RESEARCH METHODS IN SOCIAL PSYCHOLOGY
THE UNIVERSITY OF TOLEDO
DEPARTMENT OF PSYCHOLOGY, COLLEGES OF ARTS AND LETTERS
54401 – PSY 4700 - 001

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Office Hours: Virtual office hours, Wed from noon to 4pm, or by appointment

Course Website: Blackboard Learn
Credit Hours: Variable (2-4)
Offered: Fall, 2020
Class Location: On-line course

CATALOG COURSE DESCRIPTION

A hybrid course developed to provide students experiences that provide training in designing and conducting research in social psychology, includes work on research projects.

COURSE OVERVIEW

This is a multi-faceted experiential learning course designed to provide students with knowledge about research and the research process in experimental social psychology. The field of experimental social psychology seeks to answer varied research questions about social life by utilizing the experimental method of manipulating variables and measuring their influence. One goal of this advanced research methodology course is for students to learn about theoretical, empirical, and statistical issues relevant to experimental social psychology. A second goal is for students to gain a deeper understanding of the decisions involved in conducting experimental social psychology research. A final goal is to provide a hands-on learning experience about the research process in social psychology.

**This semester, the entire course will occur remotely*. Additionally, there will be a special emphasis on conducting social psychological research during COVID-19. This will include coverage of on-line data collection tools, research collaboration, and the use of existing databases.

SPECIAL NOTE

It's important to note that based on the unpredictability of the COVID-19 virus things can change at any time so please be patience and understanding as we move through the semester. I also ask that you keep me informed of concerns you may have about class, completing course work/assignments timely and/or health concerns related to COVID.

PREREQUISITES

Students are expected to have previously taken Principles of Psychology (PSY1010) and Statistical Methods (PSY2100).

MEETING TIMES/DAYS

This is an on-line course, with synchronous class meetings held Fridays at noon through Blackboard Collaborate. Students will also schedule individualized times throughout each week where they will complete experiential research learning tasks (described below).

WEBSITE

We will use Blackboard and Blackboard Collaborate for our class. Presentation materials, reading materials, and grades will be located in Blackboard. Class meetings, discussions, chats, and presentations will occur in Blackboard Collaborate. Additional course activities may occur through other services, such as Zoom, Webex, Slack, and UT email.

https://blackboard.utdl.edu/webapps/login/
http://utlv.screenstepslive.com/s/student/m/56924

READINGS & MATERIAL

1. *Primary source empirical research articles on the topic of experimental social psychology*. Readings will be provided on-line on the course Black Board page.

2. *Research Methods in Social Psychology* (2nd Edition). Aronson, Ellsworth, Carlsmith, & Hope Gonzales (McGraw-Hill; ISBN-10: 0070024669). This text provides a guide for the process of experimentation: focusing on asking the right questions, translating questions into a workable ethical design, setting up data collection, designing reliable and valid dependent variables, avoiding bias, conducting the post-experimental interviews, and writing up research results. Readings from this book will be provided on-line on the course Black Board page.

STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES

- Be trained and certified in ethical psychological research practices
- Be able to conduct a literature search on social psychological topics
- Be able to develop social psychological research hypotheses
- Be able to develop experimental protocols that test research hypotheses
- Be able to evaluate social psychological research study designs
- Be able to conduct research and interact professional with participants
- Be able to use software for psychological research, such as SONA Systems, ResearchMatch, Prolific, MTurk, Qualtrics, and PsychData
- Be able to code and enter research data into SPSS
- Be able to interpret the results of studies and plan follow-up research

TECHNOLOGY REQUIREMENTS, SKILLS, AND PRIVACY POLICIES

Please view the following webpage for technological considerations for this course, including technical skills needed, general technology requirements, and technology privacy policies: https://www.utoledo.edu/dl/students/required-info-online-learners.html#CT

*It is expected that students in the course will have computer and internet access. If this is not the case, please let the instructor know the first week of the semester. If you experience computer or internet difficulties during the semester, you need to alert the instructor immediately.

COMPUTER SKILL REQUIREMENTS

All students should be comfortable and able to navigate on-line. A basic level of computer skills is a prerequisite. If you have never taken an on-line course before I highly recommend visiting http://www.dl.utoledo.edu/help_desk/help.htm to learn how to work with an on-line course.

