

WESTERN UNIVERSITY
LONDON CANADA

Department of Psychology
Fall 2026

Psychology 2801F Section 001
RESEARCH METHODS IN PSYCHOLOGY 1

1 Calendar Description

This course will introduce students to the variety of ways to conduct research in psychology. Topics to be covered include the scientific approach to testing psychological theory; ethical issues in psychological research; developing and planning research projects; basics of measurement; survey research; best practices in research conduct.

Antirequisites: the former Psychology 2800E, the former Psychology 2820E, Psychology 2830A/B, Psychology 2840F/G Psychology 2855F/G, Psychology 2856F/G, Health Sciences 2801A/B.

Prerequisites: At least 60% in 1.0 credits of Psychology at the 1000 level; a passing grade (i.e., at least 50%) in [Data Science 1000A/B](#) and a passing grade (i.e., at least 50%) in 0.5 credit of Year 1 Math from among the following courses: [Calculus 1000A/B](#), [Calculus 1301A/B](#), [Calculus 1500A/B](#), [Calculus 1501A/B](#), [Mathematics 1225A/B](#), [Mathematics 1228A/B](#), [Mathematics 1229A/B](#), [Mathematics 1600A/B](#), or [Applied Mathematics 1201A/B](#). Students without [Data Science 1000A/B](#) may enrol with 0.5 credit of [Applied Mathematics 1201A/B](#) and 0.5 credit of [Computer Science 1026A/B](#) with a grade of at least 60% in each. Students who have completed [Statistical Sciences 1024A/B](#) (or other introductory statistics course in addition to 0.5 credit of Year 1 Math) instead of [Data Science 1000A/B](#) may enrol after completing an introductory programming class from the following list: [Computer Science 1025A/B](#), [Computer Science 1026A/B](#), [Computer Science 2120A/B](#), [Data Science 1200A/B](#), [Digital Humanities 2220A/B](#), or [Engineering Science 1036A/B](#). [Data Science 2000A/B](#) may be substituted for [Data Science 1000A/B](#) for students entering the program with 1.0 credits of Year 1 Math courses.

2 lecture hours; 2 laboratory hours; Course Weight: 0.5

Unless otherwise stated, students are responsible for ensuring that they have successfully completed all prerequisites prior to enrolling. Where prerequisites have not been met, the instructor may require the student to withdraw from the course. In accordance with Western policy, this decision is not subject to appeal.

In the event of a discrepancy between this outline and Senate or University policies, the latter shall prevail. The instructor reserves the right to modify elements of this course outline for

pedagogical or operational reasons. Any such changes will be communicated to students in a timely manner.

2 Course Information

Instructor: Dr. Samantha Joel
Office & Phone: SSC 6314
Office Hours: Thursdays: 1:15-2:15pm
Email: sjoel2@uwo.ca

Section 001 Lectures will be held on Thursdays in (ROOM TBA) from 2:30-4:30pm.

Labs will be held on eight specific weeks throughout the term (see Section 7 below). Check the OWL course site for your lab section's day/time.

3 Course Materials

This class uses an open textbook that is free to download:

Jhangiani, R. S., Chiang, I. A., Cuttler, C., & Leighton, D. C. (2020). *Research Methods in Psychology* (4th edition). Kwantlan Polytechnic University.

A PDF of the book is available on OWL. Alternatively, you can read it or download it in your preferred digital format from this website: <https://kpu.pressbooks.pub/psychmethods4e/>

If you prefer to read your textbooks in hardcopy, you can order this book on Amazon, or print the book at one of Western's libraries for 10 cents a page (<https://www.lib.uwo.ca/services/printingandphotocopying.html>).

4 Course Objectives and Learning Outcomes

This course introduces the ways in which research is conducted in psychology. We shall consider a range of available research methods, including observation, archival research, questionnaire surveys, case studies, and experimentation. We'll also consider topics closely allied to research design, such as ethics, report writing, and data presentation. In addition to providing training in research techniques needed for third- and fourth-year psychology courses (e.g., Psychology 4850), it is expected that Psychology 2801F will contribute significantly to the development of scientific thinking skills that students can apply to their future careers and in everyday life.

