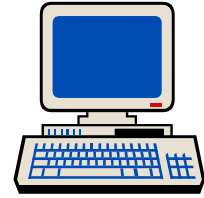
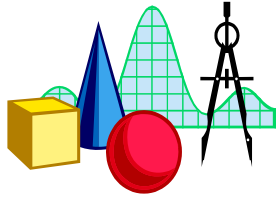


Personality Research Lab

PSY U616

Northeastern University
Fall 2005



2:50-4:30 Monday and Wednesday

Instructor: Prof. Richard Gramzow
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Office hours: by appointment
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Course Description

Course Website: There is no official text for this course. The website on Blackboard has access to an online textbook that will help you with the take-home assignments. The link to the text is in the Research Methods folder under External Links. You can log onto Blackboard through MyNeu or at blackboard.neu.edu. This course is listed as **Personality Lab – Gramzow – Fall 2005**. If you would like an actual textbook, a list of appropriate books is appended at the end of this syllabus.

Prerequisites: Statistics and Personality 1 must be completed. Because of the high demand for this course, I will check that each student enrolled has satisfied these requirements.

This course will introduce you to the basic concepts, logic, and procedures underlying research on personality and individual differences. You will gain hands-on experience with all phases of the research process. These phases include developing hypotheses, surveying the literature, collecting and analyzing data, and reporting results.

For psychology majors, lab courses are probably the most labor-intensive in the curriculum. During the semester, you will write three reports (approximately 15 pages each). The first report will be based on a personality measure that we develop in class. The second report will be based on a research project that you develop in small groups. The third report will be a research proposal that you develop individually. Each report will require a lot of work. It will not be possible to write these reports in one sitting. There also will be five take-home tasks (described below). Finally, you will give a 5-min presentation on your research proposal. There will be no formal exams.

Despite the hard work, many students consider labs to be among the most rewarding courses they take in psychology. This is true especially for students who proceed to graduate school, where sound research skills are crucial. Even those of you with other career goals should benefit from a more thorough understanding of the logic underlying this type of research. At the very least, you will gain expertise that will allow you to evaluate studies that are reported in the media.

I enjoy teaching this course because it truly is practice-oriented. You will actually do things, rather than passively learn abstract concepts and theories. I will try to keep the length of lectures to a minimum, although some material will require systematic presentation.

Specific Course Objectives

By the end of this course you will be able to:

- Understand research design issues (e.g., validity, reliability, random assignment, random sampling)
- Describe the strengths and limitations of different research methodologies (e.g., experimental vs. correlational methods, within-subjects vs. between-subjects designs)
- Translate abstract ideas into testable research hypotheses
- Analyze experimental and correlational data, using both descriptive and inferential statistics
- Critique published research reports
- Write research reports in the style outlined by the American Psychological Association (APA)

Class Policies

Paper Deadlines and Late Policy: All assignments are due at the beginning of class on the day specified in the course calendar. **No late papers will be accepted without prior approval.**

Take-home tasks: There will be no quizzes or exams. However, there will be five take-home tasks. These tasks are designed to facilitate your understanding of the material. Completing the tasks should enable you to be an active discussant during class. I will provide a detailed description of each task before it is due. For now, here’s a list of the general topic associated with each:

- Take-Home 1: Literature Search
- Take-Home 2: Critique of Correlational Study – Part 1
- Take-Home 3: Critique of Correlational Study – Part 2
- Take-Home 4: Critique of Experimental Study – Part 1
- Take-Home 5: Critique of Experimental Study – Part 2

Academic Integrity: Feel free to work together on your papers and take-home tasks. You will find it useful to confirm your logic, results, and formatting with classmates. That being said, ***all of your writing must be your own work***. It is not acceptable to borrow a paper from a classmate and simply rephrase the content. Such actions represent academic dishonesty. You will receive a failing grade for the course and be referred to the appropriate University disciplinary committee. If you have a question about what constitutes plagiarism, ask me (Prof. Gramzow).

Grades

| <u>Grade Source</u> | <u>Points</u> | <u>Grading Scale</u> | |
|---------------------|---------------|----------------------|-------------|
| Take-Home Tasks (5) | 50 | 93-100% = A | 73-76% = C |
| APA Report #1 | 50 | 90-92% = A- | 70-72% = C- |
| APA Report #2 | 60 | 87-89% = B+ | 67-69% = D+ |
| Proposal | 30 | 83-86% = B | 63-66% = D |
| Presentation | 10 | 80-82% = B- | 60-62% = D- |
| TOTAL | 200 | 77-79% = C+ | < 60% = F |

Course Calendar

| Day / Date | Topics and Activities | Assignment Due |
|--------------|--|----------------|
| Wed / Sep 7 | Intro and Course Overview | |
| Mon / Sep 12 | <i>Developing a Personality Measure</i> Study 1: A personality scale | |
| Wed / Sep 14 | <i>Developing a Personality Measure</i> Measurement Study 1: Choosing the construct | Take-Home 1 |
| Mon / Sep 19 | <i>Developing a Personality Measure</i> Reliability and Construct Validity Study 1: Creating the measure | Take-Home 2 |
| Wed / Sep 21 | <i>Developing a Personality Measure</i> Statistics Review Study 1: Making predictions | Take-Home 3 |
| Mon / Sep 26 | <i>Developing a Personality Measure</i> APA Style: I Study 1: Data-collection and entry plan | |
| Wed / Sep 28 | <i>Developing a Personality Measure</i> Data Analysis: I | |
| Mon / Oct 3 | <i>Developing a Personality Measure</i> Data Analysis: II | |
| Wed / Oct 5 | <i>Developing a Personality Measure</i> APA Style: II Unresolved issues | |
| Mon / Oct 10 | No Class - Columbus Day | |
| Wed / Oct 12 | <i>Conducting an Experiment</i> | Report 1 |
| Mon / Oct 17 | <i>Conducting an Experiment</i> Independent and Dependent Variables Groups: Planning experiment | Take-Home 4 |
| Wed / Oct 19 | <i>Conducting an Experiment</i> Internal and External Validity Groups: Further planning | Take-Home 5 |
| Mon / Oct 24 | <i>Conducting an Experiment</i> Interaction Patterns Groups: Specifying predictions | |
| Wed / Oct 26 | <i>Conducting an Experiment</i> Statistics Review Groups: Data-collection and entry plan | |
| Mon / Oct 31 | <i>Conducting an Experiment</i> Data Analysis | |
| Wed / Nov 2 | <i>Conducting an Experiment</i> Interpreting Results | |
| Mon / Nov 7 | <i>Conducting an Experiment</i> Writing it up Results | |
| Wed / Nov 9 | <i>Conducting an Experiment</i> Unresolved Issues | |

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|--------------|---|--------------|
| Mon / Nov 14 | <i>Proposing Research</i> Thinking Ahead Reading the Literature | |
| Wed / Nov 16 | <i>Proposing Research</i> What's My Idea? | |
| Mon / Nov 21 | <i>Proposing Research</i> How Do I Test It? | Report 2 |
| Wed / Nov 23 | No Class – Thanksgiving | |
| Mon / Nov 28 | <i>Proposing Research</i> Finalizing Proposal | |
| Wed / Nov 30 | <i>Proposing Research</i> Unresolved Issues Presentation Guidelines | |
| Mon / Dec 5 | <i>Presentations</i> | |
| Wed / Dec 7 | <i>More Presentations</i> | |
| Mon / Dec 12 | No Class – Finals Week | Proposal Due |

Research Methods Texts (Apparently) Available in Snell Library

- A practical guide to conducting empirical research / R. Barker Bausell. BF76.5 .B388 1986.
- Research design and methods: a process approach / Kenneth S. Bordens, Bruce B. Abbott. BF76.5 .B67 1988.
- Doing quantitative psychological research: from design to report / David Clark-Carter. BF76.5 .C53 1997.
- Research methods and statistics in psychology / Hugh Coolican. BF76.5 .C664 1990.
- Designing and conducting behavioral research / Clifford J. Drew, Michael L. Hardman. BF76.5 .D68 1985.
- Thinking about research: methods and tactics of the behavioral scientist / Francis T. Durso, Roger L. Mellgren. BF76.5 .D87 1989.
- Doing psychological research: gathering and analysing data / Nicky Hayes. BF76.5 .H39 2000.
- Doing psychological research / Joseph Horvat, Stephen Davis. BF76.5 .H67 1998.
- Foundations of behavioral research / Fred N. Kerlinger. BF76.5 .K4 1986.
- Psychological research methods: a conceptual approach / Harold O. Kiess, Douglas W. Bloomquist. BF76.5 .K45 1985.
- Introduction to behavioral research methods / Mark R. Leary. BF76.5 .L39 1995.
- Measuring behaviour: an introductory guide / Paul Martin, Patrick Bateson. BF76.5 .M35 1993.
- Understanding and conducting research: applications in education and the behavioral sciences / Emanuel J. Mason, William J. Bramble. BF76.5 .M37 1989.
- Critical thinking about research: psychology and related fields / Julian Meltzoff. BF76.5 .M45 1998.
- Research design explained / Mark Mitchell, Janina Jolley. BF76.5 .M57 2000.
- Conducting research in psychology: measuring the weight of smoke. BF76.5 .P34 1999.
- Psychological research: innovative methods and strategies / John Haworth. BF76.5 .P79 1996.
- Beginning behavioral research: a conceptual primer / Ralph L. Rosnow, Robert Rosenthal. BF76.5 .R64 1996.
- Exploring research / Neil J. Salkind. BF76.5 .S24 1994.
- Introducing research and data in psychology: a guide to methods and analysis / Ann Searle. BF76.5 .S38 1999.
- Research methods in psychology / John J. Shaughnessy, Eugene B. Zechmeister. BF76.5 .S46 1985.
- The psychologist as detective: an introduction to conducting research in psychology / Randolph A. Smith, Stephen F. Davis. BF76.5 .S54 2001.
- Research methods for the behavioral sciences / Charles Stangor. BF76.5 .S66 1998.
- How to think straight about psychology / Keith E. Stanovich. BF76.5 .S68 1998.
- Ten steps to behavioral research / Thomas E. Whalen. BF76.5 .W47 1989.
- Essentials of research methods in psychology / Jeanne S. Zechmeister, Eugene B. Zechmeister, John J. Shaughnessy. BF76.5 .Z42 2001.