

Eastern Kentucky University
Department of Psychology
Syllabus for Psychology 250, Information Literacy in Psychology
(CRN = 13471)
3 Credit Hours

Instructor: Dr. Jonathan Gore
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Office Hours: MWF 9-10 (or by appointment)

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Catalogue Course Description: Information literacy, reading, evaluating, summarizing scientific literature in Psychology; scientific writing (APA format); basic research terminology.

Prerequisites PSY 200 (or co-requisite). Completion of developmental reading and writing requirements.

Text

The following textbook will be used for this course:

- Mitchell, M. L., & Jolley, J. M. (2009). *Research design explained* (7th Edition). Belmont, CA: Thomson Wadsworth.
- **OPTIONAL TEXT:** *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association* (5th Edition).

The books should be available at the campus bookstore, and some used copies should still be available. Refer to the course schedule on page 3 for which chapter is assigned for each day. You will also be asked to read research articles for this class, which will be provided to you.

Student Learning Objectives

Welcome to Psychology 250! The purpose of this course is to provide the necessary information and practice for students, which includes:

1. General information literacy. *How this objective is evaluated: Exams, Self-reflection library assignments*
 - A. Students will be able to determine the nature and extent of information necessary for specific purposes.
 - B. Students will be able to access the information efficiently and accurately.
 - C. Students will be able to evaluate the information and its sources critically.
 - D. Students will be able to incorporate the information appropriately into the specific writing assignment.
 - E. Students will access and use information ethically and legally.
 2. Students will analyze the differences between common-sense, non-scientific approaches versus scientific approaches to knowledge. *How this objective is evaluated: Exams*
 3. Students will demonstrate the ability to read, analyze and summarize scientific literature in the field of Psychology.
 - A. Students will comprehend basic research terminology and content of APA-style entry-level journal articles in the discipline. *How this objective is evaluated: Article summaries/ analyses; Research proposals (Introduction sections)*
 - B. Students will analyze and integrate information from research articles to create research questions/predictions for future research. *How this objective is evaluated: Article summaries/ analyses; Research proposals (Introduction sections)*
 4. Students will evaluate research for internal, external and construct validity issues. *How this objective is evaluated: Exams*
 5. Students will demonstrate the skill to write reports in the style, process and format required by the discipline. *How this objective is evaluated: Research proposal.*
 6. Students will demonstrate knowledge of career opportunities available in the field of Psychology at the undergraduate and graduate levels. *How this objective is evaluated: Question-answer sessions in class; Reflective papers.*
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Evaluation Methods

Your grades will be based on four exams (25 points each; 100 points total), a cumulative final (35 points), two research proposals (25 points each; 50 points total), four article summaries (10 points each; 40 points total), four library assignments (5 points each; 20 points total), four career assignments (5 points each; 20 points total), and attendance (35 points). The total points in this course is 300. There will also be opportunities for extra credit. Keep track of how much you earn as we progress through the course. Your grade will be based on the ranges below (there will be no curves).

300-270 pts. = A 269-240 pts. = B 239-210 pts. = C 209-180 pts. = D 179-0 pts. = F

Exams (45%) + Papers (17%) + Summaries (13%) + Library/Career Assignments (13%) + Attendance (12%)

All students must earn $\geq 70\%$ in TWO COMPONENTS of the course: Exams and Papers. Earning less than 70% in any one component will result in a failing grade for the course, regardless of your scores on the other components. You will have extra credit opportunities if your work in the class does not reach the cut-off point.

Student Progress

I will keep an updated record of your grade after each assignment and exam and you may ask to see your grade at any point in the semester. I will not be able to inform anyone but you of your grade on any assignment or in the course.

I will update each person of their current course grade after each exam. You will also receive an update on your course grade prior to the final exam (during "dead week").

Attendance Policy

Your attendance is required in order to fully understand the course material. We will do many hands-on exercises and discussions that will enhance your understanding. Each day that is not an exam or a review day, you will be asked to sign-in to show that you are present. You are not allowed to sign-in for someone else who is not present. Your attendance is worth 1 point each day you sign-in.

Add/Drop and Withdrawal Deadlines

The last day to Add or Drop this course is **Sunday, August 30.**

The last day to withdraw from this course is **Friday, October 30.**

Please inform me if you plan to either drop or withdraw from the course.

Disability Statement

If you are registered with the Office of Services for Individuals with Disabilities, please obtain your accommodation letters from the OSID and present them to the course instructor to discuss any academic accommodations you need. If you believe you need accommodation and are not registered with the OSID, please contact the Office in Student Services Building Room 361 by e-mail at disserv@eku.edu or by telephone at (859) 622-2933 V/TDD. Upon individual request, this syllabus can be made available in an alternative format.

