Psychology 301 – Research Design and Methodology  
SUMMER 2007 Syllabus

Instructor: Chris Ralston  
Office: W283 Lagomarcino Hall  
Phone: 294-8794  
Email: cralston@iastate.edu (best option)

Class Hours: MTWRF: 11:00-12:00  
Office Hours: T, W, R: 12:00-1:00

Required Textbook:


Required Equipment:
A calculator capable of calculating exponents, roots, and logarithms. A calculator with statistics functions would be helpful, but not necessary. Please bring this calculator to class every day.

Course Description and Purpose:
“Psychological science is the antidote to the pitfalls of unaided intuition” (Myers, 1997; pp. 111). The main purpose of this course is to help students to learn to think like a psychological researcher. In doing so, students are armed with the tools necessary to become critical consumers of the research information found throughout all other psychological courses. To accomplish this purpose, students will be exposed to the philosophy of science, methods for designing research, strategies for making sense of data (e.g., statistics), guidelines for presenting results, and ethical constraints that we all must abide by as members of the psychological community.

Course Materials on the Web:
All course materials provided by the instructor, including copies of PowerPoint presentations, lecture outlines, assignments, and help sheets, can be found on the WebCT. This website can be accessed using all campus computers and by off campus computers with Internet access. It is the individual student’s responsibility to access this website prior to class in order to obtain lecture outlines if he or she chooses to use them in class.

Grading:
Grades will be calculated on the basis of points accrued from ten (10) in-class assignments, three (3) open-book/open note statistics quizzes, and two (2) closed-book tests. The total points for the assignments will be 400 possible points for the semester. See below for point breakdown. No extra credit will be available. Letter grades correspond to the following earned point totals:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Letter</th>
<th>Lowest Points</th>
<th>Highest Points</th>
<th>Lowest Percent</th>
<th>Highest Percent</th>
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<tr>
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<td>100.00%</td>
<td>374</td>
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<tr>
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<tr>
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<tr>
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<td>D</td>
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<tr>
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<td>53.49%</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>213.99</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Component | Points | % of Total
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Exams – Two (2) worth 100 points each | 200 | 50.0%
Quizzes – Three (3) worth 50 points each | 150 | 37.5%
Assignments – Ten (10) worth 5 points each | 50 | 12.5%

***The instructor reserves the right to change the amount and point values for all Exams, Quizzes, and Assignments.
Assignments
From time to time, we will devote class time to the completion of assignments. The reason for completing assignments in class is to allow students easy access to the instructor for questions and clarification. Consequently, there is no reason that students should score less than perfectly on these assignments. If a student misses a day in which an assignment was completed, that student is still required to complete the assignment on her or his own time. The assignment will be due to the instructor on the day of her or his return, with a one point deduction for every day that the assignment is late.

Quiz Format
The three quizzes will be held during regular class times and last approximately one hour. The quizzes will cover statistical analysis of data sets and application of concepts presented in both lecture and readings. During the quizzes, students may use calculator, books, and notes. Students may not use a computer or another student’s work to complete the quiz.

Exam Format
The two exams will be held during regular class hours and last approximately one hour. The first exam will take place at the midpoint of the semester, and the second exam will take place during the last class period. Both exams will consist of between 40 and 45 multiple-choice questions, each worth two points, and one or two short answer questions that will comprise the remaining points. Students may not use notes, books, calculators, other electronic devices, or another student’s work to complete the tests.

Course Expectations for Success and General Policies:

General
1) A large part of this course will require students to familiarize themselves with statistical analysis. Consequently, many students may feel slightly overwhelmed to extreme dread at the mere mention of the word “statistics.” I want you to know that this is very normal. I also want you to know that I believe you can succeed in this course, even if you feel apprehensive about statistics at the outset. However, in order for me to help you succeed, it is your responsibility to ask questions or seek help whenever something does not make sense. I am not omniscient, but I am compassionate. I will help you to understand the material, provided you let me know when something is not clear. So, please ask questions.

Textbook
2) Research Methods and Design is a broad and comprehensive course. Not all information contained in the text will be covered in class. However, any and all information found there is free game for discussions, tests, and assignments. Thus, it is your, the student’s, responsibility to read, take notes on, study, and ask questions on any information that you do not understand. Any questions that you may have can be addressed either in class or by meeting with the instructor during office hours.

