

UWEC Spring 2013
PSYC271 Methods of Research in Psychology
D2L Course Login Site: <http://www.uwec.edu/d2l/>

Class times and locations

Monday/Tuesday/Thursday 2-2:50, HHH 224

Wed labs: 9-10:40 and 11-12:40 in HHH 201

Instructor information

Instructor: Dr. April Bleske-Rechek

Office: HHH 255 (also look for me in HHH 217)

Phone: (O) 715-836-4641; (H) 715-831-6352; (Cell/Text) 715-864-8000

Email: bleskeal@uwec.edu

Office hours: Tuesday 8-8:50, Thursday 8-8:50, Friday 2-3 (and by appointment)

Student Academic Apprentices

Katelyn McCormick (mccormka)

Lauren Speckin (speckilm)

Textbooks:

Leary, M. R. (2012). *Introduction to behavioral research methods* (6th ed.). Boston, MA: Pearson.

Stanovich, K. E. (2010). *How to think straight about psychology* (9th ed.). New York: Allyn and Bacon.

American Psychological Association. (2009). *Publication manual of the American Psychological Association* (6th ed.). Washington, DC: Author.

Other Expenses

For this course, you should purchase your own stapler, a ream of paper, and a three-inch binder.

Toward the end of the semester, be prepared to spend money on some copying expenses, as needed. **If you are employed, you should attempt to get some time off of work during the last three weeks of the semester – we will be particularly busy at that point.**

Psychology portfolio

Psychology majors have traditionally been required to submit a portfolio in the Senior Seminar. The final paper you complete in this course will qualify for your portfolio. Some of your article analyses also will qualify. Thus, you should STAY ORGANIZED and maintain both electronic and paper copies of the required work for this course.

Students requiring special accommodations

If you are a student with a disability or issue that will require some form of accommodation, please contact Services for Students with Disabilities, Old Library 2136 (836-4542), for requisite documentation. I will be happy to make accommodations for you as necessary. It is YOUR responsibility to tell me immediately if there is some issue of which I should be aware.

Academic dishonesty

Sample violations include: (a) using student homework, papers, or ideas from previous semesters, unless approved by me; (b) asking for or giving information about the content of my exams (e.g., studying from an unauthorized file); (c) making up or altering data on any lab project; and (d) representing work done by someone else as your own (i.e., plagiarism). If you are concerned that an activity you or someone else is considering might fall into the dishonest category, ask me about it. I consider academic misconduct in this course as a serious offense, and I will pursue the strongest possible academic penalties for such behavior. The disciplinary procedures and penalties for academic misconduct are described in the UW-Eau Claire *Student Services and Standards Handbook* (<http://www.uwec.edu/sdd/publications.htm>) in Chapter UWS 14—Student Academic Disciplinary Procedures.

Grading

Final grades will be based on total points. You can access your assignment and quiz scores on D2L. Please keep track of your scores so that you always have an estimate of how you are performing in the course, and so that you can inquire about any apparent discrepancies between your records and those on D2L. If you think I made an entry error, please write me a note with a brief explanation of the problem; I will check it out and get back to you as soon as possible. I also encourage you to maintain an electronic or paper copy of all work you turn into me for your personal records and for your portfolio.

	B+	87-89%	C+	77-79%	D+	67-69%	
A	93-100%	B	83-86%	C	73-76%	D	63-66%
A-	90-92%	B-	80-82%	C-	70-72%	D-	60-62%
						F	<60%

UWEC learning goals

UWEC has five interdisciplinary learning goals. This course endeavors to promote them. Students should...

1. communicate effectively
2. demonstrate knowledge of human culture and the natural world
3. engage in creative and critical thinking
4. demonstrate individual and social responsibility
5. respect diversity

Course goals

Research Methods in Psychology (P271) is a course that aspires to build your skills in the field. It also aspires to build the critical thinking skills and scientific mindedness that facilitate living well in the modern world. Thus, I hope you will gain much from this course, whatever lies in your future (teaching, research, counseling, advising, managing, team building, etc.!).

