

Psychology 201: Laboratory in Social Psychology

Instructor: Dr. Nicola Curtin

Office: 352 Jonas Clark Hall

Office hours: Tuesday 10:30 am- 12:30 pm or by appointment. I look forward to seeing you during office hours. Please stop by!

E-mail: NCurtin@clarku.edu

MonTh 1:25 PM – 2:40 PM, JC 343

“Research is formalized curiosity. It is poking and prying with a purpose.” Zora Neale Hurston

Course Overview and Goals:

Welcome to Psychology 201! This course will allow you to delve into the world of research in social psychology. Research is a process that involves inspiration, creativity, wit, logic, concentration, flexibility, and perseverance. In this course, we will review *how* and *why* research in social psychology is conducted, practice and develop research and writing skills, and read and critique some of the “new classics” in social psychology. This course will require hard work, but I hope that you will find it engaging, thought-provoking, and even fun!

This course is designed to be hands-on to help you develop specific research skills, such as understanding how to design a method appropriate to a research question, writing a research proposal to be submitted to the Institutional Review Board (IRB), collecting, entering, and cleaning data, conducting and interpreting statistical analyses, writing about research, etc. Other goals include practicing and further developing critical thinking skills (key to conducting and critiquing research), and communicating research ideas and results both verbally and in writing.

Reading List

Textbooks:

Beins, B. C. (2009). *Research methods. A tool for life* (2nd ed.). Boston: Pearson.

Stanovitch, K. E. *How to think straight about psychology*. Boston: Allyn & Bacon.

Empirical and Methodological Readings (Marked “AR” below in schedule, and available on CICADA):

Anderson, C. A. (1987). Temperature and aggression: Effects on quarterly, yearly, and city rates of violent and nonviolent crime. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 52, 1161-1173.

Clark, R. D., & Hatfield, E. (1989). Gender differences in receptivity to sexual offers. *Journal of Psychology & Human Sexuality*, 2, 39-55.

Cole, E. R., & Stewart, A. J. (1996). Meanings of political participation among Black and White women: Political identity and social responsibility. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 71(1), 130-140.

Edlund, J. E., Sagarin, B. J., Skowronski, J. J., Johnson, S. J., & Kutter, J. (2009). Whatever happens in the laboratory stays in the laboratory: The prevalence and prevention of participant crosstalk. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin*, 35, 635-642.

Jehn, K.A., & Mannix, E. A. (2001). The dynamic nature of conflict: A longitudinal study of intragroup conflict and group performance. *The Academy of Management Journal*, 44 (2), 238-251.

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- Jordan, C. H., & Zanna, M. P. (1999). How to read a journal article in social psychology.
AVAILABLE ON-LINE: <http://arts.uwaterloo.ca/~sspencer/psych253/readart.html>
- Schwarz, N., Hippler, H., Deutsch, B., & Strack, F. (1985). Response scales: Effects of category range on reported behavior and comparative judgments. *Public Opinion Quarterly*, 49, 388-395.
- Wilson, T., & Nisbett, R. E. (1978). The accuracy of verbal reports about the effects of stimuli on evaluations and behavior. *Social Psychology*, 41, 118-131.

Recommended Texts:

American Psychological Association. (2010). *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association*. (6th ed.) Washington, D.C.: American Psychological Association.

Grading (You must complete all of the requirements in order to pass the course):

- Exam 1: 10% (80 points)
- Exam 2: 10% (80 points)
- Leading Discussion: 5% (40 points)
- IRB Proposal: 10% (80 points)
- Introduction & Methods: 15% (120 points)
- Final Presentation: 10% (80 points)
- Final Paper: 25% (200 points)
- Participation: 10% (80 points)
- Subject pool participation/alternative assignment 5% (40 points)

TOTAL POINTS: 800

Your final (letter) grade will be determined along the following scale:

- A+ = 98% and above (or: 784 points and above)
- A = 93% and above (or: 744 points and above)
- A - = 90% - 92.9% (or: 720 points and above)
- B+ = 86% - 89.9% (or: 688 points and above)
- B = 83% - 85.9% (or: 664 points and above)
- B- = 80% - 82.9% (or: 640 points and above)
- C+ = 76% - 79.9% (or: 608 points and above)
- C = 73% - 75.9% (or: 584 points and above)
- C - = 70% - 72.9% (or: 560 points and above)
- D+ = 67% - 69.9% (or: 536 points and above)
- D = 63% - 66.9% (or: 504 points and above)
- D - = 60% - 62.9% (or: 480 points and above)
- Below 60% = F (or: fewer than 480 points)

Course requirements

How can you best succeed in this course? Engage in active reading of the assigned text and be an active learner in class. This means being engaged with the readings and lectures: do you understand the key concepts? Can you apply them to your own life, or events around you? Could you explain them to a friend who knew nothing about research methods or social psychology? What connections can you make between concepts across the course?

