Psychology 300
Research Methods in Psychology

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*Please note that appointments may be made for outside of office hours as well.
**If you plan to come to any office hours it is always appreciated to have an e-mail notice in advance so we can get an idea of how many students will be coming to the office hours and plan accordingly.
Course Philosophy

Some of you will pursue research as career, most of you will not. We all, however, are consumers and victims of research. We use informal research methods every day to assess questions about our lives. We use medical research to make decisions about what foods to eat or to avoid to stay healthy and what treatments to take if we are not healthy. Research findings are often thrown about to influence your decisions. Being able to understand and critically evaluate research is a life skill that could benefit everyone. And, of course, research is the basis of psychological and behavioral sciences.

Course learning objectives. The objectives of this course are to provide you with:

1. A foundation in research methodology and statistics
2. The necessary background for more advanced courses in statistics, experimental design, or research methods.
3. Improved critical reasoning skills

Upon successfully completing this course, you will have a good understanding of the major research methodologies. You will be able to evaluate implementation, analysis, and interpretation of research.

Prior knowledge and course level. We will assume that you have an introductory-level background in psychology and statistics. We will focus on concepts, theory and implementation.

How to Study

This is not a cookbook course. Simple memorization and merely learning how to plug numbers into formulas will not get you very far in this course. Lectures, discussion, homework, and exams all will involve a mix of formulas, numerical calculations, and conceptual thinking. Treat this course as a combination of mathematics, psychology, and logic. You must keep up with the material on a day-to-day basis and you must do the assigned homework. You will benefit from doing additional problems at the ends of the chapters.

The only way to get a handle on this material is to work with it, which means actively studying on a regular basis. The most effective way to learn is to divide your study and homework time over multiple days per week. For a few of you, two to four hours outside of class distributed over the week may be enough, others of you will require five to seven hours of study per week, and yet others may require somewhat more time. Skim or read the assigned material before lecture to get the gist of what we will cover. Read it again after lecture, this time more carefully and work with it actively, not passively. Do problems, complete assigned activities, and test yourself as you go along. Small study groups are a good idea for some people. It is fine to study together, but test yourself privately to be sure
you understand the material. Regularly go back to material covered earlier and work a few
problems. We will assign homework almost every day to give you practice.

**Ask questions.** You will learn much better if you think actively about the material. If you
don’t understand something, ask right away in class. Almost certainly, someone else will
have the same question.

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**Course Mechanics and Rules**

**Lecture Time.** Lecture sections will serve as both lecture and discussion. This time is
interactive and your participation is expected, as discussion is a large part of the course.
Preparing for class is necessary for your participation and for the lecture to proceed
smoothly. We will occasionally use laptops to work through data and analyses and I will note
when we will be doing this in lecture, otherwise **there should be no laptop use in lecture,**
unless explicitly directed by the instructor.

**Lab time.** During the lab time you are expected to be working on the lab assignment for the
week. During this time that you are working on your lab assignment, your graduate teaching
assistant will be available for any questions that you may encounter. You are strongly
encouraged to work on the lab assignment at this time in order to have the time to talk with
other students and your TA as you work through the assignment.

**Computers, calculators, and software:** You may use calculators when doing your
homework and on the exams. You must also show your work by writing the equations and
showing how you inserted the data. Some of the assigned homework problems will require
you to use a computer. We will use Microsoft Excel, JASP, and Qualtrics in labs and for
some homework.

