

ADVANCED RESEARCH IN PSYCHOLOGY, PSYC4170 0.6E, 2014/15.

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FALL TERM

Dividing into groups

In this version of PSYC4170 the class will be divided, beginning in week 7, into 3 groups of equal size, each led by one of the staff persons listed above. Group leaders will be in charge of supervision and grading of their students' research projects.

Students' assignments to groups will be made as follows: The 3 group leaders will be available during the last hour of each of the first 5 class sessions to talk to individuals informally about their ideas and plans for studies. Students may talk to as many of the group leaders as they wish, and register with the person of their choice when they are ready. When a group leader's supervisee list reaches the maximum (1/3 of the class size), however, it will be closed, and the student will need to make another choice. Students who do not make a choice will be assigned to a vacant slot.

Inasmuch as the departmental computer lab (BSB 159) has limited facilities, the class will also be divided in half to provide two groups for the statistics labs to be held in the second semester, one group meeting at 2:30 to 4 and the other at 4 to 5:30. This division will be done in class.

Text material

There will be required reading from a text titled, Making Sense of Psychology, by Margot Northey and Brian Timmins (Oxford Press, 2012), available in paper-bound copy at the University Bookstore. This is a "how to" book, taking the student, step by step, through the process of conceiving, proposing, conducting, and writing a research report in psychology. The required reading material (i.e. that which will be covered in the course exam) consists of: Ch. 4 (Information Gathering), Ch. 6 (Writing a lab report), Ch. 7 (Presentation of Data), and Ch. 8 (Research Proposals and Honours Theses), a total of approximately 90 pages.

The balance of the text may be read according to individual student's needs and will not be included in the course exam. Ch. 11 - 13 are recommended, however, for anyone without experience or with difficulty in writing academic papers. Ch. 10 should be used as a guide for writing the final research report in APA format.

Lectures

There will be a series of lectures on method and theory by the CD in weeks 2-6. In general, the content of the lectures will not overlap with the assigned material of the text, but lectures will include discussions of how specific text material can best be applied to the research report requirement. Additionally, a brief demonstration study will be conducted by the class, which will provide the data for the statistics labs to be held in the 2nd semester.

Proposal outlines

Students will meet with their groups in separate seminar rooms (locations to be announced) during the last 6 weeks of the 1st term, and present, individually, their proposal outlines. Presentations will be followed by feedback by the group leader and discussions among course members. Proposal outlines should briefly describe each of the following: (1) the hypothesis and its theoretical contribution, (2) methodology, including participants and procedures, (3) statistics to be employed, (4) how the results will be interpreted. Presentations should not exceed 15 minutes.

Studies may deal with any area of psychology, and may employ any scientifically acceptable method (e.g. laboratory, naturalistic observation, archival, online), but must represent a test of an original, theoretically based hypothesis. This requirement will be discussed at length in class.

Proposal

This should not exceed 2000 words, excluding references, and should follow, in general, the format described and illustrated in Ch. 8 of the text. References should be cited appropriately and listed at the close of the paper. The proposal may incorporate material, verbatim or otherwise, presented in the outline, but should also reflect the comments and suggestions of the group leader where applicable.

The proposal should be posted to the group leader by email attachment, preferably in WORD, on or before Dec 9. Comments, suggestions and proposal grades will be posted back to students by the group leaders on or before Dec 23.

Exam

This will consist of approximately 60 multiple-choice items, taken from both lectures and text.

Schedule: 1st semester

Sep 11 Introduction to the course.*

Sep 18 Lecture: Research methods.*

Sep 25 Lecture: Theory and hypotheses.*

Oct 2 Lecture: Psychological testing. *

Oct 9 Lecture: Inferential statistics.*

Oct 16 Exam (one hour). Following the exam, research groups will meet in their seminar rooms with their group leaders to arrange schedules for presentations of proposal outlines and discuss other matters that might arise.

Oct 23 Individual presentations of proposal outlines begin.

Oct 30 Co-curricular day (no classes)

Nov 6 - Dec 11 Individual presentations of proposal outlines continue

* followed by opportunities for individual student/staff conversations

WINTER TERM

Feb 5 Statistics lab (in 159 BSB) (Group 1 at 2:30 - 4. Group 2 at 4 - 5:30)

Feb 12 Statistics lab continue – same times and place.

There will be no formal classes other than the statistics labs for this semester. Students will carry out their projects with individual consultations with their group leaders, as needed, during class hours or mutually convenient alternative times, and online, by email.

Final paper.

This should not exceed 6000 words, excluding references. It should be written in the form of a journal article, using the structure described and illustrated in Chapter 6 and the editorial details described in Ch. 10 of the text. Any and all material from the proposal may be incorporated, verbatim or otherwise, in the final paper. Final papers should be submitted by email attachment (WORD) to the group leader by April 8. Comments and grades for the paper will be posted back.

Grades - The course grade will consist of the exam score, weighted 20%, the proposal (including outline) weighted 30%, and the research report, weighted 50%. The last date to drop the course without receiving a grade is Feb. 6.

