

PSYS 681:

Applied Methods in Advanced Psychological Research

Course Syllabus: Fall 2026

Instructor

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Course Description

The goal of this course is to provide you with the opportunity to undertake empirical research on a topic of personal interest and hence facilitate your development as an independent researcher. This course is an extension of PSYS 680 and typically will involve completing the research project developed in that course. However, it is possible to alter the 680 proposal to varying degrees or develop a new project. Students will present and critique one another's work during the semester. A final paper and poster presentation is required.

Course Rationale

Research experience is an important factor in admission decisions to doctoral programs, and many doctoral programs allow the transfer of master's theses. This course addresses students' need for a solid foundation in applied research by guiding them through an individualized, graduate-level research study. Ultimately, these studies may stand alone as presentable, publishable projects in their own right or as pilot studies for students' theses or independent research projects. It is expected that this guided research experience will better prepare students to complete an independent study or thesis project in their second year.

Course Format

The course is structured as a relatively informal seminar and is largely student-driven. The majority of meetings will be devoted to the presentation and discussion of the weekly progress made on student projects. To that end, students will, on a rotating basis, upload their work to Canvas. Other students will then be responsible for reading the material and providing feedback (both written feedback on Canvas and oral feedback during the next class meeting). Feedback is expected to be encouraging and constructive. Other class meetings will involve the instructor covering relevant research topics (e.g., Research ethics, IRB, replication crisis, power); readings will be assigned to correspond to these topics.

Course Objectives

Regardless of the research topic, by the end of the term, students who complete PSYS 681 will be able to:

1. complete a research proposal containing a literature review, hypotheses, method, and analysis.
2. successfully submit an IRB protocol for the research project.
3. create and/or select the measures and/or procedures used to collect data on the research question(s) of interest.
4. be familiar with the impact of researcher decisions on the quality and interpretation of one's findings (p-hacking and replicability crisis).
5. perform appropriate quantitative and/or qualitative analyses of collected data using formal statistical tests.
6. interpret obtained results in the context of past research and theorizing and potential future research.
7. make an effective oral presentation and/or poster presentation locally and/or submit to a regional or national conference in their field.
8. generate a written paper that might serve as the basis for a thesis proposal or publishable manuscript.

Basis of Final Grades

IRB Protocol	100 points
Research Proposal	100 points
Results Draft	50 points
Manuscript Review	25 points
Final Paper	200 points
Poster/Oral Presentation	100 points
<u>Participation</u>	<u>200 points</u>
Total	775 points

IRB protocol. A complete IRB protocol is required, including the application, consent document, all experimental materials, and any other materials required by the IRB for the project. If necessary, a revised protocol responsive to reviewer comments must be submitted. Whether the protocol must be submitted to the BSU IRB will be determined on an ad hoc basis.

Research Proposal. A research proposal consisting of the Introduction (literature review) and Method section is required.

Results Draft. A draft of the Results section (including at least one table and/or graph is required).

Manuscript Review. A review of a manuscript to be assigned is required.

Final Paper. A final paper is required. This paper (APA style) will be a complete research paper (abstract, intro/lit review, method, results (with appropriate tables and/or graphs), discussion, references, appendix) that is a report of the research conducted during the semester. Thirty points will be based on responsiveness to comments on research proposal and results section draft.

Poster/Oral Presentation. A presentation of the completed research project is required. The most likely venue will be a poster presentation at the department’s spring poster session or the university student symposium.

Participation. An important component of the course is active participation by providing feedback on others’ projects. Points for this category will be assigned by the instructor (100 points) and by other students in the class who will anonymously grade one another in terms of the feedback they provided (100 points).

Deadlines: Points off for late submissions (10% per day) and scheduled postings (1% per day). Late postings may not be reviewed.

Grading Scheme

A	≥ 93%	C+	≥ 77%
A-	≥ 90%	C	≥ 73%
B+	≥ 87%	C-	≥ 70%
B	≥ 83%	D	≥ 60%
B-	≥ 80%	F	< 60%

Course Policies

Attendance Policy

If you miss class for any reason, it is solely your responsibility to obtain copies of notes, handouts, and any other oral or written information from classmates. I recommend that you ask at least two other people to borrow their notes, etc., so you can get multiple perspectives on that day’s class. Also, it is important to me as an instructor that you get to class on time. Late arrivals disrupt the flow of the course, so please do anything you can to avoid strolling in late. Although I don’t take strict attendance, there aren’t that many of you, so I can tell who’s missing! Frequently missing class will result in deductions to your participation grade.

