

PSYC 2310 - Experimental Methods & Statistics

Syllabus

Fall 2009 Monday & Thursday 2:00 pm - 3:50pm

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Office Hours: 12:00 noon - 1:30pm Monday & Thursday, and by appointment

Course Description:

This course provides an introduction to basic methods of psychological research and the use of written statistics to interpret psychological data. Students participate in several experiments and prepare written reports. Topics include experimental design, data collection and analysis, and communication of results.

Text:

- Required: Field, A. (2009). *Discovering Statistics Using SPSS*. 3/E. London: Sage Publications. ISBN: 978-1-84787-906-6
- Recommended: McGrath, R.E. (1997). *Understanding Statistics: A Research Perspective*. New York: Longman. ISBN: 0-673-99058-3

Requirements and Grading:

- Exams - We will have two in-class exams during the semester. The format of the exams will be varied and will include multiple-choice, true-false, matching, and short-answer items. Students will also be expected to solve computer-based exercises that test their knowledge of statistical concepts and procedures.
- Problem Sets - Students will be assigned 5 take-home problem sets. Each problem set is comprised of one or more "word problems" and an accompanying data set(s). Students will analyze the data from the problem sets using SPSS (Statistical Package for the Social Sciences) and then write-up and submit the results in APA (American Psychological Association) format.
- Final Project - A research proposal including title, abstract, introduction, method, anticipated results, and discussion sections will be due by 5 p.m. on Monday, December 7th, 2009. A formal PowerPoint presentation of the proposal is also required during the last week of classes. More details concerning this requirement will be discussed in class.

Attendance Policy:

Students will be expected to attend every class meeting. Students who choose to miss class are still responsible for the material covered in lecture and any assignments made during their absence. Note again that some material covered in class will not be in the lecture notes or text, so attendance is important to performance on the exams. When work is missed because of an excused absence, make-up will be by the class meeting following the missed session unless previously arranged with the instructor. Students

anticipating missing class because of an excused academic-related activity are expected to complete work before the due date. Some of the excuses that are not considered legitimate include, but are not limited to: (1) ride leaving early or only available flight, etc., (2) big party or other social event, (3) other exam on same date, (4) did not know of the assignment, and (5) forgot the exam or assignment due date. Attendance during the exams is mandatory.

Grading : A summary of the percentages assigned to each of the graded components appears below.

- Exams: Exam 1 25% Exam 2 25%
- Problem Sets: 5 @ 5% 25%
- Final Project: 25%
- TOTAL 100%

Academic Honesty:

Student relationships are built on mutual respect and trust. Students must be able to trust that their teachers have made responsible decisions about the structure and content of the course and that they are conscientiously making their best effort to help students learn. Teachers must be able to trust that students do their work conscientiously and honestly making their best effort to learn. Acts that violate this mutual respect and trust undermine the educational process. They counteract our very reason for being here at Rensselaer and will not be tolerated. Any student who engages in any form of academic dishonesty will receive an F in this course and will be reported to the Dean of Students for further disciplinary action. The Rensselaer Handbook defines various forms of Academic Dishonesty and procedures for responding to them. All of these forms are violations of trust between students and teachers. Please familiarize yourself with this portion of the handbook.