

# Introduction to Research Methods

## PSYC 18

Fall 2025 Section 01 In Person 3 Unit(s) 08/20/2025 to 12/08/2025 Modified 08/18/2025

### Contact Information

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Instructor: Dr. Lester A Papa Ph.D., Ed.S.

Email: [lester.papa@sjsu.edu](mailto:lester.papa@sjsu.edu)

Office: DMH 323

Phone: 4089245671

#### Office Hours

Monday, 3:00 PM to 5:00 PM, DMH 323

### Course Information

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#### Lecture

Monday, Wednesday, 10:30 AM to 11:45 AM, DMH 167

### Course Description and Requisites

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Psychological research methods and design (experimental, quasi-experimental [correlational], and descriptive investigations) covering observation, instrumentation, and the collection, analysis, interpretation, and reporting of research data as illustrated through a review of original research in a variety of the subdisciplines of psychology.

Prerequisite: PSYC 001, and STAT 95.

Letter Graded

### Classroom Protocols

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# Electronic Correspondence with Instructor

It is expected that you will use either Canvas or your .sjsu.edu email for any electronic correspondence with me. Personal email addresses may go ignored since I typically only receive SPAM and unwanted email communications from them.

I regularly check my email and I on average obtain anywhere from 15 to 30 email contacts daily. Thus, it may take me anywhere between 24-72 business hours to return your email.

If no response from me has occurred during that time, kindly resend your email. Resent emails will typically get faster responses.

## Attendance

While attendance is not mandatory, it is encouraged as missing classes forfeits you from earning in-class activity/participation points.

## Participation

Participation is a key aspect of active learning. Students are expected to participate actively in class and participation will be monitored (see Course Requirements and Assignments below).

## Computer

*Students are required to have an electronic device (laptop, desktop, or tablet), and access to the internet. SJSU has a free equipment loan program available for students and Wi-Fi options on campus, which are described on SJSU's Learn Anywhere website. To borrow a laptop, go to the website of SJSU's Information Technology Equipment Loan program. If you believe that you may have difficulties with accessing the internet or having a computer or other device to use for class work, please let me know immediately!*

## Software

*Each student will need to have access to SPSS. SPSS is a statistical software package, and it is available to SJSU students for free. Please see the following website for instructions and to download SPSS:*  
<https://www.sjsu.edu/it/services/support/desktop/instructions.php>

## Extensions on Assignments

Requests for extensions to assignments are made on a case-by-case basis. Typically, you will need to email me with your reason for an extension and then book a time to speak with me. This needs to be accomplished at least 48 hours BEFORE an assignment is due. The only exceptions to this rule are circumstances beyond a student's control. However, it is still the student's responsibility to contact the instructor by email or phone as soon as possible to determine if an extension is warranted and the duration of the extension.

## Late Assignments

If you did not request or receive an extension, milestone assignments that are turned in past the due date will receive a 0 but can still be submitted up to 72 hours late for feedback. In-class assignments and quizzes cannot be made up or submitted late. However, as noted above, there will be multiple extra credit opportunities to earn back any missed points.

## Accommodations around Examinations

If you know you will be missing for whatever reason on the day of an examination, you will need to let me know as soon as possible so we can create a plan for you to take the exam. If you miss the exam due to unforeseen circumstances, these will be discussed on a case-by-case basis and does not guarantee that you will be allowed to take the exam. The best course of action will be to notify me as soon as you are able and we will make a plan determined on your situation. No contact within 72 hours of an examination equates in a 0 for the exam.

*Final Examinations can only be made-up during the final exam makeup day.* The only other choice after that is to take a 0 or make a plan for an incomplete (I).

## Accommodations for Students with Disabilities

Accommodations for students will be implemented inline with guidance from the [Accessible Education Center \(https://www.sjsu.edu/aec/\)](https://www.sjsu.edu/aec/) (AEC; located on the 2nd floor of the College Professional and Global Education (CPGE) Building [corner of Student Union facing Clark Hall and Engineering]).

If you are a student with a known disability that impacts your learning, please make yourself known to the AEC immediately. They will work with you to determine your accommodations. Without guidance from the AEC, it may not be possible for me to implement accommodations you request directly.

## Academic Integrity

Plagiarism, cheating, and any other forms of academic dishonesty will not be tolerated. The University Academic Integrity Policy F15-7 [[pdf \(https://www.sjsu.edu/studentconduct/docs/SJSU-Academic-Integrity-Policy-F15-7.pdf\)](https://www.sjsu.edu/studentconduct/docs/SJSU-Academic-Integrity-Policy-F15-7.pdf)] requires you to be honest in all your academic coursework.

