

Research Methods in Psychology 1  
Psychology 2855G (530/531)  
Course Outline – Winter term 2017

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Instructor: Krista Macpherson  
Office: TBA; email [kmacphe3@uwo.ca](mailto:kmacphe3@uwo.ca)  
Office hours: By appointment.  
Class times: Mondays and Wednesdays 12:30 - 2:30 pm, BR302.  
***N.B. As explained below, the distinction between lab and lecture classes is not absolute.***  
Materials: Required: Myers, A., & Hansen, C. (2012). *Experimental Psychology (7<sup>th</sup> edition)*. Belmont, CA: Wadsworth.  
Optional: American Psychological Association (2010). *Publication manual of the American Psychological Association (6<sup>th</sup> ed.)*. Washington, DC: Author.

Students will also be expected to study supplemental readings, which will be distributed in class or made available via the course “Owl” site.

### Course Website and Emails

Registered students will see the course listed on the course Owl site. Information, handouts, PowerPoint slides, etc., will be posted to the course site. It is the student’s responsibility to check the site regularly. You are also required to have an active UWO email account and to use this or to link it to your regularly used email address. Official communications from the university are sent to students’ registered UWO email addresses. Not using UWO email is not considered an excuse for not receiving such notifications. You are responsible for checking the course Owl site and your UWO email on a regular basis for information including requirements for this course. Not receiving an announcement because your email is over quota or a message did not forward from your UWO email account, or because you did not check your email in a timely fashion will not be accepted as an excuse for missing a deadline or failing to complete a course responsibility.

If you need to ask questions it is better to talk to me, so come and see me at classes or in my office. You may also telephone the Brescia number given above (if I am not in, leave a message). If you choose to use email to contact me, please note that a reply may not be immediate – I do have other responsibilities, and you need allow time for the email to be received and dealt with.

### Course Description

This course will introduce students to the variety of ways research is conducted in psychology. Topics to be covered include the scientific approach, ethical issues in human and animal research, specific experimental and non-experimental designs, and APA writing style.

**Prerequisite(s):** At least 60% in a 1000 level Psychology course

**Antirequisite(s):** Psychology 2800E, Psychology 2820E

2 lecture hours, 2 laboratory hours, .5 course

## Learning Objectives

By the end of this course, among other skills, students should be able to:

- analyze different forms of publications on a given topic in psychology and communicate methodology and findings orally and in writing.

**Competencies: Communication; Critical thinking; Inquiry and Analysis**

- critique published work in psychology and formulate new research ideas based on this work.

**Competencies: Critical thinking; Inquiry and Analysis; Valuing**

- demonstrate knowledge of, and ability to apply, APA writing style.

**Competencies: Communication; Critical thinking; Inquiry and Analysis**

- recognize and compare experimental and non-experimental designs in psychology and appropriately interpret the findings resulting from those designs.

**Competencies: Communication; Critical thinking**

- demonstrate an understanding of (i) ethical issues arising regarding research with humans and with animals and (ii) how these issues are handled in a research setting.

**Competencies: Critical thinking; Inquiry and Analysis; Valuing**

Notes:

(i) "Students may vary in their competency levels on these outcomes. They can expect to achieve these outcomes if they honor course policies, attend classes regularly, complete all assigned work in good faith and on time, and meet all other course expectations of them as students" (Nilson, 2010, p.37).

(ii) For a full description of the Brescia Competencies, see:

<http://brescia.uwo.ca/academics/brescia-competencies/>

## Course Format

This course provides an introduction to the way in which research is planned, conducted, and communicated in psychology. In addition to providing instruction in research techniques needed for an understanding of scientific findings in psychology, it is expected that Psychology 2855F will contribute significantly to the development of critical thinking skills that students can apply to their future courses, careers, and everyday life. In particular, the skills gained will be foundational to written work and oral presentations required in upper-year psychology courses.

The course consists of a combination of class meetings and interactive labs – designated as per the Topic Outline page of this document. Note that the distinction between lab and lecture classes is not absolute and it is expected that information introduced in one setting will carry over to the other setting.

## Class meetings

Our class meetings will be a mixture of lecture, discussion, and in-class activities. Topics will generally follow the schedule given below, and both lecture and lab sessions will also introduce material that is not in the textbook. You are responsible for all of the material from class meetings and the material in the text. Any exceptions will be announced in class. If you miss class, you should arrange to borrow notes from another student. Any changes to the schedule will be announced in class and on Owl.

