RESEARCH METHODS

THE PURPOSE OF ANY EDUCATION IS “TO ACQUIRE, TO CREATE, TO INNOVATE, TO CHALLENGE” NOAM CHOMSKY

PSY3213L
3 CREDIT HOURS
SPRING/2018
** ONLINE
** NO CLASS MEETING TIME(S)

INSTRUCTOR: Marina A. Klimenko, Ph.D., M.P.A.
Psychology Building, office in room 361

GTA (GRADUATE TA): Brianna Laureano, Elizabeth Schieber, and Liz Redford
(UNDERGRADUATE TAS): n/a

COURSE WEBSITE:
https://ufl.instructure.com/

VIRTUAL OFFICE HOUR VIA CONFERENCES IN CANVAS:
Tuesday, from 10 to 11; to join the meeting, go to the course website, click on Conferences option located on the left side of the navigation menu. You can also schedule an individual virtual meeting by emailing me through Canvas. Public virtual office hours will be taped for those who cannot attend.

IN PERSON OFFICE HOURS:
Thursday, from 9:30 to 10:30 am or by appointment. Feel free to visit me in my office if you have any questions or concerns, or to just say ‘Hi”. To make sure I am in the office, send me a quick email in Canvas in advance to let me know you’re coming (I maybe in and out of office).
STRUCTURE OF COURSE IN E-LEARNING: This course uses E-Learning in Canvas. Students will have to complete weekly readings, quizzes, and a small research project. The research project will be broken down into several interrelated assignments.

The course is divided into 6 modules, roughly corresponding to the four major themes and steps of a typical research process.

COURSE COMMUNICATIONS: All communication will be done in Canvas—emails, discussions, and announcements.


The instructions and the access code will be emailed to you. Please note, that the e-book website is separate from the course website.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES: any SPSS manual recommended but not required

PREREQUISITE KNOWLEDGE AND SKILLS: Some knowledge of SPSS will be helpful but not required

PURPOSE OF COURSE: Psychology is a discipline dedicated to the scientific understanding of behavior and mental processes. This course will provide students an opportunity to learn about the scientific methods psychologists and other social scientists apply to study psychological and other related questions. The learning will be accomplished, in part, through course readings and lectures, and in part through conducting a small research project.

COURSE GOALS AND/OR OBJECTIVES: By the end of this course, students will:

1) Think critically and reason scientifically.
2) Understand a general process of research in psychology
3) Be able to evaluate the quality of evidence in published research.
4) Gain practical experience in research process by formulating hypotheses, collecting small data, analyzing it and communicating results.
5) Clearly and effectively present ideas in writing to contribute to the dissemination of knowledge and to exchange ideas in the field of psychology and social sciences.
6) Become better consumers of social sciences.
 MODULE TIMELINE

We have a diverse group of students. Many have full-time jobs and busy schedules. Some students prefer to complete school-related activities on the weekends while others work during the weekdays. In order to accommodate both schedule preferences, the timeline of each module will begin on a Thursday morning (12am) and will end on a Wednesday night (11:59pm) (exception is week 1 which will start on Monday), to give everyone a little bit of both. All graded assignments will be due on Wednesdays, at 11:59pm.

All modules will be unlocked at the beginning of the semester (unless it is being revised or updated). However, I strongly recommend that you keep up with our course timeline instead of postponing everything until the end of the semester.

 GRADED ASSIGNMENTS

 QUIZZES (100 POINTS)

There will be a quiz for each chapter covered in this class, 11 quizzes in total. Only 10 highest quizzes will be counted towards your final grade. Module quizzes will be unlocked at the beginning of the semester and due by April 25, 11:59pm. This will allow you to take extra time to study, if necessary. However, I strongly recommend that you do not postpone taking quizzes and get into the habit of completing each quiz by the end of its module week.