The Psychology Department has adopted the APA Goals of the Undergraduate Psychology Major. Below, I have listed the goals in their briefest form. Then, in the table, I have listed some of the assignments and activities you complete in this course. For each assignment, I am noting the goal(s) to which it connects, with one or more outcomes of that goal that I think are relevant. I hope that, through my laying this out, you will see my motivation for having us work through these activities.

Goal 1: Knowledge Base of Psychology

Goal 2: Research Methods in Psychology

Goal 3: Critical Thinking Skills in Psychology

Goal 4: Application of Psychology

Goal 5: Values in Psychology

Goal 6: Information and Technological Literacy

Goal 7: Communication Skills

Goal 8: Sociocultural and International Awareness

Goal 9: Personal Development

Goal 10: Career Planning and Development

Activity	APA Goal(s)	Some relevant outcomes in that goal
Stanovich chapter discussions	1, 2, 3, 5	1. Characterize the nature of psychology as a scientific discipline; 2. Distinguish the nature of designs that permit causal inferences from those that do not; Select and apply appropriate methods to maximize internal and external validity and reduce the plausibility of alternative explanations 3. Identify and evaluate the source, context, and credibility of behavioral claims; Recognize and defend against common fallacies in thinking 5. Seek and evaluate scientific evidence for psychological claims.
Hypothesis writing	2, 5	2. Formulate testable research hypotheses, based on operational definitions of variables; Distinguish the nature of designs that permit causal inferences from those that do not; 5. Demonstrate reasonable skepticism and intellectual curiosity by asking questions about causes of behavior.
SPSS lab assignments	2, 7, 6	2. Interpret basic statistical results; Distinguish between statistical significance and practical significance 6. Avoid distorting statistical results 7. Use appropriate and relevant probability and statistical analyses to facilitate interpretation of measurements; Use APA style effectively in empirically based reports
Factorial design practice handouts	2	2. Describe how various research designs address different types of questions and hypotheses; Interpret basic statistical results
Analysis 1: Psychic detection	3, 4, 5	3. Challenge claims that arise from myth, stereotype, or untested assumptions 4. Apply psychological concepts, theories, and research findings as these relate to everyday life. 5. Seek and evaluate scientific evidence for psychological claims.
Analysis 2: Mozart Effect	2, 4, 5	2. Describe how various research designs address different types of questions and hypotheses 4. Apply psychological concepts, theories, and research findings as these relate to everyday life. 5. Seek and evaluate scientific evidence for psychological claims.
Analysis 3: Self-Esteem	3, 4, 5	3. Avoid being swayed by appeals to emotion or authority 4. Recognize that sociocultural contexts may influence the application of psychological principles in solving social problems; Apply psychological concepts, theories, and research findings as these relate to everyday life. 5. Seek and evaluate scientific evidence for psychological claims.
Analysis 4: Vaccines	3, 4, 5	3. Evaluate the quality of information, including differentiating empirical evidence from speculation and the probable from the improbable; Evaluate popular media reports of psychological research; Distinguish among assumptions, emotional appeals, speculations, and defensible evidence 4. Apply psychological concepts, theories, and research findings as these relate to everyday life. 5. Seek and evaluate scientific evidence for psychological claims.
Analysis 5: Jane Doe	2, 3, 5	2. Evaluate the validity of conclusions presented in research reports 3. Evaluate the quality of information, including differentiating empirical evidence from speculation and the probable from the improbable; Avoid being swayed by appeals to emotion or authority 5. Tolerate ambiguity and realize that psychological explanations are often complex and tentative.
Analysis 6: Learning Styles	3, 4, 5	3. Use scientific principles and evidence to resolve conflicting claims 4. Describe how applying psychological principles can facilitate appropriate change in institutions and in society; Apply psychological concepts, theories, and research findings as these relate to everyday life. 5. Seek and evaluate scientific evidence for psychological claims.
Final Research Study	2, 6, 7	2. Locate and use relevant databases, research, and theory to plan, conduct, and interpret results of research studies; Collect, analyze, interpret, and report data using appropriate statistical strategies to address different types of research questions and hypotheses 6. Formulate a researchable topic that can be supported by database search strategies; Use basic word processing, database, e-mail, spreadsheet, and data analysis programs 7. Work with groups to complete projects within reasonable time frames
Final Research Paper and Talk	6, 7	6. Use appropriate software to produce understandable reports of the psychological literature, methods, and statistical and qualitative analyses in APA or other appropriate style, including graphic representations of data 7. Interpret quantitative visual aids accurately, including showing vigilance about misuse or misrepresentation of quantitative information

