

Fontbonne University Course Syllabus
Research Methods for the Behavioral Sciences
PSY 330 — Fall 2019 — 3 credit hours

Class time and location:

Tues & Thurs 12:30pm – 1:45pm

Room: Ryan Hall 303

Important Dates:

Sept 1: Last day to add/drop course, change from credit to audit

Oct 18: Last day to withdraw from course, change between credit and pass/fail

Professor: Dr. Jason Finley

email: jfinley@fontbonne.edu

phone: (314)-719-3610

office: East Building 310A

office hours: Mon 2-3:30pm & Wed 3:30-5pm

Also by appointment (just email me and we'll schedule a time to meet)

Websites:

Schoology: fontbonne.schoology.com

Powerpoints, assignments, handouts, etc. will be posted on here.

InQuizitive: digital.wwnorton.com/researchpsych3

IMPORTANT: Student Set ID: 167185

Prerequisites: PSY 100 or SOC 100; PSY 320 (statistics) recommended

Required course text:

Morling, B. (2018). *Research Methods in Psychology*, 3rd edition. Norton. ISBN: 978-0393617542

NOTE: InQuizitive access required! All new paper copies of the book come with an access code for InQuizitive. You can buy an electronic copy of the book that comes with InQuizitive access from the publisher here:

<https://digital.wwnorton.com/researchpsych3>

From that link you can also buy just the InQuizitive access (in case you got a used copy of the book, for example).

Recommended text:

American Psychological Association. (2010). *Publication manual of the American Psychological Association*, 6th ed. [also available in library]

Course Description:

An introduction to basic techniques and research methods used in the social sciences. Emphasis is on learning the application of research methodology and on the

analysis, interpretation, and presentation of results. Topics include observational, correlational, experimental, and quasi-experimental designs.

Goals and Objectives:

The learning activities, assignments, and exams in this course assess your mastery of these learning outcomes:

- **Critical and Creative Thinking**
You will learn how to think like a scientist about mind and behavior, how to transform your curiosity into testable questions, and how to critically evaluate evidence. My approach to doing research is this: unbounded creative curiosity first. Then rigor. Finally practicality.
- **Research Skills**
You will learn the basic techniques of the whole research process, including: searching and reading published scientific literature, developing research ideas, the variety of methods available (descriptive/observational, correlational, experimental), how to run a good experiment, gathering data, analyzing data with statistics, and communicating results to colleagues.
- **Writing Skills**
You will improve your writing skills, and learn to write a paper using APA (American Psychological Association) style.

Note that my job is to *help* you learn, not *force* you to learn. Learning requires time and effort. I am here to help you, but you need to also take responsibility for your own learning.

Course Format:

A flexible hybrid of lecture, discussion, activities, and workshop. In the first half of the semester we will cover most of the basic content of research methods. In the second half of the semester you will be working in groups of 2-3 on a research project: you will do background reading, design an experiment, run the experiment in class, analyze the data, present your project to the class as a group, and write a final individual paper on the project.

Note that this class moves quickly, so take care not to fall behind. The class also requires a good deal of work outside of class time. Work hard and you will learn a lot of really good useful stuff!

Overview of what you need to do for this course:

- Attend class and participate.
- Do the assigned reading from the textbook and other sources.
 - *When should you do the reading?* Either before class or soon after, or both!, whatever works best for you.

- Do the assignments and turn them in on time.
- Do the InQuizitive online modules.
- Work with your group to create and run a research project.
 - Do project components and turn them in on time.
 - Collect data in class on the assigned dates.
 - Give a final group presentation.
 - Write a final individual paper and turn it in on time.
- Ask me for help when you don't understand something.