The lab is an important component of this course and is meant to give you hands-on experience with understanding research design and how it is implemented in psychology. You will gain experience working with primary research articles in psychology and communicating studies orally and in writing. You will also propose an original research study based on prior published work and complete ethics documents for the study.

## Evaluation

### Mark distribution

Mid-term exam	25 %
Final exam	25 %
Oral presentation	8 %
Research proposal	38 % (breakdown explained below)
Participation	4%

Evaluation consists of two components: (i) exams covering class material and (ii) lab work. Each is worth 50% of the course final mark. **N.B. Students must pass both the class component and the lab component to receive a final passing mark in the course.**

## Lecture component

### ***Exams (cover class material): 2 x 25%***

There will be two, non-cumulative exams in this course. The exams are based on lecture material and the course textbook (Myers & Hansen, 2012) and are equally weighted, so each contributes 25% to the final course mark (2 exams x 25% = 50% for class component). Exams may include questions in several formats, including multiple choice, fill-in-the-blank, definitions, and short answer. All exams are closed book with no aids allowed. Without exception, students are required to take both exams in the course in order to earn a passing overall mark. Make-up exams require approval by an academic counselor. Make-ups may consist of any of the above question formats or essay questions. All make-ups will be held during the common make-up exam sitting at Brescia (usually on the Friday afternoon of the week following the exam).

## Lab component

### ***Oral presentation: 8%***

The oral presentation will be performed in groups to be assigned by the instructor. Each group will pick a primary research article from the list provided to present to the class using PowerPoint. In addition, the group should note any shortcomings in the study's design and the interpretation by the authors and propose new research to address shortcomings and/or extend the work to a further research question of interest. Every member of the group will receive the same mark. Each member of the group must participate in both preparation and in giving the presentation itself (i.e., take part in the talk).

### ***Research proposal & Ethics documents: 38% total***

In the second half of the course, each student will individually generate an original research proposal of 6-8 pages. The proposal will follow APA style guidelines and build on published research on a topic in psychology of the student's choice. There will be time allotted during lab for feedback on your proposal from your peers. You will also prepare ethics documents for your study. All written work in this course must be submitted before the deadline to turnitin.com using the link on our course page on the Owl site.

The proposal will be completed in a series of assignments:

- 1. Statement of Topic & list of 5 relevant references** (with justification for their inclusion) = 3%
- 2. Introduction outline**, including brief discussion of proposed methodology = 10%
- 3. Final proposal**, including ethics documents = 25%

(Information continues →)

### ***Participation: 4%***

Students are expected to attend all lab meetings, although the participation mark is not an attendance mark per se. The mark is based on your active participation in lab and lecture activities, including asking questions and actively providing feedback during group oral presentations, and reporting on your progress and soliciting feedback for your proposal in small groups and with the instructor. Please note that “participation” is not simply talking a lot in class; it is providing *thoughtful* comments and feedback in a way that does not monopolize the discussion.

In addition, attendance at oral presentations by other groups is mandatory, as feedback and discussion of research are an integral part of the research process and skills you are expected to acquire in this course. Two participation marks (out of the possible four) will be deducted if you miss a lab when oral presentations are scheduled. Therefore:

- If you miss an oral presentation by your own group, you will receive a mark of zero for the oral presentation component of your lab mark.
- If you miss a lab session during which other student groups are presenting, two marks will be deducted from the participation component of your lab mark.

### **Accommodations**

For academic accommodation to be considered for any course component worth less than 10% of the final course grade, it is the responsibility of the student to approach the course instructor(s) in a timely fashion. Documentation may be required to be submitted to the academic advisor. If documentation is required, the request for accommodation will be decided by the academic advisor in consultation with the instructor. If documentation is not required, the instructor will make the final decision. The policies governing requests for academic accommodation for course components worth 10% or more of the course grade are outlined in the Academic Policies section included at the end of the course outline. It is the student’s responsibility to be familiar with these policies and regulations.

In keeping with university regulations, failure to attend a test or exam **will result in a mark of zero**, unless documentary evidence of extenuating circumstances is provided. Social events, travel plans, vacations, misreading the test schedule or sleeping in are not legitimate reasons for missing a test. Only under special circumstances will a student be allowed to write a make-up test. The instructor must be notified of any such case as soon as possible, and the student request a make-up. If the instructor allows a make-up test, the student will be expected to write the test within a week or two after the missed test.

