

# Experimental Psychology

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Lab - PSY 305 51L & 52L

## Instructor

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Office Hours: By appointment

## Course e-mail

**Use the ECollege E-mail link from the course website.** Keep subject lines relevant to the contents of the e-mail by including the **specific topic** of the e-mail in the subject line (e.g., "Assignment 1", "Appointment Request for Office Hours 02/01/13"). If your subject line is vague, non-specific, and is not from ECollege (e.g., "hey" or "class"), I will not reply to it. Similarly, do not reply to an old e-mail when you are now asking a new question or addressing a new subject. Do not reply to e-mails that I sent to you without changing the subject line unless it is a direct reply to the subject of the original e-mail. In short, I can't keep track of everything if you mix up the subject lines. In all things, be specific.

E-mail is not always the most effective medium for communication. If you have the technology and know-how, we might be able to video conference during times when we are at two different locations. I will not, however, explain advanced concepts back and forth through e-mail. Instead, you must set an appointment to come speak with me in person.

If you email me and do not receive an email response within 48 hours, most likely, your email was not received. I will respond to all emails within a reasonable period of time.

## ECollege

I will use all of ECollege's wonderful features heavily throughout the semester. As such, you are expected to be a proficient user of our online system. Here, I will communicate your grades, share valuable resources outside of your textbook, and post your homework assignments. Make certain that you can navigate it well and quickly. If you need assistance in learning how to best use this tool, take the tutorial available through the university webpage. Please note, computer compatibility issues are not my domain. Any should be addressed with Technical Support.

## Required Text

No required texts outside of lecture course materials

## Description of Course:

This lab is designed to accompany the experimental psychology course that directly precedes it by taking the things that you learn in class and applying them to situations that mirror the "real world" of psychological science. As such, the general objectives here will be a subset with the same emphasis (although admittedly more applied here than in class) of those discussed in class. Specifically, students who pass this course should successfully be able to demonstrate the following learning outcomes:

## **1. Familiarization with Research Methods**

- a. Students will understand and apply fundamental aspects of empirical science such as research design, data analysis, and interpretation/ inferential application of results.

## **2. Critical Thinking Skills**

- a. Students will evaluate the quality of several contemporary peer-reviewed empirical articles and fellow student's work. In doing so, students will hone their ability to
  - i. identify how otherwise isolated experimental results apply to a larger theoretical picture;
  - ii. recognize and objectively assess underlying research assumptions;
  - iii. critically assess research strengths and potential confounds; and
  - iv. formulate new, testable research ideas and hypotheses that are motivated by theory and prevailing literature.

## **3. Technological Literacy**

- a. Students will successfully utilize computer skills that aid in empirical research (including, but not limited to), programs such as
  - i. SPSS (PASW)
  - ii. Powerpoint and
  - iii. Literature search databases

## **4. Collaboration with Colleagues**

- a. Students will successfully collaborate with a peer(s) to undertake a successfully executed research project.

## **5. Communication Skills**

- a. Students will be able to express their ideas, designs, and interpretations in an oral and written style that effectively communicates those elements to a general audience of uninformed persons.

## **Grading Policy:**

All graded components are specified in the lecture syllabus.

## **Attendance:**

Because attendance is essential to your success in this course, you are expected to come to lab on time and stay for the entire lab period. Just like class, the tenets of common decency apply.

## **Independent and Group Work:**

Although I know that some of you may have a strong independent streak, you will have the opportunity to gain experience in research through work with a partner (or group) if you so choose. For the purposes of both efficiency and two+ heads (sometimes) being better than one, working with other people is something that you will encounter throughout your research career. If you continue to pursue a career in just about any field of psychology, you will undoubtedly work with advisers, lab assistants, and colleagues in your research pursuits. Forming these types of relationships is one of the hallmarks of any type of empirical science.

In all tasks, work should be as equally distributed as possible. No one person should shoulder more of the load than others, nor should any person receive a grade for work in which they took little or no part. In sum, I want you to play well with others but let me know if someone isn't sharing the toys.

### **Personal Consultations:**

There is a distinct possibility that we will not have enough time within the confines of lab to address everything that either of us would like. Be it help with any of the assignments, the project, or just general guidance, I intend on staying a little late each class as we wrap things up. If that time is not enough (and I would suspect that it may not be with only 60 minutes), I encourage you to come see me during office hours. I can give you personalized attention here to help you wade through some potentially tough assignments. Make liberal use of this resource.