Classroom Etiquette/Logistics:

- Please be mentally present. I will strive to not be boring.
- Please do your part to *minimize distraction*. Silence your cell phone, no texting. Computers are for note-taking and other course-related activities, *not* for YouTube, Facebook, etc.
- **Put your phone away and keep it away.**
DO NOT USE YOUR PHONE DURING CLASS.
- No antimatter in class; trust me on this.
- **Ask questions!** Seriously! Speak up whenever you have questions, don't understand something, have answers, have ideas, etc. Asking questions is a sign of WISDOM, and it's also a great way to learn.

Evaluation: Your grade in this course will be based on:

Attendance/Participation	5%
Assignments Assignment 1 (ethics): 6% Assignment 2 (survey): 6% Assignment 3 (design): 6%	18%
InQuizitive online modules 8 modules worth 4% each	32%
Group Research Project Literature Review: 7% Proposal: 7% Method Section Draft: 7% Results Section Draft: 7% Final Group Presentation: 7% Final Paper: 10%	45%
Total:	100%

Final letter grades will be based on the following scale:

92.5	≤	A	≤	100
89.5	≤	A-	<	92.5
87.5	≤	B+	<	89.5
82.5	≤	B	<	87.5
79.5	≤	B-	<	82.5
77.5	≤	C+	<	79.5
72.5	≤	C	<	77.5
69.5	≤	C-	<	72.5
59.5	≤	D	<	69.5
0	≤	F	<	59.5

Attendance/Participation (5%):

In order to learn, you’ve got to show up to class, and participate in any activities we do that day. Missing class, especially in the first half of the semester, will seriously make it a lot harder to learn the material and do well on the exams and assignments. If you miss a class, it’s your responsibility to get notes from another student, and come to my office hours if you need help understanding anything you missed. Attendance will be taken at every class. Here’s how attendance figures into your grade: Every class you attend (not counting exam days or final presentation day) will earn you 0.22% toward your final grade, up to a maximum of 5%. Oh, also you have to be awake and participate in activities or it doesn’t count!

Assignments (18%):

There will be three written assignments, one on ethics, one on making a survey, and one on research design. Each will be worth 6% of your grade. The assignments will be posted on the course website, and I will announce in class when each is available. You’ll have at least 9 days to complete each assignment. There may be some time during class to work on them some, but you should plan to do most of the work outside of class time. Writing quality matters! Specific instructions, page limits, and grading criteria will be given on each assignment. Assignments must be turned in via the course website by 11:59pm on the due date given in the schedule. Late assignments will be accepted for half credit up to one week after the due date.

I reserve the right to potentially offer revision opportunities on assignments. That is, I may decide that everyone gets a chance to gain more points if they turn in a revised version of the assignment based on my feedback, by a new due date that I will announce. Any such opportunities will be equally available to all students.

InQuizitive Online Modules (32%):

There will be 8 online modules for you to complete at <https://digital.wwnorton.com/researchpsych3> (or through Schoology if I manage to get the links working). You will need to enter the “Student Set” number for our class, which is: 167185. The InQuizitive modules are like adaptive online quiz games, and they are designed to help you learn the material. They are open-book and have no time limit, but must be completed by the due dates listed in the schedule at the end of this syllabus. Late completions will earn half credit.

Group Research Project (45%):

The second half of the semester will be devoted to the research project, for which you will be put into groups of 2-3 students. You will work with your group to design and conduct an experiment (a specific type of research method). The project will be completed in stages with due dates throughout the second half of the semester (see schedule below). Late turn-in of project components will be accepted for half credit up to one week after the due date.

Group vs. individual evaluation: As a group you will turn in one project proposal and everyone in the group will receive the same score on that. Likewise, you will do the final presentation as a group and everyone in the group will receive the same score on that. For all the other project components (literature review, method section, results section, and final paper), you will complete your own individual version and receive your own individual score.

Hypothetical bonus assignment (?%):

I reserve the right to *potentially* offer a bonus assignment. Any such assignment would be equally available to all students, and would be worth 3% at most.

