

**Department of Psychology
California State University, Fresno**

**Psychology 244
Research Methods**

Fall 2019

Course Description

This course is a general introduction to research methods for all graduate students in psychology at Fresno State. Part of its purpose is to review the material covered in Psychology 144 (and similar undergraduate research methods courses)—including basic concepts in research design, statistics, and psychological measurement. But more broadly, its purpose is to help you become sophisticated professional-level consumers of psychological research. This means being able to locate, read, and understand research from a variety of areas, to identify conceptual and methodological strengths and weaknesses of research studies, to interpret individual studies in the context of other (often contradictory) research, to organize multiple studies into meaningful and useful frameworks, and to identify new research questions and directions.

Psychology 244 also provides an opportunity to prepare for and take the department's Graduate Writing Exam. We give this exam to meet the University's graduate writing requirement and you must pass it before advancing to candidacy. Specifically, you will learn how to write short critiques of empirical research articles, write two critiques as graded assignments for this course, and finally write a third critique that serves as the Graduate Writing Exam.

Instructor

Paul Price, Science II, Room 333, 278-2120, paulpri@csufresno.edu. Office Hours: Wednesdays from 12:00 to 3:00 and other times by appointment. I am also available for consultation by e-mail and I usually respond within 24 hours.

Meeting Times and Places

Tuesdays and Thursdays, 2:00 to 3:50 p.m., Science II, Room 314.

Course Website and Readings

The official course Website is on Canvas. It includes announcements, a copy of the syllabus, links to many of the readings, assignments, grades, and other interesting and useful stuff. You should check it on a regular basis.

There are two textbooks.

1. Price, P. C. (2012). *Research methods in psychology: Core concepts and skills*. Boston, MA: Flat World Knowledge.

This is an online textbook written by me. There are several free versions and a paid version. The free version should be fine and a link is available on Canvas.

2. Yockey, R. D. (2012). *SPSS demystified: A simple guide and reference* (3rd ed.). Upper Saddle River, NJ: Pearson.

We do not need this book until October, which gives you time to borrow a copy or buy one online. I will place an order with the Kennel bookstore if there is enough interest in doing it that way.

There will also be several required research articles posted on Canvas, along with several supplemental readings.

Finally, as a graduate student in psychology, you are expected to have a copy of the most recent edition of the *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association*.

Course Elements and Grading

(A – 9.0) Exams (200 Points)

There will be two exams—a midterm and a final—each worth 100 points toward your final grade. The midterm will be taken in class and will consist of a mixture of multiple-choice, short-answer, and short-essay items. The final will be a take-home exam that will also include some simple statistical analyses.

(P – 9.1) Reaction Papers (70 Points)

During most weeks, there will be a short empirical research article to read for Tuesday. These articles will come from all areas of psychology. For seven of the articles, there will be short (half page) reaction papers worth 10 points. These are due electronically by the time class begins and will not be accepted after that.

Article Critiques and Graduate Writing Exam (60 Points)

For three of the empirical research articles, instead of writing a reaction paper you will instead write a longer summary and critique of the article. The first one will be due electronically just like the reaction papers. For the second one, you will prepare for it outside of class but actually write it in class on a computer. These first two critiques are worth 30 points each and will be graded according to the same criteria as the Graduate Writing Exam. The third one will be the Graduate Writing Exam itself. You will have the article one week in advance, prepare to write your critique outside of class, and then again actually write it in class. You have to score a minimum of 24 out of 30 to pass this exam so that you can advance to candidacy and continue in the program—although these points do not count toward your grade in this class. Note that if you do not pass the Graduate Writing Exam in the Fall, you will have another chance to pass it in the Spring.

Wikipedia Project (100 points)

We will be working with a non-profit organization called Wiki Education to complete a semester-long Wikipedia Project, where groups of students work together to improve an existing Wikipedia article. The ten exercises and small assignments that have due dates on the Wikipedia Project website are worth 5 points each. The final revised Wikipedia article is worth 30 points and the presentation and reflective essay are worth 10 points each.

(P – 9.0) Research Survey (5 points)

This is a short online survey that I have everyone complete at the beginning of the semester to collect data that we can then use for class activities later in the semester.

Final Grades

There are a total of 435 points that you can earn during the semester and your final grade will be based on the percentage of these points that you earn. You need 391.5 (90%) to get an A, 348 (80%) to get a B, 304.5 (70%) to get a C, and 261 (60%) to get a D. Remember, however, that you must pass this course with a grade of A or B to advance to candidacy and complete the program.

Other Policies

Attendance

The attendance policy for this course is as follows. 1) There are no points toward your final grade for attendance. 2) It is assumed, however, that you will attend regularly because you are a graduate student and this is a foundational course in your chosen field. 3) Occasional absences due to illness or emergency are to be expected and do not need to be discussed with me (especially if they do not affect your work being turned). 4) Nevertheless, I will keep track of attendance for my own information. 5) I also consider it appropriate for me to alert your thesis advisor and graduate program coordinator of excessive (more than three) absences.