**Professional Conduct:** Professional conduct is expected in this course, as we want you to
learn and practice this conduct for your future careers. Additionally, in being professional
you will be showing respect to the teachers as well as to your fellow students. You are
expected to be respectful and courteous with your instructor and TAs both in and out of class.
This entails: 1) Arriving to class on time, 2) Turning off your cell phone before class begins,
3) Not using class time to check social networking websites, comics, instant messaging
services, or other off-task, on-line behavior, 4) Not using class time to read or send text
messages on your phone, and 5) Professional conduct when writing emails. Think of this last
point as an opportunity to practice the kind of writing you will use when inquiring about job
opportunities, communicating with your supervisor, and so forth.
Homework Etiquette: Professional conduct is necessary during the assessment portions of this class as well. Show your work. You may use Excel to check your answers, but you may not let Excel do all the work for you. You are expected to work alone on homework unless explicitly noted. You are also expected to maintain your homework at all times and ensure that no other students view your homework as that is considered collaboration. If you have questions or concerns, speak to your professor and/or the TA or come to one of the office hours that are available.

Exam Etiquette: During exams, students will spread out throughout the room as much as possible. For all exams, students may use the course textbook, their personal notes from class, and a calculator. No talking or collaboration is allowed on exams. If you show up late to an exam, you will nonetheless be expected to stop at the appointed end time.

Grades

Your grade for the course will come from four primary components: Participation, Lab assignments, mid-term exam, final exam, and extra credit. Below is a list of each component:

Participation (21%). Participation in the course is critical and there are seven participation components as described below: Contract, syllabus quiz, lecture activities, lab activities, research participation, MasteryTraining homework and readings quizzes.

1) Contract (2 points): The contract for the course is available on Canvas. You will download the contract, sign the contract for the course by typing your initials in the designated spaces, and then upload this signed document to the Canvas Contract assignment.

2) Syllabus quiz (4 points): There is a syllabus quiz on Canvas that you must complete. It is an open note quiz and due on the date indicated on the syllabus.

3) Lecture activities and professionalism (1 point per class): Participation and professionalism in class discussions and activities are important to helping the class be more engaging and to help students interact more with the class material. Half of this grade will come from the daily in-class activities/assignments throughout the course. These activities will occur neither consistently at the beginning nor consistently at the end of the class and may be at multiple times in the lecture. Participation, not accuracy, is graded. If you miss an activity for an excused absence you will still be awarded the participation points when you provide valid documentation. This documentation should be presented prior to missing the class or no later than the next class if an emergency.
The other half of this grade will come from professional conduct in class. This will, minimally involve: 1) Being on time for class, 2) leaving on time, 3) not being disruptive during class, 4) not being on your phone, 5) speaking respectfully with TA’s, the instructor, and your peers, etc. Professionalism will also include speaking via email to your TA’s, instructor, and peers.

4) Lab activities (2 points per class): Participation in class discussions and activities are important to helping the class be more engaging and to help students interact more with the class material. There will be daily in-class activities/assignments throughout the course. These activities will occur neither consistently at the beginning nor consistently at the end of the class and may be at multiple times in the lab. Participation, not accuracy, is graded. If you miss an activity for an excused absence you will still be awarded the participation points when you provide valid documentation. This documentation should be presented prior to missing the class or no later than the next class if an emergency occurs.

5) Research participation (4 points per design): In this course you will collect data. In order to ethically and pragmatically do this, we will be collecting data from students in the course. Thus, part of your grade is to complete the research of your peers to help them collect data. This will happen three times throughout the semester and should only require your participation online.

6) Mastery Training homework (1 point per assignment). Homework will consist of Mastery Training through Cengage. All Mastery Training assignments will be due at 8:00am on the day indicated on the syllabus. There may be one or more MindTap modules assigned each week. Generally, there is a Mastery Training Assignment due at 8:00am every Tuesday and Thursday. This is a grade that you may earn 100% on every class depending on how well you understand the material and how much time and effort you spend on Mastery Training: You will get a score for your mastery of the material and it is up to you to decide what level you want to achieve with your time.

We do not accept late homework. You must turn in all homework either early or on time to receive any credit. This is similar to you being on time for work – you often get penalized (explicitly or implicitly) for showing up late to work. If you have a valid, University sanctioned excuse (see later in the syllabus for more detail on this) to turn in a homework assignment late, you may bring the documentation to us and we will evaluate this exception.