ACCESSIBILITY OF COURSE TECHNOLOGIES

Please view the following webpage for information regarding the accessibility of Blackboard and other technologies used in this course: https://www.utoledo.edu/dl/students/required-info-online-learners.html#ACCESS

CLASS STRUCTURE

The course has two components.

First, the course contains an on-line classroom component. For this portion, you will participate in on-line meetings (Fridays at noon) and complete four assignments that are designed to complement our meeting topics (see course schedule below).

Second, the course has an active hands-on research portion. In this portion you will be involved in research activities, such as data collection, literature reviews, data analysis, scientific writing, etc. Activities in this component will vary throughout the term and depend upon the number of credit hours taken in the course. The instructor and the graduate student supervisors will provide you with individualized information on the research activities you will be completing.

RESPONSIBILITIES AND COURSE EXPECTATIONS

Student schedules should be open and flexible to accommodate a commitment to this course. Students with tight schedules or who cannot attend our weekly meetings should NOT register for this course. Also, as this is a variable credit hour course, the responsibilities will vary slightly depending upon whether the student signs up for 2-4 credit hours (noted below).

- **1. Attend and participate in weekly class meetings**. We will hold on-line synchronous class meetings eight Fridays throughout the semester (see the course schedule below). During these meetings, students will participate in discussions of book chapters and

empirical research articles, and be introduced to new research ideas, methodologies, statistics, etc. Moreover, students will be expected to update the group on the progress of ongoing efforts for experiential learning tasks (see below). Issues relevant to the careers of undergraduate students (e.g., graduate school preparation), as well as topics covering the technological and methodological demands of the field will also be covered. It is expected that students attend every meeting and contribute to discussion. If a student misses a meeting due to illness or some other university-appropriate excuse, please let the instructor know in a timely manner. All students in the course (regardless of whether they sign up for 2, 3, or 4 credit hours) are expected to complete this component of the course.

Absences due to COVID-19 quarantine or isolation requirements **are considered excused absences*. Students should notify their instructors and these absences may not require written notice.

- **2. Completing Meeting Assignments**. Four weeks of the term students are asked to complete an assignment related to our class meeting topics. The due dates for these assignments are given on the course schedule below. These assignments will be explained in more detail the week prior to their due date. These assignments will be submitted in the assignment room in our course Blackboard page.

- **3. Read assigned journal articles and textbook chapters**. Depending on the week, students may have chapters from our textbook or journal articles to read. These readings will be used to facilitate our discussion of research in our class meetings. All readings will be indicated on the syllabus and posted on Blackboard. All students in the course (regardless of whether they sign up for 2, 3, or 4 credit hours) are expected to complete this component of the course.

- **4. Complete hands-on experiential research tasks**. As part of the experiential learning component of the course, students will be assigned to specific research-related tasks involving research in social psychology. To facilitate this, students will set aside time each week to complete these tasks. Students who sign up for 4 credit hours will complete 12 hours of experiential learning tasks per week, students who sign up for 3 credit hours will complete 9 hours of experiential learning tasks per week, and students who sign up for 2 credit hours will complete 6 hours of experiential learning tasks per week (3 hours per credit hour taken). These tasks will include a combination of the following:

    - Data Collection. Data collection is a critical aspect of research. As such, significant time will be spent covering research ethics, experiment training, and how to successfully implement experimental protocols. If data is not collected correctly, the research project dies there. It is important to remember that the success or failure of any social psychological research project has a significant impact on the professional lives for all people in the lab (faculty, graduate students, and undergraduate students) and the direction of the research field as a whole. As such, the data collection stage of the research process deserves great attention and we always appreciate student efforts to make data collection a success for the team. Data collection activities include being an experimenter (in charge of a research session), serving as a confederate, recruiting participants,

screening participants, and compensating participants. When collecting data, keep an eye out for problems and be pro-active in finding solutions.

- Help design/implement studies. Every study starts with an idea, but it must eventually be polished into a workable study. Students will contribute to this process by doing pilot testing, developing stimuli, creating IRB protocols, designing surveys, creating Qualtrics programs, conducting literature searches, and so on (note that the specific task will depend upon the nature of the project in a semester and a student's role in the project).

- Dissemination of Research. A key element of research is writing up and disseminating the findings. Students may have the opportunity to be involved in writing up elements of manuscripts as well as informational statements for the public on research findings.