Make-Up Exams

If you have an important, unavoidable conflict with an exam (including the second practice critique and the Graduate Writing Exam), you may arrange in advance to take it at a different time. However, you must arrange it as soon as you become aware of the conflict. If you miss an exam due to a sudden unexpected occurrence, you may arrange a make-up exam for the first feasible time and you must do so before missing a second class meeting. Again, you must demonstrate the reality of the unexpected occurrence.

Late Assignments

Reaction papers will not be accepted late. The other written assignments may be turned in late but will be discounted by 10% of the points possible per day—regardless of the reason (including computer malfunctions).

Academic Dishonesty

Any kind of academic dishonesty is grounds for receiving a zero on the exam or assignment in question or, in extreme cases, an F for the course. Academic dishonesty includes, but is not limited to, cheating on an exam, plagiarizing on an assignment, and lying about one's reason for missing an exam or assignment. More information on academic dishonesty (including the university's Honor Code) is available in the *University Catalog*, the *Schedule of Courses*, and the *Academic Policy Manual*.

Students with Disabilities

Upon identifying themselves to the instructor and the university, students with disabilities will receive reasonable accommodation for learning and evaluation. For more information, contact Services to Students with Disabilities at 278-2811.

Emergencies

In the event of an emergency, call 911 from a campus phone, or 278-8400 from a cell phone. At any other time you are in Science II, if the fire alarm sounds, exit the building and reassemble at the southeast corner of the band practice field. Do not leave the assembly point until advised to do so by emergency response personnel. At the assembly point report to emergency responders any missing persons or physically challenged persons requiring rescue. If you have concerns about other emergencies or if you have special circumstances relevant in the event of an emergency, please speak to your instructor.

Other University Policies

The university also has policies on cheating, computer resources, disruptive classroom behavior, and copyright. You can read the official statements of these policies at the following Website.

http://www.csufresno.edu/academics/policies_forms/instruction/RequiredSyllabusPolicyStatements.htm

(I – 9.0, I – 9.3) Course Schedule

See Canvas for direct links to all readings other than those from Yockey (2012).

<i>Date</i>	<i>Topic</i>	<i>Reading</i>	<i>Wikipedia</i>
Th, 08/22	Course Introduction	Syllabus; Canvas Site	
Tu, 08/27	Overview of Psychological Research	Price, Ch. 1 and Ch. 2.1 ; Article 1 (Reaction Paper)	Introduction
Th, 08/29	Writing in APA Style	Price Ch. 11	
Tu, 09/03	Experimental Research Designs	Price Ch. 6; Article 2 (Reaction Paper)	Evaluating Wikipedia
Th, 09/05	Correlational Research Designs	Price, Ch. 7.1-7.2	
Tu, 09/10	Additional Research Designs	Price, Ch. 7.3 and Ch. 8; Article 3 (Critique)	Possible Topics
Th, 09/12	Wikipedia Project		
Tu, 09/17	Generalization and External Validity		Final Topics
Th, 09/19	Qualitative Research and Case Studies	Price Ch. 7.4	
Tu, 09/24	Research Ethics	Price, Ch. 3; Article 4 (Reaction Paper)	Start Drafting
Th, 09/26	Wikipedia Project		
Tu, 10/01	Descriptive Statistics Review	Price, Ch. 12; Article 5 (Reaction Paper)	Continue Drafting
Th, 10/03	Effect Size		
Tu, 10/08	SPSS Basics	Yockey, Ch. 1-2	(Continue Drafting)
Th, 10/10	MIDTERM EXAM	Price, Ch. 13	

Tu, 10/15	Inferential Statistics and Null Hypothesis Testing	Yockey, Ch. 5-7; Article 6 (Reaction Paper)	Peer Review
Th, 10/17	t Tests		
Tu, 10/22	Practice Critique 2	Article 7 (Critique; Written in Class)	Respond to Peer Review
Th, 10/24	SPSS for t Tests	Price, Ch. 13	
Tu, 10/29	ANOVA	Yockey, Ch. 8, 10; Article 8 (Reaction Paper)	Move Work to Wikipedia
Th, 10/31	SPSS for ANOVA		
Tu, 11/05	Correlation and Regression	Yockey, Ch. 12-14; Article 9 (Reaction Paper)	Continue Improving Article
Th, 11/07	SPSS for Correlation and Regression	Article 10	
Tu, 11/12	Graduate Writing Exam	Article 10 (GWE; Written in Class)	(Continue Improving)
Th, 11/14	Psychological Measurement	Price, Ch. 5	
Tu, 11/19	Multidimensionality and Factor Analysis		Polish Article
Th, 11/21	SPSS for Psychometric Analyses	Yockey, Ch. 4	
Tu, 11/26	Replication Crisis	Price, Ch. 14	(Continue Polishing)
Th, 12/28	THANKSGIVING		
Tu, 12/03	Meta-Analysis		Final Article
Th, 12/05	Ideological Bias		
Tu, 12/10	Wikipedia Project Presentations		Presentations; Reflective Essay
Th, 12/12	Dead Days		
Th, 12/19	FINAL EXAM – Take-Home Due by 5:30 p.m.		