

**Syllabus**  
**Research Methods in Psychology**  
**Spring 2024**

<b>Professor Info</b>		<b>Course Info</b>	
<b>Professor:</b>	Nicholas Maxwell, PhD	<b>Course #:</b>	PSYC 4703, Sec. 201
<b>Office:</b>	OD 118	<b>Time:</b>	2:00pm – 3:20pm, TR
<b>email:</b>	nicholas.maxwell@msutexas.edu	<b>Location:</b>	PY 101
		<b>Office Hours:</b>	MWF: 10am – 11am; W: 1pm – 3pm

**Required Texts:**

*Research Methods for the Behavioral Sciences* by Frederick J. Gravetter & Lori-Ann B. Foronzo (6<sup>th</sup> Edition) (2019)

**Course Objectives:**

After completing this course, you will have a greater understanding of:

1. The basics of psychological research, including common research designs and research reporting standards.
2. The role research plays in developing psychology as a science.
3. Ethical standards of research, including guidelines for best practices and current issues in research ethics.
4. Written and verbal research communication

**Attendance and Make-Up Exam Policy:**

If you do miss class, you will be responsible for the material you missed when absent. Class attendance is **\*required\***. Each student is allowed **\*four\*** absences without penalty. Each additional absence will result in a 10% reduction in the students' final grade. Students will be responsible for the material they miss when absent. Students with **\*more than five absences\*** will be dropped from the course with a failing grade.

*Excused-Absences:* The **\*only\*** absences that will not be counted are absences for a mandatory, university-sponsored event or religious holiday. Written notification must be provided to the professor at least two days prior to the day of the event. Absences for religious holidays must be cleared through the Dean of Students. Students must inform the instructor of religious holiday absences by the 15<sup>th</sup> day of class.

No make-up exams will be given **\*except in the case of an emergency\***, such as a serious illness, a serious accident, or a death in the family **\*OR\*** in the case of a previously excused absence (see *Attendance* section above for what qualifies as an *excused absence*).

*You must verify your emergency with documentation. \*You must contact me via email no later than 24 hours after the missed exam!\** If you miss an exam without a valid excuse, you will receive a zero for the assignment.

**Course Requirements:**

1. **Exams (400 pts total):** Students will complete **\*four\*** exams during the semester. Each exam will be worth **\*100\*** points (~55% of course grade).
2. **Class Attendance/Participation (50 points):** Classes are most productive when everyone contributes. Class participation will be assessed on a combination of attendance, contributions to class discussions, your willingness to participate in class activities, etc. Class assignments must be submitted by 11:59pm on the day they are due (see course schedule). (~5% of course grade)
3. **Research Project (300 points):** During the course of the semester, students will be required to propose an original research project investigating a topic of interest. Students will propose their topic via email within the first 3 weeks of class. You will then submit a four-to-six page project proposal midway through the semester outlining your topic, your sample, proposed methods, expected findings, and five peer-reviewed sources that you have identified **\*(100 points; due 3/22)\***. Students will then complete an IRB application **\*(75 points; due 4/23)\*** and will present a 10-minute PowerPoint presentation on their topic at the end of the semester **\*(100 points)\***. **\*The remaining 25 points will come from your participation and feedback during other students' presentations.\*** The total research project counts for 40% of your final grade.

Late research project assignments will automatically lose **\*10%\*** of their point value each day they are late. **\*Missing your presentation date will automatically result in a zero for your presentation grade, unless you have a verifiable emergency.\*** You will have the opportunity to sign-up for your presentation day, so make sure to plan ahead!

**Acceptable topics include:** Violent media and aggression, learning styles, different types of therapies, the role of genetics and intelligence, implicit biases/prejudice, cognitive benefits of being bilingual, can people predict their memory abilities, the validity of personality testing, etc.

### Grades:

Your final grade in the course will be calculated based on **\*750\*** total points.

750-675:	A
674-600:	B
599-525:	C
524-450:	D
< 449:	F

### Email Policy:

You are required to use your MSU Texas email accounts for this class. I will not send emails to any other email accounts. I will also not send out class information to any other email address other than your university email account. **\*Before emailing me about your question, make sure that your question has not been answered/addressed in the syllabus or elsewhere!\*** When emailing me, please put the course number (PSYC 4703) AND section number (Sec. 201) in the subject line. This will immediately let me know which class you are in so I can respond faster.

I will try my best to get back to you within 24-hours (during the week) or within 3 days (weekends, holidays, if you decide to email me at 10:00pm on Friday...)

### **Cell Phones:**

Unless you anticipate that you might receive an emergency communication, please turn off your cell phones in class. If you receive an **\*emergency\*** phone call or text in class, please excuse yourself and quietly leave the classroom to take the message.

