

**Faculty of Health**  
**Department of Psychology**  
**PSYC 2030 3.0 N: INTRODUCTION TO RESEARCH METHODS**  
**Thursdays / 2:30p to 5:30p / CLH-G**  
**Winter / 2017-2018**

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**Instructor and T.A. Information**

Instructor: Dr. Raymond A. Mar  
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Office Hours	Mondays, 10:00a-11:00a	By Appointment

**Course Prerequisite(s): Course prerequisites are strictly enforced.**

- HH/PSYC 1010 6.00 (Introduction to Psychology), with a minimum grade of C.

**Course Credit Exclusions**

Please refer to [York Courses Website](#) for a listing of any course credit exclusions.

**Course website:** [Moodle](#)

**Course Description**

This course will introduce students to the scientific method and various forms of research design, including case studies, correlational, and experimental approaches. The strengths and weaknesses of these different approaches to research will be discussed. At the end of this course, students should be able to locate empirical psychological research reports, comprehend them, and evaluate them critically. More specifically, students will be able to evaluate different forms of measurement, understand issues pertaining to sampling and sample size, be able to apply the concepts for basic statistical tests, and evaluate the ethical issues surrounding a research study.

**Program Learning Outcomes**

Upon completion of this course, students should be able to:

1. Distinguish between experimental and non-experimental designs.
2. Demonstrate critical thinking in identifying strengths and weaknesses of different research designs
3. Define hypotheses, independent and dependent variables, validity and reliability.

4. Demonstrates an ability to locate and identify valid, credible, and rigorous psychological research.
5. Identify the problems that arise during sampling, measurement, and making inferences from data
6. Understanding ethical obligations of researchers.

**Topics Covered**

1. Basics of the scientific method
2. Finding scientific articles
3. Understanding the methods in a scientific article
4. Samples and populations
5. Measurement (reliability, validity, measurement error)
6. Basics of descriptive & inferential statistics
7. Case studies
8. Observational studies (naturalistic & participant)
9. Correlational survey studies
10. Qualitative studies
11. Basics of experimental & quasi-experimental designs
12. Experimental control (threats to internal and external validity)
13. Research ethics and questionable research practices

**Required Text**

- Haslam, S. A. & McGarty, C. Research Methods and Statistics in Psychology (2nd ed.)

**Course Requirements and Assessment:**

<b>Assessment</b>	<b>Date of Evaluation (if known)</b>	<b>Weighting</b>
6 Weekly Assignments	January 11 to March 1	20%
Term Test 1	January 25	25%
Term Test 2	March 1	35%
Term Test 3	March 29	20%
Total		100%

**Description of Assignments**

Weekly Assignments: Assignments will be given at the end of the first 6 lectures, to be completed before the following lecture or whenever else noted. These assignments will include, but are not limited to, completion of online quizzes, small written assignments, and library searches. Altogether, these 6 assignments will be worth 20% of the total, but may differ in individual value.

**Grading as per Senate Policy**

The grading scheme for the course conforms to the 9-point grading system used in undergraduate programs at York (e.g., A+ = 9, A = 8, B+ = 7, C+ = 5, etc.). Assignments and

tests will bear either a letter grade designation or a corresponding number grade (e.g. A+ = 90 to 100, A = 80 to 90, B+ = 75 to 79, etc.)

The following allows for conversion between letter-grades and percentages:

<u>Percentage</u>	<u>Grade</u>	<u>Description</u>
90 - 100	A+	Exceptional
80 - 89	A	Excellent
75 - 79	B+	Very Good
70 - 74	B	Good
65 - 69	C+	Competent
60 - 64	C	Fairly Competent
55 - 59	D+	Passing
50 - 54	D	Marginally Passing
40 - 49	E	Marginally Failing
0 - 39	F	Failing

(For a full description of York grading system see the York University Undergraduate Calendar - [Grading Scheme for 2017-18](#))

### **Late Work/Missed Tests or Exams**

Students with a documented reason for missing a course test, such as illness, compassionate grounds, etc., which is confirmed by supporting documentation may request accommodation from the Course Instructor. (Attending Physician Statement which can be found at: <http://myacademicrecord.students.yorku.ca/pdf/attending-physicians-statement.pdf>)

Further extensions or accommodation will require students to submit a formal petition to the Faculty.

