

MACQUARIE UNIVERSITY



Research Methods in Psychology

PSY351

Semester 1, 2011

**MACQUARIE UNIVERSITY
FACULTY OF HUMAN SCIENCES
DEPARTMENT OF PSYCHOLOGY
UNIT OUTLINE**

Year and Semester: Semester 1, 2011

Unit convenor: Dr Simon Boag

Prerequisites: (Admission to BPsych(Hons) or GPA of 2.5) and (PSY222(P) or PSY248(P)) and PSY234(P) and PSY235(P) and PSY236(P) and PSY237(P) or (PSY246(P) and PSY247(P)) and PSY245(P)

Students in this unit should read this unit outline carefully at the start of semester. It contains important information about the unit. If anything in it is unclear, please consult one of the teaching staff in the unit.

ABOUT THIS UNIT

- This unit is an introduction to research methods used in psychology and related disciplines. This is a 3 credit point unit.
- Psychology uses the scientist-practitioner model as its basis and successful completion of this unit will give you an understanding of the range of methods that psychologists use to answer their research questions, their strengths and weakness, and the historical antecedents of the science of psychology.

It is now University policy that the University issued email account will be used for official University communication. All students are required to access their University account frequently.

TEACHING STAFF

- Convenor: Dr Simon Boag
- Building C3A Room 407
- Contact Details: ph: 9850 8024
- Email: simon.boag@psy.mq.edu.au
- Consultation time: Email for appointment.

- Other staff:

Name	Office	Phone extension	<u>Email</u>
Dr Hana Burianová	C5C 484	6857	hana.burianova@mq.edu.au
Dr Eugene Chekaluk	C3A 527	8009	eugene.chekaluk@mq.edu.au
A/Prof Veronika Coltheart	C5C 414	8104	veronika.coltheart@mq.edu.au
Dr Julia Irwin	C3A 506	8006	julia.irwin@mq.edu.au
Mr Tim Marsh			timothy.marsh@students.mq.edu.au
Dr Anthony Miller	F9A 145	6214	anthony.miller@mq.edu.au
A/Prof Greg Savage	C5C 403	4862	gsavage@maccs.mq.edu.au
Prof Peter Wenderoth	C3B 610	8680	peter.wenderoth@mq.edu.au

- Any staff not listed will give their contact details at workshops.

CLASSES

- There is a 1 hour lecture in Weeks 1 to 13 and 12 x 2 hour workshops beginning in Week 2.
- You must attend the workshop to which you have been allocated or arrange a different time via the student office, as space is limited.

Changes to all units can be done on-line via eStudent.

After week 2, no further changes will be entertained unless supporting documentation is provided.

REQUIRED AND RECOMMENDED TEXTS AND/OR MATERIALS

Required:

- Gravetter, F.J., & Forzano, L-A. B. (2011). *Research Methods for the Behavioral Sciences* (4th ed.). Belmont, C.A: Wadsworth.

Note: The 3rd edition (2009) will also be adequate.

Recommended (especially for report writing):

- Bell, P. & Staines, P. (2001). *Logical psych: Reasoning, explanation and writing in psychology*. Sydney, NSW: UNSW Press. [especially Chapters 9 & 11]

UNIT WEB PAGE

- See Blackboard

LEARNING OUTCOMES

- The learning outcomes of this unit are to provide insights into the process of doing research: from devising the question, selecting a research strategy, conducting the study, evaluating the data and reporting and interpreting the results, as well as practical experience in doing research. You will learn important research terminology, sampling strategies, measurement strategies, and how to write a research report.
- You will learn knowledge of research ethics and the course fosters critical thinking and reflection on scientific practice.
- More generally, outcomes include developing problem solving and research capabilities and drawing connections across fields of knowledge.

In addition to the discipline-based learning objectives, all academic programs at Macquarie seek to develop students' generic skills in a range of areas. One of the aims of this unit is that students develop their skills in the following:

Foundation skills of literacy, numeracy and information technology;
Self-awareness and interpersonal skills;
Communication skills;
Critical analysis skills;
Problem-solving skills;
Creative thinking skills.

Graduate Capabilities Developed

The graduate capabilities of this unit are:

- Practical reasoning skills including being able to make critical, independent, intellectually acute, socially responsible, and reflective choices in research.
- Educational resilience including learning to think for oneself and being self-motivated and self-directed. The best scientific research follows from critical independent thinking and questioning authority. Being expected to be provided with all the answers is an anathema to good scientific practice.

