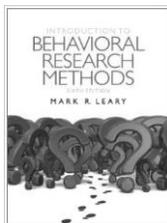




Research Methods

Course Syllabus PSY 305.01 Spring 2017

Instructor: Dr. Brooke Bennett-Day
Class meets: Taylor 127, T/Th 8:15-9:30am
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Phone: 478-757-3749
Office: Taylor 131
Office hours: MW Noon-2:30pm, and by appointment



Textbook:

Leary, M. (2011). Introduction to Behavioral Research Methods (6th edition).

Also recommended: APA Publication Manual (6th edition).

I do make use of the class site on WesPortal. Please make sure to check this at least twice a week for materials, changes, etc.

Course Description and Objectives

“Research is formalized curiosity. It is poking and prying with a purpose.”
~ Zora Neale Hurston (1942)

This course seeks to provide the student with a thorough review of the application of the scientific method to the study of behavior. At the end of this semester, a student in this course should be able to

- comprehend the philosophical roots of social science research, the nature of research materials and methods in the behavioral sciences, and issues involved in the collection and interpretation of data
- create and carry out an original psychological research project
- critically evaluate research results and be able to apply research methods appropriate to the level of measurement, theoretical issues, and sources of data involved in projects and assignments
- summarize and explain research findings using both oral and written formats

Classroom Expectations

I believe that being in class is a very important part of the learning process and I *expect* you to be here. You are allowed two “freebie” absences, after which each absence will result in a deduction of 5% from your final grade (e.g., if you have an 85% at the end of the semester and you miss three classes, you will have an 80%). Thus, four missed classes will result in the reduction of a full letter grade. If you know ahead of time that you will be missing class, you should come and talk with me about it. This won’t necessarily make the absence excusable, but it will allow me

to inform you of what you may be missing on that day. If a major medical emergency arises, we can discuss the impact on your attendance and work at that point.

In this classroom, we will treat each other with respect, faculty and students alike. Personal conversations, rude behavior, walking in and out of the classroom during class, use of cell phones, sleeping, working on other classes' assignments, and other disruptive behaviors interfere with other students' rights and with the instructor's ability to teach. Therefore, anyone exhibiting unacceptable behaviors during the class may be asked to leave and will be counted absent for that class period. Failure to cooperate with this process will result in disciplinary action that may include withdrawal from the class or dismissal from the college.

Much of the work in this class is done within collaborative groups. What? You don't care for group work? *Quelle surprise!* Group work can be challenging and requires managing schedules, skills, and personalities. Remember, though, that this course is meant to prepare you for higher-level research, which generally is conducted and presented with others. Do your fair share of the work, and deal with any issues appropriately before they snowball into larger ones. Late assignments are generally not accepted; exceptions may be made for the final paper, but this needs preapproval from the professor and will carry a penalty.

Academic Honor Code

"The Honor Code is the foundation upon which life in the Wesleyan College community is built. It is based upon the idea that individual freedom is a right founded upon responsibility. A student is expected to tell the truth, respect others and their property, and maintain academic integrity and honesty in all areas of college life."

Plagiarism is defined as presenting another person's work as your own. Obvious cases of plagiarism include copying all or a portion of a paper from a book, journal, lab manual, or a classmate and including it as part of your paper without citing the source and using quotation marks. Paraphrasing someone else's work without citing the source is also considered plagiarism. Plagiarism and other forms of cheating are not tolerated within this course. Instances of either will result in a zero for that exam or assignment, with possible further repercussions as per college guidelines. Plagiarism on the final paper may result in failure of the course.

Students with Disabilities

Wesleyan College is committed to equal education, full participation and access to facilities for all students. Any student who requires reasonable academic accommodations, use of auxiliary aids or facility access for a class must first register with Disability Resources by contacting Christy Henry, Assistant Dean of Academic Resources at chenry@wesleyancollege.edu or (478) 757-5219. If reasonable accommodations are established, students should request

Accommodation Letters from Disability Resources then schedule an appointment to meet with the professor to determine how the accommodations will be implemented for each class as early in the semester as possible. Accommodations require advance notice to implement and will not be retroactively administered for the semester. Accommodations that decrease the integrity of a course will not be approved.