Learning Outcome	Learning Activity	Assessment
Depth and Breadth of Knowledge Find and interpret original empirical research.	Lectures, readings, lab activities, lecture activities, discussions	Lab assignments, exams
Knowledge of Methodologies Evaluate the appropriateness of different methodological approaches for specific research questions.		Lab assignments, exams
Application of Knowledge - Generate your own research ideas and hypotheses. - Critically evaluate original empirical research.		Lab assignments
Communication Skills Communicate accurately and clearly, using the discourse of the discipline of psychology		Lab assignments
Awareness of Limits of Knowledge - Recognize biases and uncertainty inherent to the research process. - Understand the relative strengths and limitations of different methodological approaches.		Lab assignments, exams
Autonomy and Professional Capacity Ensure that research adheres to ethical standards.		Lab assignments, exams

5 Evaluation

The course requirements, along with relative weightings in the determination of final grades, are:

- Midterm 24%
- Final Exam 40%
- Laboratory Activities 36%

The evaluation and testing formats for this course were created to assess the learning objectives as listed in section 4 and are necessary for meeting these learning objectives. All evaluations listed in this course outline are required components of the course and together account for 100% of the final grade. Weightings and assessment formats may be adjusted where required to support course learning objectives, with appropriate notice to students.

Policy on Missing Coursework

University policies on academic considerations are described [here](#). Students who encounter extenuating circumstances affecting their academic responsibilities may submit a request for academic consideration in accordance with Western University's Academic Consideration policies. Requests must be submitted through the [Student Absence Portal](#) and may require supporting documentation.

Exams. Students who receive academic consideration for an exam will be given an opportunity to write a makeup exam. The makeup may adhere to a different format from the original exam.

Laboratory Activities. For each of the four laboratory topics, there are two labs: a practice lab, marked for completion only (worth 1.5% each – 6% total), and a timed lab assignment that will be graded for quality (worth 7.5% each – 30% total). All laboratory activities must be completed and submitted entirely during class. Submissions will not be accepted outside of class. If you receive academic consideration for a lab, the weight of the missed lab will be reassigned to the other labs of that category. That is, a missed practice lab with consideration will result in the remaining three practice labs being worth 2% each. A missed lab assignment with consideration will result in the remaining three lab assignments being worth 10% each.

Because this is an essay course, as per Senate Regulations, you must pass the essay component to pass the course. For this course, the essay component refers to the graded lab assignments. Your average mark across these five assignments must be at least 50%.

Course grades within the Psychology Department are expected to be distributed around the following averages:

70%	1000-level to 2099-level courses
72%	2100-2999-level courses
75%	3000-level courses
80%	4000-level courses

In the event that course grades are significantly higher or lower than these averages, instructors may be required to make adjustments to course grades. Such adjustment might include the normalization of one or more course components and/or the re-weighting of various course components.

Policy on Grade Rounding

Course grades are rounded to the nearest whole number. No additional assignments will be offered to enhance a final grade. Requests to change a grade because it is needed for a future program will not be considered.

6 Assessment/Evaluation Schedule

Exams	Relevant Material	Worth	Date/Time
Midterm	Lectures & readings from Lessons 1 – 6	24%	TBA (Week of Oct 23)
Final Exam	All lectures & readings from Fall semester, emphasizing material from Lessons 7 – 11	40%	TBA* (Dec. 11 – 22)

*For the final exam, the date and time are set by the **Office of the Registrar**. You can view the active exam schedules here:

https://registrar.uwo.ca/academics/examinations/exam_schedule.html

Lab Activities	Topic	Value	Week of
Practice 1	Choosing and Justifying a Research Topic	1.5%	September 17
Assignment 1		7.5%	September 24
Practice 2	Finding and Selecting Relevant Literature	1.5%	October 8
Assignment 2		7.5%	October 21
Practice 3	Organizing and Synthesizing a Literature Review	1.5%	November 5
Assignment 3		7.5%	November 12
Practice 4	Proposing a New Research Direction	1.5%	November 19
Assignment 4		7.5%	November 26

All lab activities are to be completed during your assigned tutorial time slot. If you typically write exams and quizzes with Accessible Education (i.e., if you require or receive accommodation for extra time on course work), you may likewise request to write your graded lab assignments with Accessible Education. Please connect with Accessible Education as soon as possible to make appropriate arrangements. We recommend that you still attend the practice labs on your assigned tutorial date/time/location so that you can benefit from TA instruction ahead of the assignments.

