

SYLLABUS

Section 01 TR 3:15 - 4:30 pm, in WH 303

Section 03 W 5 – 7:40 pm, in WH 303

Professor: Dr. Anne Murtagh amurtagh@shepherd.edu Phone: (304) 876-5257

Office: 108 Stutzman-Slonaker OFFICE HOURS: **Mon. and Wed., 1 – 4 pm**
Other times by appt.

Catalog description: This course is an overview of research design in psychology. Topics covered include research ethics, reliability, and validity of psychological measures, observational and survey methods, quasi-experimental designs, and experimental design and control. Prerequisite: PSYC 250.

Textbook:

Beins, B. C. (2009). *Research Methods: A Tool for Life, 2nd ed.*. Boston: Allyn and Bacon.

Other required reading:

NIH Human Subjects Certification

cme.cancer.gov/clinicaltrials/learning/humanparticipant-protections.asp

APA style: <http://flash1r.apa.org/apastyle/basics/index.htm>

Short article: How to read a research study

Google “Blewett How to read a research study”

Critiquing a research study

ww2.sjc.edu/archandouts/researcharticlecritique.pdf

Recommended reading:

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

SPSS tutorial: <http://www.psych.utoronto.ca/courses/c1/spss/toc.htm>

Selecting the right statistic: <http://www.socialresearchmethods.net/selstat/ssstart.htm>

On science:

“Science is not a collection of facts, any more than opera is a collection of notes. It’s a process, a way of thinking, a method, based on a single insight – that the degree to which an idea seems true has nothing to do with whether it is true, and that the way to distinguish factual ideas from false ones is to test them by experiment.”

*Timothy Ferris
From The New Yorker, 7-20-98*

Welcome to the study of Research Methods in Psychology!

GOALS FOR THIS COURSE: Students will

- Learn the basics of **methodological reasoning and the scientific method**
- Master the **ethical principles** in doing research
- Learn the “nuts-and-bolts” of research – e.g., **forming a research question, operationalizing variables, sampling, measurement, and analytical methods**
- Engage in a number of **on-line research projects**
- Learn to write about research in APA-style
- Become more critical consumers of social science research

COURSE REQUIREMENTS AND EVALUATIONS OF YOUR PROGRESS

Your grade for this course will include:

- **3 regular exams (each 1/10th of your grade)**
- **final exam (2/10 of your grade)**
- **4 APA-style research reports (each 1/10th of your grade)**
- **class participation (1/10th of your grade)**

Details about these requirements

Exams: Mostly multiple-choice, some short essay. Midterm exam will count as a regular exam. Final exam will be comprehensive or cumulative, covering material from the whole semester.

Research reports: Using PsychExps, our class will have the opportunity to participate in a number of psychological research studies on-line. Research participation is always optional. Whether you personally participate in the study or not, you will be able to access the data, and you will write up APA-style research reports on 4 of these. I will give you more details about what is required in these reports before the first report is due.

Turnitin

It is required that you submit your research reports to **Turnitin.com** for an originality report – i.e., a report of how much your paper matches up to existing papers in their (very extensive) database. To do this, go to www.turnitin.com and create an account (it is free).

Our class ID is **3380273** and the password is **resmeth** (case-sensitive)

Class participation (1/10th of grade). Classes will consist of a relaxed dialogue in which readings, questions, and examples are discussed. The class will be more interesting and you will all learn better if we have a lively exchange of ideas – come prepared for that. Attendance will count as part of class participation; if you miss more than 1 or 2 classes, it will have a negative impact on this part of your grade. If you need to miss a class it is your responsibility to get the notes and any announcements from one of your classmates.

(Please note the dates of exams on the schedule. If you miss an exam, you may or may not be permitted to make it up. Documentation will be required for make-up exams, and make-up exams will consist of essay questions.)

Class Sakai site. You will find a Sakai site devoted to our class. After each class, I will post Powerpoints from the class lecture under “Resources” on this site for your convenience.

Note:

FREE TUTORING! ANY COURSE! TAKE ADVANTAGE OF A FREE “PERSONAL TRAINER FOR THE MIND!”

ACADEMIC SUPPORT CENTER, Lower level of Scarborough Library (LIB 103)
www.shepherd.edu/asweb; (304) 876-5221; 8:00 – 4:30 am

POLICY ON ACADEMIC HONESTY.

Each student in this course is expected to abide by the Shepherd University Academic Integrity Procedures found in the **Shepherd University Student Handbook**. Any work submitted by a student in this course for academic credit will be the student's own work.

You are encouraged to study together and to discuss information and concepts covered in lecture and the sections with other students. You can give "consulting" help to or receive "consulting" help from such students. However, this permissible cooperation should never involve one student having possession of a copy of all or part of work done by someone else, in the form of an e-mail, an e-mail attachment file, a diskette, or a hard copy (exception: group project).

Should copying occur, both the student who copied work from another student and the student who gave material to be copied will both automatically receive a zero for the assignment. Penalty for violation of this can also be extended to include failure of the course and University disciplinary action.

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.

All papers should reflect your own words and thoughts, unless you indicate otherwise. Academic honesty requires that you give credit for ideas or statements that are not your own. Thus, if you are summarizing someone's ideas in your own words, you must cite the source of the ideas. It should be clear **in every statement or sentence** whether you are expressing your own thoughts, or reporting those of someone else. If you find a quote that you think will add substantially to a paper, you must use quotation marks around the quote, and give the precise source of that quote, including the author, source, and page no.

Plagiarism is taking credit for the ideas or statements of someone else, presenting it as your own work. It is becoming more common these days, as people cut and paste material from the Internet, and falsely submit it as their own writing. However, there are ways to detect this dishonesty. Plagiarism is a serious act, and it will be reported to the Dean of the College. Suspension or dismissal from the college are possible consequences. If you have any questions at all about what is OK and what is not, please ask me. For more information about college policies related to academic honesty, please see the Shepherd University Student Handbook.

Shepherd Late Work Policy

Late work is not accepted unless the student can provide documentation of an emergency preventing them from submitting work on time. The instructor reserves the right to deny the request.

Accommodations for students with disabilities

Please see me to discuss any appropriate academic accommodations that may be required for student with disabilities. Requests for academic accommodations are to be made during the first three weeks of the semester, except for unusual circumstances, so arrangements can be made. Students are encouraged to register with Disability Support Services to verify their eligibility for appropriate accommodations.

Please feel free to come and talk to me (or call or e-mail) if you have any questions, concerns or comments, or if I can be of service to you in any way. I enjoy meeting with students one-on-one, and I hope you will not hesitate to share your thoughts with me.

Let's have a great semester!

