



## Course Information:



Experimental Psychology: 830:381:01

Class: Monday/Wednesday, 1:20-2:40 PM BSB 132

Lab: Section 1, Monday, 2:50-5:40PM, BSB 336; Section 2, Wednesday, 2:50-5:40 PM, BSB 336; Section 3, Tuesday, 9:30-12:20, BSB 134.

## Professor/TA Information:

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

Autumn Nanassy (Assists Monday lab, runs Tuesday lab)

Dan Markoff, dbm100@scarletmail.rutgers.edu (runs Wednesday lab)

## 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. Evaluate media portrayals of psychological studies.
7. Apply results of scientific studies to matters of everyday life, public policy and public concern.
8. Communicate ideas effectively and professionally both verbally and in writing.

## Course Logistics Overview:



This class is a digitally-enhanced class, with many in-class activities and assignments completed digitally. **For this course, you will need a tablet or laptop computer capable of connecting to the internet.** (Although a smartphone may provide internet accessibility, a table or laptop is recommended). If you do not have a device, you may check out an iPad Mini from the library for the semester (more details to follow). It will be due during the final exam, and you will be responsible for lost or destroyed devices.

Everything you need for this course will be listed on the Sakai site. Each week has one Lessons page, and this page gives an overview of topics for the week and links to all tests, quizzes, assignments, and reading materials.

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 that are largely completed in class. Most of these activities will be graded. Although the number of assignments and quizzes may seem daunting, please do not panic! Everything you need to do is organized clearly in the Lessons pages. These assignments are to help you: research shows that students learn more and get better grades with such frequent, low-stakes assessments.

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. This course will provide a practical application of the skills you learned in research methods. To achieve these 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.

## Required Materials:



1. Readings in class. There will **no assigned textbook** for this course. Instead, you will be provided with review materials (written by me), research articles, media articles, and links to helpful websites. All required materials 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. In some cases, slides will also be posted after class. Please note that class discussion and problem-solving will take up most class time, so often there will be few slides. Coming to class is strongly advised.

## Grading Overview:



You will receive one grade for the class (3 credits) and one grade for the lab (1 credit). Your lab grade will be

You will receive one grade for the class (3 credits) and one grade for the lab (1 credit). Your lab grade will be assigned by your lab instructor (Dr. Allred for Monday lab, Autumn Nanassy for Tuesday lab, and Dan Markoff for Wednesday lab).

Your class grades will be divided into three parts. The first part is [quizzes and assignments \(40%\)](#). These are quizzes and short assignments where you are graded for how many correct answers you provide. However, there is ample time for revision and questions, so with effort you should be able to score well on all of these. The second part is [writing assignments \(40%\)](#). Some writing assignments will receive full credit for completion, while others will be graded. The final part is [exams \(20%\)](#), split between two 5% midterms and one 10% final exam.

### Grading Specifics:

**Quizzes and assignments:** There will be many short quizzes and assignments. Due dates will be announced beforehand in classes and posted on Sakai. Some quizzes will be due before class, others will be taken in-class. Unless otherwise indicated, quizzes will be open book, open note (and in some cases, open neighbor). Dates are posted on Sakai, but are subject to change. There are two purposes for these quizzes and assignments. The first goal is to keep you up-to-date on reading assignments so that class time can be used productively. The second goal is to give you practice applying the skills we are learning in class. **This section will be worth 40% of your final grade.**

**Writing:** This is a writing intensive course, so you will be doing a lot of writing! The goal of the writing assignments will be to improve both your writing skills and your critical thinking skills. Most writing assignments will be short, and you will be provided with clear instructions and a rubric showing how the assignments will be graded. Throughout the semester, you will have xx writing assignments (subject to change). You are required to turn in all writing assignments. For half these assignments you will receive full credit for a good-faith effort to complete the assignment. For the other half, you will receive a grade and extensive feedback. Please note that standards will be very strict for those assignments that are graded. For each assignment that is graded, you will have the opportunity to respond to feedback in order to improve your grade. **This section will be worth 40% of your final grade.**

**Exams:** Compared to many classes, exams will take up a relatively small portion of your grade. There will be two midterm exams, each worth 5% of your final grade, and one final exam, worth 10% of your grade. On the date of the midterms, you will not come to class. Instead, you will take the midterms online on Sakai. You may take the midterms at any time during the exam date, but once you begin the midterm, you will have only 80 minutes to complete it. Sakai will save all your work, and will automatically exit you from the exam after 80 minutes (or when the exam closes, whichever happens first). Like quizzes, midterms are open-book, open-note, but not open-neighbor. Mid-terms will be mostly multiple choice, with a few short answer questions.

Your final exam will occur in class at the time designated by the registrar. This exam will be short-answer/essay and will measure your ability to assess the quality of experiments conducted by your classmates and integrate the results from their studies. The difficulty of this exam will depend on the attention and participation of students over the course of the semester.