Course Overview

Course Goals

The overarching goal of this course is to provide an introduction to the major methods and research designs employed by social and personality psychologists. A second goal is to consider issues related to the appropriate reporting and interpretation of data analysis in social/personality psychology. The scope of the course is broad in nature: We will cover experimental/non-experimental designs, measurement issues, and discuss ethics in the field. The methods reviewed in the course will span multiple units of analysis—from the broader regional level down to the implicit and neuroendocrine level. Most sessions will consist of a group discussion, a lecture, and a demonstration of some sort.

Readings

There is no required textbook for the course. Copies of each week’s readings will be available at https://d2l.msu.edu/. If you have trouble accessing any of the course material, please contact me.

We’ll be drawing on chapters from multiple books about methods. I recommend getting them eventually, but they are not required for the course.


Course Requirements

Constructive participation in seminar (40% of your final grade). It is critical that everyone reads the course material and participates in the seminar meetings. You are required to produce 2 discussion questions each week about the upcoming seminar meetings. If you are leading a class discussion (see next), you do not need to submit questions for that week. You must post your questions to d2L by 6:00pm on Sunday.

Leading class discussions (15% of your final grade). You will be required to lead discussions of readings at least three times during the semester. The discussion can take any form you would like but
should also integrate the discussion questions posted by your classmates.

**Take-home assignments (20% of your final grade).** You will be required to complete short at-home assignments throughout the course of the semester. The assignments will require you to think of ways to design studies, organize data, run analyses, and present findings.

**Complete a final project (25% of your final grade).** You must turn in a final written project that is essentially a draft of the Method and Results section of an empirical paper you hope to publish. An outline of your topic and methodological approach is due on March 30th via email. The final paper is due by 2PM on April 26th via d2L.

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### Course Schedule and Assigned Readings

**Week 1-2: Reading, Reviewing, and Reflecting and Holiday (Class Cancelled)**
January 11th (RRR Day) and January 18th (MLK Day)

**Week 3: Introductory Information and Issues**
January 25th

No readings.

**Week 4: Ethical Issues and Reproducibility**
February 1st


Optional: Repository of papers on ethics, replications, and blogs

**Week 5: Measurement and Scale Construction**
February 8th


Robins, Chapter 14: The construct validation approach to personality scale construction


**Week 6: Cross-cultural Research and Geographic Comparisons**

February 15th

Chopik, W. J. (in press). Home is where the heart is: Geographic variation in relational behavior and outcomes. In L. V. Machia, C. R. Agnew, & X. B. Arriaga (Eds.), *Advances in close relationships*.


Optional: Several examples of cross-cultural/region research

**Week 7: Hormone and Physiological Data Collection and Analysis**

February 22nd


Week 8: Implicit and Projective Measures; Automated Text Analysis
March 1st


Optional: Presidents and political leader profiles

Week 9: Regression: Moderators, Mediators, and More
March 8th


Robins, Chapter 34: Moderator and mediator models in personality research: A basic introduction


Optional: Baron, R. M., & Kenny, D. A. (1986). The moderator-mediator variable distinction in social

**Week 10: Longitudinal Designs, Experience Sampling, Methods for Studying Change**  
**March 15**


Robins, Chapter 2: Designing and implementing longitudinal studies

Robins, Chapter 5: Ideographic personality: The theory and practice of experience sampling

Robins, Chapter 31: The analysis of longitudinal data in personality research


**Week 11: Dyadic Data Designs and Analysis**  
**March 22**


**Week 12: Internet Research and Crowd-Sourcing**  
**March 29**


Guide for How to Post a Study to MTurk

Optional: Additional papers on MTurk and the WWBP
**Week 13: Secondary Data Analysis**  
April 5th


**Week 14: Writing Research Papers**  
April 12th

Bem, D. J. (2004). Writing the empirical journal article. Chapter from The Compleat Academic (2nd Ed.).

Silvia, Chapters 5 and 6: Writing the Method; Writing the Results


Optional: Additional resources about writing

**Week 15: Consultation on Final Projects**  
April 19th