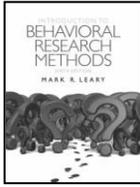




Research Preparation: Reading, Writing, & Review

Course Syllabus PSY230 Fall 2014

Instructor: Dr. Brooke Bennett-Day
Class meets: Taylor 127, T/Th 1:30-2:45pm
Email: bbennettday@wesleyancollege.edu (preferred)
Phone: 478-757-3749
Office: Taylor 131
Office hours: MWF 9:00-10:00am; M 1:00-3:00pm



Textbooks (both used for later classes – keep them!):
Leary, M. (2012). Introduction to Behavioral Research Methods (6th edition)

APA Publication Manual (6th edition).

The class website is located at <https://wesportal.wesleyancollege.edu/>. Please check this website at least twice each week for any announcements and schedule changes.

Course Description and Objectives

"There is very little difference between one person and another, but, what little there is, is very important" -William James

This course provides an introduction to philosophical and methodological issues in the empirical study of behavior. Generally, this course should provide you with a comprehensive understanding of the need for research and how that research may be planned and conducted in the behavioral sciences, as well as a better understanding of how to access, read, and understand scientific writing. The assignments completed in this course will provide you with practical experience in writing a comprehensive literature review on the topic of your choice. At the completion of this course you should be prepared to “hit the ground running” in the next course in Wesleyan’s psychological research series (Research Methods).

Classroom Expectations

I feel that being in class is a very important part of the learning process and I *expect* you to be here. Due to the nature and amount of work in this course I would strongly encourage you to attend every scheduled class; for my own record-keeping purposes, I will be taking attendance regularly. Additionally, attendance is mandatory for class sessions in which student presentations are taking place. Failure to attend these sessions will result in a deduction from your own presentation grade, with exceptions being made only for absences that I have previously cleared. Unauthorized use of a cell phone in class may result in a deduction (2 pts for each instance) from your final grade.

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.

Grading

Paper and associated tasks (Additional guidelines to be provided)

1. Key word list & Background paper – When doing a literature search, it is useful to come up with a list of key words that relate to your chosen topic. So that you will start thinking about your topic sooner, rather than later, you will turn in a list of at least 10 terms that you plan on using to search for articles in your area of interest. At the same time you will write a short paper (2-3 pages; double-spaced) that generally defines and gives a sufficient background of your topic. You may use a variety of sources for this, including your General Psychology textbook or textbooks from other classes (20 pts). This paper should include proper references and citations, but they do not need to be in perfect APA style at this point.
2. Progress report – Approximately halfway through the semester you will complete a report detailing the progress that you have made on your paper (25 pts).
3. Rough draft – You will complete a polished draft of your paper to turn in prior to the final paper (30 pts).
4. Final Paper – You will write an APA-style research proposal. This paper will be graded on content, accuracy, coherence, grammar, spelling, punctuation, appearance, and adherence to format (75 pts).
5. Oral Presentation – Class periods toward the end of the semester are set aside for presentations. Each presenter will give a 12-minute PowerPoint presentation on her research proposal; she will also prepare a handout for her classmates. (50 pts).

Other assignments

6. Summaries– You will write 3 summaries of research articles from professional, peer-reviewed journals in psychology and related areas. As one of the most important steps in performing research is to familiarize yourself with the literature, this should be helpful to you. A standardized summary form will be posted on the course website, and the article must accompany your summary (20 pts each).
7. APA assignments – You will complete short APA-style writing assignments based on correlational and experimental studies described in class (25 pts each).
8. Vita – You will write a vita for yourself, after learning about this process in class (20 pts).
9. Exams –The dates are listed on the schedule (35 pts each).

FYI – There will be additional activities to be completed during class that will be reviewed but not graded. These should be given the same careful attention as graded activities, as they serve as a way for me to catch and correct any issues with the relevant skills covered by this class.

The whole semester breaks down like this:

Key word list & Background paper	20 pts
Exams	70 pts (2 x 35 pts)
Article summaries	60 pts (3 x 20 pts)
Vita	20 pts
APA assignments	50 pts (2 x 25 pts)
Progress report	25 pts
Rough draft	30 pts
Final paper	75 pts
Oral presentation	50 pts

With a grand total of 400 points, the grading scale is as follows:

A = 358-400	(90-100%)
B = 318-357	(80-89%)
C = 278-317	(70-79%)
D = 238-277	(60-69%)
F = < 238	(< 60%)

Opportunities for extra credit may be offered to the entire class, but individual requests for extra credit will not be honored.

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 and cheating are not tolerated within this course. Instances of either will result in a zero for that exam or assignment, with plagiarism on the final paper resulting in failure of the course. Be aware that your summaries of research findings should be in your own words, just like everything else.

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 or the use of auxiliary aids in class must first identify herself to the Director of the First Year Experience and Students in Transition who serves as the Student Disability Coordinator prior to the first day of class in the semester in which she desires to receive accommodations. Documentation by a qualified physician must be provided and will be reviewed to ensure the documentation meets the college requirements. If reasonable accommodations are established, the student is expected to collaborate with each of her professors within the first week of class to determine how the accommodations will be implemented. Accommodations will not be retroactively administered for the semester. Accommodations that decrease the integrity of a course will not be approved. Please contact Christy Henry in the Academic Center for additional information or to seek services.

Course Overview

Date	Tuesday	Thursday
Aug 19/21		Syllabus -- Introduction
Aug 26/28	Chat with convo speaker	Research in the Behavioral Sciences (Ch 1)
Sept 2/4	Searching the literature Background paper & word list due	Reading journal articles Generating research hypotheses
Sept 9/11	Behavioral variability (Ch 2*)	Measurement (Ch 3-4) Article summary 1 due
Sept 16/18	Research Participants (Ch 5)	Descriptive Research (Ch 6) Article summary 2 due
Sept 23/25	Exam 1	<i>Individual meetings (to be scheduled)</i>
Sept/Oct 30/2	Correlational Research (Ch 7) Article summary 3 due	APA style for correlational study (Ch 16) Progress report due
Oct 7/9	Advanced Correlational Design (Ch 8*)	Basic Issues in Experimental Research (Ch 9) Correlational exercise due
Oct 14/16	Fall break	APA style for experimental study
Oct 21/23	Faculty Scholarship Day	Experimental design (Ch 10*)
Oct 28/30	Experimental exercise due	Exam 2
Nov 4/6	<i>Individual meetings (scheduled as needed)</i>	
Nov 11/13	Writing workshop day Rough draft of paper due	Presentation tips & vita workshop
Nov 18/20	Draft returned Vita due	Oral presentations
Nov 25/27	Oral presentations Final paper due	Thanksgiving break – no class
Dec 2/4	Oral presentations	Oral presentations
Dec 9/11	Wrap up/evaluations	

Note. Starred readings (*) may need additional time devoted to them, due to an increased level of difficulty; please plan accordingly. I reserve the right to make changes to the course plan as needed. Any changes will be announced in class and on the course website.