### **Academic Dishonesty Policy:**

Academic Dishonesty is defined as cheating, collusion, and plagiarism (the act of using source material of other persons, either published or unpublished, without following the accepted techniques of crediting, or the submission for credit of work not the individuals to whom credit is given). Additional guidelines on procedures in these matters may be found in the Office of Student Conduct: [Office of Student Conduct](#)

Cheating will not be tolerated. Any evidence of cheating on exams or written assignments will result in dismissal from this class with a grade of "F" and referral to the Dean of Students. Cheating includes, but is not limited to, using unauthorized notes of any kind during an exam, looking on another's exam, allowing another student to look on your exam, plagiarism, and self-plagiarism.

### **Desire-to-Learn (D2L):**

This course utilizes the MSU D2L program for assignment submission. Relevant course materials will also be posted on D2L. Each student is expected to be familiar with this program as it provides a primary source of communication regarding general course information. You can log into [D2L](#) through the MSU Homepage. If you experience difficulties, please contact the technicians listed for the program.

### **Disability Services:**

Any student who, because of a disability, may require special arrangements in order to meet the course requirements should contact the instructor as soon as possible to make necessary arrangements. Students must present appropriate verification from Disability Support Services (DSS) during the instructor's office hours. Please note that instructors are not allowed to provide classroom accommodation to a student until appropriate verification from DSS has been provided.

### **Midterm Grade Reports:**

In order to help students keep track of their progress toward course objectives, the instructor for this class will provide a Midterm Progress Report through each student's WebWorld account. **\*Midterm progress reports will only be provided for students with a grade of C or less in the course.\*** Midterm grades will not be reported on the students' transcripts, nor will they be calculated in the cumulative GPA. They simply give students an idea of where they stand at the midpoint of the semester.

### **Change of Schedule:**

A student dropping a course (but not withdrawing from the University) within the first 12 class days of a regular semester or the first four class days of a summer semester is eligible for a 100% refund of applicable tuition and fees. Dates are published in the Schedule of Classes each semester.

### **Important Dates**

Last day for Spring 24 schedule changes: 1/19

Deadline to file for **MAY** graduation: 2/12

Last Day to drop with a grade of “W”: 3/25

Refer to: Drops, Withdrawals & Void

### Course Schedule:

**Important!** The reading for each day is what’s expected to have been read *prior* to that date. Please note that this schedule represents *the ideal semester!* Any deviations from this schedule (particularly as they pertain to assignment deadlines and exam dates) will be announced in class **AND** posted on D2L.

<b>Week</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Topic</b>	<b>Reading</b>	<b>Assignment Due</b>
1/15 – 1/19	1/16	Course Overview	Syllabus	
	1/18	The Scientific Method	Chapter 1	
1/22 – 1/26	1/23	Research Ideas and Hypotheses	Chapter 2	
	1/25	Defining and Measuring Variables	Chapter 3	
1/29 – 2/2	1/30	Defining and Measuring Variables	Chapter 3	<b>Research Topic Due 1/30 @ 11:59pm</b>
	2/1	Defining and Measuring Variables	Chapter 3	
2/5 – 2/9	2/6	<b>Exam 1</b>	<b>Chapters 1-3</b>	
	2/10	Ethics in Research	Chapter 4	
2/12 – 2/16	2/13	Ethics/IRBs	Chapter 4	<b>Mock IRB (in class assignment)</b>
	2/15	Selecting Research Participants	Chapter 5	
2/19 – 2/23	2/20	Research Strategies and Validity	Chapter 6	
	2/22	Research Strategies and Validity	Chapter 6	
2/26 – 3/1	<b>2/27</b>	<b>Exam 2</b>	<b>Chapter 4-6</b>	
	2/29	Experimental Research	Chapter 7	
3/4 – 3/8	3/5	Experimental Research	Chapter 7	<b>Experiment Activity</b>
	3/7	Between-Subjects designs	Chapter 8	
3/11 – 3/15	<b>3/12</b>	<b>Spring Break</b>		
	<b>3/14</b>	<b>Spring Break</b>		
3/18 – 3/22	3/19	Within-Subjects Experiments	Chapter 9	

	3/21	Non-Experimental Designs	Chapter 10	<b>Research Proposal Due Friday 3/22</b>
3/25 – 3/29	3/26	Factorial Designs	Chapter 11	
	<b>3/28</b>	<b>No Class! (SWPA Conference)</b>		
4/1 – 4/5	<b>4/2</b>	<b>Exam 3</b>	<b>Chapter 7-11</b>	
	4/4	Correlational Research	Chapter 12	
4/8 – 4/12	4/9	Descriptive Research	Chapter 13	
	4/11	Descriptive Research	Chapter 13	
4/15 – 4/19	4/16	Single Case Research Designs	Chapter 14	
	4/18	Survey Research		<b>In class survey activity</b>
4/22 – 4/26	<b>4/23</b>	<b>Exam 4</b>	<b>Chapters 12-14</b>	<b>IRB Applications due Friday 4/23</b>
	4/25	Student Presentations		
4/29 – 5/3	4/30	Student Presentations		
	5/2	Student Presentations (extra day)		
Final		Student Presentations (extra day)		