Basic Wellness Needs

Your physical, mental and emotional health is important and can affect your performance in this class. Fontbonne University provides many services to help students, including counseling, health services, food and housing assistance, and emergency funds. If a service is not available on our campus, you may benefit from a referral to a provider in the greater community. If you are facing such challenges and believe it may affect your performance in this course, I encourage you to seek assistance in the Student Affairs office on the first floor of Medaille Hall, adjacent to the AMC lobby, or you can call that office at (314) 889-1411. Their hours are Monday through Friday, 8:30 am to 4:30 pm. If you are comfortable doing so, you also may contact me. I will offer any assistance that I can and help you connect with the appropriate resource.

Academic Integrity/Honesty:

Unwavering honesty is absolutely paramount in doing science and being a scholar. It is an essential value that every good scholar holds in his or her heart. My colleague, Dr. Rebecca Foushée, has written nicely about this importance: “The scientific enterprise is an organized framework for finding truths and understanding reality, and it works for many reasons. One primary reason it works is that research professionals place a great deal of faith and trust in the work of their colleagues, including any public statements/reports made by their fellow scientists. Whenever this trust is broken, the entire structure of scholarly inquiry – regardless of discipline – is placed at risk. Therefore, one main goal of scientific training is to foster and encourage ethical behavior, academic honesty, and original, creative thought among future generations of scholars.”

I take academic honesty very seriously, and you should too. The Fontbonne statement on academic integrity may be found in the catalog, in *The Griffin Scratch Student Handbook*, and in Policy Manual VI, Section 6.1.11. I’ll excerpt from it here.

“According to its mission, Fontbonne University is committed to graduating students who are prepared to think critically, to act ethically, and to assume responsibility as citizens and leaders. Fontbonne University expects the highest standards of integrity from its students. Violations of academic integrity have a broad impact on the University and will result in University review and action.

A violation of academic integrity includes, but is not limited to, any act of cheating, plagiarism, fabrication, and dissimulation and any act of aiding and abetting academic dishonesty. ...

- Plagiarism is the representation of the words and ideas of another as one’s own in any academic exercise. Plagiarism includes failing to give a citation for using work from another person or source. Modifications and rephrasing do not reduce the requirement for giving a citation. This also applies to information obtained electronically, such as from the Internet.”

Here are some guidelines to avoid plagiarism:

- DON’T COPY/PASTE unless you put quotes around the copied text and cite the source of the text.
- If you’ve paraphrased text from somewhere, cite the source.
- If you’re using ideas from somewhere, cite the source.
- If you’re ever unsure, just check with me.

You will be working in groups for the research project in the second half of the semester. With the exception of the project proposal, all the written components of the project (literature review, method section, results section, and final paper) will be completed by you individually, in your own words. Copying your fellow group members’ words is plagiarism.

Engaging in any academic dishonesty will result in the student receiving a score of zero on the exam or assignment and being reported to the Office of Academic Affairs. More than one offense will result in an automatic F grade.

Nondiscrimination

Fontbonne University does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, age, sex, gender identity, sexual orientation, national origin, disability, genetic information, or any other characteristic protected by applicable law. If you have concerns that you or someone else has been discriminated against, it is your right to bring those concerns to the attention of the University's Title IX coordinator, Associate Vice President for Student Affairs, Medaille Hall 85-99, (314) 889-1416 the Director of Human Resources, Ryan Hall 103, (314) 889-1493. Other types of concerns (i.e., concerns of an academic nature) should be discussed directly with your instructor and can also be brought to the attention of your instructor's Department Chair. Additional information on Fontbonne's policy of nondiscrimination is available in the catalog, in *The Griffin Scratch Student Handbook*, and in Policy Manual II, Section 2.1.2.

