

PSY 318: Research Methods in Social Psychology Fall 2012

Dr. Jessica Good

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Office: Watson 205

Office Hours: MF 10:30am – 12pm, TR 2-3pm, or by appointment

Mailbox: Psych office (Watson)

Class:

Tues/Thurs 12:15 – 1:30pm
Chambers 1046

Lab A, B:

Wed 12:30 – 2:20pm
Watson 132

Lab C, D:

Wed 2:30 – 4:20pm
Watson 132

Required Text:

Dunn, D. S. (2009). *Research methods for social psychology*. Malden, MA: Wiley-Blackwell.

Recommended Text:

American Psychological Association (2009). *Publication manual of the American Psychological Association: 6th edition*.

*Additional readings will be posted on Moodle.

Course Website:

<http://moodle.davidson.edu> (log in with ID and password, click on PSY 318). Additional readings, lab assignments, research project information, and the most-up-to-date syllabus can be found here. Please check the website frequently for any announcements regarding syllabus changes, class cancellations, etc.

Course Description:

Social Psychology is the *scientific* study of how people think about one another, influence one another, and relate to one another. In this course, we will examine the scientific methods and procedures utilized by social psychologists in order to answer research questions relating to the social experience. Through text reading, lectures, lab assignments, and class discussion, students will be asked to think critically about social psychological research as well as apply social psychological research methods to current research questions. Students will also work in groups to complete an original research project, from generating a novel idea to collecting data and writing up a research manuscript.

Course Goals:

- Understand the methods and techniques used by social psychologists in conducting research

- Gain the ability to critically examine existing social psychological literature
- Gain the ability to create novel experimental materials and correlational materials based on operational definitions
- Become a researcher, with the skillset necessary to carry out original psychological research
- Gain an understanding of the ethical concerns relevant to social psychological research, and the procedures for preventing ethical violations

Grading:

Grades will be based on exams, lab assignments, journal reports, a group research paper, and participation. The breakdown will be as follows:

Assignment	Percentage of Final Grade	Final Grade	Percentage
Exams	35%	A	93.0 – 100%
Research Paper	30%	A-	90.0 – 92.9%
Lab Assignments	15%	B+	87.0 – 89.9%
Journal Reports	10%	B	83.0 – 86.9%
Participation	10%	B-	80.0 – 82.9%
		C+	77.0 – 79.9%
		C	73.0 – 76.9%
		C-	70.0 – 72.9%
		D+	67.0 – 69.9%
		D	60.0 – 66.9%
		F	0 – 59.9%

Exams: There will be three in-class exams which will consist of multiple choice, fill-in-the-blank, and short essay questions. Test material will be taken from required readings and class lectures and will not be cumulative. Exams will be held during regular class hours, as specified on the schedule. **Make-up exams are not permitted without advance permission. Permission will be granted only for unavoidable circumstances (travel for athletic event, serious illness, family emergency).**

Research Paper: Over the course of the semester, students will work in groups to develop a research idea, design a research study, collect and analyze data, and write up the final project in a 10-15 page, APA style research paper. Portions of the project will be turned in throughout the term for review. **Only the final paper will be graded and all group members will generally receive the same grade.** Students are encouraged to consult with me regularly as questions arise.

Lab Assignments: Some assignments given during lab will be turned in and graded. Most of these assignments will be able to be completed within the lab period. In cases in which students are not able to finish in lab, assignments will generally be due the following day. Students not attending lab will not be able to make up the lab assignment, unless advance permission has been granted (see schedule). Specific details about each assignment will be given in lab.

Journal Reports: Students will be required to complete four journal reports (JR) during the semester. Due dates are listed on the schedule. The first report will be completed in lab, with all others completed outside of class time. Details of the assignment will be given on a separate sheet.

Participation: Participation consists of BOTH attendance and active attention and discussion in class. Attendance is necessary but not sufficient for full participation credit. Attendance will be taken at the beginning of class by passing around the roster. All students will be given three “free” missed classes. Additional absences will result in a decreased participation grade, so use your free absences wisely (i.e., save them for sick days). Students requiring additional absences due to emergency circumstances should contact me as soon as possible. This class will progress linearly, with each lesson building on the previous class. Thus, I *highly* suggest attending class regularly.

In addition to attendance, participation means being respectful of others in the classroom. Thus, students should arrive to class on time, prepared, and ready to participate in class. Students arriving late to class must sign in with an “L” on the roster at the end of class.

Laptops are permitted, but studies suggest that they lower student performance and grades (e.g., from surfing the web in class, answering email, and other multitasking), so I wouldn't advise bringing one unless you really need it. Cell phones are not permitted (that includes texting!). If it seems that students are not reading the assigned material, I reserve the right to implement “pop” reading quizzes.

Throughout the semester you will take an active role in creating and executing social psychological research. The more fully you participate in class discussions and activities, the more you will enjoy the class, and likely the better your performance will be.

GRADING NOTE: If you believe that there was a mistake in the calculation of your final grade at the end of the class, you must speak to me about it within two weeks of your final grade being posted. *After two weeks, your final grade cannot be adjusted for any reason.*

Academic Accommodations: Accommodations are the legal right of students with all kinds of disabilities. If you are a student who might need accommodations, and you have a

disability that is documented with Davidson College, please let me know *as soon as possible*, so that we can explore appropriate accommodations. All such discussions will be fully confidential unless you stipulate otherwise.