TEACHING AND LEARNING STRATEGY

- The unit involves lectures and workshops that aim to provide both a theoretical and practical grounding in scientific reasoning and research methodology. For the most part, we will be using a problem-based-learning approach, where students are given examples of “real life” research questions, and asked to confront the major research issues involved by sharing ideas and actively seeking relevant information.
- You are expected to draw upon your knowledge of psychology gained in the prerequisite units and actively learn by asking questions and by participating in discussions or other exercises organised by the teaching staff. You are expected to read the set chapters or papers before the workshops, discuss your ideas in class, search data bases, and collect data.

RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN ASSESSMENT AND LEARNING OUTCOMES

- The short quiz and exam are designed to assess students' theoretical understanding of research processes in psychology. The report aims to provide students with the opportunity of conducting and writing-up a research study.

Assessment:

Assessment for the unit will consist of:

- A A 30 question multiple choice test (10%) in Week 6 (beginning Monday 28th March 2011) covering the material presented in the lectures and workshops **in the first five weeks**. The quiz is held in your allocated workshop in C3A 335.
- B A 2000 word report (40%) due to the Psychology Department Essay locked boxes (ground floor C3A) on Friday 29th April 2011, by 10am;
- C A final exam (50%) held in exam period at the end of semester.

- **The short quiz will contain multiple choice questions and the end of semester exam will contain both multiple choice and short answer questions. In the short answer questions you may be asked to evaluate real or fictional experimental designs, compare and contrast different methodologies, and draw conclusions from data. You may also be asked to design answers to research questions.**
- The short quiz will cover the material presented in the lectures and workshops in the first five weeks (including the textbook readings). The quiz will be one hour in duration. Questions for the final exam will be drawn from the lectures, workshops and readings from week 1 onwards.
- The final examination will last for two hours, preceded by 10 minutes reading time.
- It is your responsibility to determine the date and time of the final exam and to make yourself available. You are advised that it is Macquarie University policy not to set early exams for individuals or groups of individuals. All students are expected to ensure that they are available until the final day of the official exam period. The draft timetable is usually available eight weeks before commencement of exam period. The only exception to not sitting an exam in the designated time is because of documented illness or unavoidable disruption (see information regarding Supplementary Exams below).
- The assignment will be a report based on data collected by the students in PSY351. You will have responsibility for collecting, organising and analysing data. More details about the assignment will be given in week 2-5.
- You must attend the workshop to which you have been allocated or arrange a different time via the student office, as space is limited.
- Marked work will be returned to students within three weeks of submission.

Paper copy

- ***Assignments can ONLY be submitted via the LABELLED locked boxes in the foyer of building C3A or in the single Psychology Essay Box located outside the entrance of C3A after hours.***

The assignment boxes are cleared at 10 am on Mondays to Fridays and again at 4 pm ONLY ON FRIDAYS (Assignments received at 4pm on Fridays are counted as 1 day late).

All assignments submitted must be accompanied by a completed and signed Psychology Department coversheet which is available from outside Room C3A 301 or downloadable from <http://www.psy.mq.edu.au/pdf/coversheet.pdf>

Assignments will not be accepted unless a correct coversheet is completed and signed.

A copy of the assignment must be kept as proof that the assignment was completed and submitted.

Electronic copies of assignments are not accepted.

Assignments submitted by post will not be accepted.

TURNITIN ELECTRONIC COPY: You will also be required to submit your assignment to Turnitin plagiarism detection software via the Internet. Your assignment will be automatically compared to work of other students in this unit, previous students in this unit and at other universities, and material available on the Internet in subscription-based journal format or otherwise freely accessible information. The results of the analysis will be sent only to the unit chair and tutoring staff on PSY351, who will analyse the results in reference to the University's standard policy on plagiarism
<http://www.student.mq.edu.au/plagiarism/>

AFTER AN ASSIGNMENT IS SUBMITTED:

It is the responsibility of the student to check the Psychology Webpage (<http://www.psy.mq.edu.au/assrec/>) after submitting the assignment to ensure that his/her assignment has been received. The webpage will be updated by 5pm on the due date of the assignment. If an assignment is not noted as being received, it is the student's responsibility to immediately contact the staff in the Psychology Office in writing to inform them. The student will then be required to submit a fresh copy of the assignment and the date of receipt will be the date the Psychology Office was informed of the non-receipt in writing. Lateness penalty will be applied until the date the Psychology Office is informed of the non receipt of assignment.