The purpose of our time together in class is to amplify, explain, and demonstrate the material presented in the text. We will do this through a mixture of lectures, presentations, and class discussions. There will be some overlap between the text and the lectures, but there will be material that is unique to each. Note that it is important for you to complete and understand the reading assignments prior to class; office hours and your classmates are good places to go if you have questions about the reading assignments.

Please be aware that the workload associated with this course is rigorous! People have many different learning styles and different learning strengths, but most of us tend to learn material best when we approach ideas and concepts from multiple perspectives, or apply them across multiple domains.¹ Therefore, I have designed the assignments for this course to allow you to learn and apply the material in different ways: multiple choice tests assess your broad content knowledge; individual writing assignments assess the degree to which you can apply concepts in concrete ways and write clearly about research concepts; and asking you to work together in groups provides you with the opportunity to working cooperatively with others. Most scientific innovation occurs collaboratively, despite the stereotype of the lone researcher in her or his ivory tower, and learning to work well with others is a vital life skill. Please remember to work consistently on each project throughout the term, and pay attention to the due dates in the schedule below.

Attendance: You should attend every class. I understand that extenuating circumstances arise, but please let me know before class if you cannot attend. Illnesses, death in the family, or other traumatic events unfortunately are a part of life. A make-up exam will be given if you contact me within 24 hours and provide documentation. Pop quizzes (see below) may not be made-up, but your lowest two quiz scores will be dropped (including zeros for missed quizzes).

You are responsible for all the information covered in class (including announcements) whether or not you are in attendance. Please note that this syllabus is subject to change and that changes may be announced in class or posted online.

Participation: Please come prepared to engage fully and respectfully, having read and reflected upon the reading. Participation includes active listening, thoughtful contributions to discussion, and some short in-class assignments. Class participation is critically important. Why? Because science is an inherently social enterprise — far more cooperative than competitive. By listening, asking questions, making suggestions, and offering critiques, each member of the lab can help everyone do a better job. Therefore, your regular attendance and participation are expected.

Failure to attend class or participate regularly will negatively affect your final grade.

¹ Kolb, A. Y., & Kolb, D. A. (2005). Learning styles and learning spaces: Enhancing experiential learning in higher education. *Academy of Management Learning & Education*, 4(2), 193-212.

Exams: Two exams will be given, covering material from lecture, lab, and the readings (textbook & empirical articles). Questions will be in a variety of forms, and may include multiple-choice, true/false, fill-in-the-blank, short answer, and/or brief essay.

Leading Discussions: In addition to the reading in the text, we will be reading empirical papers in social psychology. This will allow us to see how the concepts we are learning are applied in successful research in social psychology. Furthermore, these articles model good writing in psychology, and so we will take note of their variation and similarities. In groups of 2-3, students will lead discussions on these articles, which will last 20-30 minutes. These discussions can take many forms (e.g., lectures, demonstrations, debates, brief activities, etc.), but they must include the relevance of the article to the course content, and (when relevant) an emphasis on the method employed by the author(s). Discussion leading will be graded on the following criteria: 1) understanding of the article, 2) engagement of the class, 3) communication of the material presented, 4) creativity in the presentation, 5) involvement of all group members. If you have questions, please plan on discussing your plans for discussion leading with me during office hours.

Research Replication Project: A large emphasis of this course is on gaining research skills (as opposed to learning concepts in the abstract), and one of the best ways to do that is to complete a group-based empirical research project. You will work together with your classmates in groups of 3-5 (no more and no fewer) to replicate a study in social psychology (the options will be posted on CICADA). Although you will be replicating a project (and hence the question and method have already been selected), your group will still need to prepare research materials, collect data, and analyze the data. **You may make small adjustments to the methods/materials in your replication, but all decisions must be discussed with, and approved by, me ahead of time.** You should expect to spend time on the project outside of class. However, some lab time will be devoted to discussing and working on various aspects of this project. Although you will be working as a group, each person is expected to hand in his or her own research report. There are four assignments that accompany this project. Here is an overview of each assignment:

- 1) *Institutional Review Board (IRB) Proposal:* Each group must complete an IRB submission associated with their replication project. Although I am hoping to get blanket IRB approval for the course, it may be that you will need to get individual group approval before you can collect data. Either way, you will prepare an IRB proposal that I will grade. One proposal will be handed in per group (60 points for the proposal and all group members will receive the same number of points + 20 points per person, based on group & individual reports of participation).
- 2) *Introduction & Methods Section:* Even though the project will be completed in groups, each individual group member will submit her or his own research report. The first part of this report includes the introduction (including a review of the relevant literature, the rationale for your project, and your hypotheses) and a methods section (describing the research design, operationalization of the variables, plans for participant recruitment, etc.). Note that you will receive feedback on this section that I expect to see incorporated into the final version of your paper. **Additionally, each group (not individual) should submit any materials that they plan on using to implement their proposed project (e.g., questionnaires, coding sheets, stimuli, etc.).**
- 3) *Research Presentation:* Each group will formally present their project to the class. Presentations will last for approximately 12 minutes, followed by a 3-minute question-and-

answer period. Presentations should include the rationale for the project, connections to the relevant literature(s), description of the research design, summary of the results, interpretation of the results, acknowledgement of limitations, and conclusions. Presentations will be graded on the following criteria: coverage of each of the previously-described elements; incorporation of all group members; engagement of the audience; and clarity of the material presented. Additionally, each person in the audience will be required to provide feedback on the presentations, which will be incorporated into the audience member's presentation grade.

- 4) *Research Paper*: Even though the project will be completed in groups, each individual group member will submit their own APA-style research paper. Papers will include four main sections: introduction, method, results, and discussion. These research papers will be graded on the following criteria: thoroughness of the literature review, execution of the research design, analysis of the data, discussion of the results, adherence to APA style, and quality of the writing. Additionally, each group member will be required to turn in a brief report on the participation of other group members' involvement in the project, which will be incorporated into the each person's grade.

Subject-pool Participation: Research in social psychology has increased our understanding of people and social processes, and would not be possible without the participation of generous volunteers. Research participation is a vital part of knowledge creation! Further, participating in research allows one a unique perspective on the process itself. Therefore, 5% of your grade for the class will be to participate in 2 subject pool studies (more information about the subject pool will be made available on CICADA). If you would prefer not to participate in a study, you may hand-in two short papers (one page each). You may also elect to do one study and one summary. **Please note that you will need to provide proof of your study participation, and/or hand in the one-page assignments to Maggie Campbell (contact information below), not to me.** Proof of participation consists of either a signed and dated participation slip that you will receive from the researcher running the study, or a consent form and debriefing form (the latter only if applicable) from the study. You will either receive full credit, or no credit for this assignment. If you select to do the short-paper, you must briefly and accurately summarize the findings from two articles which will be posted on CICADA. Maggie will read these papers to ensure that you have met the spirit of the assignment; those that have not will be asked to re-do them. **These are due no later than December 9, 2011, but may be handed in at any point throughout the term.**

Submit your proof of participation, or summary to:

Maggie Campbell

Office: 201-A Jonas Clark Hall

E-mail: MaCampbell@clarku.edu

Course Policies

Assignment Submission: Late assignments will be penalized 10% every 24 hours they are late (the minute it is late = the first 24 hours), unless there are special circumstances that I have previously approved. Assignments more than 5 days late (without prior consent) automatically get 0 points (though please note that all assignments must be completed in order to pass the course). I cannot accept resubmissions. If you are uncertain about your idea or a rough draft of a project, I would be happy to meet with you to discuss your ideas.

Assignments (i.e., research proposal and research paper) should be turned in at the beginning of class on the due date. Papers are only accepted as hard copies; do not email me your paper. The only exception to this rule is the FINAL paper, which **must be e-mailed to me.**

Classroom Civility: As people studying social psychology, we should have a deep understanding of, and appreciation for the fact that social situations and the people around us matter! Your behavior in class affects me, you, and your fellow classmates (and vice versa). Therefore, please:

1. Put your cell phone on silent or turn it off.
2. Do not surf the internet or text during class (laptops will be banned from class if this becomes an issue).
3. Respect each other's comments even if you disagree with each other's opinions; challenge the idea and the evidence presented to support it, not the person.
4. Please keep your questions and comments appropriate in both their timing and content.
5. Remember: we all have conscious *and unconscious* beliefs, biases, and values. These shape how we react to and interpret the readings, course content, and each other. Please voice your ideas, reactions, and opinions, and be respectful of others' differences (race/ethnicity, religion, gender, sexual orientation, etc.).

Individual Circumstances:

Please contact me by email within the first two weeks of class if you have any circumstances that might affect your attendance, participation, and/or comfort in class. These may include (but are not limited to) having a certified/documented disability, involvement in upcoming religious observances, or involvement in school-related sports or extra-curricular activities. If you suspect you have a disability, or want to know more about Clark's policy on disabilities, please see:

<http://www.clarku.edu/offices/aac/ada/>

Academic Honesty & Plagiarism:

All work on exams, and individual projects and papers must be your own, completed individually and for this course alone. Quizzes and exams are closed book/closed notes.