Each item is worth 1 point. So each quiz is worth 10 points. Items are drawn at random from a larger pool of items, so no two people will receive the same quiz. Chapter quizzes are cumulative in the sense that the concepts and ideas in this course don’t exist in isolation; similar to algebra, for instance, the terms or concepts that may have been mentioned in one chapter are most likely to be reintroduced in the following chapters but either in different contexts or in more details. Thus, it is important that, as you read and learn the material of one chapter, you understand and retain its information as you move on to the next one. The best way to prepare for each module quiz is to carefully review all material posted in that given module, including text chapters, lectures, notes, videos, or any other additional information, but also draw the connection to what you've learned in the previous module.

IMPORTANT: Since most concepts and ideas in this course are interconnected, and may be better grasped after completing a particular assignment or after reading several different chapters, quizzes 1-11 will stay open until April 25, 11:59pm. (see course calendar below). Thus, you can take them at any time and/or in any order.
However, some chapters are better understood if you follow them in order; e.g., chapters 1, 2, and 3 provide the most basic foundation for any research design and, thus, I strongly recommend that you read them before proceeding with the rest of the chapters or whenever you feel you have a good grasp on a topic. The correct answers for quizzes 1-11 will be released on April 26, 12:00am; However, you can email me if you have any questions or simply would like to know the correct answers within one week of taking a quiz.

Weekly quizzes are relatively easy, and most students do well on them—the average grade is around 85 and 90. The practice quizzes are posted at the end of each chapter on the e-book website. I strongly recommend that you take them before taking the graded quizzes in Canvas. You can also post your questions about the practice quizzes on the Discussion board after each chapter of the e-book on the website. This will help you grasp the material and prepare for the graded quizzes.

IMPORTANT: You are responsible for your internet strength and reliability, and for using a reliable computer. If you lose internet connection due to issues with your computer or internet, you will not be allowed to retake the quiz. If the interruption in connection is caused by issues in Canvas, contact e-learning help desk and get verification. The decision to allow retaking a quiz will be determined on an individual basis and will be based on the cause of the issue. Since the chances of experiencing technical issues more than once in a semester are very small, no one will be allowed to retake more than one quiz.

RESEARCH PROJECT & RELATED ASSIGNMENTS (115 POINTS)

There will be 3 interrelated assignments, each building on the preceding one. All three assignments will be due Wednesday, 11:59pm. Instructions and details about the Research Project can be found in Canvas Research Project Overview web link. There will be a Group Introduction and two group discussions, Assignment 1 and Assignment 2 Group Discussions, the purpose of which is to give you the space and time to discuss Assignment 1 and 2 with your peers (e.g., share ideas and help each other by answering each other questions). The points for Assignment 1 and 2 will be based only upon their completeness and timeliness, not their correctness. You will receive our general feedback about the assignment 1 and 2 soon after their submissions. Be sure to correct/revise each assignment accordingly since they will affect the outcome of your study. Do not hesitate to seek help and ask questions when you don’t have a clear sense of what you should do next or have questions about the assignments and the project in general. It will be your responsibility to contact your instructor or TA with any follow up questions. If we don’t receive questions from you, we will assume that you understand what you are doing.
Inquiries about the assignments (e.g., questions, ask for help, etc.) should be made at least 24 hours before their due dates to ensure that you will receive our response on time (before assignments are due). Questions can be sent to class instructor or TAs via Canvas mail.

Please know the final research paper will constitute a major portion of your final grade and it is the most challenging assignment in this course. The average score is an 80 (out of 100 possible points), and many students will see a slight drop in their overall grade after completing it. However, students, who consistently participate in all group discussions, stay engaged, ask questions, and seek help promptly, usually do very well.

The final assignment related to your research project is Research Summary and Peer Review. You will be required to create a short (no more than 10 minutes) presentation describing your study and its results. You will also provide a critique of two of your peers’ presentations.

