

Psychology 3120

Understanding Psychological Research = Spring 2012

Instructor: Dr. Stephen Christman
Meeting Times: Monday, Wednesday 11:00 am - 12:15 pm; UH 4410
Office: UH5018C (phone: 530-4684)
Office Hours: Tuesday 11:00-3:00 (& by appt.)
Textbooks: 1. *Conducting Research in Psychology: Measuring the Weight of Smoke, 3rd Ed.*, by B.W. Pelham & H. Blanton, 2007, Wadsworth. [CRIP]
 2. *Statistics Without Tears: A Primer for Non-mathematicians*, by D. Rowntree, 2004, Pearson. [SWT]

<u>Dates:</u>	<u>Lecture Topics and Assigned Readings:</u>
Jan 9	Introduction to course
Jan 11	The Scientific Method (CRIP: Ch. 1)
Jan 16	NO CLASS (MLK Day)
Jan 18	Scientific Discovery (CRIP: Ch. 2)
Jan 23	Validity and reliability (CRIP: Ch. 3)
Jan 25	NO CLASS
Jan 30	Threats to validity (CRIP: Ch. 5)
Feb 1	Psychological measurement (CRIP: Ch. 4)
Feb 6	Non-experimental research designs (CRIP: Ch. 6)
Feb 8	Quasi-experimental & experimental research designs (CRIP: Chs. 7 & 8)
Feb 13	Choosing the right research design (CRIP: Ch. 9)
Feb 15	EXAM I
Feb 20	An overview of statistics (SWT: Chs. 1 & 2)
Feb 22	Measures of central tendency & variability (SWT: Ch. 3)
Feb 27	Frequency distributions: The normal distribution (SWT: Ch. 4)
Feb 29	From sample to population (SWT: Ch. 5)
Mar 5	NO CLASS (Spring break)
Mar 8	NO CLASS (Spring break)
Mar 12	Inferential statistics (SWT: Ch. 6 & 7)
Mar 14	Correlation, causality, and effect size (SWT: Ch. 8; CRIP: Ch. 10)
Mar 19	Nonlinear variability and Chaos Theory
Mar 21	EXAM II
Mar 26	NO CLASS
Mar 28	Scientific writing (CRIP: Ch. 11)
Apr 2	Methodology at work (CRIP: Ch. 12)
Apr 4	NO CLASS
Apr 9	Biases and artifacts in psychological research
Apr 11	The Ethics of Doing Research

Apr 16 Graphs
Apr 18 ESP Experiment

Apr 23 ESP Expt: Discussion of results
Apr 25 Review for Exam

Friday, May 4, 10:15 – 12:15 pm EXAM III

Course Requirements:

Attendance is not required, but is *highly* recommended, especially for the final six weeks of the course (March 19 – April 25), since the questions on Exam III will be based in part on lecture-only material. Also, **attendance on April 18 and 23 is required**, as we will be conducting an in-class experiment.

Grading:

Exam I	25%
Exam II	25%
Exam III	25%
Experimental proposal paper	15%
Participation in ESP Experiment	
Data Collection/Discussion	10%

(there will also be an opportunity to earn extra credit worth up to 5% of your final grade on Exam III).

COURSE INFORMATION

Format: The basic format for the course will consist of lectures. However, in-class questions are not only permitted, they are encouraged.

Attendance: Attendance is not mandatory. The instructor's view is that this is no longer high school, and it is now up to college students to manage their time responsibly and effectively. However, regular attendance is **HIGHLY** recommended. Our textbook covers a very large amount of material, only some of which will end up being covered on the exams. The content of lectures will provide students a strong guideline for distinguishing between the critical material covered in lecture that will constitute the bulk of exam questions and other, secondary material that will not be covered in lecture and will constitute a small percentage of exam questions. Also, the instructor does not simply "lecture out of the book". By attending lectures regularly, students will be able to learn about the material both from the way the book presents it and from the alternate way in which the instructor presents it.

Grading: Exams are graded on the basis of a modified curve that will be explained in class. Each of the three exams will be worth one third of the final grade. Exams will consist of (mostly) multiple-choice questions, along with one or two short answer questions. The final exam will *not* be cumulative, and will feature an extra-credit essay question.

Make-up policy: In general, make-up exams are **NOT** allowed. If you have a valid medical or personal excuse **AND** you inform the instructor of your absence **BEFORE** the exam, then arrangements for a special *essay* make-up exam can be made.

Academic integrity: During examinations, you must do your own work. Talking or discussion is not permitted during the examinations, nor may you compare papers, copy from others, or collaborate in any way. Any collaborative behavior during the examinations will result in failure of the exam, and may lead to failure of the course and University disciplinary action.

Accommodations for students with disabilities: In compliance with the University of Toledo policy and equal access laws, I am available to discuss appropriate academic accommodations that may be required for student with disabilities. Requests for academic accommodations are to be made during the first two weeks of the semester, except for unusual circumstances, so arrangements can be made. Students are encouraged to register with the Office of Accessibility to verify their eligibility for appropriate accommodations.