

CASPER COLLEGE COURSE SYLLABUS
PSYC 2000 Research Methods

Semester/Year: Fall 2015

Lecture Hours: 4

Lab Hours: NA

Credit Hours: 4

Class Time: Online

Days: Online

Room: N/A

Instructor's Name: Kim Talbott

Instructor's Contact Information: LH175 (office)

Office Phone: 307-268-3068

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Office Hours: MW, 10:00-11:50; TTh, 11:00-11:50; and by appointment.

Course Description: Introduces students to some of the methods of investigating psychological questions. Exposes students to various research strategies ranging from observational to experimental, using representative laboratory exercises, lectures, readings, films and demonstrations. Requires written and oral reports. Requires extra research time outside of class.

NOTE: The Casper College Addictionology / Psychology Programs have adopted the American Psychological Association [APA] Publication Manual as our official writing style for all written work in our courses.

Statement of Prerequisites: Prerequisites: an introductory course in psychology, completion of [ENGL 1020](#), [STAT 2050](#), [STAT 2070](#) or other four-hour statistic course with lab. Earned letter grade of "C" or better is required in each prerequisite course.

Goal: The goals of this course are to provide students with an opportunity to gain an understanding of the research process used in psychology, enhance critical thinking skills, as well as provide students with experience in designing, implementing, assessing, and reporting research. In doing so, students will be able to design their own research and be better able to evaluate and critique both scientific research and research reported in the popular media.

Outcomes: Through active participation in this course, students will be able to:

1. Demonstrate effective oral and written communication (using proper research terminology)
2. Use the scientific method
3. Solve problems using critical thinking and creativity
4. Use appropriate technology and information to conduct research
5. Use quantitative analytical skills to evaluate and process numerical data

Course Objectives: Students will think critically about psychological issues, acquire knowledge relating to conducting research with human participants, use technology, design, summarize, and assess research, perform statistical calculations, and effectively communicate information using appropriate research terminology.

Methodology: This course is fully online. If you have never taken a course through Moodle before, you should start by reviewing the “Student Handbook for Moodle”. A link to this manual is found on the Moodle homepage and the document is posted on the course homepage under “Start Here”. All material will be delivered through Moodle and any correspondence should also be done through Moodle. Online material and activities may include online PowerPoints, video segments, forum discussions, experiential activities, and independent research projects. Your feedback is valuable as the instructor uses course evaluations in determining course methodology.

Evaluation Criteria:

NIH Training (25 points): Students will complete the Protecting Human Research Participants short course developed by the National Institutes of Health. This course covers critical issues related to conducting research with human participants. Upon completion of the course (which includes four quizzes) students will receive a Completion Certificate. This completion certificate should be emailed to the instructor.

No late assignments without documentation

Statistics assignment (25 pts.): Students will analyze numerical data using basic statistical techniques to interpret the meaning of the data.

No late assignments without documentation

Research Prospectus (100 points): Students are required to select a psychological topic of interest to them and write a research proposal, or prospectus, in APA-format that will include an abstract, introduction/literature review (including your hypothesis statement(s)), methods section, and reference section. The proposal must include a *minimum* of 10 *peer-reviewed* articles or scholarly book references and should be between 7 to 11 pages in length (not including title page). While you will not be required to collect data for this project, you should write the prospectus so that you could conduct the experiment and report the results. From an applied stance, putting together a research proposal is the first formal step in conducting research and is mandatory for students in graduate programs requiring theses and dissertations. Research proposals are also required for grant applications. I would like for students to be exposed to this process so that they have a better understanding of the research process and can make informed decisions in selecting graduate programs (if attending grad school is a goal).

Speaking of graduate school, if you are interested in further research prospects you could have the opportunity to collect data and submit your project for possible presentation at a Rocky Mountain Psychological Association convention. The committees who select which students will be admitted to their graduate program view having presented research at a conference VERY favorably. Contact me if you would like more information.

No late assignments without documentation

Progressive Paper Reviews (50 points): To assist students in improving their scientific writing skills, three sections of the research prospectus (see above) will be turned in for grading and review *prior* to the completion of your prospectus. These progressive paper reviews are intended to expose students to the edit- revision process that is common in academic writing. Students are required to submit a reference list, an introductory section, and a methods section *that follow the APA writing guide*. Taken all together these three progressive papers account for 50 points.

- 1) **Reference List (10 pts.):** The references must be either scholarly books or peer-reviewed articles relevant to your research topic. Students could use either printed articles from a peer-reviewed journal in the library's holdings or the library's electronic databases (e.g., [PsycARTICLES](#), [ERIC](#), Medline Plus, PubMed). This section should be 1-2 pages in length.
- 2) **Introduction Section (20 pts.):** The introduction section provides the reader with some background information in the form of a literature review. So, the author basically summarizes the research that has been done (or not done or done poorly) in their field of interest thereby setting up their argument for why the study they are currently proposing should be done. Your introduction section must include a hypothesis and should be 3 to 4 pages in length.
- 3) **Methods Section (20 pts.):** In a nutshell, the methods section states how you are going to go about collecting your data and testing your hypothesis. This section should be 2-4 pages in length.

