COURSE OVERVIEW

Welcome to Laboratory in Social Psychology! This course is designed to introduce you to a broad range of methodological tools and approaches that social psychologists employ in answering questions about human social behavior. We will consider the strengths and weaknesses of various methodologies, types of experimental designs, tools of data collection, and data analysis techniques using the statistics software SPSS. In addition, you will receive hands-on experience with several of these research approaches and data analysis techniques. After completing this course, you should be able to think and behave as a psychological scientist. Specifically, you should be able to 1) design and conduct research studies, 2) critically analyze and interpret research results, and 3) write an APA style research report.

PROGRAMMATIC STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES:

PSLO 1: Describe the major concepts theories, empirical findings, historical trends in psychology and their application to behavioral and mental processes.

PSLO 2: Describe the scientific approach to psychology and apply basic research methods in psychology, including research design, quantitative analysis, interpretation and reporting in APA format.

PSLO 3: Apply creative and critical thinking and employ skeptical inquiry to addressing issues and solving problems related to psychological phenomena.

PSLO 4: Demonstrate the ability to independently locate, identify, and critically evaluate scholarly literature in the discipline of psychology.

PREREQUISITES:

You must have earned a “C” or better PSYC 100, PSYC 220, PSYC 230, AND PSYC 332. It is recommended, however, that you take this course if you have earned a “B” or better in these prerequisite courses. Previous experience preparing spreadsheets and analyzing data using SPSS is recommended. To successfully complete this course, it is necessary for you to use PsycARTICLES, PsycINFO, and/or other electronic databases to find relevant research articles.
WHAT YOU CAN EXPECT FROM CLASS

CLASS FORMAT:
One half of class meetings will be comprised of “interrupted” lectures and the other half will be hands-on activities, labs, and discussions. During interrupted lectures, the instructor will cover key concepts in the course and invite students to ask questions, discuss contentious issues, and engage in small active learning activities. Activities will give you the opportunity to work on class assignments with the help of the instructor and teaching assistant. The labs will be more structured and will be accompanied by a guided lab handout to work through in pairs. Finally, discussions represent an opportunity to read, critically evaluate, and discuss empirical research articles in social psychology. It is especially important for you to engage with these hands-on portions of the course; although participation is not graded in this course, active participation is required to perform well on assignments.

CLASS EXPECTATIONS:
Come prepared. Complete all readings prior to lecture and come to class after thinking about the material. Bring your textbook and be prepared to take notes. Check Cougar Courses regularly.

Contribute. Come to class prepared with questions from the readings. All questions will be respected. Please, share your unique perspective with the class! It is an opportunity to demonstrate your competence, help clarify the material for others, and promote an engaging classroom environment.

Be respectful. People relate to psychological theories and concepts in different ways. Please remain open and respectful to alternative perspectives of the course material. Use reason and evidence to challenge ideas presented in this class.

Minimize distractions. You may use laptops/tablets in this class. For each class Dr. Berry will share a Google Doc with the class prior to lecture as a way to crowdsource notes and create an interactive learning environment. Do not surf the web, check your email, Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, IM, Snapchat, etc, during class. While these great activities are only few clicks away, they will not help you or your neighbors accomplish the course objectives. Please be mindful of your classmates when using your computers.

COURSE POLICIES:
Academic integrity. Academic dishonesty is a bad scene; don’t go there. All assignments must represent your own work. However, in doing lab assignments it will be useful (and in some cases necessary) to confirm your logic, phrasing, and formatting of Part 3 with classmates and Dr. Berry – just make sure you write your assignments individually. If you have any questions about what constitutes academic dishonesty (e.g., plagiarism), please ask me.

