

Psychology 4850B – Methods in Behavioural Research
Spring 2016
Mondays, 3:00 to 5:50 p.m., in UHall D633



Course Instructor:

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Course Dropbox: There is a 4850B drop-slot in the large wooden cabinet located across from C866 (Ms. Wehlage-Ellis' office) in UHall.

Course Description:

This course is designed to provide senior psychology students with an opportunity to learn about and actively engage in the research process. Through hands-on class activities and out-of-class assignments, we will navigate our way through successive stages of the research process (e.g., narrowing in on a research topic and question of interest; forming a testable hypothesis; considering ethics; choosing a research design; collecting and interpreting data; etc.). This semester's offering of the course will focus on the theme of behavioural addictions and compulsions. Students should note that *Methods in Behavioural Research* is not a lecture-based course, but rather a student-driven, active-learning experience. This course is not suitable for students who cannot commit to attending each and every class, to spending a significant amount of time each week outside of class working on assignments and the major project, and to fully participating in a collaborative research effort.

Prerequisite Courses and Background Preparation:

Prerequisites for this course include Psychology 2030 (*Methods and Statistics*), 2505 (*Abnormal Psychology*), and 3535 (*Drugs and Behaviour*) **and** two additional courses (6.0 credit hours) at the 3000 level in Psychology or Neuroscience. Students who have not completed *all* prerequisite courses (or equivalent, verified transfer credits) will be deregistered from the course. In exceptional circumstances, a prerequisite waiver will be considered for a student who has adequate equivalent background. If you are considering requesting a waiver, please contact the Instructor prior to the end of the add/drop period (January 12, 2016). Submitting a request for a waiver does not guarantee that you will receive one; each case will be evaluated individually, and supporting documentation must be provided for courses not taken at the University of Lethbridge. At the 4000-level, students are expected to have a broad range of knowledge of the fundamentals of psychology; prerequisite courses are considered minimum background preparation for this course.

Required and Suggested Texts:

Required:

Cozby, P.C., & Rawn, C.D. (2012). *Methods in behavioural research* (Canadian ed.). Toronto, ON: McGraw-Hill Ryerson.

Suggested:

Northey, M., & Timney, B. (2012). *Making sense in psychology: A student's guide to research and writing*. Don Mills, ON: Oxford University Press.

American Psychological Association. (2010). *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association* (6th ed.). Washington, DC: American Psychological Association.

Virtual Distribution of Course Information:

Moodle. Important information will be made available in Moodle throughout the semester, including the weekly syllabus outlining required readings and assignments, supplementary course materials, and important announcements. Check the course site *regularly* to keep abreast of these resources. Students will be able to track their standing in the course by accessing the Moodle gradebook. With the exception of information that is freely available on the Internet, all course materials posted to Moodle should be treated as copyright-protected. You are free to make personal use of any materials posted on our course page, but you are *not* permitted to distribute materials or information in any form to persons not registered in this course in this semester. Once information is in your hands, you are responsible for what you do with it; the Instructor will not be held accountable for students who choose to violate copyright law.

Email. Other than posts to Moodle, my primary method of communicating with you for general notices and points of interest will be via in-class announcements or by email to the class listserv. Check your U of L email account on a regular basis, or have that account forwarded to your preferred email provider. Remember to do regular housekeeping of your U of L email account so that you do not miss important notices that relate to this course, due to a full mailbox.

Email Policy. Because I cannot verify the sender of any email that does not originate from a University of Lethbridge account, I will reply **ONLY** to messages sent from a “uleth.ca” account. Furthermore, I will not reply to an email that does not include the course name and topic of your email in the Subject line. Your full name (as it appears on your registration) must be included at the end of your message. Adhering to this structure makes sending accurate replies and keeping track of correspondences much easier! I will not reply to email inquiries regarding basic course information that has been made available in class, has been posted on Moodle, is provided in this course outline, or if your email message is belligerent or disrespectful. Note that I do not check my work email account over the weekend. If you have questions about the chapter reading or weekly assignment, ask them before Friday at 4:00 p.m. or drop by my office hours scheduled on Mondays immediately prior to class.

