

Psychology 291
BASIC RESEARCH METHODS

Fall 2012

Lectures: Tues. and Thurs. 8:30 – 10:20, AL 116

PSYCH 291 introduces you to the fundamental concepts and procedures that researchers use to address questions about psychological processes. This course will enable you to make more informed evaluations of research evidence, help you learn to design your own research, and prepare you for more advanced methods courses (e.g., PSYCH 392-398).

Instructors

Professor Joanne V. Wood
PAS 3051
Office hours: Tuesday lectures will be followed by an open office hour (until 11:20). If these times do not suit you, please speak to the instructor about arranging an appointment.

Head TA:	Teaching Assistants:			
Nathaniel Barr	Christie Haskell	Jesse Langstaff	Nazani Mohammadi Sepahvand	Paul Seli
PAS 4044	PAS 4248	PAS 4222	PAS 2261	PAS 2257
Office hours: Tue. 1pm	Office hours: Thurs. 4:30pm	Office hours: Mon. 1:30pm	Office hours: Fri. 1:30pm	Office hours: Wed. 2:30pm

UW Desire-to-Learn Course Web Page

Postings on the course D2L page include: the course syllabus, office hours, handouts for lectures, on-line activities, and announcements. On your browser, type in: <https://learn.uwaterloo.ca>. Provide your Quest/UWdir userid and password, and then click on PSYCH-291. Problems? Read the instructions attached near the end of this outline.

How to Get Answers to Your Questions

1st step: Consult this syllabus.

2nd step: Talk with me or TA right after class, or attend an office hour

OR: Look at D2L page for announcements and read Qs and As under Discussions tab.

3rd step: Post a question to “Discussions” and a TA will answer

4th step: For SHORT questions or private concerns, email jlangstaff@uwaterloo.ca. Please put "291- Last Name, First Initial" in the subject line.

All students are encouraged to seek information and help from the instructor and TAs during scheduled office hours. We are here to help. We have scheduled a variety of office hours throughout the week, but if none of these suit your schedule, talk with the instructor or a TA immediately before or after lecture to schedule an appointment. Any questions concerning lecture material, the readings, and administrative matters (e.g., exam timing conflicts) can be handled

during office hours. Short questions can be sent to the course email TA, Jesse Langstaff (jlangstaff@uwaterloo.ca), but please save long, detailed questions for office hours. **PLEASE DO NOT SEND EMAIL MESSAGES TO THE INSTRUCTOR OR OTHER TAs. Due to the class size, we cannot handle email messages or visits to our offices outside of our scheduled office hours.**

Lectures

Normally, class sessions will begin at 9:00, but at times to be announced, class will begin at 8:30. You are responsible for all material presented in lectures, including any announcements.

Graded exams will be returned to students either through D2L or during class sessions. If you receive feedback through D2L, please print it out and bring it to the class feedback session. In the feedback session, the correct answers and the marking scheme will be presented. Sorry, but the class is too big for the TAs to review the marking schemes with individual students. **Attend the in-class feedback sessions if you want to understand the marking!** Any disputes about marking must be brought to the attention of a TA or the instructor within one week of receiving the mark.

Course Requirements

Required Reading:

Wilson, T. D. (2011). *Redirect: The surprising new science of psychological change*. New York: Little, Brown.

Empirical articles. 6 - 10 psychology journal articles will be made available on D2L. These will be used in quizzes so students can apply the concepts presented in lecture.

On-Line Activities: We have five on-line activities/tutorials that will be accessible through the D2L web page: (1) Interpreting Graphs, (2) Correlations and third variables, (3) Regression to the Mean, (4) Interactions, and (5) Mediation. These on-line activities will be made available on D2L about a week before they are due to be completed. All students are required to access these activities and complete the quizzes that are presented. Each online activity will be worth 1% of the final course grade. Note that although your use (yes/no) of the on-line activities will be recorded for grading purposes (D2L will record who accesses these activities), the on-line quizzes will not be used for course grading; they are for your own learning only. Students vary in how much time they spend using these activities, depending on their prior exposure to these topics and on their motivation to learn the concepts.

