

Office hours Mon, Wed & Fri 12:30-1:20 in 230 Burnett Hall & Zoom

Course Materials

- There are no required textbooks, workbooks, APA manual, etc
- All course materials are available on-line at psych.unl.edu/psycrs
- You will be required to purchase a copy of SPSS: Standard Grad Pack, or make sure you have sufficient access to the package to complete your Laboratory Homework assignments completely and on time (don't worry about SPSS until the second portion of the course and lab – we'll strategize about it together then)

Introduction to the Course

In Psychology 350 you will learn about two important skill sets: 1) the ability to design, complete, interpret, and report empirical research to test hypotheses derived from Psychological theory or its application, and 2) the ability to critically evaluate research produced by others and to propose changes in the design, analysis, or interpretation of it.

You might not be planning a career as a research psychologist, and many professional psychologists do not themselves contribute to the research literature. However, all psychologists must be competent "consumers" of the psychological research literature in their area of expertise, whether it is clinical, counseling, consulting, educational, law-psych, I/O, human resources, human factors, or some other area of psychology.

Also, most jobs held by professional psychologists require a substantial amount of data analytic skill and report writing ability, whether it is to document decision making, obtain funding, to provide evidence for the efficacy of service delivery, or to contribute to the professional literature.

In addition, the ability to produce competent, theoretically relevant empirical research is usually the "ticket for admission" to a career as a professional psychologist. Completion and presentation of your own independent research (say, an Honors Thesis or presentation/poster at a student research conference) is often helpful evidence that you can "do research" when applying to graduate school. Most Ph.D. programs require at least two empirical research projects – the Master's thesis and the Ph.D. dissertation.

Identifying You

You are much more than just a number! However, there are two "numbers" that will be used to identify you at in this class. They are your UNL ID#, the 8-digit number that is on your UNL ID card, and your Blackboard login. You are not to use your Social Security Number at any time to identify yourself in this class or the laboratory! Any time you are asked for "a number" you must use your 8-digit UNL ID# or your Canvas login. For example, you will use one of these as your password for the on-line grade book.

While we're on the subject... Remember that there are around 170 of you, only one of me, and I have a lousy memory. Help me out, please?!? Wave to me if you see me on or off campus; if you have a moment, walk up and introduce yourself (several times). Do something in or out of class that I'll remember (keep it legal, ethical, & polite)!!! Drop by office hours, even if you have nothing in particular that you need...

A Moment of Honesty

What you will learn in this course is the "common sense of the discipline of Psychology." Everybody who engages in psychology – theoretical or applied, academic or professional – uses these principles and processes every day. And everything else that you learn while getting your major is based on these principles and procedures! I think that understanding how psychologists acquire "new knowledge" and how they evaluate "new procedures" is the coolest thing there is and the most important part of a Psychology major's education. I will try desperately to infuse this enthusiasm and passion into your soul during the semester. No matter what you have planned for your future, or how much those plans change, a practicable knowledge of this material and these skills will increase your chances for success – I really believe that! Here we go!!!

Specific Course Goals

By the completion of this course you should be able to:

1. Critique (i.e., identify and evaluate the components of) a summary of a research project, including: the purpose and research hypotheses, the sampling and subject assignment procedures, IV manipulation and DV measurement procedures, confound control, and the statistical analyses, and their interpretations.
2. Generate original and meaningful research, including the details of: purpose, hypothesis, research methodology, data collection, and statistical analysis procedures.
3. Complete data collection and collation procedures based upon the research design.

4. Select and perform the appropriate statistical analyses based upon the explicit research hypotheses and/or the questions and comparisons implicit in the research design and variable set.
5. Employ a computer statistical package to perform analyses of experimental data, including how and when to augment that package with hand-calculated statistical analyses.
6. Communicate the purpose, hypotheses, procedures, data, analysis results, and interpretations of a research project using the conventional written format and style (i.e., APA-style papers).