**Research Related Activities & Due Dates:**

Assignment 1: Designing a Study, due Feb 7, 11:59pm (2.5 point)

Assignment 2: Collecting Data & Developing Statistical Plan of Data Analyses, due Feb 28, 11:59pm. (2.5 point)

Assignment 3: Research Paper, due March 28, 11:59pm. (100 points)

Research Summary and Peer Review, due April 4-11, 11:59pm. (10 points)

**GROUP DISCUSSIONS (10 POINTS)**

There will be 7 group discussions and one introduction. Only 6 of group discussions (with the highest grade) will be counted towards your final grade. You can miss any one of the 7 group discussions, but with the exception of the final group discussion (you cannot miss or replace the final week discussion grade). Each discussion will pose a question or a set of questions and you will be asked to give your opinion. To receive full credit, (1) the length of your response should be at least one paragraph, (2) your opinion should be substantive and persuasive (i.e., support your opinion with evidence that you can find in our class material or from other reliable sources), AND (3) you have to respond substantively to one other post in your group forum. More details about weekly group discussions and the grading rubric can be found in Canvas, under Weekly Group Discussions, located on the left
side of the navigation panel. IMPORTANT: Many online students have jobs, families and other responsibilities. They organize their schedules ahead of time. Thus, it is important that when an assignment involves interaction with other students everyone completes his/her part on time. To make group discussions go as smoothly and as stress-free as possible, the deadline to post your initial individual answer will be due by Monday (please see class schedule for exceptions), 11:59pm, and peer reply must be completed by Wednesday, 11:59pm (check class schedule for exceptions). Canvas will only display the initial post due date. You must complete both, your individual post and a reply to another post, to receive ANY point(s). If you make your post on time (by Monday) but fail to reply to one more post in your discussion forum, you will receive a 0 for that week discussion.

- (Week 1) Group Introduction (1 point)
- (Week 1) Group Discussion #1: Human Intellectual Evolution (1.5 point)
- (Week 2) Group Discussion #2: Falsifiability (1.5 point)
- (Week 3) Group Discussion #3: Sex, Drugs, Disasters and the Extinction of Dinosaurs (1.5 points)
- (Week 5) Group Discussion#4: Misleading Statistics (1.5 point)
- (Week 8) Group Discussion#5: Emotional Contagion on Facebook (1.5 points)
- (Week 13) Group Discussion#6: Health Benefits of Eating Chocolate (1.5 points)
- (Week 14) Final Week Group Discussion#7: Evaluating a Claim (cannot miss this discussion) (1.5 points)

EXTRA CREDITS

There will be two or three possible ways for you to earn extra credit. I offer them to boost everyone’s final grade (without giving any favors); and this works especially well for those who are close to the next letter grade at the end of the semester. Please consider taking these opportunities (don’t miss the due dates if given) as this will be the only opportunities to get a “bump” in your final grade.

- Ebook website activities (discussions and debates) (see details on the ebook website) or write a 2-3 page summary of an empirical article (see Article Summary Assignment for more details) (3 points)
- Participation in a survey study 3 points (both waves must be completed to receive extra points)
• Mid-Semester Survey (0.5 point): Around the middle of the semester (Oct 9-15) provide feedback on how the course is progressing at the moment. I will send a reminder 😊.

• Possible end of semester survey (0.5 point): A simple extra credit question will be released IF I receive a 90% response rate on my end of semester evaluations.

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**CLASS SCHEDULE**

**MODULE # 1: WHAT IS SCIENCE?**

THIS MODULE IS DESIGNED TO GIVE YOU THE FOUNDATIONAL KNOWLEDGE THAT IS NECESSARY TO UNDERSTAND THE PRINCIPLES OF ANY RESEARCH DESIGN. PLEASE COMPLETE THIS MODULE FIRST. QUIZ DEADLINES ARE FLEXIBLE BUT DISCUSSIONS MUST BE COMPLETED ON TIME TO RECEIVE GRADES.

