

## Syllabus

### Course Information:

Method and Theory in Psychology, 830:255:02

Class: M/W 2:05-3:25 PM ATG 219

Office hours: M/W 1-2 pm ATG 309

### Professor/TA Information:

Dr. Sarah R. Allred, [srallred@scarletmail.rutgers.edu](mailto:srallred@scarletmail.rutgers.edu) (Psych / ATG 309; WRI / 411 Cooper Ave)

Ryan Pletcher, [rap300@scarletmail.rutgers.edu](mailto:rap300@scarletmail.rutgers.edu)

### Course Overview:

Welcome to method and theory in 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. Writing will be integrated throughout this course, and you will apply your growing knowledge of methods through writing an APA-style research paper.

### Learning Objectives:

The learning objectives of this course are consistent with the goals of the department, the broad goals of general education at the university, and the specific goals of Writing-Intensive Courses at Rutgers-Camden (<https://advising.camden.rutgers.edu/general-education/gen-ed-categories/wri/>). Course activities are designed to assess these learning objectives. Upon successful completion of this course, you should be able to:

1. Explain the scientific method and apply it to psychological research.
2. Define and use the basic vocabulary of psychological research.
3. Design both non-experimental and experimental studies to answer questions about psychology.
4. Consume critically psychological research presented in the media.
5. Produce a well-reasoned, well-written research paper.

### Course Rules

#### Use your Rutgers Email

When I email the class, I use the list that the Registrar gives me. I cannot change this list, and it is your responsibility to either use your Rutgers email account or set up your Rutgers account so that you receive emails in your personal account.

#### Academic Integrity

You are expected to read and understand rules regarding academic misconduct. Ignorance of these rules will not be accepted as an excuse for academic misconduct. If you are found cheating on exams or plagiarizing on your paper, I will refer you to the Dean of Students office as I am required by Rutgers policy to do

([https://cm.maxient.com/reportingform.php?RutgersUniv&layout\\_id=2](https://cm.maxient.com/reportingform.php?RutgersUniv&layout_id=2)) Rutgers maintains a website with specific guidelines concerning academic integrity You are expected to read and understand all of these rules and the consequences of breaking them: <https://deanofstudents.camden.rutgers.edu/academic-integrity>.

### **Attendance**

Active discussion and in-class assignments are an important component of this course. Although I do not take attendance, almost every class will have an assignment during class period; you will not receive credit for these assignments if you are not in class to complete the work.

## **Course Logistics Overview:**

This class is a digitally-enhanced class, with many in-class activities and assignments completed digitally. **You SHOULD bring to class a smartphone, tablet or laptop computer capable of connecting to the internet.** Typically I will not print out assignments or handouts; instead, I will post them and link to them on the Sakai site for the class. If this presents a problem please see me during the first week of class to make alternate arrangements.

For each new topic, I will (usually) assign a brief reading before class. To ensure that you complete the reading, you will complete a reading quiz before class. On most days, class will consist of brief periods of lecture mixed with in-class assignments and discussion.

Everything you need for this course will be listed on the Sakai site. Each class period has a Lessons page that will describe what we will cover in class as well as links to tests, quizzes, and assignments. Each class period will have a sections entitled: Before class, During class, and After class.

On the first day of class, you will be divided into teams. Most classwork will involve the opportunity to work with your teams, but **you will be graded on the work that you turn in.**

## **Course Materials:**

### **Required**

1. **Textbook.** Research Methods in Psychology, 3rd American Edition, by Cutter et al. This is a FREE textbook available to read online, or download as a pdf, here: <https://open.umn.edu/opentextbooks/textbooks/research-methods-in-psychology-3rd-american-edition>.

2. **Class information.** Information about assignments and due dates will always be posted on that day'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.

### **Advisable**

3. **Smartphone, tablet (such as an iPad) or laptop computer.** Almost every class will have work to be turned in

electronically, and it will be easiest for you to do this by turning it in during class on your device. Please see me as soon as possible if you cannot regularly bring an internet capable device to class so I can work with you to make arrangements.

## Grading Overview:

Grading is based on the premise that frequent, low-stakes assessment aids learning much better than infrequent, high-stakes assessment. I expect you to come to class having read the material, and I expect you to be prepared to apply that material in class. In return for this up-front effort on your part, the plurality of your grade will come from daily assignments (rather than exams), on which you should have ample opportunity to achieve full credit.