- Enter, code, and analyze data. An important step in the research process is correctly entering, coding, and analyzing data. Basically, research participants will provide us with their thoughts, feelings, and behaviors. Afterwards, we need to translate this information into numbers for data analysis. Thus, data entry/coding helps social psychologists make the transition from a heap of raw data collected in the research room to the condensed findings that reported to other researchers at conferences and in research articles. This step requires great care, vigilance, and training. This is the "not-so-glamorous" step in the research process—but—it is also one of the most critical. At some point in the semester, all students will be involved in the data entry and coding process. Further, depending on projects, students may obtain experience with data analysis.

GRADING

You will earn points in the class as follows:

Assignment	**Possible Points**
Attendance and Participation in Meetings	80 points
Meeting Assignments (10 points each)	40 points
Hands-on Experiential Research Task Completion	180 points
Total	**300 points**

93 – 100% A	80 – 82% B-	67 – 69% D+
90 – 92% A-	77 – 79% C+	63 – 66% D
87 – 89% B+	73 – 76% C	60 – 62% D-
83 – 86% B	70 – 72% C-	less than 60% F

As indicated above, there are a number of components to this course.

First, students should attend and participate in the on-line synchronous meetings. We will take attendance during these meetings and monitor participation. Students can earn up to 10 points for each of the eight meeting based on their attendance and degree of participation/engagement as determined by the instructor (80 points total). The synchronous meeting dates are marked on the course schedule below. If a student misses a class meeting they will have an opportunity to make up the missed points by completing a research article reaction paper and submitting it by November 13th. Students can submit up to two of these reaction papers for missed class periods. These reaction papers can be uploaded to the "missed class meeting" folder in the course Blackboard page. A document explaining how to complete research reaction papers can be found in this same folder.

Second, there are four times during the term that students will be asked to work on outside assignments based on the class meetings. The due dates for these four assignments are given on the course schedule below. These assignments will be explained in more detail the week prior to their due date. These assignments will be submitted in the assignment room in our course Blackboard page. Students can earn up to 10 points for each assignment (30 points total).

Third, students should complete their hands-on experiential research tasks each week. In total, each student will complete approximately 6 hours of experiential research tasks each week when signed up for 2 credit hours, 9 hours per week when signed up for 3 credit hours, and 12 hours per week when signed up for 4 credit hours (3 hours per credit hour). Earning all the points assumes that the student has been reliable, responsible, and productive in his/her lab tasks and with his/her contributions to the research. More specifically, this means demonstrating good attendance for experiential sessions, following task procedures, completing tasks in a timely manner (e.g., allocating research credit daily, finished assigned tasks on time each week), and showing care with tasks (e.g., not making data entry errors). Points will be deducted from this score as issues arise. Moreover, if students do not follow the procedures laid out in the syllabus, they may be asked to drop the course. When students are not following the syllabus, the instructor may also remove the student from the course (resulting in an IW) or assign the student the grade of "F". Students will be given written and/or oral warnings before a forced withdrawal from the course.

TENTATIVE SCHEDULE OF CLASS MEETINGS

Next is a schedule of topics for the class meetings throughout the semester. The "Readings" column indicates the outside work that you should be doing *before* coming to class that day. Meeting dates denoted as "**synchronous**" indicate that students should attend the live meeting for that week in Blackboard Collaborate; meeting dates marked as "non-synchronous" indicate that there is no live meeting for that week, but that there will be other tasks/activities for students to complete on their own time throughout the week (specific information about these tasks will be communicated later).

Course Schedule

Date	Topic	Reading
8/21	Orientation to Research in Experimental Social Psychology (**synchronous**)	Aronson Chp. 1
8/28	Individualized Students Training Sessions (non-synchronous)	Aronson Chp. 6
9/4	Guest speaker: Dr. Murray (NCI): An Introduction to the National HINTS data base (**synchronous**)	Aronson Chp. 4
9/11	Developing Hypotheses from Existing Data Sets (non-synchronous) **Meeting Assignment 1 Due*	Aronson Chp. 7
9/18	Research During COVID-19: Tools and Techniques **(synchronous**)	
9/25	Developing Research Hypotheses and Designs for On-Line Data Collection (**synchronous**)	
10/2	Graduate Education in Psychology Programs - Day 1 (non-synchronous) **Meeting Assignment 2 Due*	Aronson Chp. 8
10/9	Graduate Education in Psychology Programs - Day 2 (**synchronous**)	
10/16	Current Social Psychology Research; Article Review (non-synchronous) **Meeting Assignment 3 Due*	Article TBA
10/23	Guest Research Presentation: Dr. Guevarra (MSU) (**synchronous**)	
10/30	Presenting Research; Empirical Research Presentations (non-synchronous)	Aronson Chp. 3
11/6	Evaluating Social Psychological Research: Question and Answer Session (**synchronous**) **Meeting Assignment 4 Due*	
11/13	Undergraduate Research Presentations (**synchronous**)	Aronson Chp. 11
11/20	Research Project Wrap-up & Course Review (non-synchronous)	