7) Readings quizzes (1 point each). We will have empirical readings throughout the semester. These do not occur every class, but when they do, there will be a short, timed, readings quiz on Canvas to complete before class. These questions are to get you thinking about the material so we are all ready to discuss it in lecture.
You also receive two “freebies” such that we will drop your lowest two participation grades.

**Lab Assignments (41%).** There are two components to your lab assignments: Lab assignment progress reports and lab assignment APA reports.

1) *Lab assignment progress report:* Before midnight of your lab section day (either Thursday or Friday) you should submit a progress report on Canvas to show your current progress and thoughts for the lab assignment for that week. These are graded for completeness and effort and we use these to try to make sure you are on a good track for the assignment, so please take these seriously.

2) *Lab assignment APA report:* Each week you will submit an APA report on your lab assignment at the next class. This will be a formal APA paper that describes your lab assignment in detail. These are graded for accuracy, formatting and content.

**We do not accept late assignments.** You must turn in all assignments either early or on time to receive any credit. This is similar to you being on time for work – you often get penalized (explicitly or implicitly) for showing up late to work. If you have a valid, University sanctioned excuse (see later in the syllabus for more detail on this) to turn in a homework assignment late, you may bring the documentation to us and we will evaluate this exception.

**Exams (38%).** There will be a mid-term exam. For this exam students may use the course textbook, their personal notes from class, and a calculator. There will be a final exam. For this exam students may use the course textbook, their personal notes from class, and a calculator.

**Extra Credit.** There are four extra credit opportunities in this class for a total of 4 extra credit points that equal a .3% increase in your final grade, *Thus, a 1.5% increase in your final grade from extra credit is possible if you earn all the extra credit points.*

1) *Pocket Points Pilot study:* If you want to be a participant to pilot using pocket points in class to earn rewards, we will have a sign up for this in the beginning of the course.

2) *SONA credits:* You may earn a maximum of 2 extra credit points by participating in psychology studies. You may apply these credits towards this class for extra credit. Each credit is equivalent to one hour of participation in a study. These extra credit points will be credited at the *end* of the semester. To logon and sign up for studies go to [http://umppsychology.sona-systems.com/](http://umppsychology.sona-systems.com/).

3) *Online feedback:* There will be two opportunities to provide online feedback about the course, for extra credit. There will be a mid-semester survey, and an end-of-the semester survey. You may also earn a maximum of 1 extra credit point by
participating in these online surveys regarding feedback for this course. The survey links will be available as assignments in Canvas and we will post the links as they become available at the end of the semester.

**Grading.** The class has a graduate TA who will be completing all of the homework and exam grading. If you have a question about a grade, talk to your TA first. Grades for homework and exams will be posted on Canvas shortly after the assignments are graded. We anticipate a weekly turnaround on grading, although it may at times be shorter or longer. If you have a grading question about any specific assignment, talk to the TA immediately. You will have **two weeks** after receiving a grade to dispute it. At that point, it will be assumed that you agree with the grade you received. This grading policy also applies to the grades that you receive for in-class activities. Please note that having questions about how an assignment was graded and disputing a grade are separate concepts and processes. Thus, your TA can address questions you may have about the grading of an assignment, but grade disputes should be handled as outlined in the Re-Grading section below. Your course grade will be converted to a letter grade as dictated by the University. The grading rules are precise and generous and therefore they will be followed without exception and with **no rounding** beyond one decimal place. For example, if your final grade is calculated to be 89.8945, your final grade for the course will be 89.9 and you will receive a B+ for the course.