Plagiarism is representing someone else's ideas, words, statements, or work as one's own without proper acknowledgment or citation. If you are ever unsure, please ask. Plagiarism is sometimes confusing, even for seasoned scientists, so don't be embarrassed to ask. I am a resource who is happy to provide clarification if you don't know, so always ask first.

If you violate this policy, your name will be forwarded to the Office of Academic Affairs, and appropriate sanctions will apply. **If you find yourself even considering cheating, see it as a sign that you need assistance learning the course material and come see me.** For information on academic integrity at Clark, please visit:

<http://www.clarku.edu/offices/aac/integrity.cfm>

<http://www.clarku.edu/offices/aac/integrity.cfm#Section%20I:%20%20Academic%20Dishonesty>

Finally:

I look forward to working with you this semester! Never hesitate to ask questions, or come by my office hours for help. We have all needed help in something at some point in our lives. If you find yourself not understanding the assigned readings, lectures and assignments, you can drop by during my office hours, or we can arrange a mutually convenient time to meet. Please don't feel like you need to have a "problem" to come by. Like most academics, I'm incurably nerdy and more than happy to talk about research ideas, theoretical questions, future plans, big/small ideas, etc.

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Course Schedule

***NOTE:** All readings should be done *before* class the day on which they appear on the schedule

Date	In Class Activities/Lectures	Reading Assignment *	Research Project Timeline
Week 1: Introduction			
Aug 29	Introduction to course: Why we do research		
Sept 1	The research process: A general overview	Stanovitch: Chapters 1& 2	Pick a research group
Week 2: Planning Your Research & Research Ethics			
Sept 5	NO CLASS		
Sept 8	Ethics & the parts of an IRB	Beins: Chapters 2 & 3	Research topic due Begin IRB
Week 3: Planning Your Research cont. & the Literature Review Process			
Sept 12	How to find empirical articles *Meet in Goddard, Second Floor Instruction Space (Room 218)	AR: Jordan, & Zanna, 1999	Begin literature review
Sept 15	Stud Student led discussion: Edlund et al.	Beins: Chapter 4 AR: Edlund et al, 2009	Draft IRB Due
Week 4: IRB Lab & Measurement & Sampling			
Sept 19	Lab: Stats Review & Measurement & Sampling Issues	Beins: Chapter 5	
Sept 22	Student led discussion: Schwartz et.al.	AR: Schwartz et al.	IRB due

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Week 5: Introduction to Experimental Design			
Sept26	Introduction to Experimental Designs	Beins: Chapters 6 & 7	
Sept 29			
Week 6: Experimental Design Continued			
Oct 3		Beins: Chapters 8 & 9	Should start collecting data (pending IRB approval)
Oct 6	Student led discussion: Clark & Hatfield Review for Exam 1	AR: Clark & Hatfield	Introduction & Methods Section Due
Week 7: EXAM 1			
Oct 10	NO CLASS FALL BREAK		
Oct 13	Exam 1		Collecting data
Week 8: Survey Research			
Oct 17		Beins: Chapter 10	Collecting data
Oct 20	Student led discussion: Wilson & Nisbett	AR: Wilson & Nisbett	
Week 9: Correlational Research			
Oct 24		Beins: Chapter 11	Collecting data
Oct 27	Student led discussion: Cole & Stewart	AR: Cole & Stewart	

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Week 10: Observational Approaches to Research			
Oct 31		Beins : Chapter 12	Collecting data
Nov 3	Student led discussion: Anderson	AR: Anderson	* Remember: Nov. 4 th is last day to withdraw with grade of W
Week 11: I have data! Now what?!			
Nov 7	Lab: Working with SPSS to analyses your data Meet in Goddard Library, 2 nd Floor Instruction Space (Room 218)		All data should be collected, entered and cleaned <i>before</i> class
Nov 10	Interpreting data & writing a results section		
Week 12: Longitudinal and Singe-Case Studies			
Nov 14		Beins: Chapter 13	Should be writing Results
Nov 17	Student led discussion: Jehn et al.	AR: Jehn et al.	
Week 13: Cultural and Individual Differences in Research			
Nov 21		Beins: Chapter 14	Research Paper Drafts Due
Nov 24	NO CLASS: THANKSGIVING		
Week 14: General Issues in Research Methods			
Nov 28		Stanovitch: Chapters 9, 10, & 11	
Dec 1	Review: Exam 2 & Planning for Research Presentations		

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Week 15: Research Presentations & Exam 2	
Dec 5	Research Presentations
Dec 8	Exam 2
Week 16:Final Paper Due	
Dec 12	READING DAY: NO CLASS
Dec 15	Research Papers due via email to Dr. Curtin no later than 5p.m.