

New Course Proposal: Modern Psychological Studies (Psych 3580)

Catalogue Description

Psych 3580 – Modern Psychological Studies

3 credit hours, repeatable up to 6 hours.

Prerequisite: 15 hours of psychology and 2020 (Research Methodology: Laboratory and Field Research Techniques).

Modern Psychological Studies is a journal that publishes undergraduate research in psychology. Students in this course serve as the editorial board for the journal and critique, edit, and decide if a submission to MPS will be published. Additionally, students will assist in recruiting paper submissions, subscriptions to the journal, and creating the hard copy of the journal itself.

Primary Instructor: Dr. David Ross

Student Learning Outcomes:

- Identify strengths and limitations of various research designs
- Distinguish between designs that permit causal inferences from those that do not
- Interpret basic statistical results
- Evaluate the validity of conclusions presented in research reports
- Identify and evaluate the source, context, and credibility of information
- Identify components of arguments (e.g., conclusions, premises/assumptions, gaps, counterarguments)
- Weigh support for conclusions to determine how well author's reasons support conclusions
- Identify weak, contradictory, and inappropriate assertions
- Develop sound arguments for own conclusions based on reasoning and evidence

15-083 (N)

Student Evaluation Procedure

Assignments

Each week students will be asked to review a paper or papers that are submitted to MPS. MPS is published twice annually and submissions occur throughout the year, so there is never a shortage of papers for students to review. The number of papers assigned throughout the semester is based on the number of submissions that are received. All students will read and evaluate the same number of paper(s) throughout the semester. Each will be responsible for making contributions to the class discussion with other reviewers. Additionally, students will turn in a review, comments, critique, and notes on the assigned paper(s) via a hard copy or electronic file. No late work will be accepted.

Evaluation and Attendance

The grade in the course is pass or fail. Each assignment will be evaluated as satisfactory (pass) or unsatisfactory (fail). Further students will be evaluated based on attendance, class participation, and evaluation of the assigned articles. Given that the review process does take collaboration and discussion among multiple reviewers, it is essential that students attend every class.

Students will be allowed two absences from class. These will be given for not attending class or coming to class without completing the assigned readings and article review. Absences may be excused if the instructor is notified prior to class (as a result of traveling for university functions, death in the family, acute illnesses) and the article review for that week is completed. More than two absences that are not approved by the instructor will result in receiving an NS in the course.

Rationale for the Proposal

First, in the last 22 years, Psych 3580 has been taught under a different course number Psych 4560, and it has been listed in the catalogue as an "Individual Practicum," a description that does not fit the course offering or requirements. Therefore, the current proposal is designed to have Psych 3580 to be a stand-alone course that is not considered an "Individual Practicum."

Second, Psych 3580 will be offered for 3 credits whereas Psych 4560 was offered for 1-3 credits.

Third, Psych 3580 will require Psychology 2020 (Research Methodology: Laboratory and Field Research Techniques) as a prerequisite. Psych 4560 involves evaluating research articles and students need a foundational knowledge of research in order to take the course. Psych 2020 was not required to take Psych 4560.

Fourth, students can take up to 6 hours of Psych 3580. This is an important course feature because students go through an extensive process of learning how to evaluate research articles and other processes required to publish the journal. Thus having students in the course for two consecutive semesters is extremely advantageous. Listing this course as Psych 3580 is important because it will encourage more sophomores and juniors to take the course versus seniors who in the past often took the course for just one semester.

Fifth, MPS is designed to teach and engage students in the process of reviewing empirical journal articles. Students will work individually and collaboratively as an editorial board to critique, edit, and ultimately decide if a submission to MPS will be published. Moreover, students will assist in recruiting submissions and subscriptions to the journal, as well as assist in the creation of the hard copy of the journal.

Economic and Pedagogical Consequences of the Proposal

There is no anticipated economic impact of offering this course. Existing faculty will teach this course and no additional resources are required. From a pedagogical perspective the course will offer students a very unique learning experience. Currently there are only four journals in the United States that publish research by undergraduates that are run entirely by undergraduates. MPS is the longest running journal of its type—22 years. Therefore, students who take this course have a unique opportunity to assist in publishing MPS, to work as a member of an editorial board, and to learn about research in a context that is available to very few students nationwide.

Relationship to Requirements and Resources in Other Departments or Programs

There should not be any impact on other departments or programs. Psych 2020 – Research Methodology: Laboratory and Field Research Techniques will provide students the foundational basis for taking Psych 3580. The contents of this course will assist students in their other courses by further developing their skill to conduct and evaluate empirical research.

Sample Syllabus and a previous edition of MPS are attached.