Meeting course requirements. Generally, the only reasons I consider legitimate for missing a class or assignment deadlines are: conference attendance, medical illness (appropriate documentation required), or personal/family emergencies that require you to leave school. Oversleeping, heavy work load, forgetfulness, assignment disappearance (e.g., computer meltdowns), and alien abduction will not be considered legitimate failures to meet course requirements. Late assignments will be accepted with a 20% deduction from the point total, and should be turned in during the following class. Assignments turned in after this date will receive a grade of 0. This standard is designed to prevent you from getting behind in your work. Excused assignments with appropriate documentation, will be assessed on a case-by-case basis, but should be rare—instances of illness, accidents, etc., not from failure to budget enough time to get the assignment completed. At the point of a second late assignment at any time during the semester, I will arrange a meeting with you to discuss this matter.
**Make-up exams.** You are expected to take each exam as listed on the schedule of topics. Make-up exams will be available only for those students with legitimate, documented excuses, with arrangements made prior to the scheduled exam date. An exception to this rule would be something like you got into an accident on your way to school that would preclude you from getting in touch with me in advance.

**RESOURCES:**

**Writing Requirement.** As stated in the course catalog, all CSU students must demonstrate competency in writing skills as a requirement for graduation. This requirement mandates that every course at the university must have a writing component of at least 2500 words (approximately 10 pages). The writing requirement in this course will be satisfied through lab reports, discussion questions, a research proposal, and a full-length APA-style empirical manuscript. Need help writing? Visit the [WRITING CENTER](#).

**The Psychology Academic Resource Lab (PARL).** is located in SBSB 1206 and is available for one-on-one tutoring help in statistics. Check their website for the hours that the lab is staffed at [PARL WEBSITE](#). Their schedule has also been posted in Cougar Courses. PARL is a resource for all undergraduate students in psychology and the social sciences. The purpose of the PARL is to provide academic support for enhancing quantitative, computing, writing, biological, and research methodology skills that are essential to psychology. The PARL also offers a variety of specialized computer programs and tutorials on statistics, research methods, psychometrics, and the biological bases of behavior.

**Statistics Help.** Psychology graduate students staff the lab, which will be available particular hours during each semester on a drop-in basis. The graduate students also provide individual attention for academic consultation. Finally, several workshops are held each semester that include writing APA style papers and how to apply to graduate school. You can also check out the Statistics Help website in the CSUSM Psychology Department: [STATISTICS HELP](#)

**Accommodations for Students.** Students with disabilities who require reasonable accommodations must be approved for services by providing appropriate and recent documentation to the Office of Disabled Student Services (DDS). This office is located in Craven Hall 4300, and can be contacted by phone at (760) 750-4905, or TTY (760) 750-4909. Students authorized by DSS to receive reasonable accommodations should meet with me during my office hours in order to ensure confidentiality. Should you have any questions about services provided through Disabled Student Services, please call 760-750-4905 or go to [http://www.csusm.edu/dss/handbooks/student_book.html](http://www.csusm.edu/dss/handbooks/student_book.html)

**HOW YOU WILL BE EVALUATED**

You will be evaluated in six ways in this course: (1) four brief empirical lab reports, (2) three sets of discussion questions, (3) two exams, (4) one research proposal, (5) one APA style empirical manuscript, (6) and three group activities.

**LAB REPORTS:**

On weeks in which Wednesday classes are referred to as “Lab,” the instructor will provide you with a lecture on performing a statistical analysis in SPSS, and you will perform that analysis on data posted on cougar courses. The following week, you will turn in a written (2-3 page) report of your findings, including title page, introduction, methods, results, discussion, and reference(s) sections. Please see the Lab Reports Handout and Grading Rubric on Cougar Courses for more details. There will be four lab reports worth 25 points each.
DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:
On weeks in which Wednesday classes are referred to as “Discussion,” each student is asked to contribute two discussion questions based on each set of weekly readings. These questions are meant to focus your thinking and guide our in-class discussions. Your objective in this assignment is to critically evaluate one or more of the empirical papers that are assigned for that week. You will post your discussion questions in a forum available on cougar courses. They are due by 11:59 PM on Tuesdays prior to our the discussion class. This will allow the instructor and your peers enough time to read over the questions before we discuss them. There are four discussion days total and each set of questions you turn in is worth 25 points. Please see the grading rubric below for details about how discussion questions are graded.