Disability Services Accommodations

If you need course adaptations or accommodations due to a disability, please contact me as soon as possible. Ball State's Disability Services office coordinates services for students with disabilities. You'll need to have documentation on file with them before any accommodations can be provided. You can contact them at 765-285-5293 or dsd@bsu.edu.

If you are eligible for recognized accommodations, please *email* me a copy of your accommodations letter from the Office of Disability Services at the beginning of the semester or when you first receive that letter.

Whenever you email or message me about accommodations as they relate to an individual exam or assignment (e.g., if you’re requesting an extension on an assignment that’s allowed by your official accommodations), please (1) be specific about what you’re requesting and (2) directly refer to your accommodations letter in the request. I get a lot of emails from students, and it’s hard to keep track of everyone’s unique situation. A brief reminder will go a long way toward avoiding misunderstandings.

For example, if you're requesting an extension on a writing assignment, you could write something like: "Dr. Luttrell, may I please have two extra days to complete Reflection Paper 1? This is covered by the DSD accommodations letter I sent you earlier this semester." This gives me a clear sense of what you need and a reminder as to the policies under which we're operating.

Copyrighted Material

Audiotaping, videotaping, photographing, or any other method of recording lectures or class content of any kind shall be done only with my prior express permission. Recordings and other material that I distribute are restricted to the personal use of the students enrolled in the course. Note also that the textbook and the PowerPoints I present in class are copyrighted material and, as such, information from these sources cannot be sold to other students. It is also against university policy to use the class list to e-mail students with the purpose of selling course notes or study guides. Selling (or sharing) your prepared "cheat sheet" is also plagiarism. So is using one from a previous semester. Therefore, information based on the text or my PowerPoints should not be sold or purchased through vendors such as Notehall. If someone contacts you about purchasing any course material, let me know as soon as possible.

Artifact Collection

From time to time, I may make copies of the work you complete for this class (e.g., written assignments or exams) for departmental assessment purposes. I will remove all identifying information on these assignments before making your work available. Unless you decline in writing, I will assume that you are allowing me permission to keep copies of your work for this class. See me if you have questions.

Generative AI and Other Online Resources Statement

All work conducted and/or submitted in this course must be your own, completed in accordance with Ball State University's [Student Academic Ethics Policy](#). You may not collaborate with or make use of ChatGPT or any other generative AI applications at any time to produce final materials submitted in this course. Of course, AI has long been a tool used in many applications; this is not a strict prohibition on the use of any technology. Furthermore, generative AI may prove useful in an initial brainstorming session, although its utility for this class is minimal. The spirit of this policy is to restrict the use of generative AI to produce material that is turned in as though it is your own independent work or to generate the substantive base of submitted material that is only cosmetically altered. You are expected to *engage thoughtfully* with the material in this class.

Similarly, although you are encouraged to be resourceful, you should be cautious using a search engine (e.g., Google) to find information online that pertains to our class. Ideas about psychology abound online, and not all are well tied to the science nor to the organizing frameworks used in this class. Exams and assignments are meant to assess your understanding of social psychological science as it is presented in our class, so pulling from uncited additional resources may result in work that is not clearly situated in the material you are expected to have learned.

Resources

The Graduate School

The Graduate School offers a host of resources to support you throughout your time as a graduate student. Please consider getting involved or taking advantage of the following opportunities outlined below.

- [Graduate Opportunity & Leadership Development Program \(GOLD\)](#) - Gain access to free online and in-person professional development workshops.
- [Pathways Mentoring Program](#) - Sign up to gain a mentor who will help you with your next education and career steps.
- [Three-Minute Thesis](#) - Earn up to \$1000 in prize money for winning the annual 3MT competition where graduate students showcase their research and creative work.
- Graduate Student Commons - Visit or reserve West Quad 208 for your meeting and studying needs, Monday through Friday, 8 am-5 pm. Email gradschool@bsu.edu to inquire.
- If you have questions or concerns as a graduate student, please reach out to Dr. Tayla Lee (Interim Director of Graduate Studies, tlee@bsu.edu, 765-285-1705, NQ 123) or Dr. Robin Phelps-Ward (Associate Dean of the Graduate School, rjphelpsward@bsu.edu, (765) 285-3124, West Quad 203).

The Counseling Center

The Ball State University Counseling Center offers free and confidential services to all students. The Counseling Center is located in Lucina Hall, Room 320. To schedule an appointment, you can contact us at 765-285-1736. Ball State also offers a 24/7 Crisis Line, which can be reached at 765-285-HOPE (4673). The Crisis Line is a mental health resource for those who are struggling with any mental health concerns, including thoughts of self-harm and/or suicide.

