

University of British Columbia  
 PSYC 217 Sec 001 – Research Methods  
 Winter 2016/2017 Term 1  
 MWF 10 – 11 AM, AERL 120



**Welcome to PSYC 217!**



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#ubcpsyc217

**Teaching Fellows:**

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**Required materials:**

Corbella, L. (July 21, 2013). Corbella: Vancouver’s easy drug access may have helped kill Monteith. *Calgary Herald*. Retrieved from: <http://bit.ly/2ctsQ7m>

Cozby, P. C. & Rawn, C. D. (2016). *Methods in behavioural research* (Second Canadian Ed.). Toronto, ON: McGraw-Hill Ryerson.

Cuttler, C. (2010). *Research methods in psychology*. Dubuque, IA: Kendall Hunt.

**Course website:** This class uses the Connect platform, accessed at [www.connect.ubc.ca](http://www.connect.ubc.ca). Use your campus-wide login (CWL) to access our course on Connect. There, you will find the electronic version of this syllabus, all lecture slides, assignment information, peer evaluations, and extra resources that can help you succeed in this course. I also strongly encourage that you use the discussion board there to start some discussions! \*\*\*Your assigned lab locations will be announced on Connect\*\*\*

## What PSYC 217 is all about:

9 out of 10 dentists prefer Oral B toothbrushes over that of other competitors'. Also, 1 out of 10 dentists wish that they hadn't accepted Colgate's sponsorship money because now they look like such outcasts. If these claims sound ridiculous, they are – I made them up; but they are just like the messages we see on a daily basis. **You may have found yourself asking:**

“How did the researchers get these numbers?”

“What do these numbers *really* mean?”

“How can I test if this is actually true?” and

“Does League of Legends really have a more toxic community than Overwatch?”

If you didn't ask these questions, no problem! Because by the end of this course, you will. You will be *that friend* on Facebook who questions every “scientific fact” and “statistic” that your friends post. Let's face it – 94.78% of those are wrong or made-up anyway.

**The purpose of this course** is to help you develop the skills to be a critical thinker – both as a consumer of research, and a contributor to research. We will equip you with the knowledge and tools to **critically evaluate** research and **ask** the appropriate questions, **create** new ideas and **design** ways to test your ideas, **analyse** your data, and **communicate** your results to others. To facilitate this process, lab sessions are integrated into the course where you will work with your team to apply what you have learned in the classroom to a research project.

When the course ends, students successfully meeting the course requirements will be able to:

- Identify and explain sound scientific principles and practises in research
- Think critically about everyday pseudoscientific claims
- Create and implement research designs based on scientific principles and practises
- Perform simple forms of data analyses
- Communicate your research findings to a community of your peers
- Write papers in proper APA format
- Use the school's library resources to locate empirical journal articles
- Understand and critically analyse information conveyed in psychology journal articles

**217 and the Psychology program:** PSYC 217 requires both PSYC 101 and PSYC 102. PSYC 217 is a prerequisite for PSYC 218 (Analysis of behavioural data) and PSYC 359 (Advanced behavioural statistics), and is a program requirement for a B.A. in Psychology.

## Assessments of learning:

- 2 FunDay Monday assignments (each 2.5%): One key goal of the course is to help you develop into sharper researchers and more critical consumers of research. Two assignments will assess this. Details about each assignment will be posted on Connect and are due at the beginning of class on **October 17**; and **November 21**.

- Midterms (2 x 11%): There will be two non-cumulative midterms. These exams will be on **October 3** and **November 7**. Information from both lectures and textbooks are examinable.
- Peer Evaluations Completion (2 x 1%): To encourage everyone to contribute to the group project, all of you will be able to evaluate each other and have it count towards your grades. Merely completing a set of evaluations will give you 1%.
- Lab component (35%): A lab component is integrated into the course to facilitate a collaborative group project. There will be 5 lab sessions during which you will meet with your group, guided by your assigned **Teaching Fellow**. **Your attendance at the first three lab sessions are mandatory** as those involve the bulk of your teamwork (attendance is still expected at all other lab sessions). You will lose 20% of your lab grade (= 6% of your course grade) for each mandatory lab that you miss.