Assignments will be returned to students during tutorials. The remaining assignments will then be available for collection from the Psychology Office. During Semester time, the Psychology Office opening hours are 10AM to 5PM. Tutors of evening tutorials will return ALL assignments during the late classes.

Assignments will not be accepted after the return of marked assignments

Assignments submitted after the 4 pm clearing on Fridays will be cleared on Monday at 10 am and will incur a weekend (counted as two days) penalty.

Penalties will be levied for late submission of assignment and for exceeding the word limit:

- Written work that exceeds the word count will be penalised 5% for every 100 words over. For example, the report is worth 40% of the overall assessment for the Unit and if the word length is exceeded by 100 words, then $5\% \times 40 = 2$.
- Work that is submitted late (and without extension) will receive a 5% penalty for every day late. For example, the report is worth 40% of the overall assessment for the Unit and if one day late, then $5\% \times 40 = 2$.

Request for Extensions for Assignments are granted by the Psychology Office for all units:

Ordinarily, no extensions of time for submission of written work will be granted since ample time for its preparation will have been given. If an extension is required for medical or other extenuating circumstances, students may request this in writing by completing a Request for Extension on Written Work form, available outside the Psychology Office, with supporting documentary evidence (such as medical certificate, counsellor note, or similar). The form and the supporting documentary evidence must be submitted to the Psychology Office (C3A 334). The staff in the Psychology Office will make all decisions regarding extensions. Neither individual tutors nor the course convenor will grant extensions.

All requests for extensions should be made prior to the due date for the assignment. If an extension is granted the authorisation section of the form must be collected and attached to the assignment. Failure to do so will result in a late penalty being applied as the marker will not know that an extension has been granted.

MID-SEMESTER EXAMS

All students must attend the mid-semester exam at the same time. There is no separate arrangement available for evening students to sit this exam.

Students who are unable to sit the mid-semester exam at the specified time must advise the Psychology Office via email and must also submit an Application for Special Consideration form (and Professional Authority if reason is medical, clearly stating the reasons for the absence from the exam). The form is available outside the Psychology office or can be downloaded from <http://www.reg.mq.edu.au/Forms/APScons.pdf> This should be submitted to the Student Enquiry Services as soon as possible with a copy to Psychology Office in C3A334. The unit chair(s) will determine eligibility for a late mid-semester exam and eligible students will be notified about the time and location of the exam. There will be only one alternative time.

The University Examination period in First Half Year 2011 is from June 6th to June 24th.

You are expected to present yourself for examination at the time and place designated in the University Examination Timetable. The timetable will be available in Draft form approximately eight weeks before the commencement of the examinations and in Final form approximately four weeks before the commencement of the examinations.

<http://www.timetables.mq.edu.au/exam>

The only exception to not sitting an examination at the designated time is because of documented illness or unavoidable disruption. In these circumstances you may wish to consider applying for Special Consideration. Information about unavoidable disruption and the special consideration process is available at

<http://www.reg.mq.edu.au/Forms/APSCon.pdf>

If a Supplementary Examination is granted as a result of the Special Consideration process, the examination will be scheduled after the conclusion of the official examination period.

Supplementary Examination in the Department of Psychology will be held on the: 7th and 8th of July, 2011 for Semester One 2011.

Supplementary Exams are only offered to students who have satisfactorily completed all other assessments for the unit and were unable to sit the final exam.

Instructions on applying for sitting of a supplementary exam are available from the website, www.psy.mq.edu.au/speccond. It is the student's responsibility to follow the steps outlined in this website. Students awarded a supplementary will NOT be sent a letter. It is the student's responsibility to check the web if a supplementary exam has been granted. Students who are granted to sit for a supplementary exam must make themselves available to sit for the supplementary exam on the specified dates. There will be only one alternative time. It is the student's responsibility to email the Psychology Office, psy_off@psy.mq.edu.au to confirm attendance to the supplementary exams.

You are advised that it is Macquarie University policy not to set early examinations for individuals or groups of students. All students are expected to ensure that they are available until the end of the teaching semester, that is the final day of the official examination period.