Honor Code: Academic dishonesty of any type will not be tolerated. All work turned in for this class must be pledged and signed; **unpledged work will not be graded**. Students may discuss ideas or study for exams with other students, but all exams and written work are to be completed independently. Note – the exception to this rule is the Research Paper, which will be completed in groups. You are Honor bound to not use any “spots” or assignments from students who have preceded you in the course, or to reuse any work written for a previous course. No copies of prior tests should exist and none should be made. If you find or are offered any, you must report this as an honor code violation. If in doubt, don’t do it.

The honor code pledge can be found at: <http://www3.davidson.edu/cms/x8918.xml>

To help clarify the situation, I have provided specific details about what is and what is not cheating:

You May:

- Consult the textbook and other students when completing lab assignments and journal reports
- Use the internet to look up study guides or to do research for your lab assignments, journal reports, or research paper
- Study for exams with other students
- Ask me for extra help with a concept

You May Not:

- Use the textbook, your notes, or “cheat sheet” on an exam
- Turn in another student’s work as your own
- Represent someone else’s idea as your own
- Contact anyone during an exam – cell phones OFF

YOU MUST:

- Cite your sources in all written work and provide complete references

Office Hours:

Students are encouraged to ask questions during class or meet with me during office hours. Students should feel free to drop by any time during my scheduled office hours, with no appointment necessary. If you have other classes during office hours, I am happy to arrange appointments to meet with you individually for extra help. Office hours are not a substitute for coming to class, but can be a helpful supplement for students struggling with course material. Do not wait until the night before an exam; if you have questions, come to me ahead of time.

Watson Access:

As a student in PSY 318, you will be given swipe-card access to Watson (exterior doors), Watson 132 (stat lab), and Watson 338 (social psych lab). While completing your research projects you may want to meet with your group in the stat lab in order to work together on the study design, data analysis, etc. Most groups will use the Social Psych lab to collect their data. Be courteous in your use of the building; if a class or exam is being given in the stat lab, DO NOT enter the room. We will post a class schedule of use for Watson 338. Your access to these rooms is a privilege. If that privilege is abused, it will be revoked. More information can be found on Moodle.

Audio & Video Recording of Classes:

Davidson College policy prohibits audio/video recording of classes by students without permission of the instructor. You may not record class sessions or portions thereof unless the Dean of Students has authorized recording as an academic accommodation for a qualified student with a disability and has notified me of that authorization. All such recordings are for the sole use of the individual student and may not be reproduced, sold, posted online, or otherwise distributed.

Course Schedule:

The following is a tentative schedule. Any changes will be announced in class and posted on the course website.

	Date	Topic	Reading (before class)	Assignment Due
Week 1	8/28	Course Introduction Importance of Scientific Research	Chapter 1	
	8/29	<i>Lab:</i> Formatting Research		
	8/30	Generating Research Questions <i>Group Assignment</i>	Chapter 2	
Week 2	9/4	Experimental Design	Chapter 4	
	9/5	<i>Lab:</i> Conducting a Literature Search		
	9/6	Critiquing Research, Identifying Confounds		JR#1 (from lab)
Week 3	9/11	Non-experimental Research	Chapter 5	
	9/12	<i>Lab:</i> Moderation & Mediation	Baron & Kenny (1986) pp. 1173-1177	Lab Assignment
	9/13	Independent Variables	Chapter 7	JR #2

Week 4	9/18	Developing Questionnaires	Chapter 6	**Groups must submit research question and outline of intro
	9/19	<i>Lab: Create a Questionnaire</i>		Lab Assignment
	9/20	EXAM 1		
Week 5	9/25	Dependent Variables	Chapter 8	JR #3
	9/26	<i>Lab: Lexical Decision Task</i>		Lab Assignment
	9/27	Research Ethics	Chapter 3	
Week 6	10/2	Study Design - The Method Section		JR #4
	10/3	<i>Lab: Writing the Method</i>		
	10/4	More Research Ethics	Nier (2013) pp. 2-27	Proposed Method Section due
Week 7	10/9	Social Desirability Concerns	Nier (2013) pp. 384-395	
	10/10	<i>Lab: Implicit Measures - IAT</i>		Lab Assignment
	10/11	Practical Matters – the IRB	Chapter 10	**Method section revisions due, if necessary
Week 8	10/16	Fall Break - NO CLASS		
	10/17	<i>Lab: Completing an IRB application</i>		
	10/18	Study Run-Through: Groups 1 & 2		IRBs due to me by 10/19 at 10am
Week 9	10/23	EXAM 2		
	10/24	Study Run-Through: Groups 3 & 4		
	10/25	Progress Reports/ Catch-Up		
Week 10	10/30	Alternative Strategies – Archival Data		**Begin data collection (once IRB approval obtained)
	10/31	<i>Lab: Analyzing Archival Data</i>		Lab Assignment
	11/1	Validity & Realism	Chapter 9	
Week 11	11/6	Alternative Strategies – Qualitative Coding		
	11/7	<i>Lab: Coding Written Data</i>		Lab Assignment

	11/8	Data Analysis	Chapter 11	
Week 12	11/13	Data Analysis (in 132)		
	11/14	<i>Lab:</i> Create a Data Analysis Plan		Data Plan - Syntax
	11/15			**Data collection should be finished
Week 13	11/20	EXAM 3	Chapter 12	
	11/21	THANKSGIVING – NO LAB		
	11/22	THANKSGIVING – NO CLASS		
Week 14	11/27	Writing and Presenting Research		
	11/28	<i>Lab:</i> Writing a Results Section (Graphing)		
	11/29	Writing a Discussion Section		
Week 15	12/4	Presenting Scientific Work		
	12/5	<i>Lab:</i> Work Day/Troubleshooting		
	12/6	Group Project Presentations		
Week 16	12/11	Group Project Presentations (if needed)		
Dec 16th, midnight				Final Paper DUE