

**Psy 205: Experimental Design**  
**Fall 2017**  
**Yokum 203; Monday, Wednesday, & Friday 9:00–9:50AM**

This course provides an overview of the research methods used in psychological experimentation, with an emphasis on the nature of scientific problems, the development of testable hypotheses, the design of experiments, and descriptive research relevant to psychological phenomena.

**Course web page:** <http://facweb.plattsburgh.edu/wendy.braje/205/205.asp>

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<b>Office hours:</b>	Monday & Wednesday 11:00-11:50 or by appointment	<b>E-mail:</b>	<a href="mailto:brajewl@plattsburgh.edu">brajewl@plattsburgh.edu</a>
		<b>web page:</b>	<a href="http://facweb.plattsburgh.edu/wendy.braje">facweb.plattsburgh.edu/wendy.braje</a>

**Course objectives:**

1. To understand logical reasoning processes and the value of the scientific method of psychological research.
2. To be able to discriminate scientific from unscientific problems and generate testable hypotheses.
3. To understand the nature of experimental variables and procedures used in psychological research.
4. To learn the ethical considerations relevant to psychological experimentation.
5. To learn how to use experimental, quasi experimental, correlational, and other types of research designs to test psychological hypotheses.
6. To be able to communicate research results and processes clearly, concisely, and in the appropriate format.

**Textbook:** [https://saylordotorg.github.io/text\\_research-methods-in-psychology/index.html](https://saylordotorg.github.io/text_research-methods-in-psychology/index.html)

**Attendance**

- Attendance is required and counts 5% toward your final grade.
- If you need to miss class for a valid reason, you must inform me ahead of time, or as soon as is humanly possible after missing class if your emergency is unforeseeable. If you wait to inform me, your absence will not be excused.
- If you need to miss class because you are part of a college sports team or other club, please have your coach or club advisor send me a detailed list of the classes you need to miss.
- It is your responsibility to ensure that you have signed the attendance sheet each day. If you miss the sheet as it is passed around, make sure to come up at the end of class to sign it. You may not under any circumstances have another person sign in for you. Doing so will be considered academic dishonesty, and you will be formally reported and lose all attendance credit for the semester.
- Please note that you are expected to attend class whenever classes are in session, including days surrounding holiday breaks. Please plan your travels accordingly. Missing class because your ride is leaving early or getting back late is not an acceptable excuse.

**Academic honesty**

- It is expected that all students enrolled in this class support the letter and the spirit of the Academic Honesty Policy as stated in the college catalog. Please be sure you are familiar with the Academic Honesty Policy and Cheating Policy, which can be found at [www.plattsburgh.edu/offices/academic/provost/academichonesty.php](http://www.plattsburgh.edu/offices/academic/provost/academichonesty.php).
- Ignorance or misunderstanding of what constitutes academic dishonesty will not be excused. All instances of academic dishonesty, regardless of how “minor” they may seem to you, will be reported to the college.
- All written work must be in your own words. Do not work on any assignment with another student. Too often, doing so results in students submitting answers that are too similar to each other. Even if this is unintentional, all students involved will be reported to the college.
- The penalty for academic dishonesty will range from a 0 on the assignment to a final grade of E in the class depending on the offense.

**Expectations**

- You are encouraged to ask questions, seek clarification, and offer your own reactions to material presented in class. If anything from class is unclear to you, please do not hesitate to ask in class or to stop by my office to discuss things.
- Feedback is difficult to communicate in email, so please do not ask me for help with something via email. If you need assistance with assignments, please stop by in person.
- I expect every student to behave respectfully toward me and the other students during class. This means paying attention during class, and not carrying on other conversations, texting your friends, etc. Anyone doing so will lose all attendance credit for that day. Such behavior is distracting and disrespectful to the other students and to the instructor.
- All cell phones and other communication devices must be silenced and put away during class unless you have my prior approval.
- If you want to do well in this class, you should be spending at least 2 hours out of class for every hour in class. This means spending 6-9 hours per week outside of class reading, studying, reviewing your notes, and completing assignments.
- You can find some additional general student tips on my website: [facweb.plattsburgh.edu/wendy.braje/misc.asp](http://facweb.plattsburgh.edu/wendy.braje/misc.asp)

## Email

All students are expected to use their official campus email account. If you email me from something other than your campus account, it may be marked as junk/spam and I may never see it. You should plan to regularly check your campus account for email. You are responsible for all information that I send via campus email.

