Instructor

Lizzy Blundon (PhD candidate; this means I'm not yet a doctor)

Office: Kenny 3535

Office hours: Tues/Wed/Thurs 3:30-5:00pm (except on lab days)

Email: eblundon@psych.ubc.ca (please include “PSYC 217” in the subject heading, and use your UBC email account). I try to be on top of my emails, but it could take up to 2 business days for me to respond. Please check the syllabus or the discussion boards on connect before you email, the answer to your question may be there.

TFs

Eleni Nasiopoulos

Office: Kenny 3010

Office Hours: Thursday 12:30-1:30pm

Email: enasiopoulos@psych.ubc.ca

Rachele Benjamin

Office: Kenny 2202

Office Hours: Friday 11:00am-12:00pm

Email: rachele.benjamin@psych.ubc.ca

Mason Silveira

Office: Café Ami, Centre for Brain Health

Office Hours: Wednesday 12:00-1:00pm

Email: silveira.mason@psych.ubc.ca

Jennifer Yip

Office: Kenny 3407

Office Hours: Thursday 12:45-1:45pm

Email: jenniferyip@psych.ubc.ca
**Course Website:** All course materials, including grades and lecture slides, will be posted on [Connect](https://connect.ubc.ca). Please contact [Arts ISIT](mailto:artsisit@ubc.ca) if you have trouble getting onto connect.

**What is this Course About?**

**Formal description:** The purpose of this course is to prepare you to use the scientific method to answer psychological research questions. Throughout the course we will explore experimental and non-experimental designs that psychologists commonly use to answer research questions and to test hypotheses. We will also discuss practical, political, and ethical issues that are particularly pertinent to psychology. Finally, during the lab component of this course, you will collaboratively design and execute a research study, collect and analyse data, write up a lab report in APA style, and present your results in the form of a poster. By the end of this course you will be better prepared to apply your knowledge of psychological research methods to future courses in psychology, to other research experience (such as research assistantships or eventual graduate school), and to critically assess media reports of psychological studies and discoveries.

**Informal description:** I affectionately refer to this course as “how to do, and to not be duped by, science”. The bulk of the course content covers how to “do” science, i.e. how to design research studies that can answer questions about psychology in a scientific manner. Additionally, once you learn how to “do” science, you will also learn how not to be “duped” by science: i.e. how to sniff out dubious scientific practices and misleading scientific reporting (see XKCD comic on page 1). Throughout this course, therefore, you will learn to think critically about psychological science, while keeping an open mind (but not so open that your brain falls out).

**Class at a Glance**

Classes are held Tuesdays and Thursdays from 2:00 - 3:30pm in [AERL 120](https://maps.ubc.ca/). You must attend the section for which you are registered to receive participation points. You will also require a TopHat app and account, which you can find at your app store or online [here](https://tophat.com).

**Course Goals**

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

1. Design psychological research studies using the scientific method
2. Critically evaluate research studies and their results.
3. Generate and evaluate research questions, hypotheses, and predictions.
4. Understand the similarities and differences between different research designs, including experimental, quasi-experimental, observational, and surveys.
5. Discuss ethical issues particularly relevant to the study of psychology.
6. Describe, summarize, and analyze simple data.
7. Design and conduct a study, then analyse and report on the data collected from that study.

**Fitting this Course into your degree**

**Pre/Co Requisites:** To take this course you must have already taken (pre-) or be currently taking (co-) either 1) PSYC 100 (6 credits) or both PSYC 101 (3 credits) and 102 (3 credits). This course is a pre-requisite for PSYC 218 and 359 (statistics), and for PSYC 349/449 (honours), and is foundational for all upper level psychology courses offered at UBC.

**Drop Dates:** The last date to withdraw from the course with a W is **September 19th**. Check out the [UBC calendar website](https://calendar.ubc.ca/) for 2017/2018 add/drop dates.
Materials

textbooks are all available on reserve at the library)

   - Available new, used, or digital ($89.00 for digital copy on [McGrawHill Education website](#)).
   - Avoid earlier editions as there are substantial changes.
   - The second author is a member of the UBC Psychology faculty who also teaches this course. She is donating all royalties from UBC sales to UBC scholarships.
   - The Online Learning Centre that accompanies the textbook contains practice quizzes and other resources.


3. **TopHat Student Response System**:
   - Uses any mobile device to respond to questions posed in class (like an iclicker but better).
   - 4 month unlimited access $24, or 12 month unlimited access $36. [Sign up as a student](#) and use the code **228237** to join, or get the tophat app on your phone.