Course Rules and Regulations:

Students are expected to attend every class and to arrive on time and prepared for the weekly quiz and activity. Should you have an ongoing situation that prevents you from arriving in class on time, please speak to the Instructor prior to the end of the add/drop period. You are encouraged to bring an electronic device (laptop or tablet) to class to facilitate access to online resources for in-class activities, however it is expected that any use of that device will be task-related. Cell phones must be turned off during class and texting is absolutely prohibited. Should you choose to use your cell phone during class, you will be asked to leave. As this is a senior course, it should go without saying that you are expected to be respectful toward your fellow classmates, your Graduate Teaching Assistant, and your Instructor. Respect includes not using class time for conversation and other activities unrelated to the course. Finally, it is essential that you maintain strict confidentiality concerning any research participants and all information shared during in-class activities.

Students should familiarize themselves with the University of Lethbridge Calendar, in particular Part 4 that governs Academic Regulations, Policies, and Program Requirements.

(<https://www.uleth.ca/ross/sites/ross/files/imported/academic-calendar/2015-16/part04.pdf>)

Students with Special Needs:

If you have a *documented* condition that prevents you from fully participating in this course, including evaluation procedures, it is your responsibility to contact your Instructor regarding your individual situation. Please note that no accommodations will be given without official notification from the Accommodated Learning Centre (<http://www.uleth.ca/ross/accommodated-learning-centre/>).

Grade Assessment:

- (1) Quizzes (40% total). At the beginning of class (3:00 to 3:15 p.m.), students will write a short quiz consisting of multiple-choice questions covering information contained in the assigned readings for that class. With the exception of extenuating circumstances (see below), students who arrive after 3:15 p.m. will not be permitted to write the quiz and a grade of zero (0%) will be recorded in the gradebook. There will be a total of ten (10) quizzes. The average of your performance on these ten quizzes will count for 40% of your final grade in the course. Quizzes will be completed individually.
- (2) Class Activity Assignments (40% total). A total of eleven (11) out-of-class assignments will be given in the course, each relating to a weekly in-class activity. Assignments will be graded on a “Pass/Fail” basis. A “Pass” entails demonstrating a clear and coherent understanding of pertinent concepts and material, and satisfactory completion of the assignment objectives. A “Fail” entails demonstrating lack of understanding of concepts, failure to fully adhere to the assignment instructions, or submission of an incomplete or late assignment. Should you receive a “Fail” on any assignment, you have an opportunity to re-submit a corrected version of the assignment prior to the start of class the following week. In the case of resubmitted assignments, a new grade of “Pass” will be allotted half-marks. If you are not in class, for its entirety, to complete a weekly activity, and you cannot provide sufficient documentation (a medical note or documentation of bereavement) to support your absence, you will receive a “Fail” on the corresponding activity assignment. Due dates for assignments are clearly outlined on the course Moodle page. Assignments will be completed and submitted in groups.
- (3) Take-home Final Project (20% total). The take-home final project will consist of two parts, each worth 10%: (1) the finalized written version of your *Proposed Research Project*; (2) the results and discussion of our *Class Research Project*. Detailed discussion and instruction related to the Final Project will take place during our last class meeting on April 11. Final Project submissions must adhere to APA format. The Final Project is due by 5:00 p.m. on April 22. The Final Project will be completed and submitted in groups.
NB: If you fail to submit the Final Project by its deadline, you will receive a grade of zero (0%) for 20% of your final grade.

Make-up Quizzes and Late Assignment Submissions:

Supporting documentation must be provided for any request for extensions to assignments or missed quizzes. Should you find yourself in an extreme situation, please contact your Instructor or Graduate Teaching Assistant immediately via email so that we may assist you. Otherwise, penalties will be levied as described above. There will be no opportunity to re-weight other course components or complete extra work to offset missed quizzes, late assignments, or poor performance. All written assignments and the Final Project will be graded under the assumption that students have read and understood the University of Lethbridge Academic Calendar Part 4: Student Discipline Policy – Academic Offences, in particular subsections 4b. Plagiarism, 4c. Cheating, and 4d. Duplication. All assignments must be in your own words. Plagiarism is a serious academic offense and any case of plagiarism will be dealt with severely, including the imposition of the maximum penalties allowable.

Grading Scheme:

Letter grades will be assigned to final course percentages according to the following scale:

A+ ≥ 90	B+ 77 to < 80	C+ 67 to < 70	D+ 55 to < 60
A 85 to < 90	B 73 to < 77	C 63 to < 67	D 50 to < 55
A- 80 to < 85	B- 70 to < 73	C- 60 to < 63	F < 50

Enjoy a great semester as we delve into *Methods in Behavioural Research*!