

Research Methods in Psychology (Experimental Methods in Psychology)

PSY 218
Spring 2010

Instructors: Elena Kim; MA, Central European University, Returning Scholar, Academic Fellowship Program, Open Society Institute
Office: AUCA; Psychology Department
Office hours: by appointment
Pre-requisites: Introduction to Psychology and Statistics
Meeting times: Thursday 12:45-14:00; 14:10-15:35
Credit hours: 3
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Required textbooks:

1. John J. Shaughnessy, Eugene B. Zechmeister, and Jranne S. Zechmeister. (2000). *Research Methods in Psychology*. McGraw-Hill. (further referred to as **RMP**)
2. Parker, I. (2005). *Qualitative psychology. Introducing Radical Research*. Open University Press, NY
3. Silverman, D. (2000). *Doing Qualitative Research*. Sage Publications, London, Thousands Oaks, New Delhi (further referred to as **Silverman**)

Additional sources:

1. Elmes, D.G., Kantowitz, B.H., Roediger III, H.L. (1989). *Research Methods in Psychology*. St.Paul: West Publishing Co.
2. Heiman, G. (1999). *Research Methods in Psychology*. Boston: Houghton Muffin Co.
3. Aronson, E., Ellsworth, P.C., Carlsmith, J.M., Gonzales, M.H. (1990). *Methods of Research in Social Psychology*. McGraw-Hill Publishing Co.
4. Готтсданкер Р. Основы психологического эксперимента. М.: Изд-во Моск. университета, 1982.
5. Дружинин В. Н. Экспериментальная психология. М.: ИНФРА-М, 1997.
6. Джеймс Гудвин. Исследование в психологии. Методы и планирование. Питер. 2004
7. Dyer, C.(1995). *Beginning research in psychology a practical guide to research methods and statistics*
8. *Methods of research in social psychology* (1990)
9. Heiman, G. W. (1999). *Research methods in psychology*
10. Elmes, D. G. (1989). *Research methods in psychology*
10. *Doing qualitative research multiple strategies* (1992)
11. Milgram, S. (2000). *Eksperiment v sotsial'noi psikhologii essays and experiments*
12. Druzhinin, V.N. (1997). *Eksperimental'naia psikhologija*
13. *Metody issledovaniia v psikhologii: kvaziekperiment* (1998)
14. *Praktikum po obshchei, eksperimental'noi i prikladnoi psikhologii* (2000)
15. Allakhverdov, V.M. (2000). *Soznanie kak paradoks eksperimental'naia psikhologija*

Course Objectives

Since most of you are the second year students, you have already had an opportunity to get acquainted with a large body of scientific research. However, probably it was rather hard for you to understand whether you could actually trust the findings you read about because you were not familiar with the basis of scientific research. The goal of this course is to provide you with the knowledge of how Psychology as a science is conducted. Topics covered in this class will include issues of research design, methods, ethics, etc. I expect that at the end of this semester you will be able to understand, analyze, and criticize existing research. Above all, I hope that you will gain enough understanding of scientific methodology in order to conduct your own research.

Course requirements

Attendance

Attendance for this class is mandatory. In the beginning of each class, we'll take attendance. If you come late to class, you can be present but we will consider this day as missing. Above all, we do not like when students go back and forth during the class. It distracts our attention. Please, do not do that. Try to solve all your problems before the class. We are not going to regard a person as being present in class if she/he left the classroom for more than 15 minutes. There is one more issue that we wanted to warn you about, if you begin to talk to your fellow student during lectures and we noticed it, I have a right to ask you to leave the classroom. Grade "X" will be administered to those who misses 6 consecutive classes without satisfactory reasons.

Class participation

Students must attend each lecture and seminar with questions about the lectures and readings. In engaged dialogues, they should raise these questions for other students to discuss, and listen to contrary opinions. They must initiate and develop critical issues concerning the seminar activities. They should be well-structured and well-organized for the completion of their research projects.

Quizzes

There will be 20 minutes quizzes each seminar class on assigned reading and lecture materials to evaluate how students comprehend the material covered.

Assignments

Assignment # 1. Due week 4 (2 points)

1. Write out your research question in one sentence, and elaborate on it in one paragraph.
2. List three reasons why it is a good research question for you to investigate.
3. State your hypothesis
4. List at least two reasons why you think your variables will be related in the manner you stated in the hypothesis

Assignment # 2. Due on week 6 (3 points)

1. Find at least 5 **academic articles** related to your research project.
2. Summarize each of the articles and demonstrate the relevance of the articles to your research questions.
3. Properly cite all the articles in the APA format

Assignment # 3. Due on week 11 (4 points)

Write introduction section of your project.

Assignment # 4. Due on week 12 (2 points)

Write the method section in APA format with details on participants, materials and procedure.

Assignment # 5. Due on week 14 (4 points)

Submit the Results section where you present statistical results of the study. Present the statistical test, justify your choice and provide all the significant data relevant to your research.

Late assignments will be accepted but NOT graded.

