

# **PSYC\*3380, Course Outline: Winter 2016**

## **General Information**

**Course Title: NON-EXPERIMENTAL RESEARCH METHODS**

### **Course Description:**

Psychology 3380 provides an introduction to the fundamental concepts and procedures that researchers use to conduct non-experimental research in psychology. The course will enable you to critically evaluate research evidence as well as provide you with some fundamental tools that are necessary to design and conduct your own research.

**Credit Weight: .50**

**Academic Department (or campus): Psychology**

**Semester Offering: Winter**

**Class Schedule and Location:** Monday, Wednesday, and Friday, 9:30-10:20 a.m., in John T Powell Building room 214.

## **Instructor Information**

Instructor Name: Jeffrey Spence

Instructor Email: [spencejr@uoguelph.ca](mailto:spencejr@uoguelph.ca)

Office location and office hours: Wednesdays 10:30-11:20

## **GTA Information**

GTA Name: Kelsea Beadman

GTA Email: [kbeadman@uoguelph.ca](mailto:kbeadman@uoguelph.ca)

GTA office location and office hours: TBA

GTA Name: Jessica Sorensen

GTA Email: [jsorenso@uoguelph.ca](mailto:jsorenso@uoguelph.ca)

GTA office location and office hours: TBA

## **Course Content**

- 1) Specific Learning Outcomes: Plan, conduct, analyze, write up, and present an original research project.
- 2) Collaborate with colleagues to generate research products.
- 3) Gain expertise in non-experimental research methods using human participants.
- 4) Gain expertise in range of the statistical methods that are used to analyze non-experimental data.
- 5) Analyze and interpret mediation and moderation.
- 6) Critically evaluate research and conclusions based on research.
- 7) Prepare a conference quality research poster.
- 8) Prepare a full size APA style manuscript.
- 9) Recognize the importance of research ethics.
- 10) Prepare a research ethics form.

## **Lecture Content:**

You are responsible for all material presented in lectures, including any announcements. Not all of lecture material is covered in the textbook.

## **Labs:**

On several dates, statistical labs will be held in [MCKN 028 and MACS 243] (see course schedule for specific dates).

## **Course Assignments and Tests:**

**Research Ethics:** In this course, you will be conducting research with human participants. It is therefore required that you become familiar with human research ethics and the ethics review process here at the University of Guelph.

**Before you can begin your research project, you will be required to submit an ethics form (one per group) to your instructor for review. Only when you have been granted clearance can the project go forward.**

**Please ensure that you attend the guest lecture on the ethics submission process.**

Also, please visit the following website for more information and the form that your group will be required to fill out (REBApp for course based projects):

<http://www.uoguelph.ca/research/services-divisions/ethics>

**Research Project Instructions:** Students will be required to conduct research with human participants using a non-experimental research design. In small groups (3-5 students), students will formulate research hypotheses, design a study to test their hypotheses, collect data using their design, and analyze data using appropriate statistical techniques. Students will also be required to present their study and results in manuscript and poster format.

Recruitment methods will vary considerably as a function of design considerations but it should be noted that there should never be coercion or undue influence on any potential participants. This statement largely applies to situations in which there is a pre-existing relationship between the researchers and potential participants.

It is highly recommended that written consent be obtained from participants. In the case of a study that involves unobtrusive measures, this may not be necessary.

Any participant who wishes to withdraw from a study should be allowed to do so without giving an explanation. If there is any kind of compensation for participation (though this is not likely), the compensation should still be given. If possible, the data of any participant who withdraws should be destroyed (this would not be possible in anonymous research if a participant withdraws subsequent to the time of data collection).

Participants should be provided with a short and easy-to-understand debriefing in which the purpose/hypotheses of the study are clearly explained. This requirement may be waived by the instructor in the case of studies using unobtrusive measures.