Research Participation: Students may earn extra credit of up to 4 points (although the final course mark cannot exceed 100%) through participating in the REG/SONA Psychology Participant Pool, with 2 credits available before the midterm and 2 after. You can also earn extra credit in another way. Instructions appear near the end of this syllabus.

In-Class Quizzes: A short quiz will be administered nearly every week—9 in all. The goal is to: (1) give students practice applying the concepts presented in lecture, (2) help students recognize any difficulties they may be having before an exam, and (3) inform the instructor about

what material needs further review. Your two weakest quiz marks will be dropped from your final quiz mark.

Exams: The two midterm exams and the final exam will consist of multiple choice questions and short essay questions. The first midterm will cover all lectures and readings from the beginning of the course up to that midterm, and the second will cover all lectures and readings from the first midterm until the second midterm. The final will cover all lectures and readings after the second midterm. In addition, about 50% of the final will concern lecture material presented before the second midterm (i.e., the final is cumulative with respect to lecture material, not the textbook). For each exam, you will receive a list of possible short essay questions about one week before the exam date. We will select the actual questions for the exam from this list.

Questions about exam content (e.g., “will x be on the exam?”) should be asked (1) during class or (2) to the instructor (not the TAs) during office hours prior to the last class before the exam, so that answers can be given to the whole class.

Weighting of requirements for course grades

	Date due	Weight in final grade
On-line activities:		
Interpreting graphs	Sept 18	1%
Correlations	Sept 27	1%
Regression to the mean	Oct 9	1%
Interactions	Nov 9	1%
Mediation	Nov 27	1%
9 Quizzes	Nearly every week	21%
Midterm 1 exam	Oct 16	24%
Midterm 2 exam	Nov 15	25%
Final exam	Exam period	25%

Any disputes about marking must be brought to the attention of a TA or the instructor within one week of receiving the mark.

Illness/Emergencies

Students who are requesting accommodation for course requirements (quizzes, 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.
- 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.

It is imperative that you inform us of any illness or crisis before the quiz or exam takes place. If you must cancel at the last minute, please send an email to the 291 email TA, jlangstaff@uwaterloo.ca, or leave a message at 888-4567, x32085.

You do not need to follow these procedures for absences of two in-class quizzes. Two quiz absences for any reason do not require make ups. Any additional absences will require appropriate documentation and students will take an equivalent quiz at the final exam seating.

In the case of a missed excused midterm exam, the instructor will either: a) provide an extension, or b) under special circumstances, waive the course component and re-weight remaining term work as she deems fit, in line with the goals of the course.

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

In the case of bereavement or a crisis in your personal or family life, the instructor will provide similar accommodations to those for illness. Appropriate documentation to support the request will be required.

If you run into difficulties with course material, or keeping up with deadlines, talk with a TA or with the instructor as soon as possible; do not wait until it becomes a crisis. For example, if you tell us during Week 8 that you're having trouble, it is more credible and we can be more helpful than if you suddenly ask for special accommodation in Week 12.

The Faculty of Arts requires that the following message be included on all syllabi distributed in the Faculty of Arts:

Messages from the Department of Psychology and the Faculty of Arts

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 D2L, the outline on D2L will be deemed the official version. Outlines on D2L may change as instructors develop a course, but they become final as of the first class meeting for the term.

Accommodations for 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.

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. Myra Fernandes) is available for consultation and to mediate a resolution between the student and instructor. Dr. Fernandes's contact information is as follows:

Phone: (519) 885-1211 x32142

Email: mafernan@uwaterloo.ca

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

To protect course integrity, as well as to provide appropriate guidance to students, course outlines in the Faculty of Arts must include the following note on avoidance of academic offenses:

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. [Check <http://www.uwaterloo.ca/academicintegrity/> for more informaton.]

Discipline: A student is expected to know what constitutes academic integrity [check <http://www.uwaterloo.ca/academicintegrity/>] , 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 instructor, 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/>

Cheating

Cheating on quizzes or examinations will result in a grade of zero for the course and will be reported to the Chair of the Department of Psychology and to the Dean of the Faculty of Arts. Additional disciplinary action could include probation, suspension, or expulsion.