Your course grade will be calculated as follows:

\[
\text{Grade} = 0.21 \text{Participation} + 41 \text{LabAssignments} + 0.12 \text{Exam}_1 + 0.12 \text{Exam}_2 + 0.14 \text{FinalExam} + \text{EC}
\]

Using the output from the above equation, you will be assigned a letter grade as follows:

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Percentage Range</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A+</td>
<td>96 %–100 %</td>
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<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>93 %–95.99 %</td>
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<tr>
<td>A−</td>
<td>90%–92.99 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B+</td>
<td>86 %–89.99 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>83 %–85.99 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B−</td>
<td>80%–82.99 %</td>
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<tr>
<td>C+</td>
<td>76%–79.99 %</td>
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<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>73%–75.99 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C−</td>
<td>70%–72.99 %</td>
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<tr>
<td>D+</td>
<td>66%–69.99 %</td>
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<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>63%–65.99 %</td>
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<tr>
<td>D−</td>
<td>60%–62.99 %</td>
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<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>&lt; 60 %</td>
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</table>

**Grade Disputes and Re-Grading:** Occasionally, students are unhappy with a grade they have received. If you feel that you want your homework, exam, or final paper re-graded, you must present, in writing, your request for a re-grade. Your written request must include a
valid reason to merit your request for a re-grade. Your reasons for why you should get points back must be substantiated by the class textbook, class readings or class notes. It must also be evident in your written request for a re-grade that you have thoroughly read the answer key and have evaluated your assignment in light of the answer key.

1. You must submit your request for a re-grade within two weeks of the day the assignment grade is posted to the class. If your documentation and argument are sufficient, the assignment will then be re-graded by a different grader. By requesting a re-grade, you agree that the new grade will be the permanent grade. Please note that your re-grade may be higher OR lower than your original grade. Assignments will be re-graded only once.

Office hours: Our office hours are listed above. We encourage you to make appointments during those hours or for other times outside of those times.

Class Web Page. We will use the Canvas Academic Suite available at https://elms.umd.edu for this course. Log in there and follow the links to PSYC300. We will make this syllabus and syllabus updates available there. In addition, we intend to post the overheads used in lecture so that you can download them.

Evaluations: Your feedback about this course is very important to me and therefore we do several forms of evaluations throughout the semester. One important campus-wide evaluation is the online evaluation at the end of the semester. Students can go directly to the website (www.courseevalum.umd.edu) to complete their evaluations prior to the start of exam week.

Textbooks and Readings and Required Material for the Course

Required. Research Methods for the Behavioral Sciences with MindTap options. Access these through the MODULES section of Canvas.
1) Gravetter bundle with loose leaf textbook option with MindTap (Looseleaf textbook, eBook, MindTap and Mobile App) ISBN 9781337755023
2) Gravetter bundle without the looseleaf textbook with MindTap (eBook, MindTap and Mobile App) ISBN 9781337619578

Readings. Additional readings may be assigned to supplement the Pagano text and will be available on Canvas.

Attendance policies

All Absences: It is the policy of the University to excuse student absences resulting from (a) illness of the student (or a dependent as defined by Board of Regents policy on family and medical leave); (b) religious observance (where the nature of the observance prevents the student from being present during the class period); (c) participation in university activities at
the request of University authorities; and (d) compelling circumstance beyond the student's control. Students claiming excused absence must apply in writing and furnish documentary evidence that the absence resulted from one of these causes. Students are responsible for learning about any material or announcements missed and for initiating a process to make up missed work. Unless otherwise approved by the instructor, any work due on the missed day(s) must be submitted by the first class meeting after the absence.

**Absences due to illness or injury:** University of Maryland policy dictates that a single absence during the semester due to illness or injury will be excused with a student signed and dated letter attesting to the date of the health problem and acknowledging that the information is true and correct and that providing false information is prohibited under the Code of Student Conduct. The letter must be submitted by the first class meeting after the absence, and only one such letter is allowed in the class during the semester. This policy does not apply when the absence occurs on a major graded event (i.e., exam, paper due date) or is for more than a single class. Multiple absences, and those occurring on a major scheduled grading event, require written documentation of the illness or injury from the Health Center personnel or an outside health care provider. The signed and dated letter must verify the dates of treatment and the time period during which you were unable to meet academic responsibilities. The letter must be provided on the first class meeting after the multiple absences. Accommodations for such absences will be arranged on a case-by-case basis.