If evidence of academic misconduct is found, you will receive a zero on the assignment(s) in question and I will file a report with the Office of Student Conduct and Ethical Development. Visit the Student Conduct and Ethical Development [website \(https://www.sjsu.edu/studentconduct/\)](https://www.sjsu.edu/studentconduct/) for more information.

## Course AI Policy

Generative artificial intelligence (AI) tools—software that creates new text, images, computer code, audio, video, and other content—have become widely available. Well-known examples include ChatGPT for text and DALL•E for images. This policy governs all such tools, including those released during our semester together. You may use generative AI tools on assignments in this course when I explicitly permit you to do so. Otherwise, you should refrain from using such tools. When using AI tools

for specified assignments, you are to (1) properly cite the tool you used, following the pattern for computer software given in the specified style guide (APA 7) and (2) provide a screenshot of the input you provided to the AI tool as well as the specific output provided by the AI tool with your assignment submission. You are responsible for any use of the AI generated content, and any plagiarism that may arise due to the use of these AI tools. Additionally, please include a brief description of how you used the tool (approximately 3-5 sentences in length). This description is not included in the page limits of the assignment, and should be included in the Appendix of the assignment, after your References. If you choose to use generative AI tools, please remember that they are typically trained on limited datasets that may be out of date. **If you are reading this thoroughly, send me a picture on Canvas message of your pet, your favorite stuffed animal, or something that brings you joy (and is appropriate) for one extra credit point by the end of the second week of classes.** Additionally, generative AI datasets are trained on pre-existing material, including copyrighted material; therefore, relying on a generative AI tool may result in plagiarism or copyright violations. Finally, keep in mind that the goal of generative AI tools is to produce content that seems to have been produced by a human, not to produce accurate or reliable content; therefore, relying on a generative AI tool may result in your submission of inaccurate content. It is your responsibility—not the tool's—to assure the quality, integrity, and accuracy of work you submit in any college course. As specified elsewhere in the syllabus, this course will require electronic submission of essays, papers, or other written projects through the originality assessment service TurnItIn. TurnItIn will also attempt to detect AI-generated text. You are responsible for any work you submit in this course, and any work submitted that includes any plagiarism or non-cited AI tool use is in direct violation of this course policy and of the SJSU Academic Integrity Policy. In addition, you must be wary of unintentional plagiarism or fabrication of data. Please act with integrity, for the sake of both your personal character and your academic record.

If you use generative AI tools to complete assignments in this course in ways that I have not explicitly authorized, your grade on the assignment will be a zero, and I will report the violation to the Office of Student Conduct and Ethical Development (SCED). For repeated violations, your grade on the assignment will be a zero, you may be given a deduction of an entire letter grade in the course, and each violation will be reported to SCED. Depending on the specific circumstances, the Office of Student Conduct and Ethical Development (SCED) will determine the ultimate outcome of the academic integrity violation and whether further investigation is necessary.

## Program Information

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**Program learning outcomes (PLOs)** are skills and knowledge that students will have achieved upon completion of the Psychology BA degree. Each course in our curriculum contributes to one or more of these PLOs. The PLOs for the Psychology BA degree are:

1. Knowledge Base of Psychology. Students will be able to demonstrate familiarity with the major concepts, theoretical perspectives, empirical findings, and historical trends in psychology.
2. Research Methods in Psychology. Students will be able to design, implement, and communicate basic research methods in psychology, including research design, data analysis, and interpretations.
3. Critical Thinking Skills. Students will be able to use critical and creative thinking, skeptical inquiry, and a scientific approach to address issues related to behavior and mental processes.

4. Applications of Psychology. Students will be able to apply psychological principles to individual, interpersonal, group, and societal issues.

Values in Psychology. Students will value empirical evidence, tolerate ambiguity, act ethically, and recognize their role and responsibility as a member of society.

## Course Learning Outcomes (CLOs)

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Upon successful completion of this course, students will be able to:

- CLO1– Demonstrate knowledge of the research process as it relates to behavioral research.
- CLO2– Distinguish between non-experimental, experimental, and quasi-experimental research methods.
- CLO3– Assess the threats to validity within a study.
- CLO4– Analyze a body of research findings.
- CLO5– Construct a research design that effectively tests original hypotheses.
- CLO6– Develop a research proposal in APA format.
- CLO 7 – Discuss the importance of ethical principles when conducting research with human and animal participants.
- CLO 8 – Present on completed research proposal and/or research topic.