Accommodation of Students with Disabilities

Fontbonne University offers accommodations to students with documented physical, visual, hearing, learning, or psychiatric disabilities. Any Fontbonne student is eligible for special services or accommodations if: 1) The student self-identifies that he or she has a disability and needs accommodation; 2) The student provides appropriate and verifiable documentation of the disability; and 3) The student provides notification in a timely fashion. For academic accommodations, contact the Academic and Disabilities Resources Coordinator at (314) 719-3627. Ryan Hall 3rd floor
<http://www.fontbonne.edu/academics/academic-services-support/>

Note also: free tutoring for any student

Writing Support Services

The Kinkel Center provides free writing support to all students at Fontbonne University. Trained writing specialists are available to assist you at any stage in the writing process, from brainstorming and organizing ideas, to polishing a final draft. Each appointment is an hour and tailored to meet the expressed needs of you, the client. The goal is to have a substantive conversation about your project where we can collaboratively develop some usable strategies, techniques, and principles that can be applied to future projects in your collegiate and professional life. The instructions for making an appointment are on the [Kinkel Center page](#). Appointments are held in Ryan 304. For off campus students, sessions can be conducted electronically. To request an electronic appointment, send a message to writing@fontbonne.edu All writing support inquiries can be directed to Matt Nelson, the Academic Writing Support Coordinator, at mnelson@fontbonne.edu.

Subject-to-Change Clause:

This syllabus is subject to change at the discretion of the instructor to accommodate instructional and/or student needs. It is the student’s responsibility to keep aware of such changes.

Schedule:

Date	Topic	Reading Chapter	InQuisitive Due by 11:59pm	Assignmnet due by 11:59pm
Tues Aug 27	Psychology is a way of thinking	1		
Thurs Aug 29	Sources of information	2		
Tues Sept 3	Sources of information & Three claims, Four validities	2 & 3	InQ: Mod 1	
Thurs Sept 5	Three claims, Four validities	3		
Tues Sept 10	Ethics	4	InQ: Mod 2	
Thurs Sept 12	Measurement	5		
Tues Sept 17	Frequency Claims: surveys & observations	6	InQ: Mod 3	
Thurs Sept 19	Frequency claims: sampling	7		#1: Ethics
Tues Sept 24	Association claims: correlation	8	InQ: Mod 4	
Thurs Sept 26	Association claims: beyond correlation	9		
Tues Oct 1	Causal claims: Experiments	10	InQ: Mod 5	#2: Survey
Thurs Oct 3	Causal claims: Confounds & other threats	11		
Tues Oct 8	Causal claims: Exps. With 2+ Ivs	12	InQ: Mod 6	
Thurs Oct 10	Quasi-experiments and Small-N designs	13		
Tues Oct 15	Replication, etc.	14	InQ: Mod 7	#3: Design
Thurs Oct 17	Project idea development, Literature search, writing introduction section			

Date	Topic	Reading Chapter	InQuisitive Due by 11:59pm	Assignmnet due by 11:59pm
Tues Oct 22	NO CLASS, FALL BREAK			
Thurs Oct 24	Tools & Techniques, work on projects		InQ: Mod 8	
Tues Oct 29	Work on projects			#4: Literature Review
Thurs Oct 31	Work on projects			
Tues Nov 5	Work on projects			#5: Project Proposal
Thurs Nov 7	Visiting artist?			
Tues Nov 12	Project idea approval, writing method section	writing: pp. 505-543		
Thurs Nov 14	Data analysis & interpretation (descriptive), work on projects	Stats Review p. 457		#6: Method Section
Tues Nov 19	Data analysis & interpretation (inferential), work on projects	Stats Review p. 479		
Thurs Nov 21	Data Collection Day!!!			
Tues Nov 26	Data analysis, writing results & discussion, making bar graphs, Presenting Research Results	pp. 505-543		
Thurs Nov 28	NO CLASS, THANKSGIVING			
Tues Dec 3	Data analysis, writing results & discussion, making bar graphs, Presenting Research Results	pp. 505-543		#7: Results Section
Thurs Dec 5	Project workshop (paper & presentation)			
Thurs Dec 12, 12:30-2:20pm	Final Presentations			#8: Final Paper