

Edit **Course Information:**

Experimental Psychology: 830:381:01

Class: Tuesday/Thursday, 11:00-12:20 BSB 132

Lab: Section 1, Tuesday, 1:30-4:20; Section 2, Thursday, 1:30-4:20 BSB 336

Professor/TA Information:

Dr. Sarah R. Allred, srallred@scarletmail.rutgers.edu

Dan Markoff, dbm100@scarletmail.rutgers.edu (Tuesday section)

Allie O'Donnell, ao254@scarletmail.rutgers.edu (Thursday section)

Course Overview:

Welcome to Experimental Psychology. Here we will apply the scientific method to behavioral research with the aim of improving the ways in which you consume and produce psychological research.

Learning Objectives:

The learning objectives of this course are consistent with the goals of the department. Course activities are designed to assess these learning objectives. Upon successful completion of this course, you should be able to:

1. Summarize and evaluate peer-reviewed psychological research.
2. Create testable hypotheses.
3. Design experimental studies to test hypotheses.
4. Analyze data and provide easily interpretable plots of the analyzed data.
5. Determine whether data support, refute, or are irrelevant to hypotheses.
6. Apply results of scientific studies to matters of everyday life, public policy and public concern.
7. Communicate ideas effectively and professionally both verbally and in writing.

Edit **Course Logistics Overview:**

This class is a digitally-enhanced class, with many in-class activities and assignments completed digitally. You will need a tablet or laptop computer for this course. If you do not have one, you may check out an iPad Mini from the library (more details to follow).

This course consists of two class periods (80 minutes) and one lab period (170 minutes) per week. Both parts of the course will be applied, with many activities completed in class. Most of these activities will be graded. Research shows that students learn more and get better grades with such frequent, low-stakes assessments.

All assignments, assessments, and due dates can be found on the Sakai site for this course. There is a Lessons page for each week, giving an overview of class and linking to all required preparation materials.

This course is designed to showcase the importance of conducting experiments to gain knowledge, to provide you with the skills to conduct experiments, to give you practice comprehending and communicating scientific information, and to increase your understanding of the role of experimental psychology in everyday life. To achieve this goals, the course will consist of several parts, split between class and lab time. These are (1) A review of experimental methods, (2) Practice reading, summarizing, and writing literature in psychology, (3) Learning and recognizing common errors made by humans in understanding the world around them, (4) Applying knowledge of experimental methods to evaluate psychological claims made in the media.

Edit **Required Materials:**

1. Readings in class. There will **no assigned textbook** for this course. Instead, you will be provided with pdfs of individual textbook chapters or other readings (such as research articles). These will be provided via Lessons pages on Sakai. Your textbook from Research Methods may be helpful as a consultation.
2. Tablet (such as an iPad) or laptop computer. This class is a digitally-enhanced class, with many in-class activities and assignments completed digitally. If you have your own device, you may use it. Students who do not have a device of their own may check out iPads from the library (see iPad document in general course information). Please note that although most of the applications required are available on smartphones, the size of the screen can impede your work. I strongly recommend using a tablet or laptop.
3. Software. (Please note that the first lab will be devoted to helping you acquire and install the following software.) The following applications or programs are required for this class: Google Drive, Google Docs, access to Socrative (free app on Apple products, or via internet for other platforms), and software to create and display presentations (such as Microsoft Powerpoint, Keynote, or Explain Everything).
4. Class information. Information about assignments and due dates will always be posted on that week's Lessons page in Sakai. Slides will also be posted after class.

