PSYCH 491: RESEARCH PRACTICUM
Cross Social Self and Culture Laboratory
Fall 2015

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Lab Information

- Cross Lab – Science I, room 52; lab phone # 294-3993; crosslab@iastate.edu
- Computer Assistance – IT service: https://www.it.iastate.edu/

Welcome to the Cross Lab!

- Our goal is to get you involved in numerous aspects of the research process – everything from idea generation and experiment design to assistance with data coding and analysis!
- We value your ideas and input, and we hope that you will feel free to offer suggestions throughout the semester.

Textbooks

- There is no required textbook for this class.
- When we would like you to read something (such as articles, manuscripts, or chapters for discussion), electronic or hard copies will be provided.

Readings (can be downloaded from Blackboard)


Assignments

Your primary assignment is to be in the lab when scheduled, to be conscientious in data collection, data entry, and the other tasks we ask of you, and to learn as much as you can about conducting research in psychology. **Even if you don’t have any lab tasks, you have to be in the lab during your timeslots. We may need your help for urgent tasks.**

We do our best to arrange **lab meetings** when everyone can come, and we expect everyone who is able to attend the meetings. These are valuable opportunities to ask questions, to learn more about research, and to get to know the other research assistants.

Everyone will be asked to **present on a research article** during the lab meeting. Details will be announced in the first meeting.

Please **check your email daily** for emails from graduate students about your lab responsibilities or lab meeting assignments. There are no exams in this class.

Please be sure to consult the schedule (see below) for upcoming lab meeting topics.
Grading

• Grades will be based on several aspects of your performance. Research assistants, who are consistently on time, complete lab tasks and assignments, actively participate at lab meetings, and maintain a positive attitude toward lab work will receive an A.

• Typically, most research assistants receive an A; however, we may lower grades due to the following reasons:
  - Failure to show up or being late for a lab session or a lab meeting without notifying the graduate assistants in advance
  - Failure to complete the Human Subjects Training by the deadline
  - Failure to respond to our emails regularly regarding lab issues
  - Do not conduct the experiment or complete the assigned tasks in a responsible and professional manner
  - Do not follow lab rules

Course Schedule

Week 2  Lab meeting 1: Introduction; Lab Overview; Syllabus Review (Ben)
Week 4  Lab meeting 2: Ethics and Deception (Ben)
Week 6  Lab meeting 3: Article presentation
Week 8  Lab meeting 4: Article presentation
Week 10 Lab meeting 5: Article presentation
Week 12 Lab meeting 6: Graduate School (Ben)
Week 14 Lab meeting 7: Research presentation (Ben & Ceren)
Week 15 Lab meeting 8: LAB PARTY!

LAB PROCEDURES

Human Subjects Training

• All research assistants who have never completed the online Human Subjects Training MUST do so before running any experiments in the lab. This training is straightforward and can be completed online. If you have already completed this training for this or another researcher’s lab, let Ben/Ceren know. Please go to this website for training: http://phrp.nihtraining.com/users/login.php.

• Once you have completed the training, please get a PDF version of the certification you receive at the end of the test and email it to Ben; we need to file it with the IRB Office.

• THIS MUST BE COMPLETED BY THE SECOND WEEK. Failure to complete this training in a timely fashion (i.e., by the deadline!) may result in deductions to your grade.

Keys

• Lab keys will be in a locked key box hanging outside the lab. You will be given the combination to unlock the box. Please return the key to the box after you use it. Also, there is an extra key in Ben’s mailbox.

• Please lock lab door whenever there is no one in the lab, even if you just go out for a few minutes.

Lab Coats

• All research assistants will wear a white lab coat and name tag (provided) while running experimental sessions. Lab coats will be hanging up on the back wall near the filing cabinet.

• Please take care to not harm the lab coats.
AC & Dehumidifier

- Please keep the AC and the dehumidifier on (even when you leave the lab), especially on hot days. We don’t want to get mold in the lab (happened before and was not fun).
- Please empty the dehumidifier when it’s full. You can take the water bucket to one of the restrooms.

Schedules

- The lab schedule will be sent to you through email and posted on blackboard.
- Check your assigned time.
- If you must miss your assigned time in the lab, find a replacement (and let Ben know about the change). Contact Ben after your efforts to find someone else have failed (24 hour notice). If you need to change your schedule permanently, let Ben know ASAP.
- You need to make up your missed hours. Discuss with Ben within 1 week that you miss a lab session.
- In addition, we have a Journal book (soft copy on blackboard) for all of you. You are asked to write down:
  - Date, time you stay in the lab: when you come and when you leave
  - Work you have done in the lab hours
  - Other things that you think should be recorded
- You will also have to clean the lab following a cleaning schedule. Details will be mentioned at the first meeting.

