

**Research Methods I: Foundations
PSYC 221 Section 04
Fall 2011**

Instructor: Emily Cook, PhD
Office Hrs: M 1-3pm; W 9-10am (317 HM)
Class: M/W 4:00-5:50pm

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Location: Craig-Lee 205

Required Books

Salkind, N. J. (2011). *Exploring Research*, 8th Edition. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice Hall.
ISBN 10: 0-205-09381-7; ISBN 13: 978-0-205-09381-6

Recommended Books

Perrin, R. (2009). *Pocket Guide to APA Style*, 3rd Edition. Wadsworth Publishing.
ISBN: 13:978-0-547-20193-1

*Note – additional readings may be assigned throughout the semester that pertain to topics in the textbook. These readings will be assigned in class and posted on blackboard.

Blackboard

Information for this course will be available through Blackboard (<https://blackboard.ric.edu>). If you need assistance accessing BB, please contact the Blackboard Student Help Desk at (401) 456-8803. Blackboard contains a copy of the syllabus, student grades on assignments, overhead slides, study guides, assignments, and any other relevant documents to the content of this class. Please note that the information provided on Blackboard is meant to *serve as a supplement, rather than an alternative*, to regular class attendance and participation. You are still responsible for all information presented during class time.

Text Website

I encourage you to use the many tools that the text publisher's website provides. The web address is <http://www.prenhall.com/salkind/>. Unfortunately, the publisher does not yet have a website specific to the 8th edition but you can find several tools that are helpful by clicking on the 6th edition of the book.

Course Description

PSYC 221 is intended to provide students with an understanding of the purposes and procedures of psychological research. Included is the nature of empirical research, varieties of research strategies and methods, the process of conducting research, and elementary data analysis. This course also includes an introduction to the use of a computer statistics program.

Course Goals By the end of the course, I expect that you will have gained the following competencies.

- Search the psychological literature using library and internet resources.
- Critically evaluate research methods used in research articles, internet resources, and popular press articles.
- Distinguish between the different types of research designs and understand the strengths and weaknesses of different designs.
- Understand the concepts of reliability and validity and how they pertain to different research designs and research instruments.
- Identify the different sections of a research article
- Identify multiple ways to collect data and build skills in data collection techniques
- Gain a conceptual understanding of data analytic techniques
- Develop preliminary skills in using data analytic software
- Write an APA style research proposal

Learning Environment

To achieve the goals of this course we must work together. My role as instructor is to come to class prepared and provide a learning environment that is meaningful and challenging. I recognize that we all have different learning styles, and thus every attempt will be made to present class material through various mediums. Class will be conducted in lecture/presentation format, with some time devoted to group discussion and small group work. Lectures and in-class activities will highlight key information from the text, but new information *not* covered in the text will be presented.

Your role as a student is to attend class, pay attention, participate in class discussion and activities, complete all class assignments and exams, and read your textbook. I also expect that you will respect the class by **turning off your cell phones** and IPODS during the lecture and not bringing outside reading material into class. Laptops are permitted in class but should only be used for taking notes. If laptops are used for other activities (e.g., facebook) then I will no longer allow you to use your laptop. Furthermore, please do not come to class late or leave early without letting me know. Lastly, if the behavior of another classmate is somehow inhibiting your ability to feel comfortable in the learning environment please come and see me.

Course Policies

1. **Attendance:** The concepts and skills covered in this course are advanced and challenging. It is virtually impossible for students to complete assignments for PSYC 221 unless they are present and actively engaged in each and every scheduled class. Accordingly, students are expected to **be present during all classes** and to **arrive on time**. Each student will be allotted **three** “excused” absences over the course of the semester. I assume that all of these three absences will be for legitimate reasons. Accordingly, there is no need to (i.e., please do not!)

explain or document (e.g., doctor's notes) absences. For every absence over three, two points will be deducted from your final grade points, up to a total of twelve points. This penalty is in addition to any quizzes missed on the day of the absence. Students will be responsible for all material presented during classes they miss. In other words, **the professor will not "re-teach" material missed during class absences during individual appointments.**

