

PSY 225 RESEARCH METHODS



WHAT ARE THE COURSE'S OBJECTIVES?

After successfully finishing the course, you'll be able to

- [1] find, read, and understand scientific articles and synthesize scientific results;
- [2] effectively communicate ideas, critical evaluation, and research through analytic writing and engaging narrated presentations;
- [3] think critically, examine links between method and results, consider alternative explanations, and knowledgeably consume research;
- [4] generate testable hypotheses and design psychological research using different methods, data collection tools, and analysis techniques;
- [5] correctly interpret and convey statistical results via text, tables, and graphs;
- [6] use key principles of science, including use of evidence, scientific reliability and validity, and fair and thorough evaluation of research inside and outside the classroom;
- [7] understand that ethical principles, behavior, and decision-making pertain to all aspects of the research process; and
- [8] identify how psychological science can inform societal practices policies, review, and apply what you learn.

HOW WILL I LEARN IN THIS COURSE?

The pedagogy of this course is driven by empirically proven principles of learning, including the principles of

- active learning, which is more beneficial than passive learning, and
- frequent incremental practice, which is more beneficial than sporadic practice (Gernsbacher, 2014).

Therefore, in this course, you will acquire skills every day by completing 84 incremental assignments across the term. You will be expected to engage with the course, and with your peers, **daily** (via online discussion, including synchronously text-based chat).

There are NO timed exams in this course, and you will NOT need to purchase a textbook.

All course materials are available on the open-access website: <https://online225.psych.wisc.edu>

HOW WILL I LEARN MY GRADING?

On each of the course's 84 assignments, you can earn the following points:

3 points: If you completed the assignment before its due date and your assignment initially fulfilled **ALL** the requirements.

2 points: If you completed the assignment before its due date AND you corrected your initial assignment to fulfill ALL the assignment's requirements within one week after its due date.

1 point: If you didn't complete the assignment before its due date but you did complete the assignment within one week after its due date **OR** if you completed the assignment before its due date but your assignment didn't fulfill ALL the requirements and you didn't correct your assignment to fulfill ALL the requirements within one week after the assignment's due date.

0 points: If you still haven't completed the assignment one week after its due date.

Your final course grade will be the percentage of points you earn from the **252 total points** available to earn, using the grading scale below:

A 94.00 - 100.00%	BC ... 79.00 - 83.99%	F ... Less than
AB ... 89.00 - 93.99%	C 70.00 - 78.99%	60%
B 84.00 - 88.99%	D 60.00 - 69.99%	

HOW CAN I DO WELL IN THIS COURSE?

First, work on the course every day.

The best way to acquire any skill – be it playing acoustic guitar or speaking Portuguese – is to practice every day. Similarly, the best way to do well in this course is to practice (i.e., work on the course) every day.

If you've taken other online courses, you might be surprised by how this course works. In other online courses, you might have been able to hang back and then cram in a lot of work at the end of the term. A hang-back strategy will **NOT** work in this course.

Therefore, **the second way to do well in this course is to keep up.** You

will have two weeks to complete each assignment. You will also have a one-week extension after each assignment is due to complete the assignment late or to correct any errors you made in your initial assignment.

But after two weeks of regular completion time and after the one-week extension, you will no longer be able to complete the assignment. The opportunity will be gone, just like in real life.

Therefore, **the third way to do well in this course is to always work ahead.** Your working ahead is the best way to avoid the consequences of any unexpected mishap.

What will I learn in each Unit?

JUNE 20 - JUNE 23	UNIT #1	How to Think Critically about Life
JUNE 24 - JUNE 26	UNIT #2	How to Read Carefully the General Media (and Improve Your Digital Literacy)
JUNE 27 - JUNE 30	UNIT #3	How to Write Analytically about General Topics
JULY 1 - JULY 3	UNIT #4	How to Think Critically about Psychological Science
JULY 5 - JULY 7	UNIT #5	How to Find and Read Psychological Science
JULY 8 - JULY 10	UNIT #6	How to Synthesize Psychological Science
JULY 11 - JULY 14	UNIT #7	How to Evaluate Descriptive and Inferential Statistics
JULY 15 - JULY 17	UNIT #8	How to Evaluate Scientific Reliability and Validity
JULY 18 - JULY 21	UNIT #9	How to Evaluate Alternative Research Hypotheses
JULY 22 - JULY 24	UNIT #10	How to Act Ethically as a Psychological Scientist
JULY 25 - JULY 28	UNIT #11	How to Design, Administer, and Analyze the Results of Reliable and Valid Online Surveys
JULY 29 - JULY 31	UNIT #12	How to Interpret and Create Informative Tables, Figures, and Charts
AUGUST 1 - AUG 4	UNIT #13	How to Communicate Engagingly through PPT, Video, and other Presentation Media
AUGUST 5 - AUG 7	UNIT #14	How to Look Backward (Review What You've Learned) and Forward (Apply What You've Learned)

