PSYC 221-01 223 Research Method and Design I and Lab

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If you can’t be on time, be early.

Instructor: Dr. Cynthia Dulaney  
Office: 202 Elet, 745-3535  
Email: dulaney@xavier.edu

Office Hours: Thursdays 10:00 – 11:00, after class, and by appointment. You are also encouraged to drop by at an unscheduled time and I will frequently be available.

Text:


Psychology Mission Statement: In keeping with the Jesuit, Catholic, liberal arts tradition, the Department of Psychology educates students in the science of behavior and mental processes with sensitivity toward the diversity of all people so students may use psychological knowledge and insight to address human concerns.

Course Objectives: 
Welcome to the exciting world of psychological research! Well, exciting may not be the perfect descriptor, but understanding the process of research is important even if it is not “exciting.” This class is designed to familiarize you with how scientists perform and report experiments that help lead us to a greater understanding of psychological processes. A large portion of the work in this course will be devoted to developing your critical thinking and reasoning abilities so that you will be able to evaluate existing research findings as well as design and present your own research ideas.

At the end of the Research Method and Design I course, you should have the following critical thinking skills:
1. Be skeptical, ask questions, and be willing to wonder.
2. Define a problem and examine the evidence.
3. Be cautious in drawing conclusions from the evidence.
4. Consider alternative explanations of research evidence.
5. Examine biases and assumptions, including your own.
6. Avoid emotional reasoning.
7. Whenever possible, do not overgeneralize, do not oversimplify.
8. Tolerate uncertainty.

In addition, please remember the skills you will have obtained from all your hard work at the end of this course. Regardless of the career or job you pursue, you should remember to put the skills obtained from this class on your resume:

- Ability to critically evaluate published research
- Ability to develop research hypotheses
- Ability to design research to answer questions
- Ability to use statistical software
- Ability to write concisely
- Ability to present a professional document
- Ability to edit other’s writing
