



The University of Southern Queensland

Course specification

The current and official versions of the course specifications are available on the web at <http://www.usq.edu.au/coursespecification/current>.
Please consult the web for updates that may occur during the year.

Description: Research Methods in Psychology A

Subject	Cat-nbr	Class	Term	Mode	Units	Campus
PSY	2100	86252	1, 2009	EXT	1.00	Toowoomba

Academic group:	FOSCI
Academic org:	FOS005
Student contribution band:	1
ASCED code:	090701

STAFFING

Examiner: Andrea Lamont-Mills
Moderator: Tony Machin

OTHER REQUISITES

Recommended pre-requisite: STA2300, PSY1010

RATIONALE

The discipline of Psychology is based on a solid foundation of scientific research. Researchers use a variety of conceptual, logical, computational and statistical tools to reduce uncertainty in the state of psychological knowledge. This course introduces some of those tools. These same intellectual tools form a firm foundation for the scientist-practitioner model of psychological practice.

SYNOPSIS

This course introduces the methods and statistics used to develop knowledge in the field of psychology. Topics covered include: operationalising theoretical constructs, internal and external validity, sampling and assignment, and an introduction to survey and experimental methods. Data analysis techniques include measures of central tendency, chi-square tests, t-tests, one-way ANOVA, correlation and regression as they pertain to psychological research. Planned and post-hoc comparisons in an ANOVA context are also explored. The concepts of statistical inference, decision making, and potential sources of error are also covered. The computer statistical package, SPSS, is used to develop practical analysis skills and enhance conceptual understanding. Reliable access to a suitable computer and internet access is required as per Faculty of Sciences requirements.

OBJECTIVES

On completion of this course students will be able to:

1. describe different research designs, identify when it is appropriate to use them, and discuss their strengths and limitations (CMA, Assignment 1, Exam);

2. identify the concepts used in a study, the variables used to operationalise those concepts, and the control techniques used (CMA, Assignment 1, Exam);
3. develop research questions and hypotheses to test psychological concepts and theories (CMA, Assignment 1, Exam);
4. demonstrate an understanding of measures of central tendency, hypothesis testing, Chi-Square tests, t-tests, Analysis of Variance, Post-hoc and Planned Comparisons, Correlation, and Regression including the appropriate selection of analysis techniques (CMA, Assignment 1, Exam);
5. use SPSS to analyse psychological research data (Assignment 1, Exam);
6. write a last paragraph, method and results section of an APA research report (Assignment 1).

TOPICS

Description	Weighting (%)
1. Scientific foundations and the research process.	20.00
2. Hypothesis testing.	20.00
3. Independent group design: Issues and analysis.	20.00
4. Survey designs: Issues and analysis.	20.00
5. Observational designs: Issues and analysis.	20.00

TEXT and MATERIALS required to be PURCHASED or ACCESSED

ALL textbooks and materials are available for purchase from USQ BOOKSHOP (unless otherwise stated). Orders may be placed via secure internet, free fax 1800642453, phone 07 46312742 (within Australia), or mail. Overseas students should fax +61 7 46311743, or phone +61 7 46312742. For costs, further details, and internet ordering, use the 'Textbook Search' facility at <http://bookshop.usq.edu.au> click 'Semester', then enter your 'Course Code' (no spaces).

SPSS student version 15.0 (version 10.0 or later is acceptable) for Windows, Prentice Hall.

Aron, A, Aron, EN & Coups 2009, *Statistics for psychology*, 5th edn, Prentice Hall, Upper Saddle River, New Jersey.

(International Edition)

Burton, LJ 2007, *An interactive approach to writing essays and research reports in psychology*, 2nd edn, John Wiley & Sons, Brisbane, Australia.

Shaughnessy, JJ, Zechmeister, EB & Zechmeister, JS 2009, *Research methods in psychology*, 8th edn, McGraw Hill, New York.

Whitley, TW 2009, *Study guide and computer workbook for statistics for psychology*, 5th edn, Prentice Hall, Upper Saddle River, New Jersey.

REFERENCE MATERIALS

Reference materials are materials that, if accessed by students, may improve their knowledge and understanding of the material in the course and enrich their learning experience.