7 Class Schedule

Week of	Lecture	Readings	Lab Session
Sept. 10	1: Introduction	---	
Sept. 17	2: Psychology as a Science	Chapter 1	1. Research Topic Practice
Sept. 24	3: Your Own Research	Chapter 2	2. Assignment 1
Oct. 1	TRUTH & RECONCILIATION (NO CLASSES)		
Oct. 8	4: Research Ethics	Chapter 3	3: Finding Literature Practice
Oct. 15	FALL READING WEEK (NO CLASSES)		
Oct. 21	5: Theory	Chapter 11	4. Assignment 2
Oct. 29	MIDTERM EXAM (Lessons 1 - 6) (No Regular Class)		
Nov. 5	6: Open Science	---	5. Literature Review Practice
Nov. 12	7: Measurement	Chapter 4	6. Assignment 3
Nov. 19	8: Interpreting Graphs	Chapter 12	7. New Directions Practice
Nov. 26	9: Survey Research	Chapter 7	8. Assignment 4
Dec. 3	10: Professional Development	---	
TBA (Dec.11 - 22)	FINAL EXAM (Lessons 1 - 11)		

8 Academic Integrity

Scholastic offences are treated seriously at Western University. Students are expected to understand and comply with the University's standards of academic integrity. Scholastic offences may result in penalties up to and including expulsion from the University. Please read [Western's Scholastic Offences](#) policy for definitions and examples of Scholastic offences.

Statement on Use of Electronic Devices

You may use laptops or tablets in this class to consult online readings or to take notes. Please keep in mind, however, that use of technology can be distracting – not only for you, but to others in the class. Please avoid the temptation to text, check social media, etc. in class.

Use of electronic devices is strictly prohibited during exams, with the exception of devices that have been approved for accessibility/accommodation purposes.

Plagiarism Detection Software

All required assignments may be subject to submission for textual similarity review to the commercial plagiarism detection software under license to the University for the detection of plagiarism. All assignments submitted for such checking will be included as source

documents in the reference database for the purpose of detecting plagiarism of assignments subsequently submitted to the system. Use of the service is subject to the licensing agreement, currently between Western and Turnitin.com.

Use of AI

This course is designed to develop your own critical thinking, reading, writing, and analytical skills. Accordingly, the use of generative artificial intelligence (AI) tools (e.g., ChatGPT, Claude, Copilot) to generate course content is **not permitted**, unless explicitly authorized by the instructor for a specific assignment.

This course includes written laboratory assignments, completed during class time under TA supervision. Students are **strictly prohibited** from using generative AI tools of any kind while completing these assignments. If a student is caught using generative AI during laboratory writing time, it will be treated as an instance of academic misconduct. The student will receive a 0 on the assignment, and the scholastic offense will be reported to the department's undergraduate chair, in accordance with Western University's [policies on academic integrity](#).

Multiple Choice Exams

Computer-marked multiple-choice tests and/or exams will be subject to submission for similarity review by software that will check for unusual coincidences in answer patterns that may indicate cheating.

9 Academic Accommodations and Accessible Education

Western University is committed to providing an accessible learning environment. Students with disabilities or medical conditions requiring accommodation are encouraged to contact Accessible Education as early as possible. Accommodations will be implemented in accordance with University policy. Please review [Western's policy on academic accommodations](#) for student with disabilities. Accessible Education provides supports and services to students with disabilities at Western. If you think you may qualify for ongoing accommodation that will be recognized in all your courses, visit [Accessible Education](#) for more information. Email: aeu@uwo.ca Phone: 519 661-2147.

10 Absence & Academic Consideration

Please review Western's policy on [Academic Considerations](#):

11 Other Information

Helpful Websites

- Western's academic policies are available at the [Office of the Registrar](#).
- Departmental policies are available at the [Psychology Department website](#).

- Learning supports available at [Learning Development & Success](#).

Well-Being

Western University provides a range of supports to promote student well-being. Students are encouraged to seek assistance when needed. Students who are in emotional/mental distress should refer to [Health and Wellness at Western](#) for a complete list of options about how to obtain help. Please contact the course instructor if you require material in an alternate format or if you require any other arrangements to make this course more accessible to you.

Grade Appeals

If you wish to appeal a grade, please read the [policy documentation](#) on requests for relief. For lab assignments, please first contact your lab TA who graded your assignment. For exams, please first contact your course instructor. If your issue is not resolved, you may make your appeal in writing to the Undergraduate Chair in Psychology (psyugrd@uwo.ca).

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