

Psychology/SSIS

## PSYC 200: Methods in Empirical Psychology

### Fall 2018 Syllabus

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### Part 1: Course Information

#### Instructor Information

**Instructor:** Dr. Sharon Furtak, Assistant Professor  
- M.S. & Ph.D., Behavioral Neuroscience, Yale University  
- B.A., Psychology, University of Massachusetts, Amherst  
- My research interests focus on the neurobiology of emotional learning & memory.

**Class Time & Location:** AMD 362, Mondays 2pm to 4:50pm

**Office Hours:** AMD 357A, Mon. 10am-12pm & Tues. 3-4pm

**E-mail:** [furtak@csus.edu](mailto:furtak@csus.edu), I only respond to emails sent from your Sacramento State email address in order to verify student identity.

#### Course Description

Philosophy of science, critical thinking in the design of research studies, and professional issues. Topics include: nature of science; observational, experimental, and case study designs; formulating research questions; measurement strategies; scaling and coding; internal and external validity; naturalism in research; quasi-experiments; archival research; physical traces; data collection; interpreting results; program evaluation; professional writing; and ethics. Prerequisite: PSYC 8, PSYC 101, PSYC 102.

#### University Graduate Intensive Writing Requirement

- This course fulfills a requirement for the Master of Arts degree in Psychology and fulfills the University Graduate Intensive Writing requirement.

#### Textbook & Course Materials

##### Required Text (available to purchase & rent at the Hornet Bookstore)

1. Whitley, B. E., Jr., & Kite, M. E. (2013). Principles of research in behavioral science (3rd ed.). Routledge.
2. Publication manual of the American psychological association (6th ed). (2010). Washington: APA.
3. Other readings will be made available in the Canvas (See Learning Modules).

#### Course Requirements

- Internet connection (DSL, LAN, or cable connection desirable)
- Access to Canvas
- Access to Microsoft Office & **SPSS software**, available on campus computers or available via the campus cloud.

#### Canvas Access

This course will be utilizing a course management system named Canvas. All assignments will need to be uploaded to Canvas for grading.

To access this course on Canvas you will need access to the Internet and a supported Web browser (Internet Explorer, Firefox, Safari).

#### Technical Assistance

If you need technical assistance at any time during the course or to report a problem with Canvas you can:

- Visit the Canvas [Student Resources Page](#)

#### Basic Needs Support

If you are experiencing challenges in the area of food and/or stable housing, help is just a click, email or phone call away! Sacramento State offers basic needs support for students who are experiencing challenges in these areas. Please visit our [Basic Needs website](#) to learn more about your options and resources available.

**Important Note:** This syllabus, along with course assignments and due dates, are subject to change. It is the student's responsibility to check Canvas for corrections or updates to the syllabus. Any changes will be clearly noted in course announcement and sent to your Sacramento State email.

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### Part 2: Course Objectives

This course is meant to prepare the student for further course work in the graduate study of psychology, to prepare the student for thesis research, to hone public speaking skills and to improve writing skills.

By the end of the semester, you will:

1. Understand the major research and/or professional conventions, practices, and methods of inquiry of Psychology;
2. Understand APA writing, which is the major format and style of writing used in Psychology;
3. Practice reading and writing within Psychology;
4. Practice reading and writing as a learning process that involves peer and instructor feedback, revision, critical reflection, and self-editing.

Because this is a graduate course, the standards are higher than that of an undergraduate one. You will be expected to apply the concepts that you learn to your projects. In the past, collaboration has proven to be an excellent way to develop and understand a research project. In that spirit, it is suggested that you discuss your projects with your peers; and if you have any questions, please come to my office hours or schedule an appointment.

You will meet the 4 course objectives listed above through a combination of the following activities in this course:

- Prepare one discussion question and complete the analytical exercise before each class session.
- Present at least one classroom session, which includes: facilitating a discussion on the chapter topic (Chapter Facilitation), creating and reviewing an analytical exercise that is relevant to the chapter topic (Chapter Exercise); and giving an oral presentation on a research article that utilizes the topic covered in the chapter (Paper Presentation).
- Write 2 APA style papers, including a detailed description of your writing process (prewrite, write, revise, edit, publish/share).
- Provide a peer with feedback on their APA style paper.