## Course Materials

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### The Process of Research in Psychology

**Author:** McBride, D.

**Publisher:** Los Angeles: Sage Publishing

**Edition:** 5th

**Year:** 2023

**ISBN:** 978-1-4338-3217-8

### Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association

**Author:** American Psychological Association

**Publisher:** American Psychological Association

**Edition:** 7th

**Year:** 2019

**ISBN:** 978-1-4338-3217-8

**Optional**

## Course Requirements and Assignments

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# Assignment: Quizzes

## Quizzes (CLO1, CLO2):

Students will complete 12 quizzes on Canvas based on the assigned chapter for that week. Quizzes will need to be completed at 11:59pm before class and will contain 10 multiple-choice and true/false questions. Each quiz will be worth 10 points. They are open-book and open-note. There is no time limit for taking these quizzes, but quizzes will be locked once the due date passes. No late submissions will be accepted. The two lowest scores for quizzes will drop from your final grade.

Though scores are not "curved," any "bad quiz questions" (where 67% or more of students get incorrect) will be dropped and restored to you. For example, if you obtain a 7 out of 10 but I find there is 1 bad question, I will give you that point back and your grade will be an 8 out of 10.

# Assignment: In-Class Assignments and Participation

## In-Class Assignments and Participation (CLO1, CLO2, CLO3, CLO4):

Each class session will have an in-class assignment. In-class assignments will typically include some written activity or something to be submitted by the end of class. Active participation is required and will be monitored in the form of tokens. The tokens are nylon bands that students will wear over their wrist for each instance of active participation in the form of: 1. Answering Questions; 2. Asking Questions; and 3. Volunteering (or being "voluntold"). It is expected that students obtain at least 1 band during the class. The number of bands each student obtains will be recorded on their in-class activity before it is submitted. Full credit will only be awarded to students who complete their in-class activity AND obtain 1 of these bands. There are 22 in-class assignments and are 10 points each. The lowest two will be dropped from your final grade. In-class assignments cannot be turned in later or made-up.

# Assignment: Oral Presentation

## Oral Presentation (CLO4, CLO5, CLO6, CLO7, CLO8):

In addition to your final paper, you will also present your research proposal to the class.

This assignment is worth 100 points and is broken down into 3 parts: Presentation (50 points), slides/file (25 points), and feedback to peers (25 points). There are several submission options that you can choose from for the final presentation. Regardless of the option you choose, you will need to be present in class for final presentations.

# Examination: Midterm

## Midterm Examinations (CLO1, CLO2, CLO3, CLO4):

To determine your content knowledge of the material throughout the semester, you will take 3 midterm examinations that cover 3 to 4 chapters of material. Each midterm examination will be 50 questions, multiple choice, and worth 100 points.

Questions will be drawn from the same question banks as your quizzes. Responses will be recorded on a scantron and completed with a pencil. You will have the entire class period to complete the exam. However, no books or notes will be allowed. A blank piece of paper will be provided for you on the back of your exam to put down ideas or hold on to concepts while you work.

## Final Paper: Research Proposal

**Final Paper: Research Proposal (CL04, CL05, CL06, CL07):**

To prepare students for conducting future research, students will be required to turn in a research proposal. A grading rubric for the research proposal will be made available on Canvas. The completed research proposal must include the following:

- title page (1 page)
- abstract (1 page)
- literature review (2 -4 pages)
- proposed research aims (at least half a page)
- methods and data analysis plan section (1-2 pages)
- references (1-4 pages).

Thus, the final product of your research proposal should be around 6-10 pages. The final project is worth 100 points. To help you stay on track with turning in your final paper, you will turn in three separate milestone assignments throughout the semester.

## Assignment: Milestone Assignments

These assignments will be rough drafts of the different sections in your research proposal. These assignments will be turned in before the research proposal so that you can receive feedback and incorporate the feedback into your final paper. Each milestone assignment will be worth as follows.

- Literature review (15 points)
- Proposed research (15 points)
- Methods (20 points)

*Formatting Requirements for Milestone Assignments and Research Proposal:* All papers must be typed, double spaced, use 1-inch margins, 12-point font, Times New Roman, and adhere to APA format (7th edition). Please double-check for grammar and spelling errors before turning in your final paper to avoid having points deducted. A template will be provided for you on Canvas.

## Examination: Final Examination

**Final Examination (CL01, CL02, CL03, CL04):** To determine the cumulative content knowledge you have curated over the semester, your final examination will be comprised as follows:

- 25 Questions from Exam 1, 2, and 3
- 50 Questions from Chapters 11-13

Each question will be worth 2 points for a total of 150 points. Responses will be recorded on a scantron and completed with a pencil. You will have the entire Final Exam Period (2 hours) to complete the exam. No notes or books will be allowed for this examination but you will have a blank piece of paper on the back of your exam to put down ideas or hold on to concepts while you work.