### **Late policy**

Due dates in this course will be strictly enforced. Work to be turned in (both hard copy when required and electronic copy to turnitin) is due at the start of our meeting (no later than 15 minutes after the start of class). Items that are submitted after the 15-minute mark will be considered late and subject to a 10% mark deduction.

For example, for a Wednesday due date:

Work submitted later than 15 min. beyond start of class on Wednesday or later that day: -10%

Work submitted Thursday: -20%

Work submitted Friday: -30%

Work submitted Monday: -60% (N.B. weekends count as 2 days!)

(Information continues →)

All work submitted after a meeting has ended should be taken to the late assignment (hard copy) drop-off box located outside the Dean's Office. This box will be cleared daily at 4 pm; anything submitted after 4 pm is considered the next day's date. Please note that use of the drop-off box should be considered a "last resort", not the primary way to submit assignments. As noted above, you are expected to submit assignments in class, on the due dates as per this course outline. Students should not submit late assignments to the Brescia welcome desk staff or staff at the Hive – it is not their responsibility.

**Accommodation for late work, missed exams, absence from your group's article presentation or absence from a class in which other groups are presenting their articles will only be provided with the approval of an academic advisor. There are no exceptions to this rule. Such accommodation must be requested before, on or near (within a few days of) the due date.**

**Reminder:** This course is designated as an essay course. Senate regulations for a half-year essay course include that "in order to pass the course, the student must exhibit some minimal level of competence in essay writing and the appropriate level of knowledge of the content of the course". As noted under "Evaluation" (above), students must pass both the lecture component and the lab component to receive a final passing mark in the course. It is your responsibility to ensure that you complete all required aspects of evaluation to pass both components of the course.

### **Senate Regulations**

Senate regulations require that students' attention be directed to the information regarding issues such as plagiarism and course antirequisites. See the policies and regulations pages at the end of this outline, and check the UWO calendar for further details. Again, it is your responsibility to familiarize yourself with any such regulations.

*Note: In Psychology you are expected to follow the American Psychological Society (APA) guidelines for writing and for acknowledgement of sources, and to use APA referencing format. Further information on use of APA style will be given in class. There is also a copy of the APA style manual on reserve in the Brescia library.*

Note that anything copied word-for-word, even a phrase, without acknowledgement of the original author and/or source is plagiarism – a serious academic offence. Copying would not be acceptable in a grade school, and is certainly not acceptable at the university level.

Please see also the UWO regulations on *Accommodation for Medical Illness - Undergraduate Students* in the Academic Handbook (available at <http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/handbook/appeals/medical.pdf>). These university regulations will be followed.

**PROVISIONAL Topic outline** - This listing is to provide an idea of when topics are scheduled to be covered, but over the course of the term we may move ahead of, or fall behind, the absolute dates.

**Psychology 2855F (530/531) 2016 - Topic outline**

Schedule subject to change, see Owl and announcements in class for updates.

<b>Date</b>	<b>Lec/Lab</b>	<b>Topic</b>	<b>Text Ch.</b>
Jan 9	Lecture	Overview/Scientific Method	1
11	<i>Lab</i>	Psychology as a Science	1
16	Lecture	Research Ethics	2
18	<i>Lab</i>	The Literature of Psychology; Assignment to groups	2
23	Lecture	Non-experimental designs	3
25	<i>Lab</i>	How to present an article (1 hr); PsychInfo tutorial in library computer lab. (1 hr)	3
30	Lecture	Surveys & Sampling	4
Feb 1	<i>Lab</i>	Group Meetings	4
6	Lecture	Correlational Research	5
8	<i>Lab</i>	<b>Article Presentations (8%)</b>	
13	Lecture	Correlational Research, continued; Res. Proposal requirements; Formulating Hypothesis	5 & 6
15	<i>Lab</i>	<b>Article Presentations (8%)</b>	
20	Lecture	<b>Reading Week—No Class</b>	
22	<i>Lab</i>	<b>Reading Week—No Class</b>	
27	Lecture	<b>Mid-term (25%) – in class Chapters 1 to 5, plus lectures</b>	
Mar 1	<i>Lab</i>	<b>Proposal topic &amp; list of 5 relevant articles due (3%); Outlining; Experimentation, part 1</b>	6, 7
6	Lecture	Experimentation, part 2	7
8	<i>Lab</i>	APA format; Plagiarism	
13	Lecture	Controlling variables	8
15	<i>Lab</i>	<b>Outline due (10 %); Small group study design discussions</b>	
20	Lecture	Basic between-subjects design	9
22	<i>Lab</i>	Ethics: Process and package requirements	9
27	Lecture	Why we need statistics	13
29	<i>Lab</i>	Proposal checklist	13
April 3	Lecture	<b>Research proposals &amp; Ethics packages due (25%); Course Debrief</b>	
5	<i>Lab</i>	Any remaining materials to be covered.	
<b>Final Exam period</b>	Date TBA	<b>Final Exam (25%) Chapters 6 to 9 and 13, plus lectures</b>	