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### Part 3: Topic Outline/Schedule

**Important Note:** Refer to the course calendar for specific meeting dates and times. Activity and assignment details will be explained in detail within each week's corresponding learning module. If you have any questions, please contact your instructor.

#### Structure of the Class Meeting

The course will be taught in a combination lecture and discussion format. All students should bring their texts to class. Each class meeting will consist of the following sections.

1. Chapter Facilitation (~ 1 hr): discussion of topics presented in the assigned chapter readings (the presenter bears the ultimate responsibility for answering questions that are posed if no one else can do so);

2. Chapter Exercise (~ 30 mins): review of an analytical exercise that is relevant to the topics presented in the assigned chapter readings (the presenter bears the responsibility for creating and distributing the analytical exercise to the class, via Canvas, at least **one week** before the scheduled class);

3. Paper Presentation (~ 1 hrs): presentation of a research study that utilizes the topics presented in the assigned chapter readings (the presenter will find and make the paper available to the class, via Canvas, at least one week before the schedule class).

Week	Class Date	Weekly Topics	Readings	Paper-Related Assignments & Due Dates	Presenter
1	Aug. 27	Class Introduction Behavioral Science, Research Strategies & Formulating a Research Question <i>(Furtak) How to Write an Introduction Section</i>	Syllabus Ch. 1, 2, & 5	Prewriting: Brainstorming Topic Ideas <b>DUE:</b> Submit on Canvas by Aug. 27 <sup>th</sup> at 11:59pm	Dr. Furtak
2	Sept. 3	<b>Labor Day – NO CLASS</b> **must complete readings and assignments**	Ch. 19 & 20	Conduct Literature Review & Outline Introduction <b>DUE:</b> Submit on Canvas by Sept. 3 <sup>rd</sup> at 11:59pm	N/A
3	Sept. 10	Developing a Measurement Strategy & Survey Research <i>(Furtak) How to Write an Method Section</i>	Ch. 6 & 15	Draft of Introduction <b>DUE:</b> Submit on Canvas by Sept. 10 <sup>th</sup> at 11:59pm	Galan (Ch. 6) Melissa (Ch. 15)
4	Sept. 17	Ethics & Responsibility in Research <i>(Furtak) Review of IRB form.</i>	Ch. 3 & 4	Draft Methods <b>DUE:</b> Submit on Canvas by Oct. 17 <sup>th</sup> at 11:59pm	Cassidy (Ch. 3) Taylor W. (Ch. 4)
5	Sept. 24	Internal & External Validity of Research Data Collection <b>Survey - Peer Feedback</b>	Ch. 7 & 8	Draft Survey Bring Printout to Class <b>DUE:</b> Submit on Canvas by Sept. 24 <sup>th</sup> at 11:59pm	Max (Ch. 7) Shannon (Ch. 8)
6	Oct. 1	Correlational Design & Data Collection <b>Take Surveys In Class</b>	Ch. 11 & 16	Bring 15 printed copies of survey to class with identifier	Jeongin (Ch. 11) Navin (Ch. 16)