## ✓ Grading Information

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\*Note: Grades are determined by points. Thus, there is no rounding to determine grades (e.g., 899 is a B- and will not be rounded up to 900 points for an A-).

"This course must be passed with a C- or better as a CSU graduation requirement."

**Extra credit opportunities:** Extra credit assignments will be made available throughout the semester and will be announced in class (20 points maximum).

**Extensions on Assignments:** Requests for extensions to assignments are made on a case-by-case basis. Typically, you will need to email me with your reason for an extension and then book a time to speak with me. This needs to be accomplished at least 48 hours BEFORE an assignment is due. The only exceptions to this rule are circumstances beyond a student's control. However, it is still the student's responsibility to contact the instructor by email or phone as soon as possible to determine if an extension is warranted and the duration of the extension.

**Late assignments:** If you did not request or receive an extension, milestone assignments that are turned in past the due date will receive a 0 but can still be submitted up to 72 hours late for feedback. In-class assignments and quizzes cannot be made up or submitted late. However, as noted above, there will be multiple extra credit opportunities to earn back any missed points.

**Accommodations around Examinations:** If you know you will be missing for whatever reason on the day of an examination, you will need to let me know as soon as possible so we can create a plan for you to take the exam. If you miss the exam due to unforeseen circumstances, these will be discussed on a case-by-case basis and does not guarantee that you will be allowed to take the exam. The best course of action will be to notify me as soon as you are able and we will make a plan determined on your situation. No contact within 72 hours of an examination equates in a 0 for the exam.

*Final Examinations can only be made-up during the final exam makeup day.* The only other choice after that is to take a 0 or make a plan for an incomplete (I).

**Grade changes:** Final grades will not be changed unless there was a clerical error.

**Academic integrity:** Plagiarism, cheating, and any other forms of academic dishonesty will not be tolerated. The University Academic Integrity Policy F15-7 [pdf] requires you to be honest in all your academic coursework. If evidence of academic misconduct is found, you will receive a zero on the assignment(s) in question and I will file a report with the Office of Student Conduct and Ethical Development. Visit the Student Conduct and Ethical Development website for more information.



# Criteria

| Assignment                        | Points                                |
|-----------------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| Quizzes                           | 10 out of 12 X 10 points = 100 points |
| In-Class Activities/Participation | 20 out of 22 X 10 points = 200 points |
| Milestone Assignments             | 15 + 15 + 20 points = 50 points       |
| Midterm Examinations              | 3 X 100 points = 300 points           |
| Final Research Proposal           | 100 points                            |
| Final Research Presentation       | 50 + 25 + 25 = 100 points             |
| Final Cumulative Examination      | 150 Points                            |
| <b>TOTAL</b>                      | <b>1000 Points</b>                    |

# Breakdown

| <i>Grade</i>   | <i>Points</i>      | <i>Percentage</i> |
|----------------|--------------------|-------------------|
| <i>A plus</i>  | <i>960 to 1000</i> | <i>96 to 100%</i> |
| <i>A</i>       | <i>930 to 959</i>  | <i>93 to 95%</i>  |
| <i>A minus</i> | <i>900 to 929</i>  | <i>90 to 92%</i>  |
| <i>B plus</i>  | <i>860 to 899</i>  | <i>86 to 89 %</i> |

| <i>Grade</i>   | <i>Points</i>     | <i>Percentage</i> |
|----------------|-------------------|-------------------|
| <i>B</i>       | <i>830 to 859</i> | <i>83 to 85%</i>  |
| <i>B minus</i> | <i>800 to 829</i> | <i>80 to 82%</i>  |
| <i>C plus</i>  | <i>760 to 799</i> | <i>76 to 79%</i>  |
| <i>C</i>       | <i>730 to 759</i> | <i>73 to 75%</i>  |
| <i>C minus</i> | <i>700 to 729</i> | <i>70 to 72%</i>  |
| <i>D plus</i>  | <i>660 to 699</i> | <i>66 to 69%</i>  |

## University Policies

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Per [University Policy S16-9 \(PDF\)](http://www.sjsu.edu/senate/docs/S16-9.pdf) (<http://www.sjsu.edu/senate/docs/S16-9.pdf>), relevant university policy concerning all courses, such as student responsibilities, academic integrity, accommodations, dropping and adding, consent for recording of class, etc. and available student services (e.g. learning assistance, counseling, and other resources) are listed on the [Syllabus Information](https://www.sjsu.edu/curriculum/courses/syllabus-info.php) (<https://www.sjsu.edu/curriculum/courses/syllabus-info.php>) web page. Make sure to visit this page to review and be aware of these university policies and resources.