## Personal web page

A personal web page will be created on the course website for every student, from which you will be able to check your grades and access most course materials. This is NOT the Moodle system, but a web page I maintain for you. Please contact me immediately if you have trouble accessing your page. You are responsible for checking your grade page regularly and ensuring that all assignments have been recorded accurately. If you notice a discrepancy, inform me immediately!

## Written work policies

- All written work must be typewritten. Handwritten work will not be accepted except when noted in class.
- All written work (homework and papers) should be submitted in hard copy by the deadline. If you prefer to email your assignments to me instead, they must be in **Microsoft Word** or **PDF** format and they must be submitted on time. It is your responsibility to make sure I receive a file on time that I can read—otherwise it will be counted as late and you will lose 10% per day until I receive a readable file.
- All written work must be in your own words. In no case should you work on an assignment with another student. Too often doing so results in students submitting answers that are too similar to each other. Even if this is unintentional, all students involved will be reported to the college, and all assignments will receive a 0 (and the students will possibly fail the course, depending on the severity of the offense).
- Assignments are due at the start of class on the due date.
- Late work will be accepted until one week after the deadline, but 10% of the available grade will be deducted from your score for each day or part of a day (including weekends and holidays) that the work is late.
- **All work must be stapled together**. Do not use a paperclip, report cover, or fancy corner-folding technique. If I have to staple your work, you will lose points on the assignment.

**Grading summary:** Your final grade in this class will be based on the following:

Attendance	5%
4 Unit exams	45%
Homework assignments	10%
2 Article reports	5%
4 APA reports	10%
Project	15%
Final exam	10%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>100%</b>

Final grades are determined according to the following scale:

94-100%	A	79-81.9%	C+
91-93.9%	A-	76-78.9%	C
88-90.9%	B+	73-75.9%	C-
85-87.9%	B	70-72.9%	D+
82-84.9%	B-	67-69.9%	D
		<67%	E

The final application of these guidelines is subject to my discretion. Please note that I do not allow students to do “extra work” to make up for poor performance. This would be extremely unfair to other students who are not given this opportunity.

**Unit exams (45% of your grade)**

- Each unit exam covers material from the textbook as well as from lectures.
- Missed exams can only be made up if you have a valid documented excuse (e.g., a doctor's note) and you inform me as soon as possible about the need for a make-up.
- Students who arrive more than 10 minutes late for an exam will not be permitted to take the exam. Please be sure to use the restroom before the exam, as you will not be allowed to leave the room once the exam has begun. All phones and communication devices must be turned off and put away during exams.

**Homework assignments (10% of your grade)**

- The homework assignments require you to review the lecture material and are intended to help you prepare for exam questions. Homework will be posted on the class website.

**Article reports (5% of your grade)**

- You will read two short peer-reviewed publications and answer a series of questions regarding their methodology and writing style. The papers and assignments will be posted on the class website.

**APA reports (10% of your grade)**

- One important component of this course is for you to learn how to communicate experimental findings clearly using APA style. To this end, we will conduct an experiment as a class, and you will work throughout the semester writing each of the components of an APA-style paper describing the study.

**Project (15% of your grade)**

- Towards the end of the semester you will split into small groups to develop and run a research project of your own. Further information and guidelines will be provided in class.
- You will each write your own individual APA paper detailing your study. This will make up the bulk of your grade on the project.
- Your contribution to the group and your attendance on project days will also count toward your grade on the project.

