

Psychology 3201: General Experimental Psychology
SPRING 2020
CRN: 21548

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Office Hours: Thursday 1:30-3:30 PM (or by appointment)

Class Schedule: Monday 3:00-4:50 PM Undergraduate Learning Center (UGLC) 116

Office Hours: My office hours will be in Prospect Hall, Room 215 on Thursdays from 2:30 PM – 4:30 PM. If you need to meet but cannot attend my established office hours, please e-mail me to set up a different time. See information about contacting me in the section below.

Course Description: This course will introduce you to the critical methods and steps that are used to conduct research in psychology. The major focus of this course is on the **processes** of research and how we go about trying to acquire knowledge about behavior, not on what we have learned using these methods. We will discuss why it is important to have an understanding of research methods and how it can help you evaluate the strength of published research in scholarly articles and the popular media. You will apply the scientific method and learn the appropriate steps to develop research questions and hypotheses, design well-crafted experiments to test those hypotheses, acquire and analyze data, and communicate research findings. Additionally, you will learn how to identify different types of studies (e.g. experimental, quasi-experimental and correlational) and recognize the strengths and weaknesses of each. You will also learn about other potential weaknesses in study design. Further, you will review basic descriptive and inferential statistical techniques. The course will also address critical ethical guidelines and concerns when conducting research in psychology. To facilitate your learning, you will engage in in-class team-based discussions and problem-solving designed to help you gain a deeper understanding of the critical concepts in this course.

Course Objectives: Upon completion of this course you should have achieved the following:

- Learned the critical research methods used in psychology and become skilled at articulating and executing the steps required to conduct research.
- Be able to read scholarly articles or descriptions of research in the popular press, identify what type of study was conducted, and deconstruct it into its different critical components (e.g. independent variable, dependent variable, etc.).
- Be able to identify the strengths and weakness of different study designs and articulate different possible sources of error.
- Be able to summarize research findings that you read or hear about and understand why the researchers made the choices they did regarding study design, sampling technique, choice of statistical analyses, etc.