Week	Class Date	Weekly Topics	Readings	Paper-Related Assignments & Due Dates	Presenter
7	Oct. 8	Interpreting Research Results <i>(Furtak) How to Write an Results Section, Including In Class Data Analysis</i>	Ch. 17	Outline Results <b>DUE:</b> Submit on Canvas by Oct. 8 <sup>th</sup> at 11:59pm	Emily
8	Oct. 15	True Experiments <i>(Furtak) How to Write an Discussion Section</i>	Ch. 9	Draft Results <b>DUE:</b> Submit on Canvas by Oct. 15 <sup>th</sup> at 11:59pm	Caressa
9	Oct. 22	Field Research <i>(Furtak) Review of APA formatting.</i>	Ch. 10	Draft Discussion <b>DUE:</b> Submit on Canvas by Oct. 22 <sup>nd</sup> at 11:59pm	Taylor C.
10	Oct. 29	Factor Analysis, Path Analysis, and Structural Modeling <i>(Furtak) Open Forum: Last minute questions for Paper 1.</i>	Ch. 12	Paper 1 Due <b>DUE:</b> Submit on Canvas by Oct. 29 <sup>th</sup> at 11:59pm	Randy
11	Nov. 5	<b>SFN Conference – NO CLASS</b> **Complete readings & assignments. Meet with your group and get peer feedback **	Ch. 5 & 19	Research question, list of 10 references & Introduction outline for Paper 2, include peer feedback <b>DUE:</b> Submit on Canvas by Nov. 5 <sup>th</sup> at 11:59pm	
12	Nov. 12	<b>Veteran's Day – NO CLASS</b>			
13	Nov. 19	Single-Case Research Strategy	Ch. 13		Jasmin

Week	Class Date	Weekly Topics	Readings	Paper-Related Assignments & Due Dates	Presenter
14	Nov. 26	Content Analysis, Qualitative Research, and Interviewing Evaluation Research	Ch. 14 & 18		Nial (Ch. 14) Megan (Ch. 18)
15	Dec. 3	In Class Peer Feedback on Paper 2 <b>Paper 2 - Peer Feedback</b> **Upload the electronic complete copy of your Paper 2 to the OneDrive & share it with your assigned partner**		Provide a Peer with Extensive Feedback on Paper 2  <b>DUE:</b> Submit on Canvas by Dec. 3 <sup>rd</sup> at 11:59pm	
16	Finals Week			Paper 2 Due  <b>DUE:</b> Upload to Canvas by Dec. 10 <sup>th</sup> at 11:59pm	N/A

**Note about calendar/schedule.** Important dates are also noted in the Canvas calendar tool.

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**Part 4: Grading Policy**

**Graded Course Activities**

Visit the **Assignments** link in Canvas for details about each assignment listed below. (See Part 4 for more information about accessing tools and activities).

Item	Points	Description
1.	48	Total 12: Discussion Question per Week (4pts each)
2.	48	Total 12: Chapter Analytical Exercise (4pts each)
3.	54	Peer Feedback on Paper 2
4.	150	Class Presentation: Chapter Facilitation, Create Analytical Exercise & Present of Research Paper
5.	200	Paper 1- Drafts & Outlines -Prewrite & Outlines (3 total): 20pts; -Draft Survey (1 total): 20 pts; -Drafts Paper Sections (4 total): 30pts
6.	200	Paper 1- Final
7.	300	Paper 2
	<b>1000</b>	<b>Total Points Possible</b>

1. Discussion Question

The Saturday before every class you will prepare and submit on Canvas one discussion questions on the topics presented in the assigned readings in order to facilitate discussion during class. You will post the question in the Discussion Link on Canvas for the designated week. Questions will only be accepted if students then attend and participate in class. They should be typed, and worthy of graduate students in Psychology. You will be graded on the depth and complexity of your questions, so make sure that they can only be answered by synthesizing ideas and providing examples, rather than by providing simple quotations from the text.

2. Chapter Analytical Exercise

The Saturday before every class you will complete and submit on Canvas an analytical exercise that is relevant to the topics presented in the assigned

chapter readings.

### 3. Peer Feedback on Paper 2

During a class period late in the semester you will partner with another student in the class. You will read and give feedback on the student's paper. Feedback should be extensive and will be required to be typed up and submitted on Canvas or submitted using the "review" function in Word.

### 4. Class Presentations

The purpose of this assignment is to give you experience in public speaking and to prepare you for the oral presentation of your future thesis. You will be required to demonstrate your knowledge through a cohesive and integrated review of the chapter and a research article that is relevant to the chapter. The paper must be published in 2010 or later. Please make explicit the association between the article you have chosen and your assigned chapter.