   - [Digital version available](#) for $43.99 USD

Tips for Success

Submitting Writing Assignments

All written assignments will require electronic submission to turnitin, as well as submission to connect, or hard copy submission, depending on the specifications of the assignment. Turnitin cross-checks your written work with that of your classmates, all other PSYC 217 students (past and present), as well as millions of online resources (i.e. blogs) and published material. This is a fast and easy way to detect plagiarism. If you haven’t used turnitin before, please familiarize yourself with the website.

Reading the Textbook

Reading the textbook in conjunction with lectures is crucial for success in this course. All material presented in the textbook, as well as material presented in lecture, are testable. Not all material covered in the textbook will be included in the lectures, and vice versa. I will try to be as explicit as possible about which textbook material I’m not covering in lecture, but ultimately it is your responsibility to keep up with the textbook readings.

Studying

If I were taking this course, this is how I would prepare for evaluations:

1. Memorize every bold term in the textbook. These can be found in the glossary or at the end of every chapter.
2. Do the *deepen your learning* practice problems at the end of every chapter. There are no official answers for these problems (because we want you to actually think about them), so cross reference your answers with those of your classmates. Feel free to ask me or any of your TFs what they think the best answers are.
3. Write your own test questions. This is hard, but it forces you to think critically about the material, and can help you predict what kinds of questions may come up on exams.
4. Come to class and office hours. Ask a lot of questions!
• Grade distribution

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<tr>
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<td>Poster: December 1</td>
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Details of Evaluations

**Quizzes (20%)**: There will be 4 non-cumulative quizzes held throughout the term. They will be held at the beginning of lecture and will only last 30 mins.

**Missing Quiz Policy**: There will be no makeup quizzes. If you’re sick and need to miss a quiz, your next quiz will count for double what the quizzes are usually worth (i.e. 10%). While I do not need to see a doctor’s note, I would appreciate an email indicating that you won’t be attending the quiz.

**Assignment (5%)**: A short writing assignment for you to practice reading and writing scientific material. Details will be announced in class and posted to connect.

**Late Assignment Policy**: 20% of the assignment grade (that’s 1% of your total mark) will be deducted for each business day that the assignment is late.

**Participation (5%)**: Class will consist of some practice questions using TopHat. I will not be recording your score on these questions, only whether you completed them. The percentage of in class quizzes you complete will be your participation mark. Participation marks will only be counted after the add/drop date.

**Research Experience (5%)**: 

**HSP**: We ask that you participate in at least 4 hours (1% per hour) of studies through the Human Subject Pool (HSP) in the Psychology Department. Participating in research is a good opportunity to learn about the kinds of research being conducted in the psych department, and to see a side of how psychological research is often done at large academic institutions. You can access studies directly using this link here. You need an active HSP account for this; if you do not have one, the website will tell you how to get one. More information about the HSP can be found on the UBC Psychology Department website.

If you don’t want to participate in studies, you can fulfill the research experience requirement by completing 4 journal research assignments (1% each). For each assignment, you can summarize the purpose, methods, and results of a research article published in the journal *Psychological Science* since the year 2000. Each summary should be about a different
article, and should be approximately 500-words in length. These articles are due to me by **Nov 30th**.

**TCPS II:** In addition, you must complete the Tri-Council Policy Statement (TCPS) ethics tutorial. This tutorial is required for you to collect data for the lab component, so it **must be completed by the beginning of lab 2 on Thursday October 12th**. Completion of the tutorial is worth 1% of your total course grade, and failure to complete the tutorial will not only result in loss of this 1%, but you will not be able to collect any data during lab 3.

**Laboratory 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%):** Your peer evaluation, due on December 5th, 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 1st 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 30th 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 (6th ed.), the Purdue Online Writing Lab, and your teachers!

**Final Exam (30%):** The final exam will be cumulative (i.e. cover all the course material), and the date and time will be determined by the registrar. It’s important that you don’t book any flights before the date/time of the final are released. There will be no makeup final.

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**Grading**

**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 PSYC 217, 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.

**Academic Concessions and Grading Concerns:** Throughout the term, student academic performance may suffer due to medical, psychological, or other forms of distress. If this happens to you, please see me. Under certain circumstances, academic concessions can be made, but only before quizzes, exams, or assignments have been completed/submitted.

**Early Alert:** This UBC initiative allows instructors to connect students in need of aid (counselling, financial, housing, etc.) to the resources they need as early as possible. If you
think you or someone you know could benefit from these services, please let me know or visit the website.

