

LDST 389 Research Methods

Fall 2007

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Office Hours: MFW By Appointment

Course Time and Location:

Section 001: MWF 10:25-11:15, Jepson 101

Section 002: MWF 11:30-12:20, Jepson 101

Text: Cozby, P. (2007). *Methods in Behavioral Research* (9th Edition). Mayfield Publishing Company.

Description and Goals of the Course

This course provides an introduction to behavioral research techniques and methodology. It is designed to help you develop the basic skills needed to be a good consumer of behavioral research. The skills you learn in this course are intended to support you in any situation where you need to read/evaluate research or design your own research. Additionally, statistics are tools for organizing, summarizing, and interpreting data, and these tools play a central role in scientific research. Thus, you will learn the important concepts that you will need to understand and interpret statistics in the context of research and to become a better consumer of statistics in your daily life.

The principle objective of this course is to provide you with a basic understanding of behavioral research methodology and statistics. By the end of this course you should possess the theoretical background necessary to plan, execute, and evaluate a simple research project. More specifically, at the end of this course you should be able to:

- Understand the basic underpinnings of science.
- Identify various approaches to hypothesis testing.
- Identify specific issues associated with the experimental paradigm including manipulation, randomization, and statistical testing.
- Understand the role that the various types of validity and reliability play in research.
- Be able to identify and discuss the four measurement scales.
- Understand ways for assessing threats to the internal and external validity of studies.
- Understand a variety of experimental, quasi-experimental, and non-experimental (such as case studies, single variable research, and correlational methods) research methods.

- Understand research design, be able to decide how to study various behavioral phenomena, and be able to address the difficulties posed by the limitations of specific studies.
- Understand the fundamentals of being a good researcher.
- Understand how statistics are tools for organizing, summarizing, and interpreting data, and how these tools play a central role in scientific research.
- Be able to both compute basic statistics and understand the basic concepts and logic underlying the use of statistics in scientific research.

Course Requirements

Your grade in the course will be determined by performance on the following course requirements:

Class participation. This course is predicated on the active participation of all members. You are expected to attend all classes, arrive on time, and fully engage in discussions and activities. Each unexcused absence will penalize your final grade. Excused absences (such as illness, team trips, or family emergencies) must be documented with a doctor's or dean's letter. The class discussions and activities are highly dependent upon the assigned reading for the day. You must come to class fully prepared to discuss the assigned readings.

Assignments. There will be small assignments, which are designed to actively engage you with the course material. Further information regarding these assignments will be given throughout the semester. All assignments are to be done individually unless marked as a group assignment on the schedule below.

Late assignments: Late assignments will be heavily penalized. Late work will receive a penalty of one grade for each day late (24 hr from start of class). Also, assignments will receive a penalty of two grades if you were absent or late to class on the day the assignment is due.

Group research projects. Students will undertake a semester-long group research project. Groups will present the results of their project, and individuals will submit a report.

Examinations. There will be three exams in this course, two midterms and one final. The exams will cover information from both in-class discussions and reading assignments. The final exam will be cumulative and will be given during the final exam testing time.

Makeup exams. If you miss an exam due to an illness or personal emergency, you must contact me *prior to, or within one day,* of the missed exam. Before we can schedule a makeup exam, you must provide a *written medical excuse or other verifiable documentation.* Makeup exams may take an alternative form to that taken by the rest of the class.

Honor code. The Jepson School supports and adheres to the provisions of the Honor System sanctioned by the School of Arts and Sciences. Every piece of written work presented by individual students must have the honor pledge with the student's signature on it. The pledge is, "I pledge that I have neither given nor received unauthorized assistance during the completion of this work."

Students with disabilities. If you have a verified disability and would like to discuss special academic accommodations, please contact me during the first week of class to arrange reasonable and appropriate accommodations.

Assignments: 20%

- Library
- IRB (group assignment)
- Survey (group assignment)
- Results Worksheet
- Small ad hoc assignments as necessary

Research Project 20%

- Intro (literature review)
- Final paper (improved Intro, Method, Results, Discussion)

Midterm 1: 20%

Midterm 2: 20%

Final (not comprehensive): 20%

A+ 98-100%	B+ 88 to 89.9	C+ 78 to 79.9	D+ 68 to 69.9
A 92 to 97.9%	B 82 to 87.9	C 72 to 77.9	D 62 to 67.9
A- 90 to 91.9%	B- 80 to 81.9	C- 70 to 71.9	D- 60 to 61.9

<i>Date</i>	<i>Topic</i>	<i>Due</i>
Mon Aug 27	Introductions	
Wed Aug 29	Chap. 1	
Fri Aug 31	Chap. 2, Form groups	
Mon Sep 3	APA	
Wed Sep 5	Boatwright B2	
Fri Sep 7	Chap. 3	Library Assignment
Mon Sep 10		
Wed Sep 12	Chap. 4	
Fri Sep 14		
Mon Sep 17	Chap. 5, explain Intro	
Wed Sep 19		
Fri Sep 21		Intro
Mon Sep 24	Chap. 6	
Wed Sep 26		
Fri Sep 28		
Mon Oct 1		Exam 1
Wed Oct 3	Chap. 7	

Fri Oct 5		
Mon Oct 8		Survey Assignment (group)
Wed Oct 10	Chap. 8	
Fri Oct 12		
Mon Oct 15	Study Break	
Wed Oct 17		IRB (group)
Fri Oct 19		
Mon Oct 22	Chap. 9	
Wed Oct 24		
Fri Oct 26		
Mon Oct 29	Chap. 10	
Wed Oct 31		
Fri Nov 2		
Mon Nov 5		Exam 2
Wed Nov 7	Chap. 11	
Fri Nov 9		
Mon Nov 12		
Wed Nov 14	Chap. 12	
Fri Nov 16		
Mon Nov 19		
Wed Nov 21	Thanksgiving	
Fri Nov 23	Thanksgiving	
Mon Nov 26	Chap. 13	
Wed Nov 28		
Fri Nov 30		
Mon Dec 3	SPSS Lab	
Wed Dec 5	Chap. 14	
Fri Dec 7		Remainder of Paper
Fri Dec 14	FINAL EXAM 2-5 Section 2	
Mon Dec 17	FINAL EXAM 2-5 Section 1	