Sections of the Course

The expected sections of the course (things could change) are:

1. Research Hypotheses, Validity & Research Designs
2. Basic Bivariate Data Analysis
3. Cooler Research Designs & Data Analysis
4. Multivariate Research Designs and Data Analysis

Course Grade

Your course grade will be based upon: **three unit Exam scores (50% - 12% each for Unit 1, 2 & 3 Exams & 14% for Unit 4 Exam)**, **online assignments (10% - average of "Green Things" & "Pink Things")**, **laboratory assignments (In-Laboratory & Take-Home, 20%)**, **laboratory research project (literature review, research reports, poster & presentation, 20%)**.

Letter grades generally will be assigned using the usual decades: "A" = 100-90%, "B" = 89-80%, "C" = 79-70%, "D" = 69-60%, "F" = <60%. "Plus" grades generally will be given for %s in the ?7-?9 range of each decade and "minus" grades generally will be given for %s in the ?0-?1 range. For example, 93% = A, 91% = A-, 86% = B and 87% = B+.

Please note: A "C" is the minimum grade for this course to count toward a Psychology major (a "C-" will not count and the course will have to be retaken).

Please note: You cannot receive a passing grade in the class unless you complete all of the take-home laboratory assignments, both the lecture and laboratory final exams, and the 12- credit research participation requirement.

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Please note: Consideration of "Withdraw" and "Incomplete" grades will be according to the guidelines provided in the *Undergraduate Bulletin* and the *Schedule of Classes*

How Psyc350 fits into ACE Outcome(s)

SLO10: Generate a creative or scholarly product that requires broad knowledge, appropriate technical proficiency, information collection, synthesis, interpretation, presentation, and reflection.

Research Paper: Students will submit a major research paper in which they introduce the topic by connecting their research to reports that have been published in the scientific literature, describe the research methods, report the results including appropriate statistical analyses, and discuss the implications of the findings in light of other research on that topic.

Poster: Students will construct a poster in the format typically used in scientific conferences. The research that appeared in the research paper will be "packaged" in the very different format required for poster presentations.

Reinforcements

Writing

Writing will be reinforced by means of several reports submitted as required projects in the laboratory, and by the final research paper.

Mathematics and Statistics

Mathematics and Statistics will be reinforced throughout the semester as students learn to identify appropriate statistical tests to be used in particular research situations. Students will learn some of the mathematical groundwork for statistical tests, but more importantly they will learn the pros and cons of various tests and whether their assumptions are met in certain applications. Students will learn to compute statistical tests using common statistical software packages, and how to interpret the results.

Critical Thinking

Critical thinking will be reinforced by means of reading research reports to identify the authors' research designs, evaluate the validity of their measurements, and critique the appropriateness of their conclusions in light of the data.

Exam Re-takes, Make-ups, and On-Line Examinations

All lecture examinations will be taken on-line using the Mobius system that is embedded in Canvas. For testing in the DLC you will need to bring your UNL ID with you; they really will send you away if you don't have your card. When the Testing Center is open changes across days and sometimes across times of the semester, so be sure to double check when you are planning your schedule.

Any examination taken during the scheduled interval may be "re-taken" one time and the better score of the two will count towards your final grade. There will be no exam "make-ups". If you miss an exam, your score will be 0% and you may re-take the exam. This means that if you miss an examination date you will have only one chance to complete that exam (the re-take). Thus, you are NOT encouraged to procrastinate and take only the re-take.

Elaborate, redundant systems are used to administer, monitor, and record your work. Not a single exam has been lost during the years I've used these systems. However, students occasionally delete their own work, usually by not following instructions carefully. If an exam you are certain you've taken can not be found, you will be required to re-take that exam.

Lecture Homework

There will be lots of homework during this class. Specifically, the homework is designed to make me more useful to you! The various kinds of homework give you an opportunity to "try out" the material and procedures and to assess your understanding of them. Then, you can ask about specific things that you don't understand in a timely fashion, either in class or by coming to office hours. The idea is to not wait until right before (or worse yet, right after) the exam to discover what you do and don't understand!