The PowerPoint presentation on the research paper should contain: a brief introduction with references to the relevant literature; a purpose; hypotheses; an outline of the methods; the results and discussion presented together so that you explain the importance of each result as you go; limitations of the study; theoretical implications; and future directions of research.

As part of your grade, on the Monday before you present, you are required to upload onto Canvas: 1) a PDF of the research article you plan to present; 2) a detailed outline of the presentation (notes and slides); and 3) the analytical exercise you designed with an answer key. You will also be graded on: your response to earlier feedback from me; content; organization; presentation of the material; the way that you answer student questions; your use of slides (keep it simple, use bullets, & use key words or phrases); the exercise you develop that is relevant to the chapter (see the end of each chapter for ideas); and a revised hard copy of the outline on the day of the presentation. *If you miss a class presentation, it will be considered a missing assignment.*

### 5. Papers (200 pts)

You will write two APA papers on two projects. For the first paper, you will be required to show the writing process (prewriting, writing, editing, finalizing). In order to show this process, you will be required to hand in outlines and drafts of paper sections as assignments. These include the introduction, method, results and discussion section. You will receive instructor feedback on these outline and drafts. It will be expected that you incorporate feedback into the final draft of paper 1. This will be factored into your grade.

### 6. Paper 1: Survey Project (200 pts)

The purpose of this assignment is to teach you to think about psychological questions and problems from an empirical perspective, and to express your thoughts using the style of the field (APA). Publication in journals and edited books can often depend on length specifications by editors; so it is important that you learn to write concisely. Exceeding maximum page lengths will result

in grade deductions.

After reading the relevant literature, design a 24-item scale on a psychological construct (e.g., attitude or trait) of interest to you. Pilot test it with at least one peer from class and solicit feedback about the strengths and weaknesses of your scale. All students will take your survey in order to produce a set of data for analysis. In the paper you will write an introduction using relevant literature to build on the need for the current study, a method section that describes the data collected and their relevance to the study, and final a discussion section. It will be important to discuss the theory and findings which guided item creation; describe the characteristics of your scale; critique the scale based on your own thoughts and those of your interviewees; discuss how you would improve the scale; discuss the plan that you would use to investigate the reliability and validity of your revised scale; and describe the types of findings that would give you confidence that your scale is both reliable and valid.

### 7. Paper 2: Proposal Using An Experimental Design (300 pts)

Use APA style for the title page, short title and page numbering, citations, and references. Design an experiment on a topic that is of interest to you. You might want to consider this assignment as a possible thesis project, so think long term. If it is an experimental design, then it must be at least a 2x2 factorial design with at least one manipulated variable. You need to include all of the materials that you will need, and will write up a Human Subjects Application, which will be submitted, to me with your paper and not to the Humans Subjects Committee.

Your APA paper will be a proposal, and thus your hypotheses, methods, and results sections will be written in the future tense. Your paper will contain a title page, introduction, methods, results, references, and appendices. The results will discuss your proposed analyses and the appendices will contain your materials and Human Subjects Application. The paper will not have an abstract or discussion section (8-12 pp. of text and unlimited appendices)

In addition, you will pass your paper to at least one other person in the class for written feedback. This should be an electronic copy, which can be edited using the *Review* tab, moving to the pull down menu for *Track Changes*, and clicking on it. You can also insert comments by clicking on the *New Comment* tab. This edited version of your paper will be submitted to me with your final version. Reviewers please sign your editorial work, as all students are required to review at least one paper.

### **Late Work Policy**

Be sure to pay close attention to deadlines—there will be no make up discussion questions, analytical exercises or peer feedback accepted without a serious and compelling reason and instructor approval.

Late Papers (final and drafts): Five percent (5%) of the total possible points will be subtracted for each late day. Late papers should be submitted on Canvas, which will date- and time-stamp the submission.

