Foundations of Psychological Research  
PSY 201/03992  
Summer 2017/4 W 1
4 Credits
M/T/W/TH 6:30 pm - 10:00 pm, 2S 221
Instructor: Asghar Sajadian, Ph.D.
E-mail: asghar.sajadian@csi.cuny.edu
Office Hrs: M/T 5:30 pm - 6:30 pm

Course Description
An introduction to the methods of psychological research. Comparison, evaluation, and illustration of research methods such as survey, case study, questionnaire, interview, experiential, correlational, and experimental using a broad range of psychological topics such as physiological, developmental, learning, perception, personality, social, clinical, and industrial. Research design, data presentation and analysis, relation of data and theory, and ethical problems in research will be discussed. Majors should take the course within their first 12 credits in psychology.

Prerequisites: Minimum grade of C in PSY 100 and a minimum grade of C in MTH 123 or higher (except MTH 217/MTH 218). Students will be allowed to repeat the courses if necessary.

Student Learning Outcomes
By the end of the course, students will be able to
1) develop critical thinking and apply the scientific method to solve problems related to human behavior and mental processes
2) understand the important aspects of conducting research in psychology
3) use the APA format required for reporting psychological research

Required textbook:
ISBN 13: 9780205535064

Recommended text:

Course requirements and Grading
All students are required to attend class, participate in discussions, and read the assigned material before class.

The overall assessment will consist of the following elements:

Three Exams ... ... ... ... 60%
Three assignments ... ... ... ... 40%
Total: ... ... ... ... ... 100%

As mentioned above, there will be three exams given during the semester. Each will count for 20% of your final grade. Exams will cover information from the textbook, class lectures, discussions, handouts, linked internet sites and class videos. Do not miss the exams. There will
There will be no make-up tests given after the date of the exam, unless there is a legitimate reason (subject to verification) for a student to miss an exam.

Exam Dates:

Exam 1 ... ... ... ... June 13
Exam 2 ... ... ... ... June 20
Exam 3 ... ... ... ... June 28

Three assignments

The other 40% of your final grade include three research assignments during the semester.

The rationale for these assignments is the following: As a serious student of psychology, it is critical that you understand the bases for all psychological research. This will prepare you to become an active researcher in more advanced psychology courses. Equally important, you must become a critical reader of research. In fact, even if you do not continue with your work in psychology, we are bombarded every day with the results of research. One goal of this course is to prepare you to read and critique the results of psychological research. Do the research methods designed by the experimenters follow from their research question? Are the variables made operational in a reasonable way? Are the variables confounded? Have the research participants been randomly sampled? Have the results been analyzed using appropriate statistical procedures? Does the interpretation logically follow from the results?

The research assignments in this course are designed to help you become a more critical consumer of research. The first two assignments also prepare you complete the final assignment: writing a research paper. All assignment reports must be typed and double-spaced. Assignments are due in class on the due date. Late papers will not be accepted.

1) Psychological Research – reported in the popular press and in scientific journals
   ➔ Due: June 12 (10% of final grade)

2) Analyze and critique a psychology journal article
   ➔ Due: June 19 (10% of final grade)

This research exercise will give you an opportunity to put to work all the information you have learned about valid, reliable, ethical, and well-analyzed research. You will select (from among several I provide for you) an empirical study published in a refereed psychology journal and critique the study by answering a series of questions about the research.

3) Write a full APA-style research report
   ➔ Due: June 26 (20% of final grade)

This assignment gives you the opportunity to think and act like a psychological researcher. With your research group, you will choose a research question, review the literature, propose a research design, methods, equipment, etc. While you will not actually run the study, you will provide hypothetical results. (See the assignment instruction sheet)

In order to help students improve sufficient data analysis skills several SPSS labs will also be offered in class over the course of the semester.
College Attendance Policy

All students are required to attend classes as noted in the schedule. At CSI, the maximum number of absence hours is limited to two class meetings as indicated in the Catalog/Academic Policies. In the case of excessive absence, the instructor reserves the right to assign a “WU” grade.

Students must be punctual for classes. Classes begin promptly at the times indicated in the Schedule of Classes. Arrival in classes after the scheduled starting time constitutes lateness. Latecomers may, at the discretion of the instructor, incur an official absence.