PLAGIARISM

The University defines plagiarism in its rules: "Plagiarism involves using the work of another person and presenting it as one's own." Plagiarism is a serious breach of the University's rules and carries significant penalties. You must read the University's practices and procedures on plagiarism. These can be found in the *Handbook of Undergraduate Studies* or on the web at: <http://www.student.mq.edu.au/plagiarism/>

The policies and procedures explain what plagiarism is, how to avoid it, the procedures that will be taken in cases of suspected plagiarism, and the penalties if you are found guilty. Penalties may include a deduction of marks, failure in the unit, and/or referral to the University Discipline Committee.

UNIVERSITY POLICY ON GRADING

Academic Senate has a set of guidelines for the achievement of grades across the range from fail to high distinction. Your final result will include one of these grades plus a standardised numerical grade (SNG).

On occasion your raw mark for a unit (i.e., the total of your marks for each assessment item) may not be the same as the SNG which you receive.

For more information please refer to the Macquarie University Handbook.

STUDENT SUPPORT SERVICES

Macquarie University provides a range of Academic Student Support Services. Details of these services can be accessed at <http://www.student.mq.edu.au>.

On matters pertaining to the regulations, the Registrar's Office should be consulted or, within the Department of Psychology, Dr Julia Irwin, Director of Undergraduate Studies. Students with disabilities who have problems within the Department should consult Ms Radha Pathy, the Disability Liaison Officer. If your difficulties cannot be resolved by these members of staff you should consult the Head of Department.

If you have a major difficulty associated with writing skills, you could enrol in a short course on writing skills. For details go to:
http://www.ling.mq.edu.au/support/writing_skills/index.htm

APPEALS AGAINST GRADES

Please refer to the Macquarie University Handbook.

LECTURE PROGRAM (held in W5A T1): Wednesdays 1-2pm

Week	Lecture	Topic	Lecturers
1	23 rd Feb	Introduction to research methods	Dr Simon Boag
2	2 nd Mar	Survey methods	Dr Simon Boag
3	9 th Mar	Ethics	Dr Anthony Miller
4	16 th Mar	Comparing research strategies	Dr Simon Boag
5	23 rd Mar	Validity, reliability & measurement	Dr Eugene Chekaluk
6	30 th Mar	Writing a research report	Dr Simon Boag
7	6 th Apr	Statistics for research	Dr Eugene Chekaluk
8	27 th Apr	Observational research	Dr Eugene Chekaluk
9	4 th May	Repeated measures designs	A/Prof Veronika Coltheart
10	11 th May	Control & manipulation of psycholinguistic variables	A/Prof Veronika Coltheart
11	18 th May	Single case studies	A/Prof Greg Savage
12	25 th May	Qualitative research & mixed methods	Dr Simon Boag
13	1 st Jun	Research and the internet	Dr Simon Boag

WORKSHOP PROGRAM (held in C4A 335)

Week	Date begins	Topic	Workshop Convenor
2	28 th February	Introduction to research methods	Dr Simon Boag
3	7 th March	Survey methods	Dr Simon Boag
4	14 th March	Ethics	Dr Anthony Miller
5	21 st March	Comparing research strategies	Dr Simon Boag
6	28 th March	Class Quiz	
7	4 th April	Validity and reliability	Dr Eugene Chekaluk
8	27 th April (No classes 25-26 th)	Statistics for research methods	Dr Eugene Chekaluk
		Report due 29th April	
9	2 nd May	Observational research	Dr Julia Irwin Dr Eugene Chekaluk
10	9 th May	Experimental methods I	A/Prof Veronika Coltheart Dr Hana Burianová
11	16 th May	Experimental methods II	A/Prof Veronika Coltheart Dr Hana Burianová
12	23 rd May	Qualitative research and mixed methods	Dr Simon Boag
13	30 th May	Psychophysical methods	Prof Peter Wenderoth

Workshop times

NOTE: Classes are space-limited so please attend your scheduled time. However, if you unavoidably miss your scheduled workshop then you can attend another. Please let the relevant workshop convenor know.

Monday 2-4pm
Monday 4-6pm
Tuesday 11-1pm
Tuesday 6-8pm
Wednesday 4-6pm
Thursday 9-11am
Friday 9-11am