At the Ball State Counseling Center, we see students for a variety of reasons, some of which include homesickness, relationship concerns, anxiety, and depression. At your first appointment, you will work with a therapist to create a plan that will connect you with resources that best fit your needs. We assist students with getting connected to therapy at our Center as well as connecting students to self-help resources, other on-campus resources, and community-based resources. All Ball State students also have access to several on-demand, self-help resources through a variety of different platforms. All of these resources, including a direct link to our website, can be found [here](#).

Selected University Policies

University Statement

We are committed to ensuring that all members of the community are welcome, through valuing the various experiences and worldviews represented at Ball State and among those we serve. We promote a culture of respect and civil discourse. If you need course adaptations or accommodations because of a disability, please contact the instructor of record as soon as possible. Ball State's [Disability Services](#) office coordinates services for students with disabilities; documentation of a disability needs to be on file in that office before any accommodations can be provided. Disability Services can be contacted at 765-285-5293 or dsd@bsu.edu.

Freedom of Expression

In this course, we are committed to fostering a learning environment that values intellectual diversity, encourages free expression, and promotes open inquiry. As members of the Ball State Community, we treat each person in the Ball State community with civility, courtesy, compassion, and dignity and respect and learn from differences in people, ideas, and opinions. Please review Ball State University's [Statement on Freedom of Expression](#), the resources on Ball State's [Freedom of Expression webpage](#), and [Ball State's Beneficence Pledge](#).

Title IX

Ball State University is committed to providing a safe and inclusive learning environment for all students. If you or someone you know has experienced sexual harassment—including sexual assault, dating violence, domestic violence, or stalking, please know that you are not alone. The University offers support services and resources. For more information or to report an incident, please visit bsu.edu/titleix or contact the Title IX Coordinator at 765-285-1545 or at titleix@bsu.edu.

As your instructor, I am a mandatory reporter under the Title IX policy and required to report any information I receive about possible sexual harassment. This includes information shared in class discussions, assignments, or private conversations.

What happens after I report? The Title IX Coordinator will email the person who experienced sexual harassment (complainant) and invite them to schedule a meeting. If the complainant chooses to meet with the Title IX Coordinator,

- Title IX Coordinator will offer supportive measures (e.g., counseling, extensions on deadlines, course-related adjustments, changes to work or class schedules, and/or referrals to campus offices), review the policy, and discuss options to move forward.
- If a complaint is filed by the complainant or the University, an investigation will begin following University policy.

University Grade Appeal Policy

If you believe you received a final course grade that does not reflect your performance due to fairness or a procedural issue, you have the right to file an appeal within 5 school days after final grades are posted by the Office of the Registrar. Review the [University Grade Appeal Policy and Process](#).

Student Academic Ethics Policy

Honesty, trust, and personal responsibility are fundamental attributes of the university community. Academic dishonesty and other forms of academic misconduct threaten the foundation of an institution dedicated to the pursuit of knowledge and will not be tolerated. To maintain its credibility and reputation, and to equitably assign evaluations of scholastic and creative performance, Ball State University is committed to maintaining a climate that upholds and values the highest standards of academic integrity. Visit the VPAA's [academic integrity website](#) (Students tab) for resources on understanding academic integrity, citing sources properly, and avoiding inadvertent academic dishonesty. To learn about BSU's academic integrity expectations and students' rights, please read the University [Student Academic Ethics Policy](#).

Academic integrity violations include giving or receiving an unfair academic advantage (cheating), presenting someone else's ideas or work as your own (plagiarism), and falsifying academic records. Unless otherwise indicated, you must work independently by yourself. Check with me if you are unsure whether something constitutes academic dishonesty. Examples of academic integrity violations include but are not limited to:

- Using resources not authorized by the faculty member (including devices, AI tools, hidden notes, and open books)
- Using commercial study websites to find answers to graded assignments (Chegg, Course Hero, StudyPool, OneClass, etc.).
- Without the instructor's written permission, giving away, buying, or selling graded assignments class notes, exams, study guides, or other course materials to other students or to third-party vendors (Course Hero, Chegg, 24HourAnswers, etc.).
- Working with another person on any assignment other than authorized group projects.
- Sharing or allowing others to access your files, whether done with permission or not.
- Reusing your own work from another semester, course, or section.
- Sharing answers with others during exams (passing notes, texting, whispering, gesturing)
- Discussing exam questions and answers with students who have not taken the exam.
- Soliciting others to complete work for you.