Grading

Your grade for the course will be based on the following. Additional guidelines and rubrics will be provided where appropriate:

1. Exams– Each exam will be composed of multiple choice, short answer, and application questions, drawn from the text and classroom materials. “Make-up” exams are not administered except in extremely serious situations (see instructor). There will be two exams (30 pts each).
2. Data analysis practice – An assignment will be made following the days we cover data analysis in class that each student will complete independently (30 pts).
3. Research design – Before a study is carried out, each group must submit the design and have it approved by the professor. This includes, but is not limited to, information on the independent variables, dependent variables, hypothesis, statistics, types of graphs, subjects, etc. Note that there is no set due date for this plan, but each group must submit and receive feedback on their formal written design plan before they begin running subjects (20 pts).
4. Data collection and handling – Each group will be graded by the professor on their proper collection and handling of their data, including work with participants and communication with the professor regarding timelines and materials (20 pts).
5. Poster presentations – Each group will present a poster presentation of their findings to the class. Examples of this type of presentation will be given in class. Groups will be required to explain their posters to the rest of the class and to the instructor during the time designated for presentation (50 pts).
6. Oral presentations – Each student will present her experimental findings orally for the class. This presentation will be 10 minutes in length with 5 minutes allowed for questions (50 pts).
7. Empirical (Research) paper – Each group will write an empirical paper of their research findings. This paper will be graded on accuracy, coherence, grammar, spelling, punctuation, appearance, and adherence to APA format. A rough draft will be due in advance of the final paper (30 pts rough draft/70 pts final = 100 pts total).

So, with a grand total of 330 possible points, the grading scale is as follows:

A	=	296-330 points	(90-100%)
B	=	263-295 points	(80-89%)
C	=	230-262 points	(70-79%)
D	=	197-229 points	(60-69%)
F	=	below 197	(below 60%)

Grading on all group work will be determined by the following formula: An overall grade (number of points) will be given on each of the assignments. These points will be multiplied by the number of group members. To correct for differences in effort put into the project, each member of the group will make a recommendation on point distribution for each member of their group. The recommendations will be used as a guide for actual grade assignment to each member of the group. In other words, I will give you a pool of points based on what I think your project is worth. You divide them up based on what you think you deserve. This means “no whining” about your grade because someone didn’t do what they were supposed to and got the same grade as everyone else in your group. I, however, reserve the right to veto recommendations from a member or members of a group if I feel that the system is being abused.

Course Plan

	Tuesday	Thursday
Jan 10/12	Syllabus & review research ideas Basic design refresher	Ch 10 – Experimental Design
Jan 17/19	Ch 11/12 – Analyzing Experimental Data	Setting up a study Division of labor issues Going over the IRB application
Jan 24/26	Exam 1 <i>Groups chosen by this point</i>	Data entry basics (<i>Library 205</i>)
Jan/Feb 31/2	Data analysis (<i>Library 205</i>)	Data analysis (<i>Library 205</i>)
Feb 7/9	<i>*Group meetings with professor (to be scheduled) *</i> <i>IRB priority deadline Feb 9</i>	
Feb 14/16	Ch 13 – Quasi-experimental design Data analysis assignment due	Ch 14 – Single case research
Feb 21/23	Ch 15 – Ethical issues (reading on portal)	Exam 2
Feb/Mar 28/2	Writing – Updating your Introduction and Method sections	
Mar 7/9	Spring break	
Mar 14/16	Data collection and cleaning up the data set	
Mar 21/23	Writing – Results and Discussion sections	
Mar 28/30	<i>*Data analysis specific to group (to be scheduled) *</i>	
Apr 4/6	In-class poster workshop (bring printed rough draft of poster)	Final poster files due Rough draft due (bring 2 copies) In-class paper workshop
Apr 11/13	Class time for group meetings	Poster presentations Rough drafts returned
Apr 18/20	Oral presentations	Oral presentations
Apr 25/27	Oral presentations	Oral presentations Final paper due
May 2/4	Oral presentations, if needed Wrap up & evals	

Start
running
study

Note. The final exam period will not be used for this course. The instructor reserves the right to make changes at any time and for any reason to the syllabus, course schedule, and exam dates. Changes will be announced both in class and on WesPortal.