Psychology 314L: Research Methods
Fall, 2012

Instructor: Ann Renken, Ph.D.
Email: arenken@usc.edu
Office Location: SGM 611
Office hours: Mon 12-1; Tue 2-3; Thu 11-12

Lab Sections and Teaching Assistant Contact Information

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Lab Time (KOH 208)</th>
<th>Lab Day</th>
<th>Teaching Assistant</th>
<th>TA Email</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>12-1:50pm</td>
<td>Wednesday</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10-11:50am</td>
<td>Thursday</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Required Text

The bookstore will have a customized version of this book that should be a lower cost option compared to a new text. It excludes the chapters that we will not be covering and comes in a 3-ring binder. You may also order the book online, new or used. Be sure to get the 8th edition. Neither your instructor nor your TA will be able to tell you what the differences are between the 8th and the earlier editions.

Course Objectives
This course introduces you to experimental research methods. Here are some of the specific skills you will develop:
- Formulate experimental research questions
- Select relevant published studies and prepare a literature review
- Apply principles of research ethics in developing a proposal, including appropriate consent and debriefing procedures
- Apply principles of experimental design to maximize validity
- Use appropriate statistical analyses to address a research question
- Present research findings in an empirical paper and presentation using the format of the American Psychological Association

In addition, note that this course requires working closely with other student(s) during and outside of class time. Working with others is a valuable skill given that most research, and most careers, involve some degree of project collaboration.

Activities, Assignments, and Evaluation

Exams. Two multiple choice, non-cumulative exams will be administered. Exam questions will emphasize applying concepts rather than recognizing definitions of terms. You must bring a pencil and Benchmark form #29240. Exam questions will cover concepts from the text, other assigned reading, lectures, and labs.

Research Project. Working in small groups, you will design and conduct an experiment over the course of the semester. This is a guided project that will be developed over a number of lecture and lab meetings in addition to time outside of class. You must have your project approved before collecting any data, or else it will receive a failing grade. Deadlines and feedback will be frequent, and serve not only to prevent procrastination, but to ensure that your project is well-designed and meaningful.

Laboratory Activities. Lab is a graded and required component of this course. Some activities involve advanced preparation to be announced in class and on Blackboard in the “Assignments” area. If there is no such announcement at least three days before an upcoming lab, assume that you may just
show up without advanced preparation. The focus on lab is on building technical skills, including PsycINFO searches, selection of articles, writing in APA style, and analyzing data using SPSS.

**Lab Attendance and Grading.** You must attend the lab section for which you are registered. Labs are due at the end of the session and may not be completed or submitted outside of the scheduled meeting time.

**Evaluation**
The following point values apply to each course requirement. Letter grades will be assigned based on the total points earned using the scale below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Requirement</th>
<th>Points</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2 exams @ 100 points each</td>
<td>200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Course Project</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Laboratory activities</td>
<td>90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Presentation peer feedback</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total points possible:</td>
<td>400</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Grading Scale (grades are rounded at .5 and up with no curving anticipated)**

- **A (93%+)**
- **A- (90%-92%)**
- **B+ (87%-89%)**
- **B (83%-86%)**
- **B- (80%-82%)**
- **C+ (77%-79%)**
- **C (73%-76%)**
- **C- (70%-72%)**
- **D+ (67%-69%)**
- **D (63%-66%)**
- **D- (60-62%)**
- **F (59% or lower)**

**Course Policies: Please read carefully!!!**

You are responsible for all information communicated in class, in lab, and on Blackboard, even if you miss with an acceptable excuse. Posted lecture slides serve as outlines and study guides for key points but will not contain all of the information presented in class.

**Absences**
Attendance in lecture is not required, but is strongly encouraged. If you miss lecture on a day when nothing is being graded, you do not need to inform me, but you will want to get notes from another student or two.

There are three scenarios in which absences affect your course work:

1. Pre-planned absences (e.g., travel, interviews, organizational involvement). If you must miss a lab or exam due to a prescheduled event, you will need to work with your TA in advance of the missed meeting to determine how to complete this work.
2. Day-of emergencies. If you experience an emergency for which you have written documentation (e.g., illness, car break down) on the exact date of an exam, lab, or other graded activity, you must contact your TA within 24 hours of the absence to arrange a make up. Presentations will be rescheduled only if you are physically detained by an authority or hospitalized.
3. Ongoing absences. If you are experiencing difficulties leading up to a deadline or exam that are consistently compromising your work, you will need to seek help. Go to Counseling Services, a physician, or Student Affairs and inform someone that you are having trouble keeping up. These individuals can contact instructors, and while protecting your privacy, inform us about the duration of your difficulties so that we can make appropriate accommodations. No accommodations will be given based on a student’s verbal or written description of a personal challenge; documentation from an authority figure is essential.

Failure to follow these policies will result in a score of 0 for the missed work with no opportunity to make it up. Note also that course “Incompletes” are given only for emergencies arising after the drop deadline, per University policy, and would require that you complete the course project independently.
Using Blackboard. I post lecture slides, assignments and announcements as promptly as possible. Please monitor your scores in the Blackboard grade book often and keep all assignments until after final grades have been assigned. You will need to bring a graded assignment in as proof that it was not recorded correctly in Blackboard. No corrections to misentered grades will be made after 12/12/12.