The majority of these activities are conducted on-line providing you immediate feedback as well as a way to repeat the activities to improve your understanding of the material. There are three types of Maple TA (MTA) assignments: 1) *MTA Prelude Exercises* are designed to familiarize you with some of the terms and concepts that will be central in the upcoming lecture – these exercises should be completed before the lecture during which that topic is presented, 2) *MTA Homework Assignments* are designed to give you practice with concepts, techniques, and procedures covered in the lecture – these exercises should be completed as soon as possible after the lecture about that topic is presented, and 3) *MTA Terms Assignments* are designed to give you practice with key vocabulary covered in the lecture -- these exercises should be completed after that topic is presented.

Each *Prelude Exercise, Homework Assignment, and Terms Assignment* is worth 10 points. The best thing is to finish the exercise before the next class. Each class usually builds upon previous classes, so the better you know the earlier material, the more the lectures that build on them will help you. Our research over the past eighteen years has clearly demonstrated that those who complete and perform well on homeworks get better exam grades, better laboratory assignment grades, and, consequently, better grades in the course.

Please note: If you have questions about "lab stuff" you should contact your lab TA. Since they will be grading your work, their opinion is the most important! If you have difficulty with any assignment associated with the lecture or exams – whether conceptual or with the on-line systems – you should contact me (email is best because it automatically times and dates your correspondence), but you should be willing to call me at home if you're stuck (402 486-4556). All my kids are away at college or grad school, so polite & purposeful inquiries are welcome! Sometimes you'll ask for "timely" help and sometimes you will put things off, be busy with other things, or somehow get behind. You should ask for help even if you are woefully behind for no defensible reason! Here's the point... ask for help when you need help, as soon as you realize you need help and keep asking for help until things make sense and you are performing well!

Attendance: Yours – You are responsible for all of the information, materials, assignments, due dates, etc. that are presented in class meetings, laboratory meetings, on the class and laboratory web pages, or on Canvas, including any changes that are made. Attendance is not required, but I think I put on a pretty good show and that the lectures will help you perform better on examinations and in the laboratory. Some absences are unavoidable, and I will help you to "recapture" missed material (usually by suggesting reading you should do, audio files you should listen to, or encouraging you to get notes and other information from other students). If an absence can be anticipated, I can often be of greater help. **Mine** – because of various commitments (typically, attending professional conferences and a bit of statistical consulting – where most of the stories come from!), I may be gone. When this happens the substitute will usually be one of the graduate students who is particularly skilled with the material being covered.

Course Workload and Suggestions

Little of the material in this course is difficult, but the difficulty of the course comes from the sheer amount of material and the need to remember and apply large portions of it at any one time. For some of you, this will be the last formal presentation of this information you ever receive. For others, this is your best opportunity to prepare yourself for the rigorous and demanding training you will receive in graduate or professional school. With these things in mind ...

- **You should expect to "do something" for each class and laboratory meeting.** It may be reading, homework, preparing for exam reviews, etc. Sometimes this will require only two or three hours, sometimes more.
- While the "proficiency system" (re-takes and re-writes to improve your grade) allows you to re-do exams and assignments, time will be a limiting factor. You should try to get it right the first time, and only rely upon "do overs" when your best efforts are insufficient. Don't hope that an unprepared "do-over" guarantees an improved score.
- I suggest that you do not take this course as part of a "really busy semester". While I realize that you have other classes and other commitments beyond schoolwork (i.e., "a life"), a considerable commitment of time and energy will be required to take full advantage of the learning opportunity provided by this course and get the A to prove it.
- **Plan to make this course "part of your life" for the next few months!** Think about the material daily. Figure out ways to apply the skills you are learning to any research you are doing, any other classes you may be taking, and everyday life. The skills used to plan and/or evaluate a psychology experiment are the same ones used to consider any evidence-based claim (for example, when you learn to apply these principles, you'll never think about arguments or TV commercials the same way again!!)