Message from Heather Smith: 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" for further details:

<http://www.adm.uwaterloo.ca/infocist/emailuse.html>

The home page for the psychology department: <http://www.psychology.uwaterloo.ca/>

Schedule for Term

Date	Topic	Required reading from text empirical articles will be assigned as well	due dates* Quiz nearly every week. Check D2L page.
Sept 11	Introduction to course Orientation for psych majors	<i>Redirect</i> , Ch. 1	
Sept 13 & Sept 18	Basics of research design	<i>Redirect</i> , Ch. 2	Sept 18 – “Interpreting graphs” on-line activity must be completed by 11 pm
Sept 20 & Sept 25	Nonexperimental designs	<i>Redirect</i> , Ch. 3	
Sept 27 & Oct 2	Philosophy of science	<i>Redirect</i> , Ch. 4	Sept 27 – “Correlations” on-line activity must be completed by 11 pm
Oct 4 Oct 9 & Oct 11	Threats to internal validity	<i>Redirect</i> , Ch. 5	Oct 9 – “Regression to the mean” on-line activity must be completed by 11 pm
Oct 16	MIDTERM EXAM 1 in AL116 or alternate assigned room		
Oct 18 & Oct 23	Experimental designs	<i>Redirect</i> , Ch. 6	
Oct 25 Oct 30 & Nov 1	Measurement	<i>Redirect</i> , Ch. 7	Oct 25— <i>return of midterm exams with explanation of grading</i>

* Inform the instructor as soon as possible if any accommodation is required for religious observances.

Date	Topic	Required reading	due dates*
Nov 6 Nov 8 & Nov 13	Complex experimental designs	<i>Redirect</i> , Ch. 8	Nov 9 – “Interactions” on-line activity must be completed by 11 pm
Nov 15	MIDTERM EXAM 2 in AL116 or alternate assigned room		
Nov 20	Interpreting results	<i>Redirect</i> , Ch. 9	
Nov 22 Nov 27 & Nov 29	Mediation and confounds	<i>Redirect</i> , Ch. 10	Nov 22 — <i>return of midterm exams with explanation of grading</i> Nov 27 – “Mediation” on-line activity must be completed by 11pm
Exam period	To be scheduled by registrar. Exams begin: Thursday, December 6. Exams end: Thursday, December 20 According to the Faculty of Arts, student travel plans are not acceptable grounds for granting an alternative final examination time (see http://www.registrar.uwaterloo.ca/exams/finalexams.html).		

* Inform the instructor as soon as possible if any accommodation is required for religious observances.

Information for Students Using Desire-to-Learn

System-related Answers

Do I need to run a system check?

Before you login, it is a good idea to do a system check to ensure that your computer meets the minimum system requirements. A system check ensures that you have the appropriate:

- Course required plug-ins, including JavaScript
- Web browser version
- Web browser settings
- Display settings

To run a system check click the system check link on the D2L homepage.

If you fail a component of the system check, you receive a pop-up error message explaining why you failed and what actions to take to meet the requirements.

How do I login?

To login to the learning environment, use this URL: <https://learn.uwaterloo.ca>

Type your username and case-sensitive password into the appropriate fields, and click **Login**.

How do I logout?

The **Logout** link is located on the navigation bar on the top right-hand side. Selecting **Logout** takes you to the Login page and ends your current Learning Environment session.

What if I forget my password?

Your credentials are the same ones you use to access Quest. If you have forgotten your password, go to [WatIAM](#) and click "Forgot Password".

Why don't I see any courses when I login to UW Learn?

Throughout the term the Registrar's Office conduct drops from courses for unpaid fees. If this applies to you, we strongly suggest that you contact the Financial Services Office as soon as possible to get this resolved. Any course work that you have done or marks that you have accumulated are not removed as we do not remove you from the system, but just disable you in the course.

When will I have access to my courses?

By default, courses are made available to students on the first day of classes. Access to courses from the previous term will be disabled on that day as well. Some instructors may ask that a course be released early and, typically, will send an e-mail to let you know that this has occurred.

If I switch courses, how long before the new course shows up on UW Learn?

There is usually a day or two delay before courses appear on LEARN while the Registrar's Office updates its records.