Notice to students with disabilities. Accommodations require a letter from the Disability Services Program (DSP) and at least one week’s notice in order to arrange a proctor and room. Exams must be taken on the same day as the scheduled exam. If you have an accommodation other than extended time (e.g., a reader, breaks, food privileges, a noise-free environment), you should take the exam at DSP. The Psychology department does not have private testing rooms. If you take it under my supervision, you will be in a conference room or office, most likely with another student or two who get extra time.

Academic Integrity
The following behaviors constitute cheating: Looking at another students’ work or displaying or sharing the content of your work with another student, communicating with anyone in or outside of the class when prohibited, accessing or sharing old exams personally or online without the instructors expressed permission to do so, and telling another student what is on or not on a test. The penalty for cheating is an automatic F for the course. The following behaviors constitute plagiarism: (1) Submitting the work of another person as your own. This includes rearranging and rephrasing an existing work to make it appear that you produced it. (2) Failing to cite work properly using the style designated by a discipline or instructor. The penalty for plagiarism is an F in the course. Note also that the University prohibits students from dropping courses in which they have received F's for cheating or plagiarism. The University makes take more extreme action against students who are found guilty of violating academic integrity standards, including suspension or expulsion. All students should familiarize themselves with the policies on Academic Integrity and Dishonesty, available at: http://scampus.usc.edu/1100-behavior-violating-university-standards-and-appropriate-sanctions/

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week</th>
<th>Class Date</th>
<th>Lecture Topic and Relevant Discussion in Text (note that supplementary readings will be given in class)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Week 1:</td>
<td>8/27</td>
<td>Course Introduction</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>8/29</td>
<td>Ch.1: Science, Psychology, and You</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Week 2:</td>
<td>9/3</td>
<td>Labor Day Holiday--no class</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>9/5</td>
<td>Ch. 2: Validity (pp. 38 - 56)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Week 3:</td>
<td>9/10</td>
<td>Ch. 3: Generating Research Hypotheses (skip #7, pp.91-99)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>9/12</td>
<td>Ch. 4: Reading, Reviewing and Replicating Research</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Week 4:</td>
<td>9/17</td>
<td>Ch. 4: Reading, Reviewing and Replicating Research</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>9/19</td>
<td>Ch. 5: Types of Bias and Independent Variables (pp. 144-160; 185-191)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Week 5:</td>
<td>9/24</td>
<td>Ch. 6: Choosing a Dependent Variable</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>9/26</td>
<td>Ch. 15: Writing a Literature Review</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Week 6:</td>
<td>10/1</td>
<td>Exam 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>10/3</td>
<td>Ch. 10: The Simple Experiment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Week 7:</td>
<td>10/8</td>
<td>Project Idea meetings (individuallyscheduled)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>10/10</td>
<td>Ch. 11: Multi-group Experiments</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Week 8: 10/15 Ch. 12: Factorial Designs  
10/17 Ch. 12: Factorial Designs

Week 9: 10/22 Ch. 3: Mediating and Moderating Variables (#7, pp.91-99)  
10/24 Ch. 13: Within-Subjects and Mixed Designs

Week 10: 10/29 Statistical Procedures for Experimental Design  
10/31 Ch. 9: Threats to Internal Validity

Week 11: 11/5 Exam 2  
11/7 data collection day

Week 12: 11/12 data collection day  
11/14 Presentation and Final Paper Guidelines

Week 13: 11/19 Interpreting and Drawing Conclusions from Experiments  
11/21 Thanksgiving Break—no class meeting

Week 14: 11/26 Presentations  
11/28 Presentations

Week 15: 12/3 Presentations  
12/5 Presentations

Final APA format research paper due: Friday, December 14th, 2pm

Lab Schedule

Week 1: Meet and greet  
Week 2: PsycInfo search (10)  
Week 3: Developing Research Ideas from an Article (10)  
Week 4: Ethics in Research (10)  
Week 5: Selecting an Independent Variable and Control Techniques (10)  
Week 6: Work on Literature Review and Ideas for Project (10)  
Week 7: Multi-group Experiment Activity (10)  
Week 8: Factorial Experiment Activity (10)  
Week 9: Mock Design and Data Entry reviewing Weeks 7 & 8 (10)  
Introduction section of Project Paper Due (15 toward project grade)  
Week 10: Revisions on Introduction, Work on Materials (5)  
Week 11: Method Section, Plan Data Coding and Analysis (10 toward project grade)  
Week 12: Revise Method, Enter Data, Practice Analysis (5)  
Week 13: No Lab (Thanksgiving Holiday)  
Week 14: Open Lab (Optional)  
Week 15: Wrap-up (Attendance Mandatory)

Point values for Lab Activities and Project
In parentheses after graded weeks is the number of points the activity counts toward your lab grade (90 total). Deadlines at Weeks 9 and 11 count toward your project grade rather than your lab grade for a combined 25 points. The final paper is worth 50 points and the presentation is worth 25 points.