Academic Honesty: The consequences for cheating on any examination or quiz, or any plagiarism (e.g., the use of unreferenced material or the substantial use of other's work) in any laboratory writing assignment) may be: 1) failure in the course, and 2) referral of the matter to the office of Student Life for possible action by the Judicial Board as provided for in the UNL Student Handbook.

The issue of academic dishonesty for homework and laboratory assignments is somewhat less clear, and requires more of an explanation. The purpose of the homework and many of the laboratory assignments is to give you a chance to practice various skills (reading, interpreting, computing, and writing). Thus, it makes good sense for you to work together with other members of your class. **However, the final product you submit must be your own work and in your own words.**

An example or two should help: You are strongly encouraged to get together with your classmates to determine the components of a good definition for the terms which are part of the first several homework assignments. However, when you write your answers on the homework sheets, put them in your own words, and use your own examples. Similarly, you will probably find it useful to get together and discuss how to best incorporate the information from a set of laboratory readings into the Introduction of an assigned paper, and you are encouraged to do so. However, when you write that introduction do your own writing.

If there is evidence of dishonesty on any homework or laboratory assignment (including exact or very similar phrasing, order of topics, examples, computational examples, patterns of mistakes, etc.) your TA and I will decide whether to address the dishonesty by giving you the opportunity to re-do the homework assignment or to fail you in the course and/or refer of the matter to the office of Student Life for possible action by the Judicial Board as provided for in the UNL Student Handbook.

Here's the thing!

There is much we are supposed to accomplish in this course ! Not really enough time to do it! And the current "troubles" don't make things easier! What you need from me is support! Lectures, zooms, videos, websites, powerpoints, audio files, handouts and all that are provided to help, but sometimes what you will really need is a moment with me to get something explained so that you "get it"!! So, when you need help – ask for it! Content, schedules, assignments, things away from this class... If you need something, please ask. There are going to be office hours M-W-F in person in 230 Burnett, or by Zoom. And don't forget email (cgarbin@unl.edu – please, not Canvas Notifications) Give me a shot at helping, please! And, less-than-timely requests are also very welcome! Sometimes we get behind and can waste huge amounts of time trying to "recover on our own" when a couple reminders or a couple questions answered will get you on your way so you are "spending time" not "wasting it"! Ask! Please!

Here are good places to learn about the (tons of) details that are supposed to be represented in the syllabus!

The instructions and help for faculty (let's go right to the source)!!

https://canvas.unl.edu/courses/51131/pages/drafting-your-syllabus-and-sample-policy-statements?module_item_id=839947

Attendance:

<https://registrar.unl.edu/academic-standards/policies/class-attendance/>

Students who are sick or who are engaging in self-quarantine in accordance with guidance from the Lincoln-Lancaster County Health Department or their health care professional should not physically attend in-person classes. They must notify the instructor of their absence and must still meet the stated engagement expectations of the course, and they must adhere to the usual codes of conduct and rules of academic integrity that remain in place. For students who are absent for these reasons, we ask instructors to be flexible with any attendance policies they may have for their courses. Again, students in this situation must still fulfill the engagement expectations of their classes and should follow the stated guidelines for their courses in communicating with their instructors and staying current in the coursework. If the majority of the course work is completed but the absence makes it impossible for the student to adequately complete all course requirements, a grade of incomplete may be an appropriate option. Note, however, that if the student has not already completed most of the graded work for the course, then a late withdrawal would be more appropriate than an incomplete.

Services for Students with Disabilities

The University strives to make all learning experiences as accessible as possible. If you anticipate or experience barriers based on your disability (including mental health, chronic or temporary medical conditions), please let me know immediately so that we can discuss options privately. To establish reasonable accommodations, I may request that you register with Services for Students with Disabilities (SSD). If you are eligible for services and register with their office, make arrangements with me as soon as possible to discuss your accommodations so they can be implemented in a timely manner. SSD contact information: 117 Louise Pound Hall; 402-472-3787.