Whenever possible, collected data should be anonymous. That is, the data should be treated in such a manner that it is impossible to link a participant's responses to his/her identity. In addition, all data will be kept confidential. That is, a participant's responses will be known only to the researchers. If and when it becomes possible to do so, all data should be rendered anonymous. At no time will names and/or other identifiers be written directly on data materials (e.g., questionnaires). "Best practice" is to keep a "master list." A master list is the only document that associates participants' identities with assigned participant numbers. When the master list is no longer required, it is destroyed. The master list should be stored separately from the collected data materials.

All projects will involve no more than minimal risk in that the following criteria apply:

- a) The research participants must be drawn from the general adult population, capable of giving free and informed consent and may not include vulnerable participants such as

children; persons who are not legally competent to consent; mentally incompetent persons; legal wards or persons dependent upon the researcher(s) for therapeutic care.

b) The student projects must not involve any personal, sensitive or incriminating topics or questions which could place participants at risk.

c) The student projects must not manipulate behaviour of participants beyond the range of "normal" classroom activity or daily life.

d) The student projects must not involve any physically invasive contact with the research participants.

e) The student projects must not involve deception.

***Projects that do not receive ethics clearance will receive a grade of zero on the poster conference and final report.***

Two Midterms (each is worth 20% for a total of 40% of final grade): There will be one midterm held during class time on February 8th and another on March 7th.

### **Group Research Project**

As the major component of this course, students will conduct research with human participants using a non-experimental research design. This work will be done in small groups. Below is a breakdown of requirements and method of evaluation for this project.

Study Proposal (10% of final grade): As a group, students will present their research design in a proposal format. This entails presenting specific hypothesis, devising a research design to test hypotheses, and describing the methods and statistical procedures to test hypotheses.

**The Study Proposal will be written and turned in as a group.** The Research Proposal should be formatted according to APA Style (6<sup>th</sup> ed.) and should include a Title Page, Hypotheses, Proposed Methods, Proposed Analyses, References, and Appendices that include all measures and any related scripts/protocols.

**Study Proposal is Due: February 5 in-class in hardcopy form.**

Editing Assignment (5% of final grade): In this assignment students will get a sense of what editing entails. Groups will turn in just the introductory section of the introduction of their research paper to be graded. The goal is to turn in the most well written piece of writing possible. This will be achieved through extensive editing and rewriting.

**Editing Assignment is due: March 4 in class in hardcopy form.**

Poster Presentation (15% of final grade): You, and the other members of your group, will create a poster that will be displayed during class time in the last week of classes (**NERM Poster Conference**). You, and the other members of your group, will be marked on organization, clarity, and completeness of the poster and on how well your group answer questions.

All students in the class will be required to attend the poster conference and evaluate several of their peers' posters. Students will be required to grade at least 5 posters. Students will be randomly assigned to evaluate posters of other groups that are presenting on separate days from their own presentation. A marking scheme for the evaluation and instructions will be provided. Completing quality poster evaluations will count 5% towards your Poster Presentation grade.

*Important note: Only groups that have submitted a study proposal and had their ethics protocol) approved by the instructor will be allowed to present at the conference. Those who do not present will receive a mark of zero.*

**NERM Poster Conference will be held on April 4, April 6 and April 8 in UC 103**

Group Member evaluation 5% of final grade: Students will rate the performance and contribution of their group members. Ratings will be averaged to arrive at a total score.

Final Report (25% of final grade): Once you have completed your research, you will write full length research manuscript. The Final Report is to be completed according to APA Style (6<sup>th</sup> ed.). The Final Report will include all that was in the proposal, the Proposed Methods will become Methods, and Proposed Analyses will become Results. Also, an Abstract, Introduction, and Discussion will be included.