Psychology 3580 – Spring 2014 – Section 1

Modern Psychological Studies

CRN: XXXXX

12:15-1:30, TR, Holt Hall 309

[Three (3) Credit Hours repeatable up to 6 hours]

Instructor: David Ross
Email: David-ross@utc.edu
Office: 349-G Holt Hall
Office Hours: Thursday 10-12 or by appointment

ADA Statement: Attention: If you are a student with a disability (e.g. physical, learning, psychiatric, vision, hearing, etc.) and think that you might need special assistance or a special accommodation in this class or any other class, call the Disability Resource Center (DRC) at 425-4006 or come by the office, 102 Frist Hall
<http://www.utc.edu/disability-resource-center/>

If you find that personal problems, career indecision, study and time management difficulties, etc. are adversely affecting your successful progress at UTC, please contact the Counseling and Career Planning Center at 425-4438 or <http://www.utc.edu/counseling-personal-development-center/index.php>

Texts: APA Manual, 6th ed.
Add. Readings: Additional reading will be posted to UTC Learn.

Prerequisites: *[15 hours in Psychology, and (Psych 2020) Research Methodology: Laboratory and Field Research Techniques.]*

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Modern Psychological Studies (MPS) is a psychological journal devoted to publishing research conducted by undergraduate students. We are continuously seeking quality manuscripts for publication, and will consider manuscripts in any area of psychology. Although MPS primarily focuses on results from experimental research; MPS also publishes theoretical papers, literature reviews and book reviews.

MPS is designed to teach and engage students in the process of reviewing empirical journal articles. As a student, you will become a member of the editorial review board and learn how to critically evaluate research articles. You will work with other members of the editorial board to critique, edit, and ultimately decide if a submission to the MPS Journal of Undergraduate Research will be published. Moreover, you will assist in recruiting submissions and subscriptions of the journal, as well as assist in the creation of the hard copy of the journal.

Student Learning Outcomes:

- Identify strengths and limitations of various research designs
- Distinguish between designs that permit causal inferences from those that do not
- Interpret basic statistical results
- Evaluate the validity of conclusions presented in research reports
- Identify and evaluate the source, context, and credibility of information
- Identify components of arguments (e.g., conclusions, premises/assumptions, gaps, counterarguments)
- Weigh support for conclusions to determine how well author's reasons support conclusions
- Identify weak, contradictory, and inappropriate assertions
- Develop sound arguments for own conclusions based on reasoning and evidence

Additionally, the review process will help you as an author. By reviewing multiple papers throughout the semester, it will allow the opportunity for you to identify “Bad Habits” in your own writing style. Throughout the semester, as we complete each of the above objectives, you will be able to properly address and correct these problems.

Assignments

All student will be asked to review and critique the same number of articles, anywhere from 1-3, each week. Your duty will be to read and evaluate the assigned paper(s) so that you can make contributions to the class discussion with other reviewers. Additionally, you will turn in comments, critiques, and notes on the assigned paper(s) via a hard copy or electronic file. **No late work will be accepted.**

Evaluation and Attendance:

Your evaluation is based on either a satisfactory (pass) or unsatisfactory (fail) completion of the course. You will be assessed based on your attendance, class participation, and satisfactory evaluation of the assigned articles. Given that the review process does take collaboration and discussion among multiple reviewers, it is essential that you attend every class. Additionally, we ask that everyone in the class participate and voice his or her opinion on the subject at hand.

You will be granted two unexcused absences from class. Unexcused absences will be given for not attending class or coming to class without completing the assigned readings and article review. Absences may be excused if the instructor is notified of an absence prior to class (as a result of traveling for university functions, death in the family, acute illnesses) and the article review for that week is completed. More than two absences that are not approved by the instructor will result in receiving an NS in the course.

UTC Learn:

This course will utilize UTC Learn website. Aside from the textbook, all materials for the course can be found on UTC Learn.

General Considerations:

We have a number of objectives in this course. Of greatest importance is our goal to help you gain an understanding of the editorial process and improve your own writing style. We would like you to enjoy the class and to do well in it. In order to accomplish this, there are considerations we ask that you follow to promote a friendly and engaging classroom.

During discussions, please be considerate of other students and their opinions. Do not verbally attack other students if they express an opinion that you do not agree with. You may, however, express your disagreement as long as you do it in a respectful manner.

Currently a productive class environment requires some **basic rules about the use of electronics**. Please turn off your cell phones during the class. You should also remember that coming to class should be an opportunity for you to learn. This means that “texting” during class and the use of computers for any purpose other than taking notes is incompatible with course objectives. Especially if your use of electronics becomes a distraction to the instructor and thus potentially to other students, you may be asked to stop such activities.

Finally, please note that this syllabus is subject to change, and it is the responsibility of the student to keep informed of changes, new materials, and missed content.