

FIU – Department of Psychology – PSY4931 – U04
Senior Seminar: “Measuring Animal Behavior”

PREREQUISITES

You must have already taken Research Methods (PSY3213) and Statistics (STA3123).

CLASS MEETINGS

Wednesdays 2:00 – 3:40 pm (CBC 140)

INSTRUCTOR

Dr. Eliza Nelson

Office Hours: Wednesdays 10:30 am – 12:30 pm (DM 276)

Email: elnelson@fiu.edu

Note: You do not need an appointment to come to office hours. I am available in my office during the posted time and see students on a first-come, first-serve basis. If you cannot make it on Wednesdays, email me for an appointment. Include 2-3 half hour slots that you are available in your request to save time in scheduling. Do not wait until it's too late to get help.

GRADUATE TEACHING ASSISTANT

Emily Boeving

Office Hours: Thursdays 2:00 – 4:00 pm (DM 269A)

Email: eboev001@fiu.edu

EMAIL POLICY

Please address your email “Dear Dr. Nelson” or “Dear Emily” and sign your name at the bottom. We reserve the right not to respond to ‘hey you’ or otherwise unprofessional emails. Do not send a message via Blackboard. Typically, we will respond to email within 1 day.

COURSE GOALS

In this course, we will learn and apply principles of experimental design to measure behavior. Topics include research ethics, basic and advanced experimental techniques, and field methods for animal studies. We will cover all aspects of the research process from the literature search, to data collection and analysis, to manuscript writing and undergoing peer review and revision.

By the end of the course, you will be able to:

- Describe and apply basic principles of experimental design
- Critically read and analyze empirical research
- Conduct research experiments and interpret original data
- Disseminate research findings for scientific and non-scientific audiences

Note: You are required to attend a field trip to Monkey Jungle on March 4th to collect data for your final paper. The field trip occurs during class time. The cost of the field trip is \$12.50, and replaces the cost of buying a textbook. All other required materials will be provided. Carpool groups will be arranged for students who do not have their own transportation.

CLASSROOM POLICIES

Please be respectful of class time and of your peers. Kindly refrain from talking, texting, or using technology for non-class related activities. If you are disruptive, we reserve the right to ask you to leave. Arriving late and leaving early is distracting for everyone; please don't do it. We work hard to get to know each of our students personally. We want you to succeed. You can assume that when we know your name, we know when you're not present or engaged in class.

Note: Additional policies apply to the field trip. If you are not in compliance with Monkey Jungle rules, you will be asked to leave immediately and you will forfeit all points for the assignment. Conducting animal research is a privilege. You may not touch any animal, no matter the reason. The rules are in place for your protection and safety should be everyone's priority.

MAKE-UP POLICIES

Make-up work is only permitted for excused absences with documentation. This includes, but is not limited to, doctor's excuses (for yourself or immediate relatives), athletic events, FIU-related scholarly events (e.g., conference), death in the family, religious observances, or auto accident (not a traffic jam). Work-related excuses will be handled on a case-by-case basis. Approved work-related excuses are one-time absences, not regular occurrences. Vacation is not a one-time occurrence. Please do not take this class if it conflicts with your work schedule. Also, keep in mind that documentation must be dated for the material or assignment that you missed. As soon as you are able, contact Dr. Nelson directly by email to discuss your situation. We will do our best to accommodate you.

DISABILITY ACCOMODATIONS

Disability students must submit DRC paperwork in the first week of class for accommodations: **drc.fiu.edu/students**

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

Any instance of academic misconduct (e.g., plagiarism, cheating, collusion, dishonesty) will be reported to the University and Department of Psychology for further action. Please refer to your student handbook, or ask me if you are unsure about what constitutes misconduct.

Details can also be found at this website: **https://ugrad.fiu.edu/academic_misconduct/**

Note: This class uses Turnitin to check for plagiarism. Papers are uploaded via Blackboard links. **You will be warned for plagiarism in the rough draft but you will not be penalized. However, the policy for the course is an automatic "0" for plagiarism detected in the final paper. If you have a previous plagiarism charge on your record, your case will be immediately escalated to student court and the penalty may be more severe.**

ASSIGNED READINGS

All assigned readings are posted on Blackboard as PDFs. It is expected that you will have read any assigned readings before you come to class.

LAB ASSIGNMENTS

There are 10 lab assignments. They differ in length, and detailed instructions will be given with each one. Assignments are posted on Blackboard after class the day they are assigned and are due the following week at the start of class, or they are considered late. Please note that Labs #6, 7, 8, and 10 are completed in class. All take-home lab assignments (#1, 2, 3, 4, 5, and 9) must be typewritten in Arial 12-point font. Do not include a title page. Please put your name and PID in the header of your assignment so that your identifying information appears on every page. Failure to follow formatting guidelines will result in a 1-point penalty.