**N.B.** Additional material may be distributed in class - for reading and/or in-class discussions.

## 2016-17 BRESCIA UNIVERSITY COLLEGE

### ACADEMIC POLICIES AND REGULATIONS

#### 1. POLICY REGARDING MAKEUP EXAMS AND EXTENSIONS OF DEADLINES

When a student requests academic accommodation (e.g., extension of a deadline, a makeup exam) for work representing 10% or more of the student's overall grade in the course, it is the responsibility of the student to provide acceptable documentation to support a medical or compassionate claim. All such requests for academic accommodation **must** be made through an Academic Advisor and include supporting documentation. Academic accommodation for illness will be granted only if the documentation indicates that the onset, duration and severity of the illness are such that the student could not reasonably be expected to complete her academic responsibilities. Minor ailments typically treated by over-the-counter medications will not normally be accommodated. Documentation shall be submitted as soon as possible to the student's Academic Advisor indicating the period of illness and when the student should be able to resume academic responsibilities. Students must submit their documentation along with a request for relief specifying the nature of the accommodation being requested no later than two business days after the date specified for resuming responsibilities. Appropriate academic accommodation will be determined by the Dean's Office in consultation with the student's instructor(s). Please note that personal commitments (e.g., vacation flight bookings, work schedule) which conflict with a scheduled test, exam or course requirement are **not** grounds for academic accommodation.

A UWO Student Medical Certificate (SMC) is **required** if a student is seeking academic accommodation on medical grounds. This documentation should be obtained at the time of the initial consultation with the physician/nurse practitioner or walk-in clinic. A SMC can be downloaded from: <http://www.westerncalendar.uwo.ca/2016/pg117.html> The student must request documentation sufficient to demonstrate that her ability to meet academic responsibilities was seriously affected. Please note that under University Senate regulations documentation stating simply that the student "was seen for a medical reason" or "was ill" is **not** adequate to support a request for academic accommodation.

Whenever possible, requests for academic accommodation should be initiated in advance of due dates, examination dates, etc. Students must follow up with their professors and Academic Advisor in a timely manner.

The full policy on requesting accommodation due to illness can be viewed at: [http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic\\_policies/appeals/accommodation\\_illness.pdf](http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/accommodation_illness.pdf)

#### 2. ACADEMIC CONCERNS

If you feel that you have a medical or personal problem that is interfering with your work, contact your instructor and Academic Advisor as soon as possible. Problems may then be documented and possible arrangements to assist you can be discussed at the time of occurrence rather than on a retroactive basis. Retroactive requests for academic accommodation on medical or compassionate grounds may not be considered.

If you think that you are too far behind to catch up or that your work load is not manageable, you should consult an Academic Advisor. If you consider reducing your workload by dropping one or more courses, this must be done by the appropriate deadlines (refer to the Registrar's website, [www.registrar.uwo.ca](http://www.registrar.uwo.ca), for official dates). You should consult with the course instructor and the Academic Advisor who can help you consider alternatives to dropping one or more courses. *Note that dropping a course may affect OSAP eligibility and/or Entrance Scholarship eligibility.*

The Dean may refuse permission to write the final examination in a course if the student has failed to maintain satisfactory academic standing throughout the year or for too frequent absence from the class or laboratory (<http://www.westerncalendar.uwo.ca/2016/pg130.html> )

### 3. ABSENCES

**Short Absences:** If you miss a class due to a minor illness or other problems, check your course outline for information regarding attendance requirements and make sure you are not missing a test or assignment. Cover any readings and arrange to borrow notes from a classmate. Contact the course instructor if you have any questions.