### **Academic Honesty Policy:**

Texas A&M University-Commerce does not tolerate plagiarism and other forms of academic dishonesty. Conduct that violates generally accepted standards of academic honesty is defined as academic dishonesty. "Academic dishonesty" includes, but is not limited to, plagiarism (the appropriation or stealing of the ideas or words of another and passing them off as one's own), cheating on exams or other course assignments, collusion (the unauthorized collaboration with others in preparing course assignments), and abuse (destruction, defacing, or removal) of resource material. Students who commit acts of academic dishonesty will be permanently dismissed from the lab and given an F, which will effectively result in the failure from both the lab and the course.

Be certain that you clearly differentiate your work from the works of others through use of quotation marks (*direct quotes to be used minimally and only when words of the original author cannot be as effectively expressed in any other form*) and liberal paraphrasing (*which requires you to reword the ideas in such a way that expresses the same basic concept, but is not a simple search through the thesaurus for select pieces of an otherwise intact quotation*). Any document, individual or group, submitted with portions lifted from the works of others will be given a zero, regardless of references or intent. Any future document containing the same types of infractions will result in failure from the lab and course.

### **APA Format:**

You are required to use APA format for all references, including those gathered from the internet. If you are unaware of how to use APA format, there are many free internet sources that can help you in this regard. Make liberal use of them. I find [The Owl at Purdue](#) to be a great resource. Scroll down to the bottom for examples of how to cite your work appropriately.

Make certain that if I ask you to incorporate sources, that you provide an internal citation within the body of the text and a full reference at the end of your document. You need to make every effort to ensure that I not only know what information is drawn from your sources, but how I could locate those sources for myself.

Example:

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*Internal citation:*

The sky is falling (Weatherford, 2010).

*Full reference:*

Weatherford, D. (2010). The sky is falling, *Fictitious Journal*, 16-26. doi: 12346..m//ad;slkfj//

### **Paraphrasing versus Quotations:**

Personal experiences and opinions do not, obviously, need to be cited because they are authentic to you. I hope that while engaging in these discussions, that you can easily tie your opinions to facts and show that your beliefs are based upon a solid foundation of evidence, not just conjecture. That is where I expect that you will be using historical facts and statistics that have to come from somewhere, and that somewhere needs to be specified. Intellectual property is serious in academia and if someone puts their thoughts, research, and ideas out for the world to read, they deserve to have credit if you 'borrow' them to support a point that you are trying to make. They have earned that. Sometimes people treat it softly because words and ideas are not entirely physical, but plagiarism is analogous to stealing.

In sum,

- Paraphrasing (using someone's ideas, facts, historical data, research etc. in your own words) without citing is plagiarism.
- Using exact wording, even if you cite, without quotation marks is plagiarism.
- Using most of the words from a sentence and using synonyms for select words or switching up the order (basically improper paraphrasing) with or without citing is plagiarism.

If you have any questions about whether or not to cite a source, you can always feel free to ask me directly. Therefore, ignorance is not an acceptable excuse. Outside of that, cite liberally. I would much rather that you cite more than cite less.

### **When to cite:**

If I am asking you to summarize or critique an article, I expect that the only citations that I will see will come 1) if you seek out sources on your own to supplement and support your ideas or 2) cite relevant literature or theory that was cited by the original author. It is my general assumption that most of your submission will be from the article itself, and therefore citing every sentence is unnecessary. So, you only need to internally cite that article in the event you lift an exact quote from it. I caution, however, that you should use quotes sparingly and only when doing so provides particularly compelling insight that only the author's words can truly capture. In reading the articles, it is my hope that you gain a deep enough understanding to convey the ideas of the author **IN YOUR OWN WORDS. If I discover that you have taken the exact words of any source and presented them as your own, without using quotation marks, you will be given a zero for that assignment. Subsequent infractions will result in further disciplinary action through the appropriate university channels.**

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BE WARNED, I take plagiarism very seriously and I will not tolerate it in any fashion.

## **Student Conduct**

All students enrolled at the University shall follow the tenets of common decency and acceptable behavior conducive to a positive learning environment. (See *Code of Student Conduct from Student Guide Handbook*).

## **University Specific Procedures:**

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is a federal anti-discrimination statute that provides comprehensive civil rights protection for persons with disabilities. Among other things, this legislation requires that all students with disabilities be guaranteed a learning environment that provides for reasonable accommodation of their disabilities. If you have a disability requiring an accommodation, please contact:

**Office of Student Disability Resources and Services**  
**Texas A&M University-Commerce**  
**Gee Library 132**  
**Phone (903) 886-5150 or (903) 886-5835**  
**Fax (903) 468-8148**