Over the course of these sessions, you and your group will come up with, and empirically test, a hypothesis. At the end of the year, your group will present the results at a poster session attended by other faculty and university administrators.

Your lab component grade breaks down as follows:

- Participation/Peer Evaluation (5%): The second peer evaluation, due on **December 9**, will count for marks. This is a reflection of each group member's satisfaction with each other's contributions at the end of the term.

Poster session (5%): This will take place on **December 2** at the Life Sciences Centre (LSC). You and your group will present your research project and findings, while also evaluating several other groups' presentations.

Final research report (25%): This is due **November 28** *at the beginning of class*. Late papers will receive a 5% deduction per day that it is late.

This is an APA-style paper where you communicate to us your research topic, your study design, your results, and your interpretation of those results. There are many resources available for you, including Appendix A of your Cozby and Rawn text, the APA Publication Manual (6<sup>th</sup> ed.), and the Purdue Online Writing Lab: <http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/560/01/>...and us!

- Research Experience (5%): Given the research-focused nature of this course, we ask that you participate in 4 hours of studies from the Human Subject Pool (HSP) at the Department of Psychology. You can access studies at: <https://ubc-psych.sona-systems.com/>. You need an active HSP account for this; if you do not have one, the website will tell you how. More information about the HSP can be found at <http://psychology.sites.olt.ubc.ca/files/2016/05/Info-for-Participants-2015.docx>. 1 hour of participation = 1%, so 4 hours = 4%.

You also obtain 1% for completing the Tri-Council Policy Statement (TCPS) ethics tutorial – a requirement for anyone involved in research that uses human subjects (such as yours). You can access the tutorial here: <http://tcps2core.ca/welcome>.

Instead of HSP studies, Students may write 500-word summaries of empirical articles from the journal *Psychological Science* (published after 2000). Each summary counts for 1%, and should include the introduction, methods, results, and discussion sections of the article. If you opt to write these summaries instead, you must still create an HSP account and register it under our course section. You must submit hard copies of your summaries to Turnitin (ID: 13369088; password: research) at least **10 days** before the end of classes.

- **Final (30%)**: The final exam will be cumulative of all materials covered throughout the term. The date, time, and location of your final exam will be determined by the Office of the Registrar. Please check the Student Services Centre website for more details once the exam schedule has been released.
- **Early Alert (1%)**: Students who are in need of help (counselling, financial, housing, etc.) may not seek the necessary services for help for various reasons, including lacking knowledge of appropriate services. This UBC initiative provides aid to these students as early as possible by allowing me to better connect such students to the relevant resources. Students can, thus, get the support they need before problems become too onerous. As a supporter of this initiative, I ask that you read the short blurb about on the course's Connect website, and click on the checkbox to acknowledge that you have read it (which will give you the 1%). This means neither that you support this initiative, nor that you intend to use it, only that you have read it and understood what it is. If you have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to talk to me.

\*All written work for this course MUST be written *independently*. UBC subscribes to the Turn-It-In system, which compares submitted work to other sources on its database (including work submitted by your peers) to check for *potential* plagiarism. Plagiarism is a serious offense, and shall also be dealt with seriously. All written work must be submitted to Turn-It-In at <http://www.turnitin.com>. If you do not already have an account, please sign up for one, join your TF's section using their ID above, and the password (research217), and then submit your work when the time comes.

## Assessments of Learning – Summary:

Assessment of Learning	Points	Due Dates
FunDay Mondays (2 x 2.5%)	5%	October 17; November 21
Midterms (2 x 11%)	22%	October 3; November 7
Final exam	30%	Date set by university
<b>Lab Component</b>		
Group poster presentation	5%	December 2
Group participation/Peer Evaluation	5%	December 9
Individual research report	25%	November 28, start of class
Research experience	5%	Must complete all parts by December 2
Peer Evaluations Completion (2 x 1%)	2%	October 19; December 9
Early Alert	1%	October 5
<b>Total</b>	<b>100%</b>	

### Classroom norms:

Use of class time: I will be ready to go when class starts, and will make good use of the 50 minutes allotted for the class. In return, I ask that you be engaged and ready to learn when class starts, and wait the full 50 minutes before packing to leave—it's quite disruptive to others.