**Extended Absences:** If you have an extended absence, you should contact the course instructor and an Academic Advisor. Your course instructor and Academic Advisor can discuss ways for you to catch up on missed work and arrange academic accommodations, if appropriate.

### 4. POLICY ON CHEATING & ACADEMIC MISCONDUCT

Scholastic offences are taken seriously and students are directed to read the appropriate policy, specifically, the definition of what constitutes a Scholastic Offence, at the following Web site:

<http://www.westerncalendar.uwo.ca/2016/pg113.html>

Students are responsible for understanding the nature of and avoiding the occurrence of plagiarism and other academic offences. Students are urged to read the section on Scholastic Offences in the Academic Calendar. Note that such offences include plagiarism, cheating on an examination, submitting false or fraudulent assignments or credentials, impersonating a candidate, or submitting for credit in any course without the knowledge and approval of the instructor to whom it is submitted, any academic work for which credit has previously been obtained or is being sought in another course in the University or elsewhere. Students are advised to consult the section on Academic Misconduct in the Western Academic Calendar.

If you are in doubt about whether what you are doing is inappropriate or not, consult your instructor, the Student Services Centre, or the Registrar. A claim that "you didn't know it was wrong" is not accepted as an excuse.

The penalties for a student guilty of a scholastic offence (including plagiarism) include refusal of a passing grade in the assignment, refusal of a passing grade in the course, suspension from the University, and expulsion from the University.

#### **Plagiarism:**

Students must write their essays and assignments in their own words. Whenever students take an idea or a passage from another author, they must acknowledge their debt both by using quotation marks where appropriate and by proper referencing such as footnotes or citations. Plagiarism is a major academic offence (see Scholastic Offence Policy in the Western Academic Calendar).

All required papers may be subject to submission for textual similarity review to the commercial plagiarism detection software under license to the University for the detection of plagiarism. All papers submitted for such checking will be included as source documents in the reference database for the purpose of detecting plagiarism of papers subsequently submitted to the system. Use of the service is subject to the licensing agreement, currently between The University of Western Ontario and Turnitin.com.

#### **Computer-marked Tests/exams:**

Computer-marked multiple-choice tests and/or exams may be subject to submission for similarity review by software that will check for unusual coincidences in answer patterns that may indicate cheating. Software currently in use to score computer-marked multiple-choice tests and exams performs a similarity review as part of standard exam analysis.

### 5. PROCEDURES FOR APPEALING ACADEMIC EVALUATIONS

All appeals of a grade must be directed first to the course instructor. If the student is not satisfied with the decision of the course instructor, a written appeal signed by the student must be sent to the Department Chair. If the response of the department is considered unsatisfactory to the student, she may then submit a signed, written appeal to the Office of the Dean. Only after receiving a final decision from the Dean may a student appeal to the Senate Review Board Academic. A Guide to Appeals is available from the Ombudsperson's Office, or you can consult an Academic Advisor. Students are advised to consult the section on Student Academic Appeals under Academic Rights and Responsibilities in the Western Academic Calendar (<http://www.westerncalendar.uwo.ca/2016/pg112.html> )



## **6. PREREQUISITES AND ANTIREQUISITES**

Unless you have either the prerequisites for a course or written special permission from your Dean to enroll in it, you will be removed from the course and it will be deleted from your record. This decision may not be appealed. You will receive no adjustment to your fees in the event that you are dropped from a course for failing to have the necessary prerequisite(s).

Similarly, you will also be deleted from a class list if you have previously taken an antirequisite course unless this has the approval of the Dean. These decisions may not be appealed. You will receive no adjustment to your fees in the event that you are dropped from a course because you have taken an antirequisite course.

## **7. SUPPORT SERVICES**

The Brescia University College Registrar's website, with a link to Academic Advisors, is at <http://brescia.uwo.ca/academics/registrar-services/>. The website for the Student Development Centre at Western is at <http://www.sdc.uwo.ca/>. Students who are in emotional/mental distress should refer to Mental Health @ Western [http://uwo.ca/health/mental\\_wellbeing/](http://uwo.ca/health/mental_wellbeing/) for information including a complete list of options about how to obtain help.

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Portions of this document were taken from the Academic Calendar, the Handbook of Academic and Scholarship Policy and the Academic Handbook of Senate Regulations. This document is a summary of relevant regulations and does not supersede the academic policies and regulations of the Senate of the University of Western Ontario.