Counselling and Psychological Services

<https://caps.unl.edu/>

<https://resilience.unl.edu/big-red-resilience-well-being>

UNL offers a variety of options to students to aid them in dealing with stress and adversity. [Counseling and Psychological & Services \(CAPS\)Links to an external site.](#); is a multidisciplinary team of psychologists and counselors that works collaboratively with Nebraska students to help them explore their feelings and thoughts and learn helpful ways to improve their mental, psychological and emotional well-being when issues arise. CAPS can be reached by calling 402-472-7450. [Big Red Resilience & Well-BeingLinks to an external site.](#) (BRRWB) provides one-on-one well-being coaching to any student who wants to enhance their well-being. Trained well-being coaches help students create and be grateful for positive experiences, practice resilience and self-compassion, and find support as they need it. BRRWB can be reached by calling 402-472-8770.

Classroom Climate

Because the topics in this course may be emotionally charged or challenging for class members, I hope we can create an environment that is both intellectually productive and supportive for all. I realize there might be days when class members may choose to be silent. Beyond verbal participation, your active and supportive listening is also an important and valuable form of participation. I hope that we will continuously reflect upon our class processes so that we can build an inclusive intellectual community where all feel valued and supported in their learning.

This will be really important for us! The description of each “sample” and “represented population” will involve, at a minimum a description of the “age, race & sex” of participants. Each of those is a whole topic in itself! We have to be able to talk forthrightly about these topics, to explore the history, current approaches and likely future of these “descriptors”!! And there will be several other sensitive parts – ethics, researcher motivations, etc. So, we gotta find, as a group, a balance between “comfort & coverage”. Be sure to let me know when we’re bumping up against one or the other! Here’s a thoughtful bit recently written by the Chair of psych, “The pandemic and our current political polarization mean that stress is high for everyone. We obviously can’t change that but showing empathy and compassion for each other can help. Listen to one another, be aware of other people’s needs, and cut each other slack.”

Face Coverings

As of July 17, 2020 and until further notice, all University of Nebraska–Lincoln (UNL) faculty, staff, students, and visitors (including contractors, service providers, and others) are required to use a facial covering at all times when indoors except under specific conditions outlined in the COVID 19 face covering policy found at: <https://covid19.unl.edu/face-covering-policy>. This statement is meant to clarify classroom policies for face coverings:

To protect the health and well-being of the University and wider community, UNL has implemented a policy requiring all people, including students, faculty, and staff, to wear a face covering that covers the mouth and nose while on campus. The classroom is a community, and as a community, we seek to maintain the health and safety of all members by wearing face coverings when in the classroom. Failure to comply with this policy is interpreted as a disruption of the classroom and may be a violation of UNL’s Student Code of Conduct.

Individuals who have health or medical reasons for not wearing face coverings should work with the Office of Services for Students with Disabilities (for students) or the Office of Faculty/Staff Disability Services (for faculty and staff) to establish accommodations to address the health concern. Students who prefer not to wear a face covering should work with their advisor to arrange a fully online course schedule that does not require their presence on campus. Students in the classroom:

1. If a student is not properly wearing a face covering, the instructor will remind the student of the policy and ask them to comply with it.
2. If the student will not comply with the face covering policy, the instructor will ask the student to leave the classroom, and the student may only return when they are properly wearing a face covering.
3. If the student refuses to properly wear a face covering or leave the classroom, the instructor will dismiss the class and will report the student to Student Conduct & Community Standards for misconduct, where the student will be subject to disciplinary action.

Instructors in the classroom:

1. If an instructor is not properly wearing a face covering, students will remind the instructor of the policy and ask them to comply with it.
2. If an instructor will not properly wear a face covering, students may leave the classroom and should report the misconduct to the department chair or via the TIPS system for disciplinary action through faculty governance processes.

*Courses that have been granted an exception to the Face Covering Policy for pedagogical reasons are excluded. Exceptions to the Face Covering Policy are only granted after an approved health safety plan is developed.