Academic Adjustments for Students with Disabilities

CSI and CUNY follow federal guidelines -- Section 504 of the Federal Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 -- in providing reasonable accommodations (http://www.csi.cuny.edu/diversity_and_compliance/reasonable_accom.html) that insure full educational opportunity to students with disabilities. The Office of Disability Services coordinates services for students with disabilities and assists faculty in accommodating students’ physical and programmatic needs.

CSI Policy on Academic Integrity, Plagiarism and Cheating

Plagiarism is the presentation of someone else’s ideas, words, or artistic, scientific, or technical work as one’s own creation. Using the idea or work of another is permissible only when the original author is identified. Paraphrasing and summarizing, as well as direct quotations, require citations to the original source. Plagiarism may be intentional or unintentional. Lack of dishonest intent does not necessarily absolve a student of responsibility for plagiarism.

Violations of academic integrity may result in a lower grade or failure in a course and in disciplinary actions with penalties such as suspension or dismissal from the College. More information on the College’s policy, including numerous examples, can be found in the CSI Undergraduate Catalog (http://www.csi.cuny.edu/catalog/undergraduate/5282.htm) and in Appendix L of this manual.

Cell Phone or Other Electronic Devices

In order to create a comfortable learning environment during the class, students are expected to turn off all cell phones and iPods before entering the class. Any use of electronic devices that may be a distraction to the instructor or any other students will be prohibited.
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<th>Date</th>
<th>Topic</th>
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<tr>
<td>6/5</td>
<td>Psychology, Science, &amp; Life</td>
<td>1</td>
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<td>6/6</td>
<td>Ethics in Research</td>
<td>2</td>
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<td>6/7</td>
<td>Planning a Research</td>
<td>3</td>
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<td>6/8</td>
<td>Practical Issues in Planning Your Research</td>
<td>4</td>
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<td>6/12</td>
<td>Measurement &amp; Sampling</td>
<td>5</td>
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<td>6/13</td>
<td>Research 1 (ch 1-5); Conducting an Experiment</td>
<td>6</td>
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<td>6/14</td>
<td>Experiments with One Independent Variable</td>
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<td>Experiments with Multiple Independent Variables</td>
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<td>6/19</td>
<td>Expanding on Experimental Designs</td>
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<td>6/20</td>
<td>Exam 2 (ch 6-9); Principles of Survey</td>
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<td>6/21</td>
<td>Correlational Research</td>
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<td>6/22</td>
<td>Studying Patterns in the Natural World</td>
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<td>6/26</td>
<td>Research in Depth</td>
<td>13</td>
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<td>6/27</td>
<td>People Are Different</td>
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<td>6/28</td>
<td>Exam 3 (ch 10-14)</td>
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RESEARCH ASSIGNMENT #1

This assignment has two parts. Do not exceed five pages, double-spaced throughout (plus photocopied material)

1. Popular press:
Find two articles (of at least 1000 words) published in the popular press (i.e. New York Times, Time, Newsweek, US News and World Report) between January 2016 and June 2017 in which psychological research (not medical research) is cited. For each article,

a) give a full bibliographic reference for each article in APA style (HINT: If you have not purchased the APA writing manual, use Purdue Online Writing Lab: APA Formatting and Style Guide).

b) summarize the article in several paragraphs (in your own words), note what the psychological topic is and what kinds of data were reported in the article (i.e. what kind of statistical information).

c) what are journalist's conclusions and evaluate them; do they follow logically from the data reported?

d) attach copies of the two articles.

Then, write about the following as it relates to your two articles: Is each of your articles examples of primary or secondary sources? Discuss the advantages and disadvantages of primary vs. secondary sources and how that applies to your articles. (see the textbook for more details)

2. Use PsycINFO or PsycARTICLES, the computerized database, to identify articles in scientific psychology journals (you can also use Ebsco Academic Search Premier).

a) Choose one of your topics of interest in psychology (e.g., addiction, homosexuality, emotional intelligence, positive psychology, ADHD, depression, violence, friendship)

b) Use PsycINFO and the Thesaurus of Psychological Index Terms to narrow down the topic (e.g. friendship... children... peer rejection). Print the screen which indicates your search history of how you narrowed down your topic.

c) State the topic first as a research question; then as a research hypothesis

d) Identify four scholarly articles on the narrowed topic using PsycINFO and write down all the relevant bibliographic information (the reference) in APA style. The articles need to address the research hypothesis.
RESEARCH ASSIGNMENT #2

Assignment #2 involves critically reading and analyzing a research article, which is published in a referred psychology journal. Select a research article of interest from psychology journals (please attach a copy of your selected article to your assignment.

Your assignment is the following:

1) Answer EVERY question listed in the following page. List questions one by one and answer them thoroughly. Refer to your textbook (pp. 81-88), which discusses the critical reading of scholarly articles.

2) Your answers must be typed (with 1" margins), double-spaced, proofread and edited and no more than five pages.

How to Read and Critique a Psychology Journal Article:
(or how to become a more discerning consumer of research)

1) Write the reference for this article in APA style.

2) Write an "overview" or brief summary of the article, indicating IN YOUR OWN WORDS, your assessment of what the study is about and the major findings of the study.

3) According to the introduction, what information was already known about the topic? (Look for references to previous research).

4) What variables were studied - identify the independent and dependent variables. What were the hypotheses concerning these variables?

5) What were the operational definitions of the variables studied?

6) Who were the participants in this study? Were there any special participant characteristics?

7) What were the procedures used to test the hypotheses? Did you notice any problematic features of the procedure - that is, were there any confounds?

8) Was the experimental or correlational method used? Describe the design, if it was experimental. Were there attempts to control any extraneous variables? How?

9) What were the major results of the study? Were the results consistent with the hypotheses - that is, did the results confirm the hypotheses or not?

10) How do the results relate to the other studies cited in the introduction - confirm or refute past research?

11) How did the researcher interpret the results - what did the results mean to the researchers? Think of alternative interpretations - that is, what other variables may have caused the results?

12) Did the author(s) give suggestions for future research or applications of their research? Can you provide other suggestions?

13) What would you do if you wished to find out more about the research topic?

14) Are there any ethical issues with this study? Discuss.
RESEARCH ASSIGNMENT #3

Use APA style to organize your paper into sections, for reference citations within the body of the paper and for the reference (see textbook and APA manual for details).

Follow these steps in constructing your papers.

1) Identify a psychological research question.
2) Use PsycInfo with descriptions to narrow down the topic.
3) Find 3 articles on the topic (copy the first page of each article).

ABSTRACT
4) Write the abstract following APA guidelines:

INTRODUCTION SECTION
5) Summarize and integrate the findings by indicating for each article, the hypothesis, the IV and DV (or predictor or criterion variables), and the results (including whether or not their hypotheses were confirmed).

6) Using past research (i.e. what has already been confirmed, what variables have not yet been tested, which new dependent measures might be used) on the topic, devise your own research hypothesis. Explicitly state the independent variables and dependent variables in the hypothesis. Remember, research is incremental exploration.

METHOD SECTION
7) Choose a general research strategy (i.e. non-experimental or experimental) and explain why.

8) If experimental, choose a specific research design (i.e. between groups, within groups, single subject, special design), which fits your hypothesis, and explain why you chose this design. If non-experimental, choose a method (i.e. survey, observation, case history, measure your variables and record) and explain why you chose this design.

9) Design the procedures to test the hypothesis – describe the sample or sampling procedures, the participants, how you recruited them, how you operationalized your variables, procedures for conducting the study, any instruments or scales you use (describe those), etc.

10) Attach your informed consent statement and/or cover letter to the participants.

RESULTS SECTION
11) Create fictitious results with actual numbers for subject scores, etc.

Create a frequency table, histogram or stem plot. Explain in the text your selection and then describe the distribution of scores. Use descriptive statistics in the text (if an experiment, measure of central tendency and spread; if non-experimental, measure of association) and why you selected those descriptive statistics. Graph the data using the appropriate graph (bar graph or line graph as a way to compare the means of the conditions; or scatterplot).

12) What kind of statistical procedure would you use, if any (t-test, ANOVA, correlations, chi square) and why?
**DISCUSSION SECTION**

13) write a conclusion (i.e. hypothesis confirmed or not; why not? Internal validity problems? External validity problems? Not tight enough control over extraneous variables, therefore confounding the experiment? Possible subject characteristics? Ways to improve/future research ideas and applications.

**REFERENCE**

14) Accurately written reference section (listing article you referenced in the paper)