WHAT IF I DON'T HAVE ACCESS TO THE INTERNET?

This is a completely online course. You're required to have access to high-speed Internet EVERY DAY during the ENTIRE TERM of the course. Not having access to high-speed Internet (because you're traveling or you forgot to pay your cable bill or your roommate is hogging all the bandwidth playing video games) will NOT be a valid excuse for not completing your work. You must have access to the Internet.

HOW MUCH TIME DO I NEED TO SPEND ON THIS COURSE?



PSY 225 "Research Methods" is a **4-credit Communication B course** at the Intermediate Level in the College of Letters & Sciences' Divisional Affiliation of Biological Sciences, with the prerequisites of Introductory Psychology and Basic Statistics.

Because Psychology 225 is a 4-credit course, you're expected to spend a total of 180 hours on the course (4 course credits x 45 work hours per credit = 180 total work hours for the entire course).

If you are taking this course during the **SUMMER** term:

You are expected to work on this course **4 HOURS per DAY**, six days a week.

You should **NOT** register for this course if you will not be able to spend 4 hours a day, six days a week working on this course, during the course's 14 Units.

HOW DO I RESPOND TO OTHER STUDENTS' DISCUSSION POSTS?

Each response you write to another student **MUST** be at least 200 words long and must include **AT LEAST TWO** of the following:

A COMPLIMENT: I like how ... I like that ...

A COMMENT: I agree that ... because ... I disagree that ... because ...

A CONNECTION: I have also read that ... I have also seen that ... I have also heard that ... I have also thought that ...

A QUESTION: I wonder why ... I wonder how ... I wonder who ... I wonder what ... I wonder when ... I wonder where ...

WHAT ARE THE ETHICS OF BEING A STUDENT IN THE PSYCHOLOGY DEPARTMENT?

The Faculty of the Department of Psychology at UW-Madison expect their students to uphold the highest standards of ethical conduct. By registering for this course, you are implicitly agreeing to conduct yourself with the utmost integrity throughout the semester.

In the Department of Psychology, acts of academic misconduct are taken very seriously. Such acts diminish the educational experience for all involved – students who commit the acts, classmates who would never consider engaging in such behaviors, and instructors.

Academic misconduct includes, but is not limited to, cheating on assignments, sabotaging the work of classmates, plagiarizing the work of classmates or published sources, and assisting fellow students in acts of misconduct. For detailed information on how to avoid plagiarism, see [this link](#).

Students who have knowledge that classmates have engaged in academic misconduct should report this to the instructor.

HOW DO I RECEIVE REASONABLE INSTRUCTIONAL ACCOMMODATIONS FOR DISABILITIES?

UW-Madison supports the right of all enrolled students to a full and equal educational opportunity. The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), Wisconsin State Statute (36.12), and UW-Madison policy (Faculty Document 1071) require that students with disabilities be reasonably accommodated in instruction and campus life. Reasonable accommodations for students with disabilities is a shared faculty and student responsibility.

Students are expected to inform the instructor of their need for instructional accommodations by the end of the third week of the semester, or as soon as possible after a disability has been incurred or recognized. The instructor will work either directly with the student or in coordination with the McBurney Center to identify and provide reasonable instructional accommodations. Disability information, including instructional accommodations, as part of a student's educational record is confidential and protected under FERPA.

FROM YOUR PROFESSOR

I am genuinely interested in each student succeeding in this course. If you encounter any barriers to your success, please let me know. I'm always available by email at MAGernsb@wisc.edu.