**Week 1: Jan 8-17 (extended due to drop/add): Evolution of Scientific Thought (Chapter 1)**

- Group Introduction, due Jan 17, 11:59pm (extended).
- Group Discussion #1, Jan 17-19, 11:59pm (extended).
- Quiz #1 (chapter 1 and week 1 material), recommended to be completed by Jan 17, 11:59pm (extended).

**Week 2: Jan 18-24: Modern Science (Chapter 2)**

- Group Discussion #2, due Jan 21-24, 11:59pm.
- Quiz 2 (chapter 2 and week 2 material), recommended to be completed by Jan 24, 11:59pm.
- (Optional) Extra credit study (first wave) due by Jan 24, 11:59pm (IDs will be emailed)
Week 3: Jan 25-31: Generating Testable Hypotheses & Developing a Research Plan (Chapter 3).

- Group Discussion #3: Sex, Drugs, Disasters and the Extinction of Dinosaurs, due Jan 29-31, 11:59pm.
- Quiz 3 (chapter 3 and week 3 material), recommended to be completed by Jan 31, 11:59pm.

**MODULE #2: DESIGNING A RESEARCH STUDY**

IN THIS MODULE YOU WILL CHOOSE YOUR RESEARCH TOPIC AND ITS RESEARCH DESIGN OF DATA COLLECTION (E.G., CONTENT ANALYSIS, OBSERVATIONAL, OR EXPERIMENTAL). FOLLOW THE LINK POSTED IN MODULE 2 ASSOCIATED WITH THE DESIGN OF YOUR CHOICE AND COMPLETE ALL POSTED ACTIVITIES.

Week 4: Feb 1-7: Select Your Research Question and a Research Design:
Content Analysis (Chapter 4), Observational (Chapter 5), or Experimental (Chapter 6)

- No Group Discussion this week
- Assignment 1, due Feb 7, 11:59pm.
- Take a weekly quiz #4, recommended to be completed by Feb 7, 11:59pm.

**MODULE #3: DATA COLLECTION & ANALYSIS**

IN THIS MOUDLE YOU WILL COLLECT DATA IN ORDER TO ADDRESS YOUR RESEARCH QUESTION; IN ADDITION, THIS MODULE WILL INTRODUCE YOU TO THE LOGIC AND THE COMPUTATIONS OF STATISTICAL ANALYSES USING SPSS PROGRAM. YOU WILL USE THIS KNOWLEDGE LATER TO ANALYZE RESULTS OF YOUR OWN DATA COLLECTION.

Week 5: Feb 8-14: Data Analysis Part 1 (Chapter 8)

- Review assignment 1 feedback (go to Instructor Feedback page) & begin collecting data (execute assignment 1)
- Group Discussion #4, due Feb 12-14 pm.
- Quiz #5 (chapter 8 and week 6 material), recommended to be completed by Feb 14, 11:59pm.
Week 6: Feb 15-21: Data Analysis Part 2 (Chapter 9)

- Quiz #6 will be based on the statistical tests that I will post in this week's homepage. Please complete the tests and all related activities before taking the quiz.
- No Quiz this week.
- No Group Discussion this week.

Week 7: Feb 22-28: Data Analysis Part 2 cont. (Chapter 9)

- No group Discussion this week
- Assignment 2 and Data, due Feb 28, 11:59pm.
- Quiz #6 (chapter 9 and week 7 and 8 material), recommended to be completed by Feb 28, 11:59pm

MODULE #4: WRITING AN EMPIRICAL PAPER

THIS MODULE WILL TEACH HOW TO WRITE A SCIENTIFIC PAPER ACCORDING TO APA GUIDELINES; YOU WILL COMPLETE YOUR RESEARCH PROJECT BY WRITING A RESEARCH PAPER AND REPORTING RESULTS OF YOUR INVESTIGATION. IN ADDITION, YOU WILL BE INTRODUCED TO SOME OF THE ETHICAL ISSUES SURROUNDING SOCIAL SCIENCE.