Course requirements

Lecture and lab attendance are MANDATORY. This course is challenging, and attendance is absolutely essential. Concepts intertwine and build on one another. As a result, it is likely that if you miss a day, you will be lost. Furthermore, much of the course content will be difficult to understand simply from my power point outlines or from other students' notes. Missing a lab session, or a project-related class devoted to collecting or analyzing data, hurts you as well as your classmates. As with lecture, it is VERY important that you do not miss lab. I do not have the time to go over the course material alone with you if you miss. **You should plan on taking a zero for any assignment that occurs during a lab session you miss due to an unauthorized absence.**

In addition to conventional lectures, this course relies on interactive lectures and hands-on activities. Therefore, I expect you to participate in class activities and exercises. I also expect you to be a good citizen. This includes participating actively in class discussion **but not dominating it**, doing your fair share in group work, and having a positive attitude toward the course. **When possible, you should complete your reading assignments prior to class.** Please do not get behind.

I learn names quickly and will track absences. If you miss more than three class sessions due to unauthorized reasons, I will deduct 1% from your course grade for each subsequent absence. Lab absences are included in that. I also reserve the right to have you complete the final lab project alone if your class attendance and performance are unreliable. Students must consult with me regarding the nature and timing of coursework missed due to a university-authorized absence.

Quizzes (~300 points). We will have 10 or so quizzes. They will generally include a combination of closed-ended and short answer (e.g., fill-in-the-blank) questions, with mostly emphasis on closed-ended items. Quizzes focus on your ability to understand and apply concepts in addition to rote memorization. The quizzes get more difficult as we proceed, so be careful to not get complacent if you do well on the first quizzes. I also will throw in questions from previous weeks on occasion, so that you are retested on material (this is a remarkably effective way to facilitate retention). Make-up quizzes will be granted only under exceptional circumstances, such as serious illness or death in your immediate family. To be eligible for a make-up quiz, you must adhere to the following 2 conditions: (1) notify me **prior** to the quiz that you cannot make it (or as soon as possible if circumstances prevent contact); and (2) provide official documentation of your circumstances (e.g., a note from the dean or a written medical excuse signed by a physician). Your last quiz is comprehensive. It will be three times as long as the others, and will take about an hour to complete.

SPSS-APA exercises (~150 points). You will complete eight SPSS assignments during lab, each of which includes a component that requires submission of one or more manuscript sections in APA format. Each exercise is worth between 10 and 25 points. Each exercise is due either directly to me or in the envelope on my door by 9am on its due date. **Late assignments (including 5 minutes late) are subject to point deductions of 20% per day.**

Article analyses (~150 points). Over the semester you will complete six analyses of literature in the media and in peer-reviewed journals. Each one will be worth between 10 and 35 points, depending on the degree of work demanded by each. Each analysis is due either directly to me or in the envelope on my door by 9am on its due date. **Late assignments (including 5 minutes late) are subject to point deductions of 20% per day.**

Research paper and research talk (~200 points). During the last several weeks of the session, you will work with other students to design and conduct a psychological study. In preparation for the study, you and your partners will complete various assignments relevant to the study design, including an annotated bibliography, research proposal, and study materials (~40-50 points). You and your partners will then conduct the study and write up the study in a collaborative report (100 points). With your partners, you also will present the study and your findings to the class in a research talk (~40 points). Our class talks will take place during the final class session (see schedule). A portion of your grade (~20 points) will come from a peer evaluation of your contribution to the project.

The research paper must be in APA format, neat, typed, double-spaced, and stapled. Your final paper is due the last week of class (see schedule). Papers handed in after the designated time will be considered late and will be penalized 20% (20 points) per day (do not plan on printing out your paper just before the due date and time; too many things go wrong when time is limited). I will not accept papers more than 2 days late.