Note: No assignments are accepted via email. You must turn in a hard copy to receive credit. There is 1-point penalty every day that your assignment is late without an approved excuse. It is better to turn in an assignment late than to take a 0. If your absence is excused, a new due date will be negotiated with Dr. Nelson and you will not be penalized.

FINAL PAPER

The final paper required in this course has four components: (1) rough draft (2 copies due in class on 4/15 and handed in with your final paper); (2) cover letter to Dr. Nelson describing the edits made as a result of the peer review (occurs in class on 4/15); (3) research journal with an entry for each of the 15 required references (see below); and (4) final paper. Both the rough draft and the final paper are uploaded to Turnitin. You will be warned for plagiarism detected in the rough draft, and penalized accordingly for plagiarism detected in the final copy. You will be asked to grade your own paper using Dr. Nelson's rubric before turning it in. You will have the rubric in advance; we recommend using it as a checklist during the writing process.

Note: The final paper should be double-spaced in Arial 12-point font with 1" margins. The length must be at least 2500 words and no more than 3000 words. You will be asked to provide a word count with your final paper. You will be penalized on paper length and formatting if you fail to meet the requirements. A separate handout will be provided.

RESEARCH JOURNAL

Your journal can be completed in either Excel (highly recommended) or Word. Each entry in your journal will be a summary of an article that you read for your final paper. The summary should contain 3 parts: (1) why the study was conducted (2 sentences), (2) how the study was conducted (1 sentence), and (3) what the authors found (2 sentences). Each entry is worth 1 point, for a total of 15 points. The research journal is due with the final paper on the last day of class, but you should be working on it throughout the semester.

Occasionally, I offer extra credit for outstanding participation in class. Come to class, and be prepared to work each week. Do not ask me to adjust your grade at the end of the semester.

GRADING

Labs	250 points	10 @ 25 points each; See calendar for due dates
Field Trip	50 points	March 4th – Bring \$12.50
Final Folder	200 points	See rubric for breakdown of points

LETTER GRADE CONVERSION

A: 94-100%	A-: 90-93%	B+: 87-89%	B: 83-86%	B-: 80-82%	
C+: 77-79%	C: 73-76%	C-: 70-72%	D+: 67-69%	D: 60-66	F: 59 & below

To calculate your grade, divide your total by 500. You must earn a 'C' or better for the major.

LECTURE SCHEDULE

<u>Date</u>	<u>Topic</u>	<u>Reading Due</u>	<u>Assignment Due</u>
January 14	Introduction	None	None
January 21	Literature Search	None	Lab #1
January 28	Reading Articles	Reading #1	Lab #2
February 4	Identifying Subjects	None	Lab #3
February 11	Observation Part 1	Reading #2	Lab #4
February 18	Observation Part 2	Reading #3	Lab #5
February 25	Experimental Design	Reading #4	Lab #6 (In-Class)
March 4	FIELD TRIP	**Meet at Monkey Jungle**	
March 11	NO CLASS – SPRING BREAK		
March 18	Analyzing Data	**Meet at computer lab**	Lab #7 (In-Class)
March 25	Presenting Results	**Meet at computer lab **	Lab #8 (In-Class)
April 1	Professional Development		Lab #9
April 8	Professional Development		Lab #10 (In-Class)
April 15	PEER REVIEW	Turnitin by midnight 4/14	2 copies to class
April 22	FINAL FOLDER DUE	Turnitin by midnight 4/22	Due @ 2 pm
	- Rough draft		
	- Cover letter		
	- Final paper		
	- Research journal		

PLEASE DETACH THIS PAGE AND RETURN TO DR. NELSON

A contract made between _____ (PID _____) and Dr. Nelson for the duration of Spring 2015 for the class “Measuring Animal Behavior” PSY4931-U04.

Please read and initial the following statements.

I have read and understand what is expected of me in this course. _____

I know that I am expected to download readings because there is no textbook. _____

I know that I must complete 10 labs for 50% of my grade. _____

I know that I must attend the field trip on **March 4th** for 10% of my grade. _____

I know that the final folder for this course is worth 40% of my grade. _____

I have read and understand the policies of this course. _____

I agree to abide by the classroom policies outline in the syllabus. _____

I agree to abide by the email policies outlined in the syllabus. _____

I understand I can make an appointment if I have a conflict with office hours. _____

I understand the difference between an excused and unexcused absence. _____

I understand the consequences of academic misconduct. _____

I understand the consequences of violating Monkey Jungle rules on the field trip. _____

I understand there is a cost of **\$12.50** to me to attend the field trip. _____

I understand that I am expected to check my FIU email regularly for course news. _____

I understand Dr. Nelson may ask to meet with me if I fall behind in the course. _____

Signed: _____

Major: _____ Year: _____ Grade Expected in Course: _____

Birthdate: _____ Favorite Candy: _____ Favorite Animal: _____