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PSYX 120.50: Research Methods I

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Psyx 120 Online: Introduction to Research Methods

Spring 2015

Instructor Information

Instructor: Lindsay Crosby, M.A.

Email: lindsay.crosby@umontana.edu

Office hours: by appointment

Course Description

Psychology is the science of human and non-human animal behavior as well as mental, perceptual, and biological processes. As a survey course, Introduction to Research Methods provides an overview of the scientific approach to studying those various topics. By understanding basics research methods of psychology, you will learn to approach the world in a more systemic and scientific manner. The course primarily employs an online discussion format. Throughout the course of the semester, you will be asked discussion questions, and it is expected that you will interact with your instructor and classmates by responding to the questions posed. Furthermore, at various points in the semester you will be asked to use your understanding of research methods to critique and comment upon actual published research studies. It is anticipated that by the end of the semester you will have a basic understanding of research methodology that will enable you to consume psychological literature.

Required Text

Shaughnessy, J.J., Zechmeister, E.B., and Zechmeister, J.S. (2011). Research Methods in Psychology, 9th Ed. Boston, MA: McGraw-Hill.

Course Requirements

please follow the course schedule throughout the semester

Exams

There will be two non-cumulative exams in this course. Each exam is worth 100 points. The format of the exams will include 50 multiple-choice/true-false questions with each question being worth 2 points. The first exam (midterm) will contain questions with assigned readings through chapter 6. The second exam (final) will contain questions with material from chapters 7-12. You will have 120 minutes to complete each exam. Please do not wait until the last minute to submit the exam because you may not submit it before time runs out. If you fail to submit the exam in the allotted time, you will receive a zero on the exam. No exceptions will be made, so please plan accordingly.

Quizzes

Over the course of the semester we will have a total of 13 quizzes that will cover material from the week's reading. Each quiz will have 15 questions with each question being worth one point. The quizzes are meant to serve a multitude of purposes. They should key you in on what is significant from the material we cover in class. Quizzes will be multiple choice/true false. **Each quiz will be open to take from 12 AM until 11:59 PM on the Friday of that week and cannot be made-up after this time.** This offers you an entire 24hrs. to take a 15 question T/F quiz. There are 16 weeks in the semester. You will not have quizzes on weeks, 8, 10, and 16 because of spring break, midterm week, and finals week.

Discussion Forums

Almost every week throughout the duration of the semester, two discussion forums will be created based on the week's readings. Discussion forums will be opened at the beginning of the week (Monday at 12 AM) and will close on Thursday at 12 PM, noon. **Students will be expected to make an original post and one reply (to another student's post) in each discussion forum during that allotted time.** In other words, don't wait for the end of the semester to make 26 posts and 26 replies; you must submit two posts and two replies every week if you want the credit. Please attend to the quality of your discussion post because the instructor reserves the right to not give you credit for unsatisfactory posts. For example, simply stating "I agree" or some variation is not a satisfactory reply to another student's post.

Responses to discussion posts are expected to help you explain, analyze, synthesize and evaluate basic concepts in psychological research methods. Additionally, through interacting with your peers it is anticipated that you will develop a better understanding of the material covered. You will be expected to make 26 original posts and 26 replies throughout the semester. Each original post is worth 5 points (and you'll submit two per week) and each reply is worth 2.5 points (and you'll submit two per week) for a total of 15 points a week. There are 16 weeks in the semester. You will not have quizzes on weeks, 8, 10, and 16 because of spring break, midterm week, and finals week.

Homework Assignments

There will be three homework assignments throughout the course of the semester. They will ask you to apply the material that you have learned to critiquing and commenting original research articles. For the first assignment you will be provided with an article and asked to address specific questions about the research study. The second assignment will require you to find your own peer-reviewed original research article. The third and final HW assignment will ask you to reflect on the course and share how the material applies to you currently and will apply to you in the future (professionally or personally). **An explanation for each HW assignment will be posted as a resource on the course page at least two week prior to its due date.** Please see course calendar for due dates.