2. **Academic Integrity** is the pursuit of scholarly activity free from fraud and deception and is an educational objective of this institution. Academic dishonesty includes, but is not limited to, cheating on exams, having unauthorized possession of exams, fabricating information or citations, facilitating the academic dishonesty of others, and submitting the work of another person as your own (plagiarism). Academic dishonesty may result in a failing grade for the particular assignment or exam, a failing grade for the entire course, or suspension or expulsion from the university.
3. **Plagiarism** has become an increasing problem. Anyone who plagiarizes on a paper will at the very least receive an F on that paper. Please go to the following website to review plagiarism policies. (<http://ric.libguides.com/content.php?pid=96224&sid=720434>)
4. **Disability Accommodations:** Rhode Island College is committed to making reasonable efforts to assist individuals with documented disabilities. If you are seeking reasonable classroom accommodations under the Americans with Disabilities Act and/or Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, you are required to register with the Student Life Office, located in room 127 in Craig Lee (456-8061). To receive academic accommodations for this class, please obtain the proper forms from the Student Life Office and meet with me at the beginning of the semester.

Course Requirements

1. Students will complete assigned readings prior to class.
2. Students will attend all lectures and participate in class discussions and activities.
3. Students will complete three exams. These exams are not cumulative.
4. Students will complete three class assignments designed to familiarize them with research methodologies and statistical techniques.
5. Students will develop a research proposal to be handed in at the end of the semester.

Out of Class Assignments & In Class Activities. Out of class assignments will be posted on Blackboard and discussed in class prior to due dates. These assignments are designed to further help you develop concepts and skills you learned in class. Out of class assignments are due as indicated on the syllabus unless otherwise noted in class. Out of class assignments will not be accepted late and will not be accepted by email. You must turn in a hard-copy of the assignment in class unless you have made arrangements before hand.

In-class activities will take a variety of forms including group activities and writing assignments in class. If you are absent the day an activity takes place, you **will not** have an

opportunity to make up these points. There will be a total of 6 **graded** in-class assignments, with each one being worth 5 points. Class activities **will not** be announced prior to class. Your lowest in-class assignment grade will be dropped. Please realize that in-class activities are an **excellent way for you to improve your grade** and thus it is **very important for you to attend class**.

Exams. You will be required to take three exams in this class. The last exam will be your final. The final is not cumulative. Exams may consist of multiple-choice, short answer, fill-in-the-blank items, and application questions. You will be tested on information presented during lectures, class discussions, and on your assigned readings. **There will be no excuses or make-ups if you miss one of the exams.** If you must miss for emergency, you must contact me before the test and make an appointment to take it before you return to class. You will not receive full credit for your make-up test if you do not follow this procedure.

Research Proposal. Students will be required to individually prepare an 8 – 10 page research proposal designed to address a research question of their choosing from the field of Psychology. The format will be that presented on pp. 259 – 271 of *Exploring Research*, with adjustments as discussed in class. Specific instructions for the paper will be posted on Blackboard under course documents. During the course of the semester, you will hand in a one-page research summary and two papers (all of which will receive a separate grade). The summary will include a broad statement of the problem, proposed research methods for studying the problem, and three references. The first paper will include an introduction to your topic, review of the literature, and statement of your hypotheses. Instructor feedback on the first part of the proposal is expected to be incorporated into the subsequent final proposal. The final proposal will include revisions to the first three sections of your paper with the edition of your proposed methods section and limitations section. These revisions will help you become a better writer by increasing your awareness of the writing process. Papers must be in APA format and typed. A useful FAQ about APA writing style can be found at <http://www.apastyle.org/learn/faqs/index.aspx>. Papers should not be handed in late. Any late paper will result in a letter grade off the final paper grade for each day it is late. Please see me as soon as possible if you have any questions regarding expectations for the paper. Grades will take into account quality of writing (grammar, punctuation, sentence structure, etc.) and whether the proposal demonstrates an understanding of material presented during the semester and how it should be applied to a specific research question. A rubric with more specifics about grading will be posted on Blackboard. Students who reproduce phrases or sentences from the work of others in their own writing without appropriate quotation marks and page references *have committed plagiarism*. All students are required to turn in a signed copy of the “Statement Regarding Plagiarism” (**attached**) with their **final paper**.