**Access and Diversity:** It’s important to our teaching team, as well as UBC in general, that all students get the help that they need. If you require academic accommodations, please contact Access & Diversity in Brock Hall 1203, 1874 East Mall, Contact: 604.822.5844, www.students.ubc.ca/access.

**Academic misconduct:** Academic misconduct constitutes cheating or plagiarism. UBC takes this behaviour very seriously, and evidence of misconduct can result in receiving a “0” grade for the exam or assignment in question, and may prompt more serious punishment. You can find UBC’s policies on academic misconduct at the UBC calendar website. UBC’s definition of, and policies regarding, academic misconduct are consistent with North American and European cultural attitudes around cheating and plagiarism, which may not reflect cultural practices from elsewhere around the world. If you went to school outside of North America or Europe before attending UBC, please familiarize yourself with UBC’s policies on academic misconduct, as they may be different from what you’re used to.

**Tips to avoid plagiarism:** In my experience, students who end up in trouble for plagiarism get there without realizing it. The following are a few tempting practices to avoid, as they can unintentionally pave the way to plagiarism.

1. **Know what plagiarism means:** In North America, plagiarism means to take credit for work that isn’t yours. This can include borrowing ideas from sources found on the internet without crediting the original authors, or claiming the work of a peer as your own (i.e. copying a classmate’s work). These definitions of plagiarism, and how seriously UBC takes plagiarism, may be different from what you’re used to. Please avoid getting yourself into trouble by making sure you understand what plagiarism is by reviewing the UBC policies on academic misconduct.

2. **Don’t share work:** This is the most common way students get into trouble. The laboratory component of this course involves a lot of group work, so it can be tempting to share written material to make sure every group member is on the same page. Students have in the past copied their teammates work, changed a few words, and submitted that work as their own. These students rarely intend to plagiarise, they just don’t realize how similar their “modified” version of the work is to the original. Avoid getting into this trap by either not sharing written work with your teammates, or by getting into the habit of paraphrasing every idea you borrow from your teammates.

3. **Don’t copy anything from the internet:** Like sharing work with teammates, this can get students into trouble without them realizing it. The assignment and final lab require students to review primary scientific literature, or journalistic reporting of primary scientific literature. Because this material can be dense, and written in a style unfamiliar to most undergraduate students, it can be tempting to simply copy and paste excerpts from literature found on the internet into the body of your written assignment, change a few words, and submit this work as your own. Avoid getting into this trap by getting into the habit of paraphrasing every idea you borrow from the internet, and by making sure you keep track of where this information came from so you can appropriately cite the original author. Proper citation practices don’t inoculate you against plagiarism, but they can help.

**Non-academic misconduct:** Non-academic misconduct includes, but is not limited to, physically threatening, or verbally harassing, anyone who is a student at, or works at (i.e. instructors, faculty, staff, etc.), UBC. UBC also takes this behaviour very seriously, the policies for which can be found at the UBC calendar website.
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.

Collaborative Research Project – 25% Individual, 10% Team

The purpose of this project is to give you—and everyone who takes Psyc 217—an opportunity to apply what you are learning in class to a real research project. You will work in a team to generate and test a hypothesis about human behaviour, and you will report these results in professional written and poster formats. This project has been designed to incorporate as many elements as possible of the process in which psychological scientists engage to gain insight into human behaviour. You will receive guidance from your Teaching Fellow at each stage of the process. Lab Meetings will take place during class time, but in a smaller room, on Thursdays September 28, October 12, October 26, November 9, and November 16. Attendance at all Lab Meetings and the Poster Session (December 1, 5-6:30pm) is required. The first three lab meetings involve crucial teamwork and are therefore mandatory. You will lose 20% of your lab grade (i.e., 7% of your course grade) for each of these meetings that you miss (e.g., if you miss 2 of those first 3 meetings, you will lose 14% of your course grade, simply for not showing up to contribute to your team). See the “Expectations” section for the procedure if you absolutely must miss one of these events.