Grading

According to FERPA law, I am not permitted to email student grade information. I can answer questions about your grade but, please access the actual percentage/letter via Moodle.

Course grading is based on a total of 700 points. Points are awarded as follows:

Component	Points
Participation (Discussion Posts/Replies)	13 weeks @ 15 points each (195 points)
Quizzes	13 @ 15 points each (195 points)
Research Homework Assignments	2 @ 40 points each (80 points)
	1 @ 30 points (30 points)
Exams	2 @ 100 points each (200 points)

A = 100 - 90%

B = 89 - 80%

C = 79 - 70%

D = 69 - 60%

F = 59% and below

Make-up Policy

To make up a missed quiz or exam, you must meet the following criteria:

1. Notify your Instructor before the time of the exam and provide proper documentation.
2. You must have legitimate documentation verifying the reason for your absence. Examples of documented circumstances that may merit approval include the following:
 - illness or accident
 - death or family emergency
 - University-sanctioned activity

Course Guidelines and Policies

Academic Misconduct

All students must practice academic honesty. Academic misconduct is subject to an academic penalty by the course instructor and/or disciplinary sanction by the University. All students need to be familiar with the [Student Conduct Code](#).

Disability Modifications

The University of Montana assures equal access to instruction through collaboration between students with disabilities, instructors, and [Disability Services for Students](#). If you think you may have a disability adversely affecting your academic performance, and you have not already registered with Disability Services, please contact Disability Services in Lommasson Center 154 or call 406.243.2243. I will work with you and Disability Services to provide an appropriate modification.

Announcements

Students are responsible for any announcements made throughout the duration of this course. Announcements will be located on the course page, and may include changes in policy, due dates, or assignment requirements.

Course Schedule

Week/Dates	Readings	Topic(s)	Assignment(s)
Week 1 – Jan. 26	Syllabus, Attached Reading	Introduction to online courses	2posts; 2replies; 1quiz
Week 2 – Feb. 2	Chapter 1	Introduction	2posts; 2replies; 1quiz
Week 3 – Feb. 9	Chapter 2	The Scientific Method	2posts; 2replies; 1quiz
Week 4 – Feb. 16	Chapter 3	Ethical Issues in the Conduct of Psychological Research	2posts; 2replies; 1quiz
Week 5 – Feb. 23	Chapter 4	Observational Methods	2posts; 2replies; 1quiz
Week 6 – March 2	Chapter 5	Survey Research	2posts; 2replies; 1quiz

Week/Dates	Readings	Topic(s)	Assignment(s)
			1 st HW assignment due (03/06)
Week 7 – March 9	Chapter 6	Independent Groups Designs	2posts; 2replies; 1quiz
Week 8 – March 16	Midterm Week – review past readings	Midterm Week – review past readings	Midterm: Chapters 1-6 (03/20) No posts, replies, or quiz due
Week 9 – March 23	Chapter 7	Repeated Measures Designs	2posts; 2replies; 1quiz
Week 10 – March 30	Chapter 8	Complex Designs	Nothing Due – Spring Break
Week 11 – April 6	Chapter 9	Single-Subject/Small N Designs	2posts; 2replies; 1quiz
Week 12 – April 13	Chapter 10	Quasi-Experimental Designs	2posts; 2replies; 1quiz 2 nd HW assignment due (04/17)
Week 13 – April 20	Chapter 11	Data Analysis and Interpretation: Part 1	2posts; 2replies; 1quiz
Week 14 – April 27	Chapter 12	Data Analysis and Interpretation: Part II	2posts; 2replies; 1quiz
Week 15 – May 4	Review past readings	Review past readings	2posts; 2replies; 1quiz 3 rd HW assignment due (05/08)
Week 16 – May 11	Finals week	Review past readings	Final Exam: Chapters 7-12 (05/12)