**Viewing Grades in Canvas**

Points you receive for graded activities will be posted to the Canvas Grade Center. Click on the My Grades link on the left navigation to view your points. Grades are typically posted within 7 days of the due date. You will see a visual indication of new grades posted on your Canvas home page under the link to this course. If you have a question or complaint about a grade, then you must email Dr. Furtak from your CSUS email account *within 7 days of the time when the grade was posted*. In the email, list topic as PSYC 200 grade question, and state the question or complaint you have for the given grade.

**Letter Grade Assignment**

Final grades assigned for this course will be based on the percentage of total points earned and are assigned as follows:

Letter Grade	Percentage	Performance
A	95.00 - 100%	Excellent Work
A-	90.00 - 94.99%	Nearly Excellent Work
B+	86.00 - 89.99%	Very Good Work
B	84.00 - 85.99%	Good Work
B-	80.00 – 83.99%	Mostly Good Work
C+	76.00 – 79.99%	Above Average Work
C	74.00 - 75.99%	Average Work
C-	70.00 – 73.99%	Mostly Average Work
D+	66.00 – 69.99%	Below Average Work
D	60.00 – 65.99%	Poor Work
F	0-59.99%	Failing Work

**Important note:** For more information about grading at Sac State, visit the academic policies and grading section of the university catalog.

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**Part 5: Course Policies**

**Attend Class**

Students are expected to attend all class sessions as listed on the course calendar. A student who misses 3 or more classes will earn an F in the course.

**Build Rapport**

If you find that you have any trouble keeping up with assignments or other aspects of the course, make sure you let Dr. Furtak know as early as possible. As you will find, building rapport and effective relationships are key to becoming an effective professional. Make sure that you are proactive in informing your instructor when difficulties arise so that I can help you find a solution.

**Understand When You May Drop This Course**

It is the student's responsibility to understand when they need to consider disenrolling from a course. Refer to the Sac State Course Schedule for dates and deadlines for registration. After this period, a serious and compelling reason is required to drop from the course. Serious and compelling reasons includes: (1) documented and significant change in work hours, leaving student unable to attend class, or (2) documented and severe physical/mental illness/injury to the student or student's family.

**Incomplete Policy**

Under emergency/special circumstances, students may petition for an incomplete grade. An incomplete will only be assigned if the instructor feels the state reasons are compelling and not easily overcome. All incomplete course assignments must be completed within 1 year.

**Inform Your Instructor of Any Accommodations Needed**

If you have a documented disability and verification from the [Office of Services to Students with Disabilities](#) (SSWD), and wish to discuss academic accommodations, please contact your instructor as soon as possible. It is the student's responsibility to provide documentation of

disability to SSWD and meet with a SSWD counselor to request special accommodation *before* classes start.

SSWD is located in Lassen Hall 1008 and can be contacted by phone at (916) 278-6955 (Voice) (916) 278-7239 (TDD only) or via email at [sswd@csus.edu](mailto:sswd@csus.edu).

## Commit to Integrity

As a student in this course (and at this university) you are expected to maintain high degrees of professionalism, commitment to active learning and participation in this class and also integrity in your behavior in and out of the classroom.

### Sac State's Academic Honesty Policy & Procedures

"The principles of truth and honesty are recognized as fundamental to a community of scholars and teachers. California State University, Sacramento expects that both faculty and students will honor these principles, and in so doing, will protect the integrity of academic work and student grades."

Read more about Sac State's [Academic Honesty Policy & Procedures](#)

### Definitions

At Sac State, "**cheating** is the act of obtaining or attempting to obtain credit for academic work through the use of any dishonest, deceptive, or fraudulent means."

"**Plagiarism** is a form of cheating. At Sac State, "plagiarism is the use of distinctive ideas or works belonging to another person without providing adequate acknowledgement of that person's contribution."

**Source:** Sacramento State University Library

**Important Note:** Any form of academic dishonesty, including cheating and plagiarism, may be reported to the office of student affairs.

**Course policies are subject to change.** It is the student's responsibility to check Canvas for corrections or updates to the syllabus. Any changes will be posted in Canvas.