Week 8: March 1, 2, 12-14: Research Ethics

- Group Discussion #5, due March 12-14, 11:59pm.
- Feedback for Assignment 2 posted this week.
- No quiz
- Optional Mid semester survey (0.5 extra point), due March 14, 11:59pm
Week 9: March 15-21: Writing an Academic Paper (Chapter 10)

- No Group Discussion
- No quiz

Week 10: March 22-28: Working on research paper

- No Group Discussion
- Quiz #7 covering research ethics and writing an academic paper material, recommended to be completed by March 28, 11:59pm

**MODULE 5: MORE RESEARCH DESIGNS**

In this module you will learn three more research designs, compare their strengths and weaknesses. By the end of this module you should be familiar with all four research designs: content analysis, observational, experimental and quasi-experimental.

Week 11: March 29-April 4

- Complete a second research design and take quiz #8 covering the design, recommended to be completed by April 4, 11:59pm.
- Presentations due by April 4, 11:59pm (You will not be assigned peer-reviews unless you submit a presentation.)

Week 12: April 5-11

- Complete a third research design and take Quiz #9 covering the design, recommended to be completed by April 11, 11:59pm
- Peer-Reviews due by April 11

Week 13: April 12—18

- Complete a fourth research design and take quiz #10 covering the design
- Quiz #10, recommended to be completed by April 18, 11:59pm.
- Contribute to Group Discussion #6, due April 16-18, 11:59pm (Feedback on this discussion will be posted on Instructor Feedback Page; questions pertaining to this discussion and the importance of critical evaluation of scientific studies will be on quiz 11)
• All extra credit activities in ebook website must be completed by April 18, 11:59pm; or complete an article summary by April 18, 11:59pm.
• Complete the last wave of the extra credit study by April 18, 11:59pm. Alternatively, complete an article summary by April 18, 11:59pm.

MODULE #6: BECOMING a CRITICAL CONSUMER OF SCIENCE

Week 14: April 19-25: Becoming a Wise Consumer of Science

• Final Week Group Discussion #7: Evaluating a Claim, due April 23-25, 11:59pm.
• Quiz 11, must be completed by April 25 (check feedback on discussion 7 as some questions may pertain to that discussion), 11:59pm.
• Quizzes 1-10 must be completed by April 25, 11:59pm.
• Quiz 11 disputes/inquiries must be made by April 27, 11:59pm.

2. Week 15: Finalizing Grades

POLICY FOR DISPUTING GRADES

You will have one week (exception is the last quiz for which your inquiries should be emailed to instructor within two days of its completion), including weekends and holidays, after the release of the grade to dispute it (disputes are defined as questions about the material on quiz or assignments), and will NOT be accepted after that date.

If you want to dispute a grade you will need to write a paragraph explaining the dispute (write out the question on the quiz or explain the part of the assignment in detail). Quiz disputes must be sent to my Canvas mail (your instructor). Disputes about your research paper or group work should be sent to your graduate TA via Canvas mail.

COURSE POLICIES & GUIDELINES

1. All communication will be done in Canvas.

If you have any questions/comments pertaining to
a. Course administration, not time sensitive: post your question in Technical issues and course materials errors/FAQ discussion board.

b. Course concepts: post your question in Course Concepts discussion board.

c. If you do not receive an answer from either FAQ or Course Concepts discussion boards within 24 hours, contact instructor or TA by Canvas mail.

*Discussion boards will not be monitored on Saturdays and Sundays.

If you have a question about

a. A quiz, email instructor via Canvas mail.

b. Research project, email instructor or your TA.

c. If you have concerns/need help, email me instructor or your TA.

Do not post questions or information about your grade on the discussion boards.