WHERE DO I TAKE CONCERNS ABOUT A TEACHING ASSISTANT OR COURSE INSTRUCTOR?

Occasionally, a student may have a concern about a TA or course instructor. If that happens, you should feel free to discuss the matter directly with the TA or instructor. If the concern is about the TA and you do not feel comfortable discussing it with them, you should discuss it with the course instructor.

Concerns about mistakes in grading should be resolved with the instructor or TA in the great majority of cases. If the concern is about the instructor (other than ordinary grading questions), and you don't feel comfortable discussing it with them, make an appointment to speak to the Associate Chair for Undergraduate Studies, Professor [Maryellen MacDonald](#).

If you have a concern about sexual harassment, you may also take your concern to Dr. Linnea Burk, Clinical Associate Professor and Director, Psychology Research and Training Clinic, Room 315 Psychology (262-9079; burk@wisc.edu).

If you have concerns about climate or bias in this class, or if you wish to report an incident of bias or hate that has occurred in class, you may contact the Chair of the Department, Professor Craig Berridge (berridge@wisc.edu) or the Chair of the Psychology Department Climate & Diversity Committee, Professor Martha Alibali (martha.alibali@wisc.edu). You may also use the University's bias incident reporting system, which you can reach at [this link](#).

HOW CAN I TAKE ADVANTAGE OF THE FLEXIBILITY ACCOMMODATION THAT IS BUILT INTO THIS COURSE?

This course is based on the principles of Universal Design, which prescribes that **instructional accommodations should be** built into the environment and **available to all students** (just like elevators and curb cuts) rather than needing to be requested ex post facto or available to only some students.

Therefore, in this course, all lecture videos are accompanied by written transcripts; all PDFs are screen-readable (and voice-able with text-to-speech software, as well as searchable and highlightable). There are no timed tests, no in-person lectures or in-person labs, and no in-person attendance requirements.

The course offers nearly a hundred grading opportunities, rather than only three or four, and the course is highly structured with explicit due dates. These accommodations are all built into this course to facilitate all students' success.

Most importantly, the course has a built in flexibility accommodation available to all students. All students have the opportunity to work ahead; to turn work in late (with a small penalty); and to miss occasional assignments and still earn a good final grade.

Flexibility is built into this course to aid all students, including students with disabilities, chronic health conditions, religious conflicts,

care-giving responsibilities, unpredictable work schedules, and student athletes -- everyone.

To take advantage of the flexibility accommodation, you must do three things.

First, take advantage of the opportunity to work ahead. The entire course is available two weeks before the first assignment is due; each Discussion Board opens two weeks before it is due. Take advantage of the opportunity to work ahead and complete as many assignments in advance as you can. If, for example, you're a student with a chronic health condition, the work you do in advance when you're feeling well will be like money in the bank for the times later in the term when you might not be feeling well.

Second, take advantage of the opportunity to turn in work up to one week late, with a small penalty. Experiment with Canvas's "What If" grades, and you will see that all students can turn in some assignments late and still earn a good final grade.

It is unnecessary to ask for an extension on any assignment because all students have a one-week extension on every assignment.

Third, take advantage of the opportunity to miss an assignment if needed. Again, experiment with Canvas's "What If" grades, and you'll see that all students can miss an assignments here or there and still earn a good final grade.

Flexibility is built into this course because we know how important it is for everyone to have a built-in flexibility accommodation. Take advantage of it.



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WHAT CAN I EXPECT FROM MY PROFESSOR AND TAs?

Professor Gernsbacher and the TAs of this course will abide by the “Seven Principles of Good Practice in Undergraduate Education.”

1. They will educate using the methods of active learning.
2. They will emphasize your spending time on task.
3. They will provide rapid feedback to you.
4. They will encourage you to cooperate and reciprocate with other students.
5. They will communicate high expectations.
6. They will respond to your email within 24 hours.
7. They will respect your diverse talents.

WHO SHOULD I CONTACT IF I HAVE A QUESTION?

Whenever you have a question, you should email Professor Gernsbacher [MAGernsb@wisc.edu].

Title your email message **PSY 225: Question**
Send your email message from your wisc.edu email address.
Please do NOT email the TAs.