A Typical Day Running in the Lab

Your duty is to conduct our studies in a professional (and reliable!) manner

- **Arrive early**: Come early enough to prepare so participants don’t have to wait. If your scheduled lab time is a problem (i.e., you can’t make it all the way across campus AND set up the study in time) please let Ben or Ceren know so we can make accommodations in the schedule.
- **Check SONA and email**: Sign-ups for experiments are done through the SONA scheduling system; you will be trained on how to use it, log in, award credit, etc. Write down names of participants on the log sheet. Sometimes files will be sent through email.
- **Prep lab**: In the lab, make sure everything is ready for participants. This includes:
  - Look professional and in charge. Remember to wear the white lab coat at every session.
  - Make sure the lab looks neat – push in the chairs, pick up garbage, etc.
  - Setting up the cubicles with pencils, consent forms, and receipt card
  - Setting up computers BEFORE participants arrive
- **Training and Procedure**: It is imperative that you know how to run the study before participants arrive. For every study you run, you will receive training. Someone will be with you during your first session to walk you through it.
  - Research participants are volunteers, and we want them to continue to participate. Please treat them with respect and thank them for their participation.
  - Keep the lab quiet if there are participants in the lab. Even if there’s no participant, make sure the lab is not too noisy for working.
- **Experiment Logs and Protocols**: Each experiment will have a log and protocol. On the log (sometimes electronic version will be used), we record the names of participants, and any notes regarding the studies.
  - For example, if someone is drunk or falls asleep, write it down
  - If someone is suspicious of our study, write it down
  - If someone cancels or does not show up, write it down
  - Essentially, anything that seems weird and that could affect the participant’s data should be recorded (i.e., a participant started crying during the session)
- **Write down problems** that come up on the log sheet so that we can clean up the data easily.
• Before leaving the lab, write down your daily activity in the Journal.

• **Receipt Cards:** Each participant will receive a receipt card (in yellow) to prove they participated in our study. If we are running low, please contact Ben and he will get more for you.
  
  To complete the receipt card:
  
  o Write the experiment number and number of credits IN INK
  
  o Initial the card at the bottom
  
  o We typically give them the cards at the end of the study. If participants ask what to do with the card, tell them to keep it as a receipt of their participation

• **When leaving the lab:** Make sure things are set up for the next person and that the lab is tidy.
  
  o If you are the last person to run that day, please shut down the computers, turn off the fans, and turn off the lights
  
  o Make sure you return keys to the key holder and lock it.

• **ASK QUESTIONS!!** It is better to ask many questions to clarify than to not ask and do something wrong.

• **NO SHOWS:** Occasionally, participants will sign up and not show up. **Be sure to indicate that the student is a “no show” in SONA so that they do not get credit for the study.**

  If there are no participants in your session, please remain in the lab. It is possible that Dr. Cross or one of the graduate students will have something for you to work on. When not running participants:
  
  o Work on data entry, coding, calling...whatever tasks need to be done. Typically, one of the graduate students will leave a note with what needs to get done, or they will stop in the lab
  
  o Check your emails to see if anything was left for you
  
  o Contact graduate students to see if any other work needed to be done
  
  o Do your own course-related work if there is no lab-related work

**If You Miss Your Session…**

• This should **NOT** happen.

• However, sometimes there are emergencies. **Let Dr. Cross and a graduate student know ASAP.**

  If you cannot get hold of anyone, you can go to SONA and cancel your session.

• If you are sick the night before your session, please let one of the graduate students know if you don’t think you are going to make it the next day. **The more notice, the better!**

• Being punctual and reliable are perhaps the most important qualities of a research assistant. Tardiness is not tolerated. Your grade depends on it – being late will result in decreases in your grade.

  Furthermore, failure to show up for your lab hours will result in decrease in your grade.

• Individuals who are consistently not on time or who fail to show up for their assigned hours may be removed from the Cross lab.

**Other Information**

• **Computer safety:** Please do not use the computers for personal business. Please do not download files from the internet or surf on unsafe websites. Generally, please only use the lab computers for lab related use. If you have time to work on homework, use your own laptop.

• **Do not print non-lab related materials on the lab printer.** The printer is for lab use only.

• Do not make long distance personal calls, or long personal local calls in the lab.

• If a participant calls, write down the time and date.

• Please leave ALL data in the lab.

• Please don’t talk about the studies or data outside the lab. We do not want potential participants to find out too much about the studies. All participant data is strictly confidential. Anyone discovered discussing a participant’s responses outside the lab will be dismissed.

• Our main goal is to make sure participants “run cleanly” through our studies.
• It is important to keep the lab neat, organized, and well-labeled.
• Different people will be assigned to different tasks (i.e., data entry, coding). We want you to have a well-rounded experience by the end of the semester.
• The lab is the domain of whoever is running the study. If you need to hang out for a short while, feel free to use one of the cubicles, but RAs should never get in the way of an experiment in session or other lab work. Basically, our research lab is a work place. We expect you to behave professionally during your lab sessions and while others are doing lab work.

   Enjoy Your Time in the Lab!!!