Late Assignments. **Assignments received after the deadline will be given a grade of 0.**

Missed Tests. Students who miss a test due to illness or severe distress must **e-mail the instructor and TA within 24 hours**, and follow the Faculty of Health guidelines for missed tests or examination. Exams missed on the grounds of medical circumstances must be supported by an Attending Physician's Statement. Also acceptable is a statement by a psychologist or counselor. Students are not expected to disclose the nature of the illness, but the document must specify (1) the date of consultation, (2) contact information for the health provider, and (3) a statement that the student would not have been able to attend class (or write a test/exam) during the relevant period of time. For other types of emergencies, appropriate official documentation must also be provided (e.g., death certificate, obituary notice, automobile accident report; notes from parents and relatives will not be accepted). **The documentation must be dated on the same day of the exam/test or earlier, or it will not be accepted.** This documentation should be placed in the instructor's mailbox (main floor of BSB) and sent as a PDF/JPG via e-mail. **Failure to provide appropriate documentation for a missed test will result in a grade of 0.**

If this missed test is prior to the drop date, regardless of reason, the student has waived the right to have a specific percentage of graded feedback available to them prior to the drop date.

If appropriate documentation is provided, then the other tests may be re-weighted or the student may have to write a make-up test or complete a make-up assignment. Please note that the make-up test or assignment may not resemble the original test, but instead be a series of essay questions or a take-home essay assignment.

**Important New Information Regarding Missed Tests**

For any missed tests or late assignments, students **MUST** complete the following online form which will be received and reviewed in the Psychology undergraduate office.

[HH PSYC: Missed Tests/Exams Form](#). Failure to complete the form within 48 hours of the original deadline will result in a grade of zero for the test/assignment.

**Add/Drop Deadlines**

For a list of all important dates please refer to: [Fall/Winter 2017-18 - Important Dates](#)

	<b>FALL (F)</b>	<b>YEAR (Y)</b>	<b>WINTER (W)</b>
Last date to add a course <b>without permission</b> of instructor (also see Financial Deadlines)	Sept. 20	Sept. 20	Jan. 17
Last date to add a course <b>with permission</b> of instructor (also see Financial Deadlines)	Oct. 4	Oct. 18	Jan. 31
Drop deadline: Last date to drop a course without receiving a grade (also see Financial Deadlines)	Nov. 10	Feb. 9	March 9
Course Withdrawal Period (withdraw from a course and receive a grade of “W” on transcript – see note below)	Nov. 11 - Dec. 4	Feb. 10 - Apr. 6	March 10 - Apr. 6

**\*Note:** *You may withdraw from a course using the registration and enrolment system after the drop deadline until the last day of class for the term associated with the course. When you withdraw from a course, the course remains on your transcript without a grade and is notated as “W”. The withdrawal will not affect your grade point average or count towards the credits required for your degree.*

**Electronic Device Policy**

Students are forbidden from texting or using their cellphone during lectures. If you must use your phone during a lecture, please leave the classroom to do so. Past research has shown that taking notes by hand results in better retention of material and better performance on tests and exams. Students are encouraged to avoid using laptops for note-taking. If laptops are employed, WiFi must be disabled and the laptop can only be used for note-taking purposes. Multi-tasking, such as checking Facebook and other sites, during class is prohibited. Past research has found that multi-tasking with a laptop results in poorer course grades, not just for the person doing the multi-tasking but for those sitting behind and within view of the screen. Be considerate to others and do not multi-task if you choose to use a laptop. Along similar lines, if someone’s laptop-use is distracting you, feel free to ask this person to stop. This behavior is not only prohibited, it is negatively impacting your ability to learn the material and do well in this course. In order to reduce the negative impact on peers, those using laptops are asked to please sit in the back row so as to not distract other students.

## Attendance Policy

If you want to get a good mark in this class, you will need to attend all lectures. You cannot expect to receive a decent mark in this course if you are not present for lectures.

## Policy Regarding E-mail Etiquette

Formal norms exist for e-mail communication in a professional setting, such as at a University or in a workplace. Learning these norms is important because violating them will often result in creating a poor impression. Here are some tips for how to make a good impression when you e-mail a professor or TA:

- Before you write, read the syllabus carefully to make sure the information you need isn't there.
- Avoid informal language or slang.
- Be sure that your e-mail contains proper spelling, grammar, and punctuation.
- Take the time to think out your question before writing. Be clear and concise.
- Write your e-mail far in advance of when you need the answer (see below for details).

Here are some examples of good and bad e-mails, courtesy of Dr. Joni Sasaki (University of Hawaii at Manoa):

### Good e-mail:

Dr. Sasaki,

I hope all is well and that you are enjoying your weekend. I have been looking over my past assignments, and I was wondering if I could make an appointment to see you to discuss how I can improve for my presentation and final paper. Tuesdays and Wednesdays would be the best days for me. Looking forward to hearing from you.

- [Student's name, Student number]

### Bad e-mail:

hey prof, i was wondering if i could come and see you tmrw? i just started working on my presentation and ran into some problems and im kind of confused as to what i should do in regards to my topic.thx

## SPECIFIC POLICIES

The full course code (with section) must appear in the subject-heading of all e-mails, to prevent messages from being discarded as spam. As well, all e-mails should begin with a salutation or address indicating to whom the message is directed (e.g., "Dr. Mar") and close with your full name and student number (e.g., "John Smith, 211995552"). Please format your e-mails properly, if you expect them to be answered. Students can expect a response to a legitimate inquiry within 48 hours, not including weekends. If you don't receive a reply in this time period, please re-send your message.