Classroom Activities: Throughout this course, we will engage in classroom activities that are designed to help you learn and grasp key concepts in scientific research. Some may be silly, but they are intended to facilitate your learning. Just have fun!

Consideration for others: My role is to provide the best learning environment for you, to the best of my abilities. **I take this role very seriously.** It is up to individuals whether they will make use of the learning environment. It is not acceptable, however, that one's personal choice of not using the learning environment detracts from others' learning experience. This includes activities such as gaming, watching movies, talking on the phone, and making out. Please refrain from activities such as these that may be distracting to students around you.

### Emailing:

Logistics: While students take priority in my inbox, I am not always available to respond. I will also be receiving emails from people outside of this course, so I need to know which emails are directly related to this course. Therefore, please:

- Allow me a 24-hour window within which to answer emails
- Put "PSYC 217" in the subject line when you email me

Email content: Answers to your queries are often already provided in the syllabus. Also, students may miss a concept for a variety of reasons; but it is difficult and cumbersome to address such questions via email. For these reasons, I request that students:

- Please check the syllabus first
- Visit my office hours or the TFs' office hours if the question is going to elicit a lengthy response (> 5 sentences) – we would love to explain things to you in person!

### **The “?” Box:**

At the front of the class, you will see a small box with a “?” label. This is an opportunity to anonymously:

- Pose questions about materials that you find to be unclear
- Give feedback/make suggestions about my teaching

Depending on time concerns, I will do my best to address these at the beginning of the following class. I would still encourage you to provide your name and/or email address so that, if I am not able to address it in class, I can still address it to you privately, should you wish.

### **Academic Concessions and Other Grading Concerns:**

During the term, students may experience medical, psychology, or other forms of distress, which may affect performance. In such cases, it is imperative that students speak with me **before the exam time or assignment due date**. Under certain circumstances, you may be able to obtain academic concession from the Dean of your faculty. You **MUST** have documents supporting your claim (e.g. doctor's note). **Special accommodations cannot be made after an exam has been written, or assignments have been submitted**. Also, the weighting of each learning assessment cannot be changed.

### **Academic and Non-Academic Misconduct:**

Academic misconduct, such as cheating or plagiarism, is a serious offense, and may be subject to punishment by the university. UBC has clear policies about what academic misconduct means: <http://www.calendar.ubc.ca/vancouver/index.cfm?tree=3,54,111,959>. Evidence of academic misconduct may result in a “0” grade for the exam or assignment in question, and may prompt more severe punishment as the University deems appropriate.

Non-academic misconduct includes, but is not limited to, physically threatening an instructor. This is also a serious offense, and is also subject to punishment by the university. UBC has clear policies about what constitutes non-academic misconduct, found here: <http://www.calendar.ubc.ca/vancouver/index.cfm?tree=3,54,750,0>. Punishment for both academic and non-academic misconduct may include, but is not limited to, a non-removable notation on the transcript, or suspension from the University.

More information about these issues, including annual reports of student discipline cases at UBC, can be found here: <http://universitycounsel.ubc.ca/discipline/>.

### Department of Psychology's Grading Policies:

In the interest of promoting equity across multiple sections of the same course, and to prevent grade inflation, the Department of Psychology has instated grading policies for all PSYC courses. For our course, the average final grades across all sections must fall within the range of 67-71%, with a standard deviation of 14%. Scaling *may* be done to bring the class average in accordance with this policy. The scaling may be done by the instructor, or by the Department. Thus, a student's grade is not official until it appears on a student's transcript.

### Withdrawal Dates:

If you wish to drop this course without a "W" (or "Withdrawal") on your transcript, the deadline to do so is September 20. If you wish to drop this course with a "W" on your transcript, the deadline to do so is October 14.