Discussion Question Grading Breakdown:

23 - 25 Points: great! Questions were very relevant to a class concept, insightful, and critically evaluated the methods, results, and/or claims of one or more of the reading.

21 - 22 Points: good; questions were very relevant to a class concept and critically evaluated the methods, results, and/or claims of one or more of the reading.

18 - 20 Points: average; questions were somewhat relevant to a class concept and evaluated the methods, results, and/or claims of one or more of the reading.

10 - 17 Points: below average; questions were not relevant to any of the discussed topics and superficially evaluated the methods, results, and/or claims of one or more of the readings.

0 Points: did not turn in an entry on time.

GROUP ACTIVITIES:
On weeks in which Wednesday classes are referred to as “Activity,” students will complete in-class activities with their assigned groups. These activities include preparation of study materials for a field study and a lab-based experiment, peer reviewing, and a PowerPoint presentation. Each of these four lab activities accounts for 25 points toward your final grade. Please see Activity Rubrics on Cougar Courses for more details.

EXAMS:
The material in this course is acquired gradually because new material builds on previously learned concepts. It can be very difficult to cram for these exams. Thus, it is important to read your assignments before class and complete your work on time. You should also try to keep your notes and assignments clear, organized, and legible, as these resources may be valuable on exams and assignments. You will be given a study guide of topics that may appear on the exams and you will be informed about the structure of the exams one week prior to taking them. You may write on the study guide and bring it with you to the exam. This by no means indicates that the exams are easy—they will be fair but challenging. In fact, you should try to rely on minimal resources when taking the exams. Otherwise, you will spend too much time looking for information in the study guide and not finish the exam.

You will take two exams in this course. Exams will include multiple choice questions, but most of the test will include interpreting and expressing (in writing) what statistical results mean and critical evaluation of research
methodologies. Each exam is worth 200 points toward your final grade.

**APA-Style Empirical Manuscript:**

You will write two APA style papers in this class. The first paper will be a research proposal for a two-study project that we will complete later in the semester. The first study will be a field study and the second will be a laboratory-based experiment. This paper will include a title page, abstract, introductions, two brief interim study introductions, two methods sections, two expected results, and references sections. The second paper will expand on the first by adding two results sections (based on data that we collect as a class), two interim discussion sections, and a general discussion section. The proposal is worth 50 points toward your final grade, and the full-length manuscript is worth 250 points toward your final grade. You will also be expected to submit a rough draft and actively participate in the peer review lab as part of your grade. Although you will conduct most of this work in groups of 4-6 students, these papers are to represent your own work. The purpose of this project is to get you to think, talk, and behave as a psychological scientist. For more details about this project please see the APA Style Empirical Manuscript Guidelines and Rubric available on cougar courses.

