
PSY3393 (section 001) – EXPERIMENTAL PROJECTS – Fall 2016

Tuesdays and Thursdays 11:30 – 12:45 PM in JO 3.209

CONTACT INFORMATION

Instructor

Dr. Candice Mills

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Office hour: Thursdays 9:30-10:30

Teaching Assistant

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JO 4.312

Office hour: Tuesdays 1-2 PM

GENERAL COURSE INFORMATION

Course Pre-requisites, Co-requisites, and/or Other Restrictions

PSY 3392 or PSY 3490

Course Description

Laboratory and field experience in designing and conducting psychological research, with a major emphasis on the writing of research reports. This course fulfills the advanced writing requirement for Psychology majors because you will write, receive feedback on, and re-write more than 15 double-spaced pages.

Student Learning Objectives

After completing the course, students should be able to:

- 2.2 Explain and apply basic statistical analyses and employ critical thinking to evaluate the appropriateness of conclusions derived from their use.
- 2.3 Locate, accurately summarize, and evaluate bodies of scientific literature in psychology in order to construct an argument.
- 2.4 Use critical thinking to design and conduct basic studies to address psychological questions using appropriate research methods.
- 2.5 Use critical thinking to evaluate scholarly literature and empirical reports.
- 4.1 Demonstrate effective writing skills in various formats (e.g., summaries, technical reports in APA style) and for various purposes (e.g., explaining, persuading).
- 4.2 Demonstrate effective oral communication skills in various contexts (e.g., group discussion, presentation) and for various purposes (e.g., informing, teaching, explaining, defending, persuading).
- 5.1 Demonstrate professional behavior by meeting deadlines and with conscientious completion of responsibilities
- 5.2 Demonstrate competence in effectively collaborating with others.

Required Textbooks and Materials

Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association (6th Ed.) (2009). Washington, D. C.: American Psychological Association.

Additional **required** readings will be assigned. These assignments will be posted on the eLearning site for our class. Articles can be downloaded from the eLearning site or campus library online resources in PDF or word document format.

Course website

New assignments, revisions to the syllabus, announcements, and your grades will be posted on eLearning. You can access eLearning through a link on UTD's main page. You are then responsible for checking this site frequently (at least twice weekly) in order to remain aware of new activities, announcements, etc. Make sure that you have a UTD email address on this account (see info below on UTD email policy). Any email to students enrolled in this class will be sent through UTD email.

COURSE SCHEDULE

Week	Date	Topic	Work Due
1	Tues, Aug 23	Course introduction	
	Thurs, Aug 25	Getting started with generating research ideas, finding research, and writing summaries	Read assigned article
2	Tues, Aug 30	Research design overview; <i>Choose research teams!!</i>	Summary 1
	Thurs, Sept 1	Work day: Experimental Sketch	
3	Tues, Sept 6	Work day; <i>Topic approved by the end of class</i>	Summary 2
	Thurs, Sept 8	The shape of an APA paper	
4	Tues, Sept 13	Writing a research proposal	Summary 3
	Thurs, Sept 15	Work day	
5	Tues, Sept 20	Conferences	Experimental Sketch due at beginning of Conference
	Thurs, Sept 22		
6	Tues, Sept 27	Work day	Summary 4
	Thurs, Sept 29	Work day: Final touches	Proposal (Due at 11:59 PM)
7	Tues, Oct 4	Preparing for data collection; IRB forms and training	
	Thurs, Oct 6		IRB Forms by end of class
8	Tues, Oct 11	Statistics overview; Hypothesis Form	Hyp. Form by end of class
	Thurs, Oct 13	Statistics activity: t-tests and correlations	Once you have IRB approval, collect data!
9	Tues, Oct 18		
	Thurs, Oct 20	Statistics activity: ANOVAs	
10	Tues, Oct 25		
	Thurs, Oct 27	Writing the results section, setting up your data spreadsheet	Statistics Activity due; Data collection complete
11	Tues, Nov 1	Data analysis/writing	
	Thurs, Nov 3		
12	Tues, Nov 8		
	Thurs, Nov 10	Writing the discussion and abstract, and giving presentations	Results (Due at 11:59 PM)
13	Tues, Nov 15	Conferences	Open questions
	Thurs, Nov 17		
14	Tues, Nov 22	Fall break – no class	
	Thurs, Nov 24		
15	Tues, Nov 29	Presentations	
	Thurs, Dec 1	Presentations	
16	Tues, Dec 6	Last class period – Presentations if needed	Final research paper (Due at 11:59 PM)

Note: These descriptions and timelines are subject to change at the discretion of the professor. It is *your* responsibility to keep up with changes to the syllabus by attending class, as well as by checking eLearning and your email.

For “Conferences”, your team will sign up for a specific time during class to meet with the professor in the classroom. Aside from that, on Conference days your team is free to work in the computer lab or elsewhere during class time.

