



Syllabus

Undergraduate Seminar in Psychology

PSYC 288

Fall 2018

Instructor: Dr. Maliki Ghossainy

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Office: Jesup 103B

Office Hours: Mondays and Wednesdays 4:30-5:30 pm or by appointment

Class Time and Location: M 2:00-4:30 pm in Nicely 105

Course Description

This course will provide students the opportunity to learn about and evaluate seminal research studies across various areas of psychology. We will be reading a selection of theoretical and experimental articles that address core topics in areas including social, developmental, cognitive, and evolutionary psychology. The course will be a combination of instructor-led and student-led discussions and presentations, and will culminate in an in-depth research paper on a topic related to those we covered in class. The paper will take the form of a scientific research proposal that is inspired by the studies we discuss in class.

To complement the research paper, students will also design a conference-type poster which will be displayed during an end-of-semester poster session that I will be organizing.

Required Readings

In this course, we will be reading a selection of theoretical and empirical articles that will be posted to Moodle. There is no required textbook for this course.

Learning Outcomes

- Become experienced consumers of psychological literature
- Ability to discuss the theoretical motivations of psychological research
- Critically evaluate methodological approaches to psychological research
- In-depth discussion of study findings and implications in the context of the original research question

Your preparation will help your understanding of and ability to engage with the topics discussed in class. Experts recommend that students allocate 2-3 hours of studying per week for each one hour of class time. In our case, this would entail roughly **6-7 hours of studying per week outside of class.**

Course Etiquette - Reminders on being respectful toward your classmates and professor

Showing up (even 1 minute) late is disrespectful, distracting, and a poor use of your financial investment. Don't talk while others are talking.

No personal electronic devices are allowed in class (e.g., cell phones, laptops, and tablets).

You should make plans to leave your devices at home, in your car, or anywhere that isn't the classroom. If you bring your devices to class, they must be **TURNED OFF** and left inside your bag or pocket. I reserve the right to expel you from class and/or mark you absent if you violate these device-related regulations.

Communication

Email: The best way to contact me outside of class is via email. While I do my best to respond swiftly, I reserve the right to take **up to 24 hrs. to respond.** If you anticipate needing to contact me about an exam or assignment (chances are other students are also trying to contact me), please plan accordingly.

Office Hours: My office hours are listed at the top of this syllabus and you are encouraged to utilize those regularly throughout the semester. If you're unable to make it during those times, please see me after class or contact me via email to make alternative arrangements.

Moodle: You are required to check our course's Moodle page everyday. There you will find the syllabus, handouts, assignments, announcements, grades, and other useful resources. I will use Moodle to post time sensitive announcements and it is your responsibility to stay apprised of course-related news. Accommodations will NOT be made just because you didn't check your Moodle page regularly.

Important Course Information

Academic Integrity

This is an integral part of the educational process. Scholastic dishonesty includes cheating, plagiarism, unauthorized collaboration, and any other act designed to give unfair advantage to a student.

Instructors are required to report instances of scholastic dishonesty and students who violate University rules on scholastic dishonesty will be subject to disciplinary penalties. Students who present unoriginal work as their own can expect to receive a failing grade on the assignment.

For more information, please refer to AUB Student Code of Conduct:

<https://website.aub.edu.lb/sao/Documents/Student%20Handbook%202017-2018.pdf>

Students with Disabilities

The University strives to make your learning experience as accessible as possible. Upon request, the University provides appropriate academic accommodations for qualified students with disabilities. If you anticipate or experience academic barriers due to a visible or invisible disability (including mental health, chronic or temporary medical conditions), please notify the University's Accessible Education Office by the first week of the semester. AEO have guidelines in place to help you attain reasonable accommodations, and I will expect to see an official AUB letter of accommodations from AEO.

AEO contact information:

accessibility@aub.edu.lb

+961-1-350000, Ext. 3246

West Hall 314

Non-Discrimination

AUB is committed to facilitating a campus free of all forms of discrimination including sex/gender-based harassment prohibited by Title IX. The University's non-discrimination policy applies to, and protects, all students, faculty, and staff. If you think you have experienced discrimination or harassment, including sexual misconduct, we encourage you to tell someone promptly. If you speak to a faculty or staff member about an issue such as harassment, sexual violence, or discrimination, the information will be kept as private as possible, however, faculty and designated staff are required to bring it to the attention of the University's Title IX Coordinator. Faculty can refer you to fully confidential resources, and you can find information and contacts at www.aub.edu.lb/titleix. To report an incident, contact the University's Title IX Coordinator (see below). An anonymous report may be submitted online via EthicsPoint at www.aub.ethicspoint.com.

University's Title IX Coordinator:

Trudi Hodges

+961-1-350000, Ext. 2514

titleix@aub.edu.lb

www.aub.ethicspoint.com

Course Requirements

Student-led Presentation and Discussion (26%)

Each student will lead a 40-minute discussion and presentation on a topic from those we cover in class. Students will rely on at least 2 articles to introduce the research question(s) and present the theoretical and empirical evidence drawn from the set of studies. Presentations should go beyond summarizing the articles and should result in an in-depth analysis of the strengths, weaknesses, and future directions of the studies presented. Presenters will be expected to interact with their audience and ask engaging questions that spark meaningful discussion. To do this well, pick a topic that you, as the presenter, find especially interesting. You should be prepared to take a deep dive into the area of research on which you're presenting; this can include researching materials online (e.g., videos, PsyToolKit, media & news articles, interviews with scientists, etc.) that demonstrate the importance or applicability of the research question.

Research Proposal (40%)

As a writing intensive course, you will be expected to prepare a research proposal based on a one or more hypotheses that arise from the papers and topics we cover in class. This assignment is designed to practice students' writing skills and experience a core aspect of modern psychology, namely scientific research. This assignment is meant to replicate the early stages of the research process, providing you the experience of developing a novel research question inspired by existing literature, posing competing hypotheses based on theory, and designing the methodology and analytics that would support (or reject) your hypotheses. Remember, the field of psychology and our understanding of human minds and behavior has progressed in large part because of the dedication to the scientific method, and throughout this course, you are encouraged to think of yourself as a scientist.

Conference-style Poster (20%)

As a complement to the research proposal, you will design a conference-style poster that provides a high-level summary of the background literature and competing hypotheses, visualizations and/or descriptions of the proposed methodology and expected results, as well as a discussion of the implications and future directions of the findings. I will provide you with a template of a typical conference-style poster and you are reminded that some basic internet research will provide numerous examples as well. All student posters will be displayed at an end-of-semester poster session that I will be organizing. The poster session will be open to the university body, and you will be expected to stand alongside your poster, ready to talk about your research proposal with your audience.

Attendance and Contribution (14%)

Attendance will be taken during each class, and you are expected to be actively and deeply engaged with the class discussion. It is not sufficient for you to show up, and there will be times that I call on students to offer their analysis or critique of the readings for that week. To avoid being caught unprepared, you are encouraged to complete the readings and draft a list of questions, thoughts, reactions that arose while thinking critically about the readings. On occasion, I will assign such reaction papers in which you will be asked to submit 1-2 pages of your reactions or musings based on that week's readings.