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Grading Overview:

Grades will be divided into five parts. The first part is [individual effort \(IE, 22%\)](#). IE assignments will receive full credit for any reasonable attempt at completion. Every student should in principle be able to get full credit. The second part is [individual assessment \(IA, 22%\)](#). These are quizzes and exams where you are graded for how many correct answers you provide. The third part is [team assessment \(TA, 20%\)](#). Most course activities will be completed by a lab team to which you will be assigned on the first or second day of class. Every member of the team will receive the same grade on each activity. Some of these activities will receive full credit for completion, others will only receive credit for correct answers. For the latter, you will have ample chance to check answers with me or TAs before getting graded. The fourth part is [team effort \(TE, 20%\)](#). Your team members will provide a grade based on your work in the team. I reserve the right to alter this grade in the (rare) instance where team members assign grades that are grossly unfair. The fifth part is the [final paper \(Paper: 16%\)](#). This will be due in lieu of a final exam. You will receive feedback on each part of the paper before it is due.

You will receive the same grade in the lab as the class. In cases where your overall grade is between 90 and 92, you will receive an A in the three-credit course, and a B+ in the one-credit lab (averaging to A-).

Grading Specifics:

Individual Effort (IE): Assignments in this category are designed to give you full credit for a reasonable effort to complete the assignment. If you complete the assignment by the due date, and what you turn in conforms to the general guidelines of the assignment, you will receive full credit. If you complete something by the due date, but it fails in obvious ways to conform to the guidelines, you will receive half credit. If you fail to turn in anything by the due date, you will receive no credit. Late assignments will not be accepted for any reason. All due dates are posted at the beginning of the semester. If you have a conflict-filled week, complete the activity *before* your conflict. Individual effort is broken into three sections: (1) Weekly blog posts (14 at 8 pts each, 112 points). (2) Research paper rough drafts and feedback from me/TAs (Intro, 24 pts; Method and Results; 24 points; Discussion sentence outline, 24 pts; Abstract rough draft, 10 pts) and (3) A 1-2 page Reflections paper completed during the last lab (20 pts). Instructions for each assignment are available on the General Course Information tab. **This section totals 220 points, for 22% of your final grade.**

Individual Assessment (IA): There are will be nine short quizzes (10 pts each, drop your lowest) and two exams (70 points each, 140 pts), **for a total of 220 points, 22% of your grade.** The short quizzes will be announced beforehand. Quizzes and exams will be taken in-class, on Sakai, and will be open book, open note. Dates are posted on Sakai, but are subject to change. It is very unlikely that exam dates will change, but quizzes may adjust with speed of course. There is no final exam in this course. On the final day of class, you will take an exam that covers the material on the first two exams. If your grade on this last exam is *higher* than your first exam grade, you may keep it. If not, the last exam grade will be discarded. To sum: the exam on the last day of class can only *help* your grade, and not hurt it. Because of this second opportunity, there will be no makeup exams of any kind offered for the first two exams.

Team Assessment (TA): You will be sorted into teams for the semester, and a large part of your grade will be based on activities completed in your team. Examples of such assignments include group quizzes, short papers, short presentations to the class in response to question prompts. Please note that all team members will receive the same grade. Very detailed instructions for Team Activities (TA) are posted on the weekly lessons pages, and also in the general course information section, linked to below. Nearly all of these activities will be completed in lab or in class. Although many of these activities require correct answers for full credit, teams will have ample opportunity to check answers with me or TAs before they are graded. Points received for each team activity (TA) will be posted in a google sheets file in your team folder, and not on Sakai. This grade will be added as one section to Sakai at the *end* of the semester. **This**

section will be worth 20% of your final grade.

Team Effort (TE): 20% of your grade (200 points) will be assigned based on your participation with your team. During the first few weeks of class, you (students) will decide on 2-4 criteria for evaluating your team members. Examples of criteria include things like preparation, skill, attitude, contribution, etc. Twice during the semester (halfway, and at the end) you will evaluate each member of your team on each of these criteria. The grade you receive will be the average of your teammates' evaluations of you. Each evaluation is worth 100 pts (10%). I reserve the right to adjust these grades.

Final Paper: 16% of your grade (160 points), will come from a research paper that you write over the course of the semester, and that will be due in lieu of a final exam. This research paper will be in the form of a journal article written about the research completed by your team. Each person must write their own paper. You will write rough drafts of each section and receive feedback from me/TA on each section. Full instructions on the paper can be found on the general course information tab, linked to below.

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