ASSIGNMENTS AND EVALUATIONS

Contributions to your grade

1. **Research Project.** Students are expected to design and execute a research study and write the project in a complete APA style manuscript. For some components of the project, you will work in research teams to complete a first draft. However, the final research paper is an individual research project, including *individually* updated versions of each portion of the paper based on the professor's feedback as well as *individually* written discussion and abstract sections. More details will be provided as the course progresses.
 - a. Teams
 - i. **Proposal**
 - ii. **Results**
 - b. Individuals
 - i. **Presentations** (with a small portion of the grade reflecting flow between speakers)
 - ii. **Final Research Paper**
2. **Other Assignments.**
 - a. Teams
 - i. **Experimental Sketch.** Students will be asked to prepare and discuss an "Experimental Sketch" in a conference between their research team and the professor. All testing materials and measures are also due at the conference and must be formatted for participants.
 - ii. **IRB Forms and Training.** In order to conduct research with human subjects, students will complete the requisite forms and training.
 - iii. **Hypothesis Form.** To prepare for data collection and analysis, students will be required to complete a form describing each specific hypothesis, connecting each one clearly to the data.
 - b. Individuals
 - i. **Summaries.** During the first few weeks of the semester, students will be completing short writing assignments as individuals that relate to developing their research ideas. Most will be summaries of journal articles that relate to the research topic. Guidelines for the summaries will be provided in class. Your lowest grade will be dropped and the rest of the scores averaged together.
 - ii. **Statistics Activity.** Students will be required to complete a statistics activity designed to prepare them to use statistical software and interpret data and results.
 - iii. **Participation.** Attendance for this class is mandatory and active participation is expected. Your attendance and participation will be monitored throughout the semester and will count towards your final grade. You will be expected to attend conferences during the semester as well. If you think you will miss a class or a conference (for any reason), please email your professor and your research team in advance. If you miss class, you are responsible for getting any notes and/or assignments from a willing classmate. Some class periods may not require attendance, but you will be notified of this in advance. If you find that you will be unable to attend a significant number of classes (more than 4), withdraw from the course.

Calculating your final grade

Final grades will be calculated as follows: 90-100% = A, 80-89% = B, 70-79% = C, and 60-69% = D. Plusses and minuses may be given for borderline cases. If you are concerned about your grade, see me as early as possible.

Research Project (70 points)	Points	Your Scores
Proposal	20	_____
Results	5	_____
Presentation	10	_____
Final Research Paper	35	_____
Other Assignments (30 points)		
3 of 4 Summaries	10	_____
Experimental Sketch	5	_____
Statistics Activity	5	_____
IRB Forms and Training	3	_____
Hypothesis Form	2	_____
Participation	5	_____
TOTAL	100	

COURSE AND INSTRUCTOR POLICIES

Contacting us

The best way to reach us is by email rather than by phone or eLearning. Please put the course abbreviation (Projects or PSY3393) in your subject line and include your first and last name in the message. In addition, you should use a UTD email address for all email correspondence (see the Email Use university policy). Anticipate that it may take us 24 hours to respond to emails and longer on weekends.

Submissions over email

If you are asked to submit a component of your research project over email (and do not do this unless asked), it is crucial to clearly name your files so that they are easily distinguished. Thus, please name your file as follows:

Proj_LastName_AssignmentTitle_MMDDYY (e.g., Proj_Mills_Proposal_092416)

Research team grading policy

All students on a team are expected to be involved with every step of the project. Note the following policies related to teamwork:

1. You will be required to evaluate contributions to the group when you submit the Proposal and Results.
2. Any team member who is not contributing to the group will be required to work alone from that point forward and may also receive a deduction from their grade for that portion of the project.
3. For presentations, if your team has divided, the professor will assign portions of the presentation to individual team members.
4. Any team member who is absent from class for more than two consecutive class days without making arrangements with their group and the professor will be asked to work alone.

Late policy

Because of the number of assignments and the importance of understanding one assignment before moving on to the next, it is imperative that work be turned in on time. Any papers are due at the BEGINNING of the class period unless otherwise specified in the syllabus, and they must be turned in proofread and typed. After this, penalties are as follows:

Up to 24 hours late	10% deduction
24 to 48 hours late	25% deduction

FINAL VERSIONS OF PAPERS WILL NOT BE ACCEPTED MORE THAN 48 HOURS AFTER THE DUE DATE.

Early policy

You may hand in your final research paper by Thursday, November 17th for a “free” evaluation. In order to receive this early feedback, you must have completed your ENTIRE PAPER and provide a cover letter regarding your specific questions when you hand in the paper. Complete papers will be read over to address your questions, comments made, but no grades recorded.

Extra credit

There will be no individualized extra credit given for this course.

Recordings

Please do not make video and/or audio recordings of class sessions without my explicit permission. Recordings of my class made with or without permission may not be distributed in ANY way (email, internet, eLearning, etcetera).

A FEW WORDS OF ADVICE

This may be the most difficult class you’ve ever taken, but it also may be the most rewarding. This class gives you the opportunity to apply what you’ve learned in other psychology classes and to engage in a project related to your own interests. Come to class and stay on top of the assignments. Really think about why you are interested in psychology, and what psychology research can tell others about human behavior. The more you get into the assignments and projects, the more you’ll get out of the class. Take advantage of our office hours to ask questions. We want you to walk out of this class with a deeper understanding of psychology research and writing.

UT DALLAS SYLLABUS POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

Please go to the following link for information regarding the University’s policies and procedures:

<http://go.utdallas.edu/syllabus-policies>