How long can a session be idle before it will timeout?

By default, the system will timeout as a result of inactivity after 180 minutes (2 hours). Please keep in mind that you may lose connectivity to LEARN as a result of an interruption of service because of your internet service provider separate from the timeout default on the system.

How do I send an email?

Course email address: jlangstaff@uwaterloo.ca. Please reserve this email address for short questions. Save longer questions for office hours.

Please do not send emails to the instructor or to other TAs. Sorry, they will not be answered.

Why does the Blog tool keep appearing and disappearing?

The Blog tool, although a system level tool, is turned on or off at the course level. You will need to enter a course where the Blog is being used in order to access the tool.

Research Experience Marks Information and Guidelines

Experiential learning is considered an integral part of the undergraduate program in Psychology. Research participation is one example of this, article review is another. A number of undergraduate courses have been expanded to include opportunities for Psychology students to earn grades while gaining research experience.

Since experiential learning is highly valued in the Department of Psychology, students may earn a **"bonus" grade of up to 4%** in this course through research experience. Course work will make up 100% of the final mark and a "bonus" of up to 4% may be earned and will be added to the final grade if/as needed to bring your final grade up to 100%.

The two options for earning research experience grades (participation in research and article review) are described below. Students may complete any combination of these options to earn research experience grades.

Option 1: Participation in Psychology Research

Research participation is coordinated by the Research Experiences Group (REG). Psychology students may volunteer as research participants in lab and/or online (web-based) studies conducted by students and faculty in the Department of Psychology. Participation enables students to learn first-hand about psychology research and related concepts. Many students report that participation in research is both an educational and interesting experience. Please be assured that all Psychology studies have undergone prior ethics review and clearance through the Office of Research Ethics.

Educational focus of participation in research

To maximize the educational benefits of participating in research, students will receive feedback information following their participation in each study detailing the following elements:

- Purpose or objectives of the study
- Dependent and independent variables
- Expected results
- References for at least two related research articles
- Provisions to ensure confidentiality of data
- Contact information of the researcher should the student have further questions about the study
- Contact information for the Director of the Office of Research Ethics should the student wish to learn more about the general ethical issues surrounding research with human participants, or specific questions or concerns about the study in which s/he participated.

Participation in LAB studies is worth 0.5 participation credits (grade percentage points) for each 30-minutes of participation. Participation in ONLINE studies is worth .25 credits for each 15-minutes of participation. Researchers will record student's participation and

will advise the course instructor of the total credits earned by each student at the end of the term.

How to participate?

Study scheduling, participation and grade assignment is managed using the SONA online system. All students enrolled in this course have been set up with a SONA account. You must get started early in the term.

INSTRUCTIONS/DATES/DEADLINES: How to log in to Sona and sign up for studies

**** Please do not ask the Course Instructor or REG Coordinator for information unless you have first thoroughly read the information provided on this website. ****

More information about the REG program is available at:
REG Participants' Homepage

Option 2: Article Review as an alternative to participation in research

Students are not required to participate in research, and not all students wish to do so. As an alternative, students may opt to gain research experience by writing short reviews (1½ to 2 pages) of research articles relevant to the course. The course instructor will specify a suitable source of articles for this course (i.e., scientific journals, newspapers, magazines, other printed media). *You must contact your TA to get approval for the article you have chosen before writing the review.* Each review article counts as one percentage point. To receive credit, you must follow specific guidelines. The article review must:

- **Be submitted before the last day of lectures. Late submissions will NOT be accepted under ANY circumstances.**
- Be typed
- Fully identify the title, author(s), source and date of the article. A copy of the article must be attached.
- Identify the psychological concepts in the article and indicate the pages in the textbook that are applicable. Critically evaluate the application or treatment of those concepts in the article. If inappropriate or incorrect, identify the error and its implications for the validity of the article. You may find, for example, misleading headings, faulty research procedures, alternative explanations that are ignored, failures to distinguish factual findings from opinions, faulty statements of cause-effect relations, errors in reasoning, etc. Provide examples whenever possible.
- Clearly evaluate the application or treatment of those concepts in the article.
- Keep a copy of your review in the unlikely event we misplace the original.