# Research Methods

**Course prefix:** PSYC

**Course number:** 2015

**Section:** C01

**CRN (you may add up to five):**
29646

**Instructor First Name:** Tessa

**Instructor Last Name:** Fink

**Semester:** Spring

**Academic year:** 2026

**Course description:**

The official description of this course is: *"Introduction to methods used in conducting research on human behavior. Experimental research is emphasized, but the course covers other methods and some statistics."*

This course involves a lecture component and a lab component.

During lectures, students will learn about the scientific methods as it is applied to behavioral research. This involves an overview of the research process as well as a review of the ways that this process changes depending on different research questions. Students will complete activities, assignments, and exams covering topics discussed during lectures.

During labs, students will develop technical skills that can be applied across diverse research topics as well as developing in-depth knowledge related to only a specific topic. In groups, students will develop a research project on a topic of their choosing from start to finish. In addition, students will complete activities to reinforce knowledge and skills gained during lab.

**Course learning outcomes:**

After successfully completing this course, students should be able to:

- Locate, evaluate, and extract information from past research
- Generate and refine high quality research questions
- Frame questions using proper research methodology
- Design ethical and practical experiments to test research questions

- Utilize technical skills to create data collection materials
- Collect and properly analyze data and interpret the outcomes
- Communicate research outcomes orally and in writing
- Work in teams to balance roles and apply individual strengths

**Required course materials:**

There is no required textbook for this course. All materials for this class will be provided to students through Canvas.

**Grading policy:**

LECTURE ASSIGNMENTS

ACTIVITIES: Most lectures will include an activity related to the current course material. Activities can involve working as an individual or in groups and will take 5-15 minutes to complete. The content of each activity will not be announced ahead of time.

MAJOR ASSIGNMENTS: Throughout the semester, students will complete six in-depth assignments related to the current course material.

The major assignments will cover the following topics:

- Extracting specific information from research publications
- Refining experimental design
- Summarizing applications of a specific methodology
- Selecting analysis type and interpreting outcomes
- Summarizing and presenting a chosen research publication
- Developing detailed plans to address research questions

EXAMS: Students will complete two exams – one in the middle of the semester and one at the end. Both exams will take place during normal lecture periods. The exams will be non-cumulative and hand-written. Students are allowed to bring printed notes into the exams. Exams will include a combination of true/false, short answer, and essay questions.

LAB ASSIGNMENTS

ACTIVITIES: Some labs will include an activity related to the current course material. Activities can involve working as an individual or in groups and will take 10-30 minutes to complete. The content of each activity will not be announced ahead of time.

MILESTONES: Throughout the semester, students will work in groups to develop their own research projects. Milestones are assignments that keep students on track to complete these projects by the end of the semester.

The milestones include: literature review, research question, materials, introduction, method + appendices, results, discussion, final draft, and poster.

**Attendance policy:**

Attendance is mandatory for both lecture and lab. Attendance will be taken 10 minutes after the scheduled start time. Students who show up late will receive a 50% deduction in attendance points for that day. If a student shows up after attendance has been taken, but before an activity begins, then they can still earn full points for the activity.

If a student feels unwell or cannot attend class, they should notify the instructor in advance. Most absences can be made up easily, and students should prioritize their well-being.

**Academic honesty/integrity statement:**

Students are expected to maintain the highest standards of academic integrity. All work submitted must be original and properly cited. Plagiarism, cheating, or any form of academic dishonesty will result in immediate consequences as outlined in the university's academic integrity policy.

**Core IMPACTS statement(s) (if applicable):**

This course is a part of the Core IMPACTS Social Sciences area.

Core IMPACTS refers to the University System of Georgia's General Education curriculum, which provides students with essential knowledge in foundational academic areas. This course will help students master course content, and support students' broad academic and career goals.

This course should direct students toward a broad Orienting Question:

- How do I understand human experiences and connections?

Completion of this course should enable students to meet the following Learning Outcome:

- Students will effectively analyze the complexity of human behavior, and how historical, economic, political, social, or geographic relationships develop, persist, or change.

Course content, activities and exercises in this course should help students develop the following Career-Ready Competencies:

- Intercultural Competence
- Perspective-Taking
- Persuasion