**Grading System**

The table to the right details the total points available in this class. We believe that students improve with frequent, detailed, and fair feedback. Thus, your instructor and graduate student will grade assignments quickly but carefully before returning them to you. In general, you can expect an average of a one week turnaround on assignments. You can find your grades posted on the class website (Cougar Courses). Should you have any questions about your grades, Dr. Berry encourages you to share your concerns.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignment</th>
<th>Points</th>
<th>Percent</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4 Lab Reports</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>10%</td>
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<tr>
<td>4 Discussion Questions</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 Group Activities</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 Exams</td>
<td>400</td>
<td>40%</td>
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<tr>
<td>2 APA Style Papers</td>
<td>300</td>
<td>30%</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>1000</strong></td>
<td><strong>100%</strong></td>
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<th>Grade Distribution:</th>
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<tr>
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<td>900 – 939</td>
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<td>860 – 899</td>
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<td>800 – 829</td>
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<td>760 – 799</td>
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5
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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Assignment</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Time Due</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1/30</td>
<td>Lab Report I: Analysis of Variance</td>
<td>Does Winning the Lottery Make you Happier?</td>
<td>1:00 PM</td>
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<tr>
<td>2/6</td>
<td>Lab Report II: Chi-Square</td>
<td>Does Mindfulness Increases Prosocial Behavior?</td>
<td>1:00 PM</td>
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<tr>
<td>2/13</td>
<td>Lab Report III: Correlation &amp; Regression</td>
<td>Does Mindfulness Increase Prosocial Behavior?</td>
<td>1:00 PM</td>
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<td>2/20</td>
<td>Lab Report IV: Moderation</td>
<td>Effects of Personal Insults on Aggression among Males from a Culture of Honor</td>
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<td>2/27</td>
<td>Research Proposal</td>
<td>Does Social Class Predict Prosociality?</td>
<td>1:00 PM</td>
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<tr>
<td>3/5</td>
<td>Activity I: Materials for Field Study</td>
<td>Does Social Class Predict Prosociality?</td>
<td>1:00 PM</td>
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<tr>
<td>3/5</td>
<td>Exam I</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>3/17</td>
<td>Discussion Questions I</td>
<td>Coding and Experience Sampling</td>
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<tr>
<td>3/19</td>
<td>Activity II: Materials for Experiment</td>
<td>Does Social Class Predict Prosociality?</td>
<td>1:00 PM</td>
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<tr>
<td>3/24</td>
<td>Discussion Questions II</td>
<td>Social Neuroscience</td>
<td>11:59 PM</td>
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<td>4/7</td>
<td>Discussion Questions III</td>
<td>Responsible Conduct of Research</td>
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<td>4/14</td>
<td>Discussion Questions IV</td>
<td>Meta-Science</td>
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<td>4/28</td>
<td>Draft APA Style Empirical Manuscript</td>
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<td>5/5</td>
<td>Activity IV: Group Presentations</td>
<td>Does Social Class Predict Prosociality?</td>
<td>1:30 PM</td>
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<tr>
<td>5/7</td>
<td>Final APA Style Empirical Manuscript</td>
<td>Does Social Class Predict Prosociality?</td>
<td>11:59 PM</td>
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<td>5/15</td>
<td>Exam II (optional take home)</td>
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<td>5:00 PM</td>
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LECTURES AND ASSIGNED READINGS
*Readings are listed in the order that you should read them

A. Having and Testing Ideas

Week 1
Lecture 1/21/2020
Topics: course overview, creativity and the emergence of research ideas, philosophy of science and testing ideas.
Required Readings:

Recommended Readings:

Lab 1/23/2020
Topics: analysis of variance
Required Readings:

Week 2
Lecture 1/28/2020
Topic: does social class influence prosociality?
Required Readings:
Lecture 1/30/2020
Topic: chi-square


B. The Logic of Experimental Design

Week 3
Lecture 2/4/2020
Topic: experimental design and causality

Required Reading:

Recommended Readings:

Lab 2/6/2020
Topic: correlation and regression

Required Reading

Week 4
Lecture 2/11/2020
Topic: artifacts and bias

Required Reading:

Recommended Reading:

Lab 2/13/2020
Topic: statistical mediation

Required Reading:
Week 5
Lecture 2/18/2020
Topic: generalizability and rethinking the meaning of statistical results

Required Reading:

Recommended Reading:

Free Activity 2/20/2020
Topic: group discussions about research proposal, generating hypotheses, and thinking of ways to test them

C. Tools of the Trade

Week 6
Lecture 2/25/2020
Topic: scale and manipulation development

Required Readings:

Recommended Readings:

Activity 2/27/2020
Topic: development of field study protocol, operationalization of measures, creating run sheets

Required Readings:
None

Week 7
Exam Review 3/3/2020
Exam 1 3/5/2020

Week 8
Lecture 3/10/2020
Topic: field and quasi experiments

Required Readings:

Recommended Readings:


**Activity 3/12/2020**  
Topic: development of experimental protocol, creating informed consent and debriefing, designing manipulations and scales  
**Required Readings:**  
None

