



**Psychological Research  
University of New York Tirana  
Fall 2007  
Classroom 3C**

**Meeting time: Mondays (except for holidays), 15:00 – 19:00**

**Instructor:** Dr. Aida Orgocka  
**E-mail:** aorgocka@unyt.edu.al  
**Office hours:** E-mail for appointments

**Purpose of the Course**

The purpose of this course is to provide you with a general understanding of the scientific method and the skills to critically evaluate scientific research. This class is oriented around three parts focusing on the major processes in conducting research - from formulating research questions, designing research activity, data gathering and analysis. Additionally, you will develop important computer data handling skills in descriptive and inferential statistics, information retrieval skills, as well as scientific reading, writing, and critical thinking skills.

**Prerequisites:**

Students enrolled in this course should have completed the course Psychological Statistics.

**Required Reading Materials:**

- Hugh Coolican. (2006). Introduction to Research Methods in Psychology. Third Edition. Hodder Arnold.
- Dunn, Dana S. (2007). Short Guide to Writing about Psychology. Second Edition. Longman<sup>1</sup>
- APA Manual (5th Edition).<sup>2</sup>

**Course policies and expectations:**

This class is intended for committed students of psychology. In order to maintain engaged and high-level discussions, it is imperative that all students read the assigned material, prepare for and participate in class discussions and complete written assignments on time.

- *Academic integrity:* All examinations, papers, and other graded work products and assignments are to be completed in accordance with *The University of New York Tirana Code of Academic Integrity*. Students will be expected to be honest and avoid plagiarism. Any case of plagiarism or other academic dishonesty will be handled in

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<sup>1</sup> This text will be used as a reference for the final presentation and paper. There will be no assigned reading throughout the course, however students are encouraged to start reading and studying this resource especially after the midterm exam. Class sessions may accommodate questions/need for clarifications on students' request.

<sup>2</sup> This edition is being ordered by the University. In the meantime, students may use *APA Concise Rules*, already available at the University Library, should need arise for reference.

accordance with unit policy. You are not permitted to turn in the same paper for this class and for any other class.

- *Copyright policies:* Your textbooks will be available for purchase from the university bookshop at most in three weeks time. Once the textbook is available, USE OF PHOTOCOPIED MATERIALS WILL NOT BE TOLERATED. Use of photocopied textbooks violates the copyright laws in force. UNYT has strict commitments to abide by all local and international copyright laws that are part of a western university's moral code.
- *Religious observances:* If you will miss class because of a religious observance, please let me know in advance to make alternative arrangements.
- *Late work and incompletes:* You are expected to complete all work by the assigned due date. Late work will be marked down.
- *Communication:* All students are required to have an e-mail account.

### **Electronic Research Resources**

UNYT library has access to electronic resources that you may be able to use to complete your assignments. Please refer to <http://www.unyt.edu.al/libonline.aspx> for further instructions.

### **Course Assignments**

- ***Class Participation:*** Class attendance is integral to your learning and to the functioning of the course itself. Engagement with each other and with class activities is key. There are 13 class sessions, each at a value of ten points. **The total score for this component is 130 points.**
- ***The ten-minute test:*** This is a multiple choice test designed to evaluate students' knowledge on the assigned reading for each session. There are 11 ten-minute tests of ten questions. Each test is 20 points and the **total score for this component is 220 points.**
- ***Midterm Exam:*** This is a proctored multiple choice exam that assesses your knowledge and application of the concepts on the material studied till November 12, 2007. Your ability to define, differentiate, and apply concepts and techniques presented in the lessons will be evaluated. You will have four hours to complete the exam of 40 questions. You will not be permitted to use textbooks or any other supplemental notes during the exam. **The total score will be 200 points.**
- ***Final Exam:*** This is a proctored multiple choice exam that assesses your knowledge and application of the concepts on the material studied from November 26, 2007 to January 21, 2008. Your ability to define, differentiate, and apply concepts and techniques presented in the lessons will be evaluated. You will have four hours to complete the exam of 40 questions. You will not be permitted to use textbooks or any other supplemental notes during the exam. **The total score will be 200 points.**
- ***Final Paper.*** This paper will be a review of a psychological concept as described in the scientific literature. You may choose to discuss how the concept has been studied using one or more of the methods (data gathering and analysis) studied in class. The paper demonstrates how well you have understood the material presented in this class. You will need to state things clearly enough, explaining any technical terminology, offering examples where they are needed for illustration, and expanding on any remarks, so that a person not already familiar with the material would understand what you mean. The quality of your written work will be especially important. Proper grammar and spelling are important, as is the demonstration of expository writing skills. **The final paper will be worth 200 points.**

**Psychological research is an exciting process! Enjoy the experience!**

### Course Schedule

<b>Date</b>	<b>Topic</b>	<b>Readings</b>	<b>Quizzes</b>
October 8, 2007	Psychology and Research; Ethical Issues	Coolican: Chpt. 1; Chpt. 13	
October 15, 2007	Measuring people – variables and samples	Coolican: Chpt. 2	Quiz on Chpt 1 & 13
October 22, 2007	Experimental methods	Coolican: Chpt. 3	Quiz on Chpt. 2
October 29, 2007	Beyond the experiment – other kinds of research approach and Observation	Coolican: Chpt. 4; Chpt. 5	Quiz on Chpt. 3
November 5, 2007	Asking questions – questionnaires, scales, interviews and surveys	Coolican: Chpt. 6	Quiz on Chpt. 4 & 5
November 12, 2007	Review session	Review all chapters studied this far	Quiz on Chpt. 6
<b>November 23, 2007</b>	<b>Midterm Exam</b>		
November 26, 2007	Qualitative data and qualitative approaches to research	Coolican: Chpt. 7	<b>Final paper outline due</b>
December 3, 2007	Dealing with data – descriptive statistics Lab time: Introduction to SPSS and descriptive analysis	Coolican: Chpt. 8	Quiz on Chpt. 7
December 10, 2007	Significance testing and probability	Coolican: Chpt. 9	Quiz on Chpt. 8
December 17, 2007	Choosing a significance test for your data; Correlation – things that go together	Coolican: Chpt. 10; Chpt. 12	Quiz on Chpt. 9
January 7, 2008	Test of difference Lab time: Introduction to inferential analysis on SPSS	Coolican: Chpt. 11	Quiz on Chpt. 10 & 12
January 14, 2008	Planning practicals and writing reports	Coolican: Chpt. 14	Quiz on Chpt. 11 <b>Final paper draft due</b>
January 21, 2008	Review session	Review all chapters studied this far	Quiz on Chpt. 14 <b>Final paper due</b>
<b>January 28, 2008</b>	<b>Final Exam</b>		