No late assignments without documentation

Exams (150 points total): There will be a total of four (4) exams based on textbook chapters, learning material posted on Moodle, activities, and videos. The exams may consist of multiple choice, short answer, and essay-style questions. Each exam is worth 50 points. *Three of the four exams* will count towards your final grade. The exam with the lowest score will be dropped. Since the exam with the lowest score is dropped-

No make ups will be allowed for any exam

Extra Credit: You can earn 30 points by participating in extra credit activities. The two ways to earn extra credit are through research participation during the term or completing three hours of service learning. More information about these opportunities will be provided on Moodle. In order to earn extra credit all other graded assignments must be turned in. These points are truly extra credit and points earned cannot be used in lieu of a required assignment.

Casper College may collect samples of student work demonstrating achievement of the above outcomes. Any personally identifying information will be removed from student work.

Final Grade Grading Rubric

% Points	Points	Letter Grade
90-100	315- 350	A
80-89	280-314	B
70-79	245-279	C
60-69	210-244	D
Below 60	<210	F

Required Text, Readings, and Materials:

Smith, R. A., & Davis, S. F. (2013). *The psychologist as detective: An introduction to conducting research in psychology (w/ MySearchLab access)*. (6th Ed.). Boston: Pearson.

Class Policies:

1. You are responsible for all assigned readings. While many topics will be covered in class, not all concepts from the readings will be covered. Nonetheless, students are responsible for all assigned readings.

2. You are responsible for turning in assignments on time. The course schedule includes the week that assignments are due. The specific date will be announced in class no later than one (1) week before the due date. Late assignments are not accepted without documentation.
3. It is your responsibility to log into Moodle at least four (4) times per week so that you are aware of critical due dates and any changes that have been made to the schedule. It is also your responsibility to let me know if you are having difficulty grasping any of the course material. I'm here to help.... but you've got to let me know that you need help.
4. Withdrawing from class: Students may withdraw from this class up to November 12th, the official withdraw deadline date. Students who continue the class into finals week may not withdraw from the class. It is the student's responsibility to withdraw. The Instructor will not initiate withdrawals.

Student Rights and Responsibilities: Please refer to the Casper College Student Conduct and Judicial Code for information concerning your rights and responsibilities as a Casper College Student.

Chain of Command: If you have any problems with this class, you should first contact the instructor to attempt to solve the problem. If you are not satisfied with the solution offered by the instructor, you should then take the matter through the appropriate chain of command starting with the Department Head/Program Director, the Dean, and lastly the Vice President for Academic Affairs.

Academic Dishonesty: (Cheating & Plagiarism) Casper College demands intellectual honesty. Proven plagiarism or any form of dishonesty associated with the academic process can result in the offender failing the course in which the offense was committed or expulsion from school. See the Casper College Student Code of Conduct for more information on this topic.

Official Means of Communication: Casper College faculty and staff will employ the student's assigned Casper College email account as a primary method of communication. Students are responsible to check their account regularly. This is also, where you will find course evaluation links during course evaluation periods.

ADA Accommodations Policy: If you need academic accommodations because of a disability, please inform me as soon as possible. See me privately after class, or during my office hours. To request academic accommodations, students must first consult with the college's Disability Services Counselor located in the Gateway Building, Room 344, (307) 268-2557, bheuer@caspercollege.edu. The Disability Services Counselor is responsible for reviewing documentation provided by students requesting accommodations, determining eligibility for accommodations, and helping students request and use appropriate accommodations.

Course Schedule (tentative):

WEEK	WEEK OF:	TOPIC & READING	ASSIGNMENT
1	8/24	Chapter 1: Psychological research and the research methods course	
2	8/31	Chapter 14: Writing and assembling an APA-format research report	
3	9/7	Chapter 2: Developing a good research idea and conducting an ethical project (Monday is Labor Day)	NIH Training (Thurs)
4	9/14	Chapter 3: Qualitative research methods	EXAM 1 [1,14, 2, 3] (Thurs)
5	9/21	Chapter 4: Non-experimental methods (Monday is President's Day)	Reference list (Thurs)
6	9/28	Chapter 5: Using the scientific method in psychology	
7	10/5	Chapter 6: Conducting a good experiment	
8	10/12	Chapter 7: Conducting a good experiment II	Mid-term Week -EXAM 2 [4, 5, 6, 7] (Thurs)
9	10/19	Chapter 8: Internal and external validity (Fall Break falls on Monday & Tuesday)	Introduction Section (Thurs)
10	10/26	Chapter 8: Internal and external validity Chapter 9: Using statistics to answer questions	
11	11/2	Chapter 9: Using statistics to answer questions (Friday is Advising Day)	Statistics Assignment (Thurs)
12	11/9	Chapter 10: Designing, conducting, analyzing, and interpreting experiments with two groups	-EXAM 3 [8, 9, 10] (Thurs)
13	11/16	Chapter 11: Designing, conducting, analyzing, and interpreting experiments with more than two groups	Methods Section (Thurs)
14	11/23	Chapter 12: Designing, conducting, analyzing, and interpreting experiments with multiple independent variables (Thanksgiving Break starts on Wednesday)	
15	11/30	Chapter 12: Designing, conducting, analyzing, and interpreting experiments with multiple independent variables	
16	12/7	Chapter 13: Alternative research designs	Prospectus (Thurs)
17	12/14	Final Exam Week	EXAM 4 [11, 12, 13]