Academic Integrity Statement

Students are advised that EKU's Academic Integrity policy will strictly be enforced in this course. The Academic Integrity policy is available at www.academicintegrity.eku.edu. Questions regarding the policy may be directed to the Office of Academic Integrity. Students found guilty of an academic honesty violation will receive a 0 on the assignment in question. Violations could also result in a 0 in the course and/or a referral to the Academic Council. Academic dishonesty includes plagiarism, cheating, and co-responsibility (i.e., "anyone who knowingly assists in any form of academic dishonesty shall be considered as guilty as the student who accepts such assistance").

Official E-mail

An official ECU e-mail is established for each registered student, each faculty member, and each staff member. All university communications sent via e-mail will be sent to this ECU e-mail address.

Standards for Written Assignments

Students in all psychology courses are expected to use correct grammar, spelling and composition in written assignments. These elements of writing will be taken into consideration in grading all out-of-class writing assignments. If you would like free help with your writing, you may use the writing lab: Case Annex 173 (622-6191).

WHAT CAN YOU DO TO SUCCEED IN THIS COURSE?

1. STUDY. In order to succeed in most college courses you should allow a minimum of 2—3 hours outside of class for homework and study purposes for each hour spent in class. Thus, for this 3-credit course you need to allow 6--9 hours/week outside of allow yourself time to work through the study guide/homework assignments, understand the material and to develop the critical thinking skills that you will need in your professional lives.
2. STUDY GUIDES/HOMEWORK. Reviewing the study guides for exams and completing your homework assignments are your responsibility. You are asked to: (a) answer ALL of the questions on assignments and (b) ask for help if you do not understand. *Understanding ALL of the information on the study guides is the BEST way to prepare for exams.*
3. DEVELOP WRITING SKILLS. **WRITING IS A SKILL. Most students are not at the skill level of writing they should be, but it is not too late to learn.** If you are serious about writing well, you can learn to do it. Good writing takes practice and a willingness to accept feedback from others. I am willing to help you with your writing, but you may also get free help at the **Writing Lab: Case Annex 173 (622-6191)**.
4. EXAMS. Exams cover a lot of information so it is important that you understand ALL exam material. We will review for the exam the class period before the exam, and go over the answers the class meeting after the exam. If going through the exam does not answer all of your questions, please make an appointment with me to receive additional help. **I am always willing to help you understand any material. Please don't hesitate to ask.**
5. WORK WITH OTHERS. We learn best when we teach others. I will give you opportunities to work with other students and I encourage you to study with a partner and explain concepts to each other. This is a great way to determine what you do, and do not, know.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Exams

The unit exams will consist of a short-answer question (5 points), and 20 multiple-choice questions (1 point each). The cumulative final exam will consist of three short answer questions (15 points) and 20 multiple choice questions (1 point each). The class before these exams, we will have a review session, but you will receive a study guide before each exam (including the final). Because this course presents a lot of material, I suggest you begin reviewing your notes *before* the day of the review session. Each unit exam will only cover about two weeks of information (they are not cumulative), but the final will be cumulative. All material in this course is fair game to use (i.e., lectures, activities, books, articles), but you'll get some hints on the review day what will be on it and what won't be on it. We will go over the answers to the exams the class period after the exam date.

**IMPORTANT NOTE: YOU MUST RECEIVE AN AVERAGE OF
70% OR HIGHER ON EXAMS TO PASS THE COURSE**

You need to let me know if you are unable to take the exams *as soon as possible*. Otherwise, you need to make sure that you can attend class on each exam day (see Course Schedule).

If you miss an exam and have a legitimate, documented excuse, you need to contact me (622-1115, 116 Cammack) before exam answers are covered in class to make it up. **STUDENTS WHO DO NOT MAKE ARRANGEMENTS WITH ME REGARDING A MISSED EXAM WILL RECEIVE A SCORE OF ZERO ON THE EXAM.** To make-up an exam, you must present written verification from a physician or a professional. In special circumstances, you may be excused from an exam. These circumstances will also require written verification. For excused absences, a score will be calculated for your missing exam based on the average of your scores on the other exams. You may be excused from only one exam. If your situation causes you to miss two exams, you will receive an incomplete in the course.

Papers

This course requires you to write two research proposal papers, which will include a title page, an integrative literature review, and a hypothesis. The first proposal will be based on a common topic for the whole class, whereas the second proposal will be based on a topic of your choice. Both of these papers will be revised and resubmitted and **MUST BE TYPED**.

Note: Students are expected to use correct grammar, spelling and composition in the in-class assignments. These elements of writing will be taken into consideration in grading all in-class assignments. If you would like free help with your writing, you may use the writing lab: Case Annex 173 (622-6191).

Each of these proposals are worth 25 points. Each writing error (e.g., spelling, grammar) will result in a 1 point deduction from the paper, so it is a good idea to read over your papers thoroughly before turning them in.

**IMPORTANT NOTE: YOU MUST RECEIVE AN AVERAGE OF
70% OR HIGHER ON THE PAPERS TO PASS THE COURSE**

Article Summaries

You will be asked to complete 4 article summaries (10 points each; 40 points total). These will involve answering questions about the content, and evaluating the quality of the information presented. On the day the summary is due, we will have a discussion about the article, so you must read it before we discuss it. Refer to the assignment instructions for more details.