On Teamwork

The vast majority of research conducted in psychology is collaborative (Kliegl & Bates, 2011; Madigan, Johnson, & Linton, 1995). Reflecting this trend, you will work closely in teams of 5-6 on this project. Teams will be assigned immediately after the drop period in a way that promotes diversity and resources (Brickell, Porter, Reynolds, & Cosgrove, 1994). I encourage you to work together in the spirit of collaboration. I also know that team work can sometimes be challenging. To help you achieve excellence in your projects, each team will have a private discussion thread on Connect to collaborate with each other throughout the term. Using this thread provides a permanent record of your team collaborations, and might be helpful if a team dispute arises. You will also provide feedback to your teammates about their performance, and receive feedback on your performance (see “Participation” section). You are always welcome to seek me and our TFs out for help and advice on your team dynamics. If your team is having great challenges, there is a form on Connect that you can submit a formal request for mediation. In the past, such mediation has typically led to positive team progress.

Lab Structure

LAB MEETING 1 – RESEARCH DESIGN (THURSDAY SEPTEMBER 28): You will meet with your team in your lab break-out room to brainstorm a research question and design a brief, simple, minimal risk experiment to address the question (note: the experiment must not require more than 5 minutes of each participant’s time). Our Teaching Fellow will be present to assist and guide you. Come to the meeting prepared with some ideas so you can maximize your 50 minutes of time together. You will be able to start posting ideas in advance on Connect as soon as teams are established. See Cuttler’s guide, Chapter 1, for further guidance and tips, as well as Appendix 1 for ideas.

LAB MEETING 2 – PROPOSAL PRESENTATION (THURSDAY OCTOBER 12): Your team will give a 5 minute presentation of your proposed research question and design. During this presentation you should: i) state your research question and why it is interesting, ii) clearly describe the independent variable and how it will be manipulated, iii) clearly describe the dependent variable and how it will be measured, iv) discuss any controls you plan to implement, v) state your hypothesis. Each
presentation will be followed by a 5 minute discussion period where your classmates and Teaching Fellow will ask questions and provide suggestions for improving your study design. Failing to present a proposal will result in all team members receiving a 3% deduction. See Cuttler’s guide, Chapter 2, for further guidance and tips.

LAB MEETING 3 – DATA COLLECTION
(THURSDAY OCTOBER 26): You will collect data for your experiment using your classmates as participants. Your team must arrive to this meeting with all of the materials needed to conduct your experiment. This meeting is the primary (and required) opportunity to collect data. Your team may also opt to collect data (along with other teams across all sections) on Monday Nov 3, 5-6:30 in Swing 222. Collecting data outside these two meeting times and/or with individuals other than your 217 classmates and Teaching Fellows is not covered by our ethics approval certificate (H13-01648) and will result in a major deduction from your lab component grade. While some team members are collecting data, you may participate in other teams’ studies. See Cuttler’s guide, Chapter 3, for further guidance and tips.

LAB MEETING 4 – DATA SUMMARY
(THURSDAY NOVEMBER 2): Your TF will help you learn how to meaningfully summarize your data, including calculating descriptive statistics and creating graphs using Microsoft Excel. Come prepared with your raw data and a plan for summarizing it that you can discuss with your TF. See Cuttler’s guide, Chapter 4, for further guidance and tips, and Appendix 2 for examples.

LAB MEETING 5 – WRITING AN APA STYLE RESEARCH REPORT (THURSDAY NOVEMBER 16): Your TF will help you learn how to write an APA style research report. You may wish to come prepared with a rough draft of your paper as well as specific questions and challenges you are having with its preparation. See Cuttler’s guide, Chapter 5, for further guidance and tips.

Communicating your Results

After conducting research and generating conclusions, psychological scientists (like all scholars) need to communicate their methods and findings to the scientific community. For your research projects, we consider our class as well as all sections of Psy 217 as our common scientific community. You will be asked to communicate your research findings in written form (one APA Style Report per person), and in poster form (one per team) to be presented at the Annual Psychology 217 Research Methods Poster Session.

POSTER SESSION (10%): DECEMBER 4, 5-6:30PM, EAST ATRIUM OF UBC LIFE SCIENCES INSTITUTE (2350 Health Sciences Mall): Approximately 700 students, 12 Teaching Fellows, and 4 Instructors from all 7 sections of Psychology 217 will meet to share and learn about everyone’s research projects. You will prepare, as a team, a poster that summarizes your research project’s hypothesis, method, results, and conclusions. This kind of presentation is common at professional scientific conferences; all of us on the teaching team have presented our research at this kind of poster session. During the poster session, you will be asked to evaluate your peers’ posters (from a different section). Your own poster will be evaluated by five peers (the average of these five ratings will equal 3% of your grade), as well as your Teaching Fellow (whose rating will comprise the other 7%). More details about how to prepare for the poster and presentation, as well as how to evaluate others’ posters will be provided later in the term. NOTE: TO ACCOMMODATE ALL SECTIONS, THE POSTER SESSION IS IN THE EVENING ON THE LAST FRIDAY OF THE TERM. IT IS A MANDATORY COURSE EVENT; MARK YOUR CALENDAR NOW.

