

PSYCHOLOGY 395
RESEARCH IN SOCIAL PSYCHOLOGY
FALL 2008

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Class Time: Monday & Wednesday, 11:00a.m. - 12:20 p.m.

Location: HH 334

Required Text and Readings

None

Recommended (Optional) Resources

American Psychological Association. (2001). *Publication manual of the American psychological association* (5th ed.). Washington, DC: Author.

Bem, D. J. (2004). Writing the empirical journal article. In J. M. Darley & M. P. Zanna (Eds.), *The complete academic: A career guide* (2nd ed., pp. 185-219). Washington, DC: American Psychological Association. May also be available at http://comp9.psych.cornell.edu/dbem/writing_article.html

Class Format: In the first two months of the term, class time will be split between my lectures and working on/presenting assignments. For the last few weeks, class time will mostly be used for class presentations of the major research proposals.

Goal Statement: The goal of Psychology 395 is to provide you with advanced knowledge about methods and research design in Social Psychology. We hope that you will master the material, rather than only memorize the basic information, and that you will acquire the skills to apply the knowledge. At the end of this course, you should be able to look at a research question, decide which method can best test that question, and design a study using that methodology to test your hypothesis. The assignments and research proposal are designed to assess your accomplishment of this goal.

Grade Composition:

Assignments = 30%

Exam = 20%

Presentation of research proposal = 15%

Research proposal = 25%

Participation = 10%

Exam: On November 12, there will be a two-hour exam covering material provided in the lectures. The test will be composed of short answer and essay questions.

Assignments: There are four assignments in the course. The assignments are designed to prepare you for your individual proposals. Across the four assignments, in groups, you will progress through the main steps of designing an experiment. All assignments require students to work in pairs or small groups. Students are then required to give 5 to 10 minute presentations describing their projects to the class. All members in a given group or pair are expected to evenly share presentation duties. Wednesday classes will be devoted solely to assignments (one Wednesday you will work on your assignments, in class with the guidance of the TA and professor, and then the next you will present your assignment to the rest of the class). If an assignment is not completed, 3% will be deducted from your total grade.

Class Participation: You are expected to be a productive and inquisitive member of our class. Relevant questions and comments are welcome. Participating in class involves the following: attending lectures, asking questions, answering questions, and **providing comments on the presentations of assignments and research proposals.**

Research Proposal: Each student must develop a research proposal for the course. The topic of the research proposal must be related to social psychology and the design of the study must have a sufficient level of complexity (either a mediation model or a 2 x 2 factorial design). The purpose of the research proposal is to demonstrate that you have mastered the basics of research design and are able to apply this knowledge to test a hypothesis. Each proposal must include an introduction section (short literature review, hypothesis, and rationale), a methods section (description of research design, procedure, and measures), “expected” results section (with graph and table of the predicted results), and discussion section (explanation of the implications of the results for the “real world” and the strengths and weaknesses of the design).

- a) **Research Proposal Presentation:** Each student will present their proposal in class (12-15 min). This will allow students to receive feedback from the instructors **and class members** before handing in the written proposal.
- b) **Research Proposal Report:** Each student must write up the research proposal using APA style, 5th edition. The written report will follow the same basic format (introduction, methods, expected results, discussion) as the presentation. The length of the paper depends upon the complexity of your design, but typically range from 8 to 12 pages. You are expected to properly cite and reference your sources according to APA style, 5th edition. Reports will be due (at a specific date yet to be determined) during the final exam period. Reports can be delivered to the Psychology Department mailroom (3rd floor of the PAS) or to 3051 PAS. For every day the paper is late, 5% will be deducted.

Important: Set an appointment to discuss your research proposal topic with me at least one week before your presentation date. **If you do not discuss your research proposal with me before your presentation date you will be docked marks (5%)!**

Special Notes:

1. Note on avoidance of academic offenses: All students registered in the courses of the Faculty of Arts are expected to know what constitutes an academic offense, to avoid committing academic offenses, and to take responsibility for their academic actions. When the commission of an offense is established, disciplinary penalties will be imposed in accord with Policy #71 (Student Academic Discipline). For information on categories of offenses and types of penalties, students are directed to consult the summary of Policy #71 (Student Academic Discipline) which is supplied in the Undergraduate Calendar (p.1:11). If you need help in learning how to avoid offenses such as plagiarism, cheating, and double submission, or if you need clarification of aspects of the discipline policy, ask your course instructor for guidance. Other resources regarding the discipline policy are your academic advisor and the Undergraduate Associate Dean.

In other words, you are responsible for knowing what plagiarism is and how to avoid it.

3. Computer accounts: All undergraduate students in the Faculty of Arts may obtain free computer accounts on Waterloo Polaris (other faculties have similar accounts). The accounts give students free access to all Polaris applications (e.g., word processing, electronic mail, spreadsheets, statistical and graphic packages, and access to the Internet). Students may purchase printing privileges at PAS 1080 using their WATCARDS. Note that library catalogue searches as well as journal article searches are available on the Internet (<http://www.lib.uwaterloo.ca>).

COURSE OUTLINE & SCHEDULE

Date	Topic
September 8	Receive Syllabus and Personal Introductions
September 10	Course Introduction
September 15	Philosophy of Science (Idea Generation), Correlational Design and Survey Research, & Presenting in Class
September 17	Work on Assignment #1 (Choose two variables)
September 22	Measurement in Social Psychology (Trends in Social Psych)
September 24	Presentation of Assignment #1
September 29	Types of Dependent Measures in Social Psychology & Principles of Experimental Design: Internal and External Validity
October 1	Work on Assignment #2 (Operationalize DV and IV)
October 6	Moderators and Mediators
October 8	Presentation of Assignment #2
October 13	No Class
October 15	Work on Assignment #3 (Moderation and Mediation)
October 20	Quasi Experiments and Single-N Designs
October 22	Presentation of Assignment #3
October 27	Ethics
October 29	Work on Assignment #4 (Ethics)
November 3	Review
November 5	Presentation of Assignment #4
November 10	Questions
November 12	Exam
November 17, 19, 24, 26	Presentation of Proposals