**Week 9**  
**Lecture 3/17/2020**  
Topic: experience sampling and observational methods  
**Required Readings:**  

**Recommended Readings:**  

**Discussion 3/19/2020**  
Topic: evaluating the quality of an experience sampling and observational methods  
**Target Articles:**  

**Week 10**  
**Lecture 3/24/2020**  
Topic: social neuroscience and genetics  
**Required Readings:**  

**Recommended Readings:**  


**Discussion 3/26/2019**

**Topic:** evaluating social neuroscience research on social contagion

**Target Articles:**


**D. Responsible Conduct of Research**

**Week 11**

**Lecture 4/7/2020**

**Topic:** responsible conduct of research

**Required Readings:**


**Recommended Readings:**


**Discussion 4/9/2020**

**Topic:** evaluating responsible conduct of research

**Target Articles:**


**Recommended Readings:**


2. **Important Read Showing that Data on Social Class and Unethical Behavior are Improbable** Francis (2012). Evidence that publication bias contaminated studies relating social class and unethical behavior. *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences, 109*(25), E1587-E1587.

Week 12  
Lecture 4/14/2020  
Topic: evaluating research topics with meta-science  
Required Readings:  

Discussion 4/16/2019  
Target Articles:  

E. The Cultural Matrix of Social Psychology

Week 13  
Lecture 4/21/2020  
Topic: does social psychology make a difference in our lives?  
Required Reading:  

Recommended Reading:  

Free Activity 4/23/2020  
Topic: analyzing field study and experimental data  
Required Readings:  
None
F. Presentations and APA Manuscripts

Week 14
Activity 4/28/2020
Topic: review peer’s APA style empirical manuscript
Required Readings:
None

Free Activity 4/30/2020
Topic: planning little SPSP talks
Required Readings:
None

Week 15
Activity 5/5/2020
Topic: little SPSP
Required Readings:
None

Exam 2 Review 5/7/2020
More Resources for Amusement, Inspiration, and Conducting Rigorous Science

Research Tools

Research Randomizer This web site is designed to assist researchers and students who want an easy way to perform random sampling or assign participants to experimental conditions. Sponsored by the Social Psychology Network.

A Power Primer Jacob Cohen’s 1992 American Psychologist article contains a useful table for determining the sample size needed for various statistical designs. See Table 2 in the article.

Threats to Internal Validity Tutorial This tutorial is a component of the courseware of the Psychology Centre of Athabasca University. It was authored by David Polson and colleagues at the University of Victoria and Athabasca University. In Part 1 of this tutorial, you are introduced to sources of threat to internal validity and examples. In Part 2, you are asked to classify the threats present in several hypothetical experiments.

Effect Size Calculator Lee Becker of the University of Colorado – Colorado Springs created this site for quick effect size computations.

General

Science The online version of the flagship journal of the American Association for the Advancement of Science. Daily news updates and some of the articles from the current edition of the journal are available.

Edge One of the coolest science sites on the web, with a good dose of psychology and psychology-relevant content.

Greater Good Magazine This online magazine sponsored by the University of California – Berkeley and disseminates positive psychology research to the public. Many positive psychologists are social psychologists by training, and this may be a good place to learn about ways to measure prosocial behavior.

Humor, Pseudoscience, and Academic Dishonesty

Ig Nobel Awards The Ig Nobel Prizes, presented annually by Harvard, honor scientists whose work “cannot or should not be reproduced. Ten prizes are given to people who have done remarkably goofy things—some of them admirable, some perhaps otherwise.” For example, the 2001 prize in physics went to a researcher who examined why shower curtains billow inwards. The award for medicine went to work on injuries due to falling coconuts. The psychology prize was won with an “ecological study of glee in small groups of preschool children.”

Annals of Improbable Research There is some wild stuff here; these folks issue the Ig Nobel Prizes

Retraction Watch This web site tracks academic articles that have been retracted for various reasons.