Individual presentation

During the semester, each of the students will do one 30 minutes presentation followed by a facilitated discussion. The goal of facilitation is to provide students with experience of how to lead discussion, engage people in discussion, keep people's attention on the topic at hand, and provide quick and compelling answers to questions. The students should on the one hand, learn not to dominate a discussion and, on the other hand, not let the discussion fall into chaos. In the beginning of the semester I will pass around all the topics that we are going to cover during semester and you will have to choose one topic that you would like to facilitate. In order to get a good grade, you should read the relevant to you chapter at least one week prior your facilitation

date, come up with at least 5 questions you would like to address during the seminar, find additional material concerning your topic and arrange a consultation with the instructor at least two days before your facilitation.

Article reports

During the semester, each of the students will work on 10 important studies in psychology in jigsaw exercise. This activity will aim at familiarizing students with key psychological studies. Students will be expected to acquaint themselves with a particular research, prepare a handout and teach this material to a group of fellow students.

Final exam

There will one final exam at the end of the semester. Your exam will include the material covered in the textbook, distributed handouts, and **lectures**.

Final project

During the semester you will have to work on the research project. Your final project should follow APA style requirements. Requirements for the paper are described in details in additional materials.

Final Project Presentation

At the end of the semester you will have to make a public presentation on your research project. Each presentation will last for 5-7 minutes.

Grading criteria for the presentation:

Content

- clearly stated research topic and hypothesis - 1 point
- adequate level of familiarity with the research method(s)- 1 point
- clearly stated conclusions – 1 points

Delivery

- clear annunciation of words – 1 points
- visual aids or other supporting materials- 1 point

Total – 5 points

Course evaluation criteria:

Class participation	5 points
Individual presentation	15 points
Quizzes	15 points
Assignments	15 points
Final project	15 points
Final exam	15 points
Final project presentation	5 points
Article reports	15 points
Bonus	10 points
Total	100 points

Grading system

95-100%	A		74-77 %	C	
90-94 %	A-		70-73 %	C-	
88-89 %	B+		68 - 69 %	D+	
84-87 %	B		64 - 67 %	D	
80-83 %	B-		60- 63 %	D-	
78-79 %	C+		0-59 %	F	

Grade “X” will be administered in the cases when students miss 6 classes with no satisfactory and well-witnessed reasons.

Missed Classes and Make-up Exams

There will be only few satisfactory reasons for missing classes, especially exams. You may miss exams when you are sick (you should present a reference from a doctor), you are presenting a paper at the conference, and you have major family problems (death of a relative, etc.). Make-up exams will be arranged in the convenient for the teacher and a student time.

Cheating policy

If we notice that you have submitted someone else's work and presented it as your own, copied your answers from other exam papers or plagiarized from a published article, we will assign you an F in the course and inform the administration about this issue regardless of your performance in other portions of the course. We will hate to do that, but there will not be any exceptions to this rule.

Cell Phones and Beepers

It is always disturbing when cell phones and beepers go off during the class, especially during exams. You are supposed to turn them off before every class. If we hear any noise from the cell phone or the beeper during the class, you will be asked to leave the class without permission to come back. You can take your belongings only after the class. If you are waiting an emergency call, you should warn me before the class. Again, there will be no exception to this rule!

Grading Policy

There will be a precise algorithm of how the grade will be calculated (look at course evaluation criteria). Taking into account that many of us are susceptible to Above Average Effect (overly positive view of the self), many people in the class will feel that they deserve a higher grade because you are so "close" to it. Do not ask us to change the grade. I am not going to do that. I will give everybody the grade in accordance with the grading system. We do not want to make any decisions based on my personal attitude to you.

If you feel that the evaluation of your work was not fair or you noticed some scoring mistakes in your grade, you should bring these issues to our attention immediately!!! If your demands are **reasonable**, I will remedy my mistakes. After all, social psychological research demonstrates that all people are susceptible to mistakes and biases. We promise, there will be a no-risk situation for you- we will not penalize anyone who takes the time to highlight instances where you or someone else were treated unfairly.

There always will be someone who thinks that he/she was "tricked" by an exam question. If you feel that way, you should write a statement arguing your position. Your argument should include citations from the book (page numbers, dates) or other reasonable sources. Submit your comments no later than 1 week after the exam.

Class Schedule

Dates	Topics	Reading Material	Due dates
January 14	Introduction. Course requirements. Syllabus.		
	Introduction to Research Methods. Developing ideas for research.		
January 21	Scientific Thinking in Psychology.		
	Ethics in Psychological Research		
January 28	Developing Ideas for Research in Psychology.		
	Choosing a research design		
February 4	Measurement, Sampling, and Data Analysis		Assignment 1 is due by 17:00
February 11	Introduction to Experimental Research		
February 18	Control Problems in Experimental Research		Assignment 2 is due by 17:00
February 25	Experimental Design: Single Factor Design		
March 4	Experimental Design: Factorial Design		
March 11	Spring Break		
March 18	Introduction to Correlational Research		

March 25	Correlational Research: Quasi-experimental design		Assignment 3 is due by 17:00
April 1	Small N Designs		Assignment 4 is due by 17:00
April 8	Descriptive Research Methods: Observation		
	Descriptive Research Methods: Case-study and archival research		
April 15	How to construct a questionnaire		Assignment 5 is due by 17:00
	Descriptive Research: Unobtrusive measures		
April 22	Descriptive Research: focus-group		
April 29	Final projects presentations		
May 6	Final exam	Submit your final project to kim_el@mail.auca.kg	