Library and Career Assignments

You will be asked to complete 4 assignments with the library staff and 4 assignments with the career services staff (5 points each; 40 points total). These will involve searching for specific information, and answering questions about the information you gathered. Refer to the Course Schedule for when these assignments will be completed (they will be due the same day). Specific instructions for each assignment will be provided for more details.

Attendance

Attending classes are extremely important so you are keeping up with the information. To insure that you are rewarded for doing so, you will receive 1 point for each class period you attend (not including unit exam review sessions or exam days). Although excused absences are still counted as an absence, you can make up the points by doing extra credit.

Extra credit

One of the articles you will summarize will be for the second research proposal you write. You will be asked, however, to read and integrate THREE articles into this second paper. For those of you interested in securing a good grade in the class, you will receive 10 extra credit points for summarizing and evaluating the other two articles (10 points each; 20 points total). Receiving all 20 points would boost your final grade more than 6%. Please refer to the Course Schedule for when these are due.

Outside Credits for Psychology Department

All students in PSY 200, 250, 291 and 301 are required to complete 5.0 hours of outside credits. This requirement is set by the Psychology Department. *Failure to complete all three hours by the due date set by the instructor will result in a one-letter grade reduction of the final course grade.* To fulfill outside credits for this class you are encouraged to participate in research projects. If you do not participate in enough research studies to fulfill the required 3 hours, you have the option of answering questions about students' research posters, which are available during finals week. *I encourage you to participate in some research in order to get ideas about your own future research projects.*

To receive credit for participating in research: Sign up for studies via the online system (see handout). The researcher will assign you credit in the computer once you participate. You will be asked to write a brief summary of what you experienced and what you thought about the study. **Please keep track of which studies you participate in (name of study, date, researcher),** just in case we have a computer glitch.

To receive credit for reading posters: *(Available the first day of finals week).* Complete the questions on the Poster Question Form, and give to the instructor. (Get forms from instructor) Each poster you review is worth 0.5 unit credits.

Course Outline

If this changes in any way, I'll let you know

Date	TOPIC	HOMEWORK
8/24	Introduction & Science	Read through the syllabus
8/26	Psychological Research Articles	Read Chapter 1
8/28	Theories & Hypotheses	
8/31	Types of Variables	
9/2	Types of Designs	
9/4	Generating Hypotheses	
9/9	Article #1 Discussion: Hypotheses, Design, Variables	ARTICLE #1 SUMMARY DUE
9/11	Review for Exam 1	
9/14	Exam 1	
9/16	Answers to Exam 1, Ethics	Read Chapter 2
9/18	External Validity: Generalization	
9/21	Construct Validity: Measurement	
9/23	Internal Validity: Causality	
9/25	NO CLASS	
9/28	Validity Issues in Designs	
9/30	Article #2 Discussion: Ethics and Validity Issues	ARTICLE #2 SUMMARY DUE
10/2	Review for Exam 2	
10/5	Exam 2	
10/7	Exam 2 Answers, Introduction to PsycINFO	Read Chapter 4
10/9	Library Day #1: Basics and Evaluating Websites	Advisor Form Deadline; Library #1 Due
10/14	Library Day #2: Sources of Information	Library Assignment #2 Due
10/16	Library Day #3: Conducting a Search Online	Library Assignment #3 Due
10/19	Library Day #4: PsycINFO Searches	Library Assignment #4 Due
10/21	Article #3 Discussion: Hypotheses, Designs, Validity	ARTICLE #3 SUMMARY DUE
10/23	Review for Exam 3	
10/26	Exam 3	Read Chapter 15
10/28	Introduction Sections	
10/30	Generating Your Hypothesis	Read Chapter 3
11/2	Writing Issues & APA Format	PROPOSAL #1 DRAFT DUE
11/4	Critique Workshop	
11/6	First Paper Discussion	
11/9	Review for Exam 4	REVISED PROPOSAL #1 DUE
11/11	Exam 4	
11/13	Answers to Exam 4, Develop Topic & Hypothesis	
11/16	PsycINFO search (3 articles on topic)	
11/18	Literature Review Workshop	ARTICLE #4 SUMMARY DUE
11/20	Second Paper Draft Discussion	
11/23	Second Paper Meetings	PROPOSAL #2 DRAFT DUE
11/30	Career Day #1: Careers in Psychology	DWYA Deadline; Career #1 Due
12/2	Career Day #2: Understanding Yourself	Career Assignment #2 Due
12/4	Career Day #3: Creating Your Plan	Career Assignment #3 Due
12/7	Career Day #4: The Professional Package	Career Assignment #4 Due
12/9	Second Paper Discussion	EXTRA CREDIT DUE
12/11	Review for Final Exam	REVISED PROPOSAL #2 DUE

FINAL EXAM WILL BE ON FRIDAY, DECEMBER 18 FROM 8:00– 10:00 AM