## Course Schedule

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Psyc 18: Introduction to Research Methods

Fall 2025 Course Schedule

| Week | Date  | Topics                              | Reading              | Assignments |
|------|-------|-------------------------------------|----------------------|-------------|
| 1    | 08/20 | Course Introduction                 | None                 | None        |
| 2    | 08/25 | Using the Scientific Method         | Ch1: Intro to Bx Res | Quiz #1     |
|      | 08/27 | Basic Research and Applied Research |                      |             |

|    |       |  |  |                      |
|----|-------|--|--|----------------------|
| 3  | 09/01 | LABOR DAY                                  | None   | None                 |
|    | 09/03 | Developing a Research Question             | Ch 2: Hypothesis Development                               | Quiz #2              |
| 4  | 09/08 | Hypotheses and Operationalizing Variables  |  |                      |
|    | 09/10 | <b>Hypothesis Development Workday</b>      | <b>BRING LAPTOP TO CLASS</b>                               | Start Lit Rev & Aims |
| 5  | 09/15 | Ethical Research Guidelines: Past/Present  | Ch 3: Eth Guidelines for Bx Res                            | Quiz #3              |
|    | 09/17 | IRB, Animal Subjects, & Reporting Research |  |                      |
| 6  | 09/22 | <b>EXAM #1</b>                             | <b>NONE</b>  | <b>NONE</b>          |
|    | 09/24 | Validity, Reliability, & Data Collection   | Ch 4: Using the Sci Method                                 | Quiz #4              |
| 7  | 09/29 | Research Designs                           |  |                      |
|    | 10/01 | Dependent and Independent Variables        | Ch 5: Variables & Measurement                              | Quiz #5              |
| 8  | 10/06 | Validity and Confounding Variables         |  | Lit Review Due       |
|    | 10/08 | Types of Sampling and Strategies           | Ch 6: Sampling   | Quiz #6              |
| 9  | 10/13 | <b>EXAM #2</b>                             | <b>NONE</b>  | <b>NONE</b>          |
|    | 10/15 | Descriptive Statistics                     | Ch 7: Using Statistics<br><br><b>BRING LAPTOP TO CLASS</b> | Quiz #7              |
| 10 | 10/20 | Inferential Statistics                     | <b>BRING LAPTOP TO CLASS</b>                               |                      |

|       |       |  |  |                                  |
|-------|-------|--|--|----------------------------------|
|       | 10/22 | Group Comparison                                 | Ch 9: Using More Stats<br><b>BRING LAPTOP TO CLASS</b> | <b>Quiz #8</b>                   |
| 11    | 10/27 | Testing Relationships                            | <b>BRING LAPTOP TO CLASS</b>                           | Research Aims Due                |
|       | 10/29 | Survey Research                                  | Ch 10: Survey Research                                 | <b>Quiz #9</b>                   |
| 12    | 11/03 | EXAM #3  | NONE   | NONE                             |
|       | 11/05 | Correlational Studies                            | Ch 11: Correlational Studies                           | <b>Quiz #10</b>                  |
| 13    | 11/10 | One Factor Experiments                           | Ch 12: One-Factor Experiments                          | <b>Quiz #11</b>                  |
|       | 11/12 | Quasi-Experimental Designs                       | Ch 13: Quasi-Experiments                               | <b>Quiz #12</b>                  |
| 14    | 11/17 | <b>Methods Work Development Day</b>              | <b>BRING LAPTOP TO CLASS</b>                           | <b>Start Methods</b>             |
|       | 11/19 | <b>Presentation Development Day</b>              | <b>BRING LAPTOP TO CLASS</b>                           |                                  |
| 15    | 11/24 | <b>Open Consultation Day</b>                     | <b>Online</b>  | <b>Methods Due</b>               |
|       | 11/26 | Non-Instructional Day                            | None   | None                             |
| 16    | 12/01 | <b>Oral Presentations Day 1</b>                  | None   | None                             |
|       | 12/03 | <b>Oral Presentations Day 2</b>                  | None   | None                             |
| 17    | 12/08 | Exam Review/SOTES                                | None   | None                             |
| Final | 12/15 | 10:45AM-12:45PM<br><b>Cumulative Examination</b> | <b>Ch 1-10 &amp; Ch 11-13</b>                          | <b>Final Paper Due @ 11:59pm</b> |