*Please note that the schedule and procedures in this course are subject to change in the event of extenuating circumstances and when the instructor needs to do so.

COLLEGIATE POLICIES

We will adhere to the following Collegiate Policies set out by the University of Toledo:

Academic integrity: http://www.utoledo.edu/dl/students/dishonesty.html
Undergraduate policies: http://www.utoledo.edu/policies/academic/undergraduate/

Policy Statement on Non-Discrimination on the Basis of Disability (ADA)

The University is an equal opportunity educational institution. Please read The University's Policy Statement on Nondiscrimination on the Basis of Disability Americans with Disability Act Compliance. Students can find this policy along with other university policies listed by audience on the University Policy webpage (http://www.utoledo.edu/policies/audience.html/#students).

Academic Accommodations

The University of Toledo embraces the inclusion of students with disabilities. We are committed to ensuring equal opportunity and seamless access for full participation in all courses. For students who have an accommodations memo from Student Disability Services, I invite you to correspond with me as soon as possible so that we can communicate confidentially about implementing accommodations in this course. For students who have not established affiliation with Student Disability Services and are experiencing disability access barriers or are interested in a referral to healthcare resources for a potential disability or would like information regarding eligibility for academic accommodations, please contact the Student Disability Services Office (http://www.utoledo.edu/offices/student-disability-services/) by phone: 419.530.4981 or email at StudentDisability@utoledo.edu.

Academic and Support Services

Please follow this link to view a comprehensive list of Student Academic and Support Services (http://www.utoledo.edu/studentaffairs/departments.html) available to you as a student.

Safety and Health Services and UT Students

Please use the following link to view a comprehensive list of Campus Health and Safety Services available to you as a student.

Inclusive Classroom Statement

In this class, we will work together to develop a learning community that is inclusive and respectful. Our diversity may be reflected by differences in race, culture, age, religion, sexual orientation, gender identity/expression, socioeconomic background, and a myriad of other social identities and life experiences. We will encourage and appreciate expressions of different ideas, opinions, and beliefs so that conversations and interactions that could potentially be divisive turn, instead, into opportunities for intellectual and personal development.

Resource Related to Sexual or Gender-based Violence and Harassment

The University of Toledo cares greatly about the health and well-being of our students, staff, and faculty, and takes all sexual or gender-based violence and harassment very seriously. If you have experienced sexual assault, sexual harassment, intimate partner violence, and/or stalking and want a confidential place to obtain support and information, please contact the Center for Student Advocacy and Wellness on the main campus in Health and Human Services Room 3017. You can call 419.530.2497 during regular business hours and 419.530.3431 for 24-hour assistance from a trained advocate. In-person, walk-in appointments are also available Monday-Thursday from 8:30 a.m. to 5 p.m. The Center for Student Advocacy and Wellness provides free and confidential advocacy and counseling services to students, faculty and staff. The YWCA H.O.P.E. Center also can be accessed as an off-campus confidential resource at 419.241.7273. Faculty, teaching assistants, and other university employees are mandated reporters of any incidents of sexual or gender-based violence or harassment. Thus, any disclosures of sexual or

gender-based violence or harassment on or off campus made to faculty or teaching assistants, or other university employees must be forwarded to the Title IX Coordinator. The Title IX Office will then contact you regarding your rights, your option to participate in the investigation, interim safety measures and/or academic accommodations, and the need to proceed with an investigation (even if none is requested). Your participation in the process is voluntary. You may call 419.530.3152 to file a complaint or visit the following website for more information and resources: http://www.utoledo.edu/title-ix/. Policies relating to Title IX can be found at: http://www.utoledo.edu/title-ix/policies.html.