STUDENT WORKLOAD REQUIREMENTS

ACTIVITY	HOURS
Assessments	25.00
Directed Study	33.00
Examinations	2.00
Private Study	90.00
Residential Schools	24.00

ASSESSMENT DETAILS

Description	Marks out of	Wtg (%)	Due date
CMA 1	1.00	1.00	03 Apr 2009
CMA 2	1.00	1.00	03 Apr 2009
CMA 3	1.00	1.00	08 May 2009
ASSIGNMENT 1	100.00	25.00	29 May 2009
CMA 4	1.00	1.00	12 Jun 2009
CMA 5	1.00	1.00	12 Jun 2009
PTA OF 2HR RESTR EXAM (METHOD)	46.00	35.00	END S1 (see note 1)
PTB OF 2HR RESTR EXAM (STATS)	45.00	35.00	END S1

NOTES

1. Examination dates will be available during the Semester. Please refer to the examination timetable when published.

IMPORTANT ASSESSMENT INFORMATION

- 1 Attendance requirements:
There are no attendance requirements for this course. However, it is the students' responsibility to study all material provided to them or required to be accessed by them to maximise their chance of meeting the objectives of the course and to be informed of course-related activities and administration.
- 2 Requirements for students to complete each assessment item satisfactorily:
To satisfactorily complete an individual assessment item a student must achieve at least 50% of the marks or a grade of at least C-. Refer to Statement 4 below for the requirements to receive a passing grade in this course.

- 3 Penalties for late submission of required work:
If students submit assignments after the due date without (prior) approval of the examiner then a penalty of 5% of the total marks gained by the student for the assignment may apply for each working day late up to ten working days at which time a mark of zero may be recorded. No assignments will be accepted after model answers have been posted.
- 4 Requirements for student to be awarded a passing grade in the course:
To be assured of receiving a passing grade a student must achieve at least 50% of the total weighted marks available for the course.
- 5 Method used to combine assessment results to attain final grade:
The final grades for students will be assigned on the basis of the aggregate of the weighted marks/grades obtained for each of the summative assessment items in the course.
- 6 Examination information:
Candidates are allowed access only to specific materials during a Restricted Examination. The only materials that candidates may use in the restricted examination for this course are: writing materials (non-electronic and free from material which could give the student an unfair advantage in the examination); calculators which cannot hold textual information (students must indicate on their examination paper the make and model of any calculator(s) they use during the examination); Students whose first language is not English, may, take an appropriate unmarked non-electronic translation dictionary (but not technical dictionary) into the examination. Dictionaries with any handwritten notes will not be permitted. Translation dictionaries will be subject to perusal and may be removed from the candidate's possession until appropriate disciplinary action is completed if found to contain material that could give the candidate an unfair advantage.
- 7 Examination period when Deferred/Supplementary examinations will be held:
Any Deferred or Supplementary examinations for this course will be held during the next examination period.
- 8 University Regulations:
Students should read USQ Regulations 5.1 Definitions, 5.6. Assessment, and 5.10 Academic Misconduct for further information and to avoid actions which might contravene University Regulations. These regulations can be found at the URL <http://www.usq.edu.au/corporateservices/calendar/part5.htm> or in the current USQ Handbook.

ASSESSMENT NOTES

- 9 The due date for an assignment is the date by which a student must despatch the assignment to the USQ. The onus is on the student to provide proof of the despatch date, if requested by the Examiner.
- 10 The Faculty will normally only accept assessments that have been written, typed or printed on paper-based media.
- 11 The Faculty will NOT accept submission of assignments by facsimile.
- 12 Students who do not have regular access to postal services or who are otherwise disadvantaged by these regulations may be given special consideration. They should contact the examiner of the course to negotiate such special arrangements.
- 13 In the event that a due date for an assignment falls on a local public holiday in their area, such as a Show holiday, the due date for the assignment will be the next day. Students are to note on the assignment cover the date of the public holiday for the Examiner's convenience.

- 14 Students who, for medical, family/personal, or employment-related reasons, are unable to complete an assignment or to sit for an examination at the scheduled time may apply to defer an assessment in a course. Such a request must be accompanied by appropriate supporting documentation. One of the following temporary grades may be awarded IDS (Incomplete - Deferred Examination; IDM (Incomplete Deferred Make-up); IDB (Incomplete - Both Deferred Examination and Deferred Make-up).
- 15 Students may be required to provide a copy of assignments submitted for assessment purposes. Such copies should be dispatched to the USQ within 24 hours of receipt of a request to do so.

OTHER REQUIREMENTS

- 1 Students can expect that questions in assessment items in this course may draw upon knowledge and skills that they can reasonably be expected to have acquired before enrolling in the course. This includes knowledge contained in pre-requisite courses and appropriate communication, information literacy, analytical, critical thinking, problem solving or numeracy skills. Students who do not possess such knowledge and skills should not expect to achieve the same grades as those students who do possess them.
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