Grading

Final grades will be computed as follows:

Out-of-Class Assignments:	30 points
In-Class Activities	25 points
Exam 1	50 points
Exam 2	50 points
Exam 3	50 points
Research Proposal Summary	10 points
Research Proposal Draft 1	40 points
Final Research Proposal	100 points
Total	355 points

Points will be converted to a traditional 100 point grading scale for assignment of grades:

A (94% and higher)	A- (90-93.99)
B+ (87-89.99)	B (84-86.99)
B- (80-83.99)	C+ (77-79.99)
C (74-76.99)	C- (70-73.99)
D+ (67-69.99)	D (64-66.99)
D- (60-63.99)	F (less than 60)

Note: The instructor reserves the right to change the syllabus as necessary. **You are responsible for all changes to the syllabus and all information presented during class time, regardless of whether or not you attended class.**

Course Calendar – Lectures

***Readings should be completed before class**

<u>Date</u>	<u>Topic, Readings, and Assignments</u>
August 31	Review of Syllabus What is Research?
September 5	No CLASS - Holiday
September 7	Chapter 1: The Importance of Research
September 12	Chapter 2: The Research Process
September 14	Chapter 2: The Research Process Assignment #1 Reviewing Research Article Due
September 19	Chapters 13-14: Writing a Research Proposal and Discussion of Papers Bring in APA Guide
September 21	Chapter 3B: Ethics
September 26	Chapter 4: Samples and Generalizability
September 28	Chapter 4: Samples and Generalizability Research Proposal Summary Due
October 3	Chapter 4: Samples and Generalizability
October 5	***** Exam 1: Chapters 1-4 *****
October 10	NO CLASS –HOLIDAY but Monday classes meet Oct 11 th
October 11	Chapter 5: Measurement, Reliability, and Validity
October 12	Chapter 5: Measurement, Reliability, and Validity
October 17	Chapter 6: Methods of Measuring Behavior
October 19	Chapter 6: Methods of Measuring Behavior

October 24	Chapter 7: Data Collection Draft 1 Due
October 26	Chapter 7: Descriptive Statistics
October 31	Chapter 8: Inferential Statistics
November 2	Chapter 8: Inferential Statistics Assignment # 2 SPSS Analyses Due
November 7	*****Exam 2: Chapters 5-8*****
November 9	NO Class – Friday Schedule
November 14	Chapter 9: Descriptive and Correlational Methods
November 16	Chapter 10: Qualitative Methods
November 21	Chapter 11: Experimental Research Assignment # 3 Qualitative Interview Due
November 23	No CLASS
November 28	Chapter 11: Experimental Research
November 30	Chapter 12: Quasi-Experimental Research
December 5	Chapter 12: Quasi-Experimental Research
December 7	Applied Research: Article Kellam & Langevin, 2003 Final Papers Due

*******Exam 3 on Chapters 9-12 – TBA – See RIC Exam Schedule*******

Statement Regarding Plagiarism

Broadly speaking, plagiarism involves representing the work of another person as one's own. All of the following are included in the definition of plagiarism:

- Representing the ideas of another as one's own
- Representing as one's own a paper written by another person
- **Including within a paper sentences or phrases used verbatim from another source without enclosing the quoted words within quotation marks and indicating the source and page number of the quotes.**

It is essential when summarizing the findings from a research article that the words used are your own and not plagiarized from the original source. Plagiarism is a clear violation of the RIC Academic Honor Policy. In addition, re-arranging the phrases or sentences of another in one's own paper does not constitute writing a paper and is considered plagiarism.

I understand that if I commit plagiarism on a paper handed in for credit in PSYC 221, I will receive a grade of 0 for the assignment and may be referred to for possible disciplinary action. **There will be no exceptions to this policy.**

Signed _____

Printed Name _____

Date _____