**Please read the syllabus closely before asking a question via e-mail. Questions that are answered in the syllabus will be given low priority.**

## **Academic Integrity for Students**

York University takes academic integrity very seriously; please familiarize yourself with [Information about the Senate Policy on Academic Honesty](#).

It is recommended that you review Academic Integrity by completing the [Academic Integrity Tutorial](#) and [Academic Honesty Quiz](#).

## **Test Banks**

The offering for sale of, buying of, and attempting to sell or buy test banks (banks of test questions and/or answers), or any course specific test questions/answers is not permitted in the Faculty of Health. Any student found to be doing this may be considered to have breached the Senate Policy on Academic Honesty. In particular, buying and attempting to sell banks of test questions and/or answers may be considered as “Cheating in an attempt to gain an improper advantage in an academic evaluation” (article 2.1.1 from the Senate Policy) and/or “encouraging, enabling or causing others” (article 2.1.10 from the Senate Policy) to cheat.

## **Electronic Devices During a Test/Examination**

Electronic mobile devices of any kind are not allowed during a test or examination. Students are required to turn off and secure any electronic mobile device in their bag which is to be placed under the chair while a test/exam is in progress. Any student observed with an electronic device during a test/exam may be reported to the Undergraduate Office for a potential breach of Academic Honesty.

## **Academic Accommodation for Students with Disabilities**

While all individuals are expected to satisfy the requirements of their program of study and to aspire to do so at a level of excellence, the university recognizes that persons with disabilities may require reasonable accommodation to enable them to do so. The [York University Accessibility Hub](#) is your online stop for accessibility on campus. The [Accessibility Hub](#) provides tools, assistance and resources. Policy Statement.

**Policy:** York University shall make reasonable and appropriate accommodations and adaptations in order to promote the ability of students with disabilities to fulfill the academic requirements of their programs.

The nature and extent of accommodations shall be consistent with and supportive of the integrity of the curriculum and of the academic standards of programs or courses. Provided that students have given sufficient notice about their accommodation needs, instructors shall take reasonable steps to accommodate these needs in a manner consistent with the guidelines established hereunder.

For Further Information please refer to: [York university academic accommodation for students with disabilities policy](#).

## Course Materials Copyright Information

These course materials are designed for use as part of the PSYC 2030 course at York University and are the property of the instructor unless otherwise stated. Third party copyrighted materials (such as book chapters, journal articles, music, videos, etc.) have either been licensed for use in this course or fall under an exception or limitation in Canadian Copyright law.

Copying this material for distribution (e.g. uploading material to a commercial third-party website) may lead to a violation of Copyright law. [Intellectual Property Rights Statement](#).

## Course Schedule

Date	Lecture/Reading	Assignment
Jan. 4 Week 1	1: Course Introduction and Overview	
Jan. 11 Week 2	2: The Scientific Method (in Psychology) and Scientific Literature - Chapter 1, Chapter 2. Library Tutorial.	Weekly Assignment due
Jan. 18 Week 3	3: Sampling, Measurement, and Naturalistic Observation - Chapter 5 (pp. 104-109). [sampling for surveys] - Chapter 4 (pp. 73-77). [sampling for experiments] - Chapter 3 (pp. 34-43). [measurement] - Chapter 5 (pp. 109-115). [naturalistic observation]	Weekly Assignment due
Jan. 25 Week 4	<b>Term Test 1 (25%)</b>	Weekly Assignment due
Feb. 1 Week 5	4: Descriptive Statistics and Inferential Statistics - Chapter 6. Chapter 8 (pp. 224-243)	
Feb. 8 Week 6	5: Case studies, Survey Research, and Research Ethics - Chapter 3 (pp. 56-59) [case studies] - Chapter 3 (pp. 53-56) [surveys] - Chapter 5 (pp. 98-104; 115-125). [surveys] - Chapter 14. [ethics]	Weekly Assignment due
Feb. 15 Week 7	6: Correlational Research - Chapter 9.	Weekly Assignment due
Feb. 22	<b>* READING WEEK*</b>	
Mar. 1 Week 8	<b>Term Test 2 (35%)</b>	Weekly Assignment due
Mar. 8 Week 9	7: Introduction to Experimental Research - Chapter 3 (pp. 43-53) - Chapter 4 (pp. 65-73)	
Mar. 9	Last date to withdraw without receiving a grade	
Mar. 15 Week 10	8: Controls in experimental research - Chapter 4 (pp. 77-91)	
Mar. 22 Week 11	9: Qualitative Methods - Chapter 12	
Mar. 29 Week 12	<b>Term Test 3 (20%)</b>	
Apr. 5 Week 13	<b>*WINTER STUDY DAY*</b>	