**Final report is due: April 8 before 5pm**

**The Final Report will be submitted as a group.**

*Important note: A final report will only be accepted if you have submitted a Research Proposal and had your ethics protocol approved by the instructor. Otherwise a mark of zero will be assigned.*

**Final Report is Due: April 8<sup>th</sup> before 5 p.m. in hardcopy form**

**Special Notes about the Group Research Project:**

- It is highly recommended that your dataset includes more than two variables (not including demographic information).
- Electronic submissions for any component of the Research Project are not acceptable.
- You are required to retain copies of all materials and reports that you submit.
- You are required to retain all of your raw and electronic data.
- You are responsible for becoming a member of a group. All groups will have 3-5 members, unless an exception is granted by the instructor. **Groups need to be registered by January 22.**

Assignment or Test	Due Date	Contribution to Final Mark (%)	Learning Outcomes Assessed
Midterm 1	Feb 8th	20	3,4,6
Midterm 2	March 7th	20	3,4,5,6
Proposal	Feb 5th	10	2, 3,6,9,10
Editing Assignment	March 4th	5	2
Poster presentation	April 4, 6, 8	15	2,3,4,7,9
Final Report	April 8	25	2,3,4,8,9
Peer Review	April 8	5	2

## **Course Resources**

### **Required Texts:**

Kline, R. B. (2009). *Becoming a behavioral science researcher: A guide to producing research that matters*. New York, NY: The Guilford Press.

### **Other Resources:**

**Course Website:** On CourseLink. This website will contain announcements, lecture notes, discussion, and other information pertinent to the course.

## **Course Policies**

### **Grading Policies**

#### **Copies of out-of-class assignments**

Keep paper and/or other reliable back-up copies of all out-of-class assignments: you may

be asked to resubmit work at any time.

#### **Policy on Late Assignments:**

All assignments are due on the date and time specified **unless prior arrangements have been made with the instructor**. All overdue assignments that are received late, and without prior arrangement will be subject to a penalty of 20% per day of the assignment grade, up to a maximum of 100%. Late submissions for the poster conference cannot be accepted.

***Please note that these policies are binding unless academic consideration is given to an individual student.***

#### **Course Policy regarding use of electronic devices and recording of lectures:**

***Electronic recording of classes is expressly forbidden without consent of the instructor. When recordings are permitted they are solely for the use of the authorized student and may not be reproduced, or transmitted to others, without the express written consent of the instructor.***

## **University Policies**

### **Academic Consideration**

When you find yourself unable to meet an in-course requirement because of illness or compassionate reasons, please advise the course instructor in writing, with your name, id#, and e-mail contact. See the academic calendar for information on regulations and procedures for

Academic Consideration:

[Academic Consideration, Appeals and Petitions](#)

## **Academic Misconduct**

The University of Guelph is committed to upholding the highest standards of academic integrity and it is the responsibility of all members of the University community, faculty, staff, and students to be aware of what constitutes academic misconduct and to do as much as possible to prevent academic offences from occurring.

University of Guelph students have the responsibility of abiding by the University's policy on academic misconduct regardless of their location of study; faculty, staff and students have the responsibility of supporting an environment that discourages misconduct. Students need to remain aware that instructors have access to and the right to use electronic and other means of detection. Please note: Whether or not a student intended to commit academic misconduct is not relevant for a finding of guilt. Hurried or careless submission of assignments does not excuse students from responsibility for verifying the academic integrity of their work before submitting it. Students who are in any doubt as to whether an action on their part could be construed as an academic offence should consult with a faculty member or faculty advisor.

The Academic Misconduct Policy is detailed in the Undergraduate Calendar:

[Academic Misconduct Policy](#)

## **Accessibility**

The University of Guelph is committed to creating a barrier-free environment. Providing services for students is a shared responsibility among students, faculty and administrators. This relationship is based on respect of individual rights, the dignity of the individual and the University community's shared commitment to an open and supportive learning environment. Students requiring service or accommodation, whether due to an identified, ongoing disability or a short-term disability should contact the Centre for Students with Disabilities as soon as possible.

For more information, contact CSD at 519-824-4120 ext. 56208 or email [csd@uoguelph.ca](mailto:csd@uoguelph.ca) or see the website: [Student Accessibility Services Website](#)

## **Course Evaluation Information**

Please refer to the [Course and Instructor Evaluation Website](#) .

## **Drop date**

The last date to drop one-semester courses, without academic penalty, is **March 11** . For regulations and procedures for Dropping Courses, see the Academic Calendar:

[Current Undergraduate Calendar](#)