**Scheduled Absences:** When the absence is due to a major scheduled event (e.g., religious observances, jury duty), the student must provide written notice of the absence by the second week of the semester (or as soon as possible thereafter if the student learns about the scheduled absence after the second week) in order to have the absence excused. If an exam is given during this planned absence, this written notice must include a request for a make-up exam.

**Participation points:** If you miss a class for an excused and documented reason you will receive participation points for that day if you provide your documentation prior to missing the class or by the next class you attend.

**Missing Exams:** If some extreme event or religious observance is going to require you to miss an exam, you must talk with me about missing the exam at least one week before the exam date. Claims of physical illness or distress must be accompanied by documentation from a physician or mental health practitioner. Claims of death in the family must be accompanied by a funeral announcement (or analogous documentation).

The make-up assessment will be at a time and place mutually agreeable to the instructor and student, will cover only the material for which the student was originally responsible, will be
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at a comparable level of difficulty with the original assessment, and will be given within a  
time limit that retains the currency of the material.

**Special Accommodations:** Appropriate special arrangements will be made for students with  
documented disabilities. Students with documented disabilities should report them to the  
instructor immediately so that proper arrangements can be made.

**University Closure:** If the University is closed due to inclement weather, emergency, etc.  
during a scheduled class period, that class period will be shifted to the next time we will  
meet. Therefore, any exams or papers that are due will be due the following class. This does  
not mean the deadlines for following projects or exams will be changed, however, so plan  
your time accordingly. Make sure to check the University’s website for information on  
closures.

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**Academic Integrity and Accommodations**

**Academic Integrity:** The University is one of a small number of universities with a student-  
administered Code of Academic Integrity and an Honor Pledge. The Code prohibits students  
from cheating on exams and assignments. Cheating includes, but is not limited to,  
plagiarizing, copying another student’s answers, bringing cheat notes in for the exam, etc.  
You will be asked to write the following signed statement on each examination or  
assignment:

_I pledge on my honor that I have not given or received any unauthorized assistance on this  
assignment/examination._

**Academic Dishonesty:** All students are expected to abide by the University's Code of  
Academic Integrity which is printed in the Undergraduate Catalog (also see  
[http://www.studenthonorCouncil.umd.edu/code.html](http://www.studenthonorCouncil.umd.edu/code.html)). Academic dishonesty (cheating,  
fabrication, facilitating academic dishonesty, and plagiarism) will not be tolerated. The  
definitions for these offenses are printed in the Code of Academic Integrity, and I urge you to  
familiarize yourselves with them. Academic dishonesty is a serious offense and will be dealt  
with according to University policy.

The **Code of Academic Integrity** is reprinted in full in the Undergraduate catalog. For further  
information, to report Academic Dishonesty, or to inquire about serving on the Honor  
Council call 301-314-8204.  
[http://www.testudo.umd.edu/soc/dishonesty.html](http://www.testudo.umd.edu/soc/dishonesty.html)
Note that ignorance of the student conduct policy is not an accepted excuse for committing academic dishonesty. Issues relating to academic dishonesty will be sent to the Office of Student Conduct.

*Please read the Ethics of Scholarship in Psychology handout that is also available on Canvas*
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*This is a guideline for the course, and is thus subject to change.  
**Empirical articles will be updated in some of the classes listed here with accompanying readings quizzes. This will be updated on your Canvas page and assignments as well, but please check regularly.

