

PSY390: Experimental Psychology | Fall 2006 (64786)

Time: Monday 1:40 – 2:55; Wednesday 1:40 – 4:30

Location: LL 148 (and sometimes PSY141)

Instructor: Nick Schweitzer

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office hours: M 11 – 12:30, W 11-12

This course is different from most undergraduate courses. There is no textbook, there are no lectures and there are no exams. Instead, you will be spending the semester doing what most graduate students do: designing research, conducting research and writing-up research.

The schedule for the semester is flexible, so there is no set timetable; however there are several phases that we will go through:

Phase I: Identifying research topics / Forming groups

During this phase, we will figure out three or four different areas of research that interest people, then we will split up into groups based on everyone's interests. You will be working with the same group throughout the semester.

Phase II: Developing a study

Once everyone is in a group, the groups will start to plan a research study. You will develop a specific hypothesis and then design a study that tests that hypothesis. At this point, you will submit a written proposal for your project that specifies the details of your study.

Phase III: Collecting data

This will be the most intense phase as many of you will be running a research study for the first time. You will be responsible for planning and organizing everything that goes into collecting data. You will have access to the PGS101 participant pool for your data collection needs.

Phase IV: Interlude—Assessing the first study, designing the second study

You will analyze your data and see what your research has found. Based on your findings, you will plan a second study. It might be a follow-up to a successful study or a redesign of an unsuccessful study.

Phase V: Collecting data again

You will now collect data for your second study.

Phase VI: Communicating your results

A study doesn't do any good if you don't let people know what your findings are. During this phase, you will put together an APA format manuscript and prepare a presentation for the class. I will also encourage you to submit your study to a research conference.

Your final grade will be based on your written proposals, final manuscripts, class presentations and, most of all, your level of participation. No one may sit back and slack in this class. I will ask for group evaluations from everyone and those who do not contribute to the research project will be penalized and those who are major contributors may be rewarded. In addition, Whitney and I will become very involved in your projects and groups, and we will be assessing how things are going throughout the semester.

Most of all, I want everyone to have fun in this course. Be creative with your research and do what interests you. If at any time you have questions, concerns or general comments, please come talk to me.