INDIVIDUAL RESEARCH REPORT (25%):
FORMAT, SUBMISSION (MONDAY NOVEMBER 30) AND GRADING: The most important step in the research communication process for researchers is to clearly document their research and the contribution it makes to understanding human behaviour in a written manuscript. These written manuscripts are then reviewed by their peers, and (hopefully!) published in a journal. This individual report is designed to give you experience with a part of this process.
Reports are to be prepared independently; each team member must prepare a report separately from other team members. Evidence of collaboration or team work in writing the reports will result in major deductions from your lab component grade and in severe cases may result in a grade of zero on the lab component.

**Format:** Your report must be written using APA style and must include the following sections: Abstract, Introduction, Method, Results (including at least one graph or table), Discussion and References (at least 2). See Appendix A of your Cozby and Rawn text, the Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association (6th ed.), and Cuttler’s guide (Chapter 5), for guidance in writing APA style reports.

Reports must be between 5 and 7 double spaced 8.5 x 11 inch pages (approximately 1500-1700 words). This page limit does NOT include a cover page, references, graphs, tables or appendices. You must use 12 point Arial, Times New Roman, or Calibri font, and margins must be set to 1 inch all around. Your paper should integrate into the introduction section at least 2 references to related empirical journal articles (e.g., to set up a foundation for your hypothesis). Articles can also be used in the discussion section to help put results into context.

**Submission:** Reports are due on Monday November 30. A hard copy must be submitted (at the start of class) AND identical copies must be submitted on Connect and to TurnItIn (by 11:59pm). If you fail to do either (submit it in person or online) on the deadline, your report will be considered late. You will lose 10% for each day the report is late. See “Submitting Written Assignments” section on Page 7 for details about submitting work to TurnItIn.

**Grading:** The lab report is worth 25% of your grade. You will be graded on the following: Abstract and Introduction (5%), Method and Experimental Design (5%), Results and Figures (5%), Discussion (5%), proper use of APA format and writing style (5%). Read Cuttler Chapter 5 and attend Lab 5 for details about each section.
Expectations and Policies

What we expect from you

Attend class: I have designed my lectures with the intention of guiding you through them in real time. The lectures are not, therefore, designed to be studied independently. I’ve also included in-class activities and participation questions to help illustrate some difficult concepts. It is in your best interest, therefore, to come to class, and to stay engaged for as long as possible.

A note on independent learning: One of the goals for this course is to teach you how to teach yourself. I, therefore, encourage you to seek out different resources (e.g. YouTube videos) to help explain material in a different way. I also encourage you to share those resources with me and your colleagues. Feel free to send those materials to me for verification as well; not every educator is going to explain concepts the same way I would, and since I’m writing the tests, you want to make sure I agree with whatever they’re saying.

Maintain a respectful and inclusive environment: We expect you to maintain a respectful and inclusive environment inside and outside the classroom, both face-to-face and via email. This includes using respectful and inclusive language, arriving to class on time, cleaning up after yourself, and minimizing distractions. See also section on non-academic misconduct.

Act ethically: Cheating of any kind will not be tolerated. See sections on academic misconduct.

Complete all evaluations: It is in your best interest to complete all evaluations, even if you question the quality of your performance. See the section on academic concession and grading concerns for more info.

What you can expect from us

Be available: We’re here to help! All TFs, as well as myself, will be holding at least one office hour per week to help answer questions in person. While you will be assigned a specific TF for the collaborative research component, you are free to attend the office hours of any of the 4 TFs we have supporting this course. If none of the office hours work for you, feel free to email us with questions. Some questions are too complex to answer via email, so please also make some dates/times available for appointments.

Maintain a respectful and inclusive environment: It is important to all members of the teaching team that we create an inclusive environment. This includes treating all students with respect, and using inclusive language. While it is not the responsibility of students to educate instructors on inclusive practices, we encourage students to inform us if we’ve failed to create such an environment.

Consider re-grade requests: If you feel strongly that a component of an evaluation was graded unfairly, please come see me about this. While the TFs are responsible for all grading in this class, re-grading requests must be authorized by me.
Tentative Course Schedule

The course schedule is subject to change. Latest version 08/30/2017

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