**CANNOT CONTACT INSTRUCTOR OR GTA WITH QUESTIONS ABOUT ASSIGNMENTS 8 HRS BEFORE THE ARE DUE!!**

d. In the case of a serious medical condition, a family emergency or other situation that will keep you out of class a week or more, email instructor (mklimenko@ufl.edu).

2. All interactions with instructors and among class members are expected to be professional and appropriate. Students are encouraged to answer each other’s questions on the FAQ and Course Content Board.

3. Announcements: Occasionally, announcements will be made if there are any changes to class schedule or assignments.

4. Extension of deadlines may be requested ONLY for university excused absences with adequate documentation. Requests for an extension must be based on University approved reasons and must include proper documentation as per University guidelines. Requests for extensions must be made before the deadline, if possible, or within 24 hours of the deadline for unexpected emergencies.

5. Computer/internet access to e-learning is required for this course. Students are responsible for maintaining access to e-learning.

e. Extensions will not be given for student-based technical difficulties. Do not wait until the last minute to complete assignments and
quizzes! Do not take your quizzes on the bus! Use a land connection instead of Wi-Fi.

f. If UF e-learning experiences technical difficulties, deadlines will be adjusted to allow for completion of assignments.

6. This course adheres to all University Policies. See http://www.dso.ufl.edu/ for useful information at the Dean of Students Office webpage.

7. Academic Honesty: This course uses the definitions and guidelines for academic honesty as described by the Dean of Students Office. See http://www.dso.ufl.edu/judicial/academic.php for details.

8. Students with disabilities: requesting accommodation must first register with the Dean of Students Office. The Dean of Students Office will provide documentation to the student who must then provide this documentation to the Instructor when requesting accommodation. See http://www.dso.ufl.edu/drc/ for details.

9. Religious Observances: Please check your calendars against the course syllabus. Any student having a conflict due to religious observance should contact me as soon as possible so that we can make any necessary arrangements.

10. Copyright Statement: Some of the materials in this course are possibly copyrighted. They are intended for use only by students registered and enrolled in this course and for instructional activities associated with and for the duration of the course. They may not be retained in another medium or disseminated further. They are provided in compliance with the provisions of the Teach Act.

11. Syllabus Change Policy: Except for changes that substantially affect implementation of the evaluation (grading) statement, this syllabus is a guide for the course and is subject to change with advance notice. If changes are made to this syllabus they will be announced and/or emailed. It is your responsibility to check for announcements and/or email of changes online.

12. Extra Help: Contact me as soon as possible for extra assistance if you discover you are having trouble. I want you to do well!
Your final grade is based on the total number of points you accumulate. Your grade will be calculated by summing the points you earn on quizzes and assignments.

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<tr>
<th>Assignment</th>
<th>Points</th>
<th>Percentage of your grade</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>10 (out of 11) quizzes</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>45%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Group introduction (1)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Group Discussions (5)</td>
<td>7.5</td>
<td>3 %</td>
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<td>Final Week Group Discussion (1)</td>
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<td>1%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Research (Paper and Assignment 1 and 2)</td>
<td>105</td>
<td>40%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Research Presentation and Peer-Review</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>10%</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>225</strong></td>
<td><strong>100%</strong></td>
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**GRADING SCALE**

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<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
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<tr>
<td>A</td>
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<tr>
<td>A-</td>
<td>90% &amp; up</td>
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<tr>
<td>B+</td>
<td>87% &amp; up</td>
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<td>83% &amp; up</td>
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<td>D-</td>
<td>60% &amp; up</td>
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<td>&lt;60%</td>
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How to Calculate Your Grade in the Class:

\[
(\text{Grade X } \% \text{ assignment is worth}) + (\text{Grade X } \% \text{ assignment is worth}) = \text{Grade in class}
\]

*The good news is – these grades are firm – there is no curve. Everybody in the class can get an A grade and I hope you do.*
The bad news is – these grades are firm – there is no curve. If you score just a quarter of a point below the cutoff then you will receive the lower grade.