### Bagels with Ben:

Does ANYONE like being in an environment that's stuffy and overly academic? Probably not, and that's one reason why people often get too intimidated to go to office hours. Every week, I'm going to be at the Niche Café by the Beaty Museum. I will bring Bagels, you bring whatever you want, and we're just going to chat the time away. Everyone is welcome, but a group of 7 or so will be specifically invited each week! Your TAs might drop by on occasion! The dates are:

Monday	Sep 12	3pm	Group 1
Friday	Sep 23	2pm	Group 2
Monday	Sep 26	3pm	Group 3
Friday	Oct 7	2pm	Group 4
Wednesday	Oct 12	3pm	Group 5
Friday	Oct 21	2pm	Group 6
Monday	Oct 24	3pm	Group 7
Friday	Nov 4	2pm	Group 8
Thursday	Nov 10	3pm	Group 9
Friday	Nov 18	2pm	Group 10
Monday	Nov 21	3pm	Group 11
Wednesday	Nov 30	2pm	Group 12

Remember – All groups are announced on Connect!

† Content of this syllabus is based on Catherine Rawn's syllabus for PSYC 217

† Dates are subject to change due to exigent circumstances. Any such changes will be communicated via email and/or Connect

## Class schedule \*Dates are subject to change, but announcements will be made\*

Wk	Date	Topics	Readings	Important Events
1	W Sept 7	Welcome and introduction	Syllabus	
	F Sept 9	Principles of Science	Chapter 1	Critique eHarmony
2	M Sept 12	Hypotheses and reading research articles	Chapter 2	Bagels with Ben @3pm (G1)
	W Sept 14		Corbella	Discuss Corbella (2013)
	F Sept 16	Basics of Research Designs	Chapter 4	
3	M Sept 19			<b>Final day to withdraw without W</b>
	W Sept 21			
	F Sept 23			Bagels with Ben @2pm (G2)
4	M Sept 26	Conducting experiments	Chapter 9	Bagels with Ben @3pm (G3)
	W Sept 28	Experimental designs	Chapter 8+7 (p. 131-143)	
	F Sept 30			<b>Lab 1: Research design</b>
5	M Oct 3			<b>Midterm #1</b>
	W Oct 5			<b>Early Alert due</b>
	F Oct 7	Special research designs	Chapter 11	Bagels with Ben @2pm (G4)
6	M Oct 10	<b>Thanksgiving – University closed</b>		
	W Oct 12	Complex research designs	Chapter 10	Bagels with Ben @3pm (G5)
	F Oct 14			<b>Lab 2: Proposal presentation TCPS Certificate due Deadline to withdraw with W</b>
7	M Oct 17			<b>FunDay Monday 1 due</b>
	W Oct 19	Ethics in Research	Chapter 3	<b>Peer evaluation 1 due</b>
	F Oct 21	Types of measurements	Chapter 5	Bagels with Ben @2pm (G6)
8	M Oct 24			Bagels with Ben @3pm (G7)
	W Oct 26	Descriptive Statistics	Chapter 12	
	F Oct 28			<b>Lab 3: Data collection</b>
9	M Oct 31			
	W Nov 2			
	F Nov 4			<b>Lab 4: Data analysis Bagels with Ben @2pm (G8)</b>
10	M Nov 7			<b>Midterm #2</b>
	W Nov 9	Inferential Statistics	Chapter 13	<b>THU: Bagels with Ben @3pm (G9)</b>
	F Nov 11	<b>Holiday in lieu of Remembrance Day – University Closed</b>		
11	M Nov 14			
	W Nov 16			
	F Nov 18			<b>Lab 5: APA style Bagels with Ben @2pm (G10)</b>
12	M Nov 21			<b>FunDay Monday 2 due Bagels with Ben @3pm (G11)</b>
	W Nov 23	To measure and recruit	Chapters 6+7	
	F Nov 25			
13	M Nov 28	Generalizability	Chapter 14	<b>Individual research report due</b>
	W Nov 30			Bagels with Ben @2pm (G12)
	F Dec 2	Extras and wrap-up		<b>Poster Session 5-6:30 pm, LSC</b>