**Final exam (10% of your grade)**

- The final exam will be held on the designated date during finals week.
- The final exam is cumulative.
- In addition to contributing 10% to your overall grade, your score on the final exam will automatically replace any and all unit exam scores that it beats.
- Students who arrive more than 10 minutes late for an exam will not be permitted to take the exam. Please be sure to use the restroom before the exam, as you will not be allowed to leave the room once the exam has begun.

**Reading requirement**

Scientific writing (which you will do for your APA reports) is different from other types of writing you have probably been taught. In class I will give you information about scientific writing and have you complete some exercises. However, one of the best ways to truly understand this form of writing is to read a lot of it. For this reason, you will be required to read at least 3 peer-reviewed journal articles during this course. This is not a graded assignment but is a requirement that will help you write a better paper yourself. You are simply required to read the papers (not just the abstracts!) and understand them as best as you can (they are typically written for experts in the field, not beginning undergraduates, so don't be discouraged if you struggle with some parts). You can read any papers you want that meets these requirements:

- They must be about some area of psychology.
- They must be from peer-reviewed journals (I recommend articles from the journal *Psychological Science* because they are typically easier to read/understand than are some other journals).
- They must be empirical articles – they must describe research done by the authors, i.e. they cannot be articles that only review other research or perform meta-analyses. Look for headings like "participants," "procedure," and "results."

As verification that you have done the reading, you will be required to submit to me the citation for each article you read on the dates designated in the course schedule.

## SCHEDULE

You are expected to complete the assigned readings *before* we discuss them in class each week. Class time will often be used for discussing material from the textbook and completing activities based on this information, so it is crucial that you complete the reading before class.

Any changes to this schedule will be announced in class.

Date	Topic	Chapter	Assignment due
8/28	Course overview	1	
8/30	Psychology and science	1	
9/1	Basic concepts and research	2	
9/4	Basic concepts and research	2	
9/6	Ethics	3	
9/8	Ethics	3	Homework 1: Literature search
9/11	Theories	4	Reading requirement 1
9/13	Review and practice exam		
9/15	<b>EXAM 1 (Ch 1-4)</b>		
9/18	Measurement	5	Reading requirement 2
9/20	Measurement	5	
9/22	Measurement	5	
9/25	Experiments	6	Reading requirement 3
9/27	Experiments	6	
9/29	Experiments	6	Homework 2: Measurement/Experiments
10/2	APA: Overview and Intro section	11	
10/4	APA	11	Article report 1
10/6	APA	11	
10/9	<b>FALL BREAK</b>		
10/11	APA Introduction review		APA Introduction draft – for review
10/13	<b>EXAM 2 (Ch 5-6, 11)</b>		
10/16	Tables and graphs	12	
10/18	Tables and graphs	12	APA Introduction
10/20	APA: Methods and Results	11	
10/23	Nonexperimental research	7, 2	Homework 3: Tables and graphs
10/25	Nonexperimental research	7	
10/27	Nonexperimental research	7	
10/30	APA Methods/Results review		APA Methods/Results draft – for review
11/1	<b>EXAM 3 (Ch 2, 7, 11-12)</b>		
11/3	Complex designs	8	
11/6	Complex designs	8	APA Methods/Results
11/8	APA style: Discussion; Surveys	11, 9	
11/10	Surveys	9	Homework 4: Factorials
11/13	Surveys	9	
11/15	Single-subject research	10	Article report 2
11/17	APA: Title, Abstract, References; Discussion review	11	APA: Discussion draft – for review
11/20	<b>EXAM 4 (Ch 8-11)</b>		
11/23	<b>THANKSGIVING BREAK</b>		
11/25	<b>THANKSGIVING BREAK</b>		
11/27	Project planning		
11/29	Project planning		APA: Discussion; Homework 5: Proposal
12/1	APA Title/Abstract review; finish planning		APA: Title page and abstract draft – for review
12/4	Data collection		
12/6	Data collection		APA: Title page and abstract
12/8	REVIEW		

**FINAL EXAM – CHECK BANNER FOR SCHEDULE**