My policy is that there is no makeup work after the fact; all due dates are posted on Sakai in advance. If you know about a conflict and talk to me **at least one week in advance** of the due date, I will work to make alternative arrangements.

There are **1000** points possible in this class. Overall, grades will be divided into 5 parts:

(1) **Reading and Review Quizzes:** For most chapters, a **reading** quiz is due before class. This quiz will cover the assigned reading material. Quizzes are multiple choice, on Sakai, and are due **before** class. The goal of these quizzes is to prepare you to apply the material in class. The quizzes are open book, open note, open friend, and open internet. Most quizzes allow multiple submissions. These quizzes are worth 10 points each.

Before each exam there will be a **review quiz** that will be taken in class to help you prepare for the exam. These are worth 10 points. These are open book, open note, open teacher, open classmate.

**130 points (13 quizzes x 10 points each).**

(2) **In-class Assignments:** Nearly every class period will have some assignment that you are expected to complete during class. The assignments will be posted on Sakai, and they will be due electronically before the next class period. (Although they are not due until the next class period, you should be able to finish and submit these during class time). Unless otherwise noted, you are encouraged to work on these assignments with your team, although each student will be graded for the work they submit. Unless otherwise noted, you will receive full credit for turning in the completed assignment. These assignments are noted as "CW" assignments.

**There are no makeup in-class assignments.** You can drop your two lowest.

210 points (23 assignments x 10 points each, drop 2 lowest).

(3) **Paper:** Over the course of the semester, you will write a research paper. You will receive extensive detail about the research paper in another document. Multiple assignments will be included in your paper grade (including data collection, study design, peer-review, and rough drafts). The final version of your paper, due in lieu of the final exam, will be worth 120 points. Over the course of the semester, another 12 assignments (P1-P12) will lead up to the final paper, so that what you submit at the end is a revised version of previous assignments that you have already

completed.

**310 points** (Final paper = 110 points , P assignments (P1-P13) = 200 points).

(4) **Exams.** There will be three non-cumulative exams. Dates are noted on the calendar. Each exam will be open-book, open-note, and will be taken online through Sakai. It will be open for (at least) a 2 day period, with a time limit of the normal class period. Because of the flexibility in the exams, there will be no makeup exams provided. If you are concerned about your connectivity, take the exam in the library. If you have a technology glitch, contact me IMMEDIATELY with a screen shot of the issue. (RU-IT can document that you have logged into Sakai, even if you are kicked out; the system records every answer as you take the exam.) If you have an issue that prevents you from taking the exam online, you must contact me at least one week before the exam date to make alternate arrangements to take a paper version of the exam. Because we do so much writing in the class, exams will be primarily multiple-choice.

**300 points (3 exams x 100 points for each exam)**

(5) **Participate as a Research Subject:** To promote a better understanding of psychological research from the perspective of a participant, you are required to participate in human subjects research conducted by the Department of Psychology at Rutgers-Camden (to sign up, go to: <https://rutgerscamden.sona-systems.com/default.aspx?logout=Y>). You must participate in 2 credit hours of research studies, which usually amounts to two separate studies. Further details can be found on the Participate as a Research Subject page and will be discussed in class. ~~You must also write a short, one-page reflection paper (full credit for completion). Note: it is strongly encouraged to complete these by the second exam.~~ **Alternative activity:** If you choose not to participate in human subjects research, the designated alternative activity consists of writing a paper on some aspect of the psychological research process associated with a psychology-related topic (your topic must receive prior approval by me). Your paper must be 5 pages in length in APA style (in addition to a title page and reference list). **The deadline to complete these studies is May 6th**, the last day of class, but it is strongly recommended that you do the studies before then. Sometimes there are only a few studies available at the end of the semester.

Either version of this assignment will account for 5% of your overall grade (50 points) and must be completed by the beginning of class **Wednesday, May 1**. If you do not complete either of these assignments, you will receive 0 points (no late assignments will be accepted). You will receive full credit (50 points) for completing this requirement.

**50 points (25 points per credit x 2 = 50 points).**

**NOTE: Writing-Intensive courses are required to have 40% of the points come from writing assignments (400 points). The astute observer will notice that the Paper category above is 310 points. To reach the 400, I include 90 points from the CW assignments. These writing-based assignments will be designated as such throughout the semester.**