**SYLLABUS GUIDE**

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<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Reading &amp; Assignment</th>
<th>Lab Topic</th>
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</table>
| Tu 01/28 | Class introduction  
Randomization  
**Purpose and method of research**  
Purpose of research  
Creating research ideas and theories (Steps 1-2) | Ch. 1: 1.3 – 1.4 Ch. 2          | LAB 1: Introduction to syllabus and materials  
Creating a theory and research question  
Selecting measures for your research question  
- Write an APA introduction for your theory  
- Include selected measures and 5 citations |
| Th 01/30 | **Method of research**  
Measurement for research ideas (step 3)  
Reliability  
Validity introduction | Ch. 3  
*Ch. 3 Mastery Training to .25 level*  
Contract & Syllabus quiz | |
| Tu 02/04 | **Method of research**  
Validity  
Selecting and refining a research design (step 4)  
Internal and external validity  
Creating hypotheses (step 5) | Ch. 3  
*Ch. 3 Mastery Training to .5 level*  
*Ch. 4 AND 6 Mastery Training to .25 level* | LAB 2: Refining your theory, research question, and measure selections  
Select and refine design for your research question  
State your hypotheses  
Ethical considerations  
Select participants  
- Revise your APA introduction of your theory  
- Include proposed methods section  
- CITI Training |
| Th 02/06 | **Method of research**  
Selecting participants for research (step 6)  
**Implementing research**  
Ethics in research  
Conduct research (step 7)  
Review of NHST/Hypothesis testing (steps 8 & 9) | Ch. 4, 6  
*Ch. 4 AND 6 Mastery Training to .5 level*  
APA formatting quiz | |
| Tu 02/11 | **Correlation research design**  
Purpose  
Theory and hypotheses  
Implementation introduction | Ch. 12,  
*Ch. 12 Mastery Training to .25 level* | LAB 3: Design your correlational research  
- APA methods write up  
Design and launch data collection |
| Th 02/13 | **Correlation research implementation**  
Issues in implementing | Ch. 12,  
*Ch. 12 Mastery Training to .5 level* | |
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<th>Date</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Reading/Activity</th>
<th>LAB</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tu 02/18</td>
<td>Correlation research analyses</td>
<td>Ch. 15</td>
<td>LAB 4: Analyze your correlational research and Exam review</td>
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<tr>
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<td>Compiling data</td>
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<td>• APA results write up</td>
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<td>Analyses</td>
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<td>• APA discussion write up</td>
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<td>Interpretation introduction</td>
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<td>Th 02/20</td>
<td>Correlation research interpretation</td>
<td>Ch. 15</td>
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<td>Interpretation</td>
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<td>Correlation in the wild</td>
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<td>Where do we go from here</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tu 02/25</td>
<td>Review</td>
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<td>LAB 5: Trouble shooting &amp; questions</td>
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<td>Th 02/27</td>
<td>Exam 1</td>
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<td>Tu 03/03</td>
<td>Observational research design</td>
<td>Ch. 13</td>
<td>LAB 6: Design your observational research</td>
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<td>Purpose</td>
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<td>• APA methods write up</td>
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<td>Theory and hypotheses</td>
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<td>• Design and launch data collection</td>
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<td>Implementation issues introduction</td>
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<td>Th 03/05</td>
<td>Observational research implementation</td>
<td>Ch. 13</td>
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<td>Issues in implementation</td>
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<td>Tu 03/10</td>
<td>Observational research analyses</td>
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<td>LAB 7: Analyze your observational research</td>
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<td>Compiling data</td>
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<td>• APA results write up</td>
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<td>Interpretation introduction</td>
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<td>Th 03/12</td>
<td>Observational research interpretation</td>
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<td>Interpretation</td>
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<td>Correlation in the wild</td>
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<td>Where do we go from here</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Experiments introduction</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tu 03/17</td>
<td>SPRING BREAK</td>
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<td>Ch. 7 &amp; 8</td>
<td>LAB 9: Design your experimental between subjects factorial research</td>
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<td>LAB 10: Analyze your experimental between subjects factorial research and Exam review</td>
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