Attendance and In-Class Behavior
3) The class format will be a mixture of lecture, demonstration, and discussion. Some material is best presented via lecture; however, because discussion can be used to help students critically evaluate and internalize the information presented, discussion will be initiated during each class period. Because discussions require active participation all members of the class, it is imperative that all students come to class prepared to discuss the assigned material.
4) Ask questions whenever they arise. I will do my best to answer them. Remember that my goal is to help everyone succeed. If you have a question, it is likely that someone else has the same question. So, please ask.
5) In order to succeed, one needs to attend every class, as much material not presented in the book will be covered in lecture. Furthermore, any and all material presented in class will be fair game for tests and quizzes.
   a. Planned Absences and Absences due to Extenuating Circumstances:
      i. If you plan to be gone for more than two class periods (e.g., for vacation), please consider taking this class at another time. With such a condensed Summer session, the most successful students will be those who attend every class period.
      ii. It is recognized, however, that extenuating circumstances may prevent you from attending a given class (e.g., hospitalization, or family emergency, alien abduction, etc.). In those instances an absence may be excused; however, it is the student’s responsibility to contact the instructor in advance to set up a time
when he or she may make up that particular test or turn in an assignment. If you know in advance that you will not be in attendance on the day of a quiz or test, it is expected that you will take the quiz or test prior to the scheduled time and/or turn in the assignment prior to your departure. If a student misses a day in which an assignment was completed, that student is still required to complete the assignment on her or his own time. The assignment will be due to the instructor on the day of her or his return, with a one point deduction for every day that the assignment is late. Verification may be requested for the absence to be considered excused.

iii. If it is absolutely not possible to contact the instructor in advance to make up the quiz or test prior to the scheduled time and the absence would be considered “excused,” you will be allowed to make up the test during the next available office hour (see above). If a make-up exam is scheduled and missed without prior notification, you will be penalized by lowering that test score by 10% of the total possible points. You will only be allowed to make-up one test unless extenuating circumstances present themselves (e.g. family emergency; multiple, prescheduled extracurricular events; alien abductions lasting longer than 24 hours).

iv. Lastly, the final test will be given on the scheduled date and time. No early examinations will be given. So, make travel arrangements accordingly.

b. Unexcused Absences: Unexcused absences (e.g., “I forgot,” “I didn’t feel like coming,” “I wasn’t prepared”) on a day in which there is a quiz, test, or assignment will result in a zero on that or test or assignment.

6) I promise to start and end every class on time. That is one of the many obligations I have to you. In turn, I expect you to be in your seats and ready to learn by the start time of every class. Habitual tardiness will not be tolerated. If you anticipate needing to leave class early on any day, I would also ask that you choose a seat that will allow you to do so without disturbing your fellow students.

7) Please remember to turn off all cell phones, pagers, or other noise making devices during class. Setting your device to “buzz” will not suffice, as the buzz can be as distracting to others, as an actual ring.

8) Please refrain from sleeping, reading newspapers, or surfing the Internet on your computer during class. Anyone caught doing so will be asked to leave the class for that day.

Office Hours
9) Students having difficulty understanding any material in the lectures or text or in need of guidance in the class are encouraged to see the instructor either during office hours or during a scheduled appointment for further clarification or direction. To schedule an appointment feel free to either contact the instructor by phone or by email. Email is the preferred method and will likely get you a quicker and more satisfactory response pertaining to a meeting time. Phone numbers and email addresses can be found at the top of the first page. If your question is sufficiently short and can be answered in one or two sentences, email can be used to ask the question. However, if your question requires more lengthy clarification or elaboration, please schedule a meeting time.

Grievance Policy
10) The instructor is more than happy to discuss student’s standing in the class during regularly scheduled office hours or at other times scheduled by appointment. If a student feels that a grade is unwarranted or if the student wishes to try to persuade the instructor that an answer on a test, quiz, or assignment should be counted as correct when marked incorrect, the student may do so by first writing a paragraph about why they think that he or she believes the instructor should change the grade or the mark. This paragraph must be presented to the instructor in hardcopy at least one hour before meeting with the instructor so that he may have the appropriate test or quiz available for discussion.

Academic Honesty
11) This class will follow the Academic Honesty policy presented in the Student Information Handbook. A copy of this document can be downloaded at the following address, http://www.dso.iastate.edu/handbook/toc.htm.

Disability Accommodation Policy
12) Iowa State University complies with the American with Disabilities Act and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act. Any student who may require an accommodation under such provisions should contact the instructor as soon as possible and no later than the end of the first week of class or as soon as you become aware. Those seeking accommodations based on disabilities should obtain a Student Academic Accommodation Request (SAAR) form from the Disability Resources (DR) office (515-294-6624). DR is located on the main floor of the Student Services Building, Room 1076.