few Other Notes:

All students should activate their UW computer accounts each term. The accounts give students access to applications such as word processing, statistical and graphics packages, and electronic email as well as access to the Internet. For those who are not planning to use their UW email addresses, please do one of the following things:

- change your email address on QUEST to the one that you want posted on the University Directory, or
- on the UW account, arrange for the email from your UW account to be forwarded to your alternate email address.

Psychology majors should check the Psychology Undergraduate Web Site (<http://www.psychology.uwaterloo.ca/ugradprog/>) regularly for updates (e.g., psychology course offerings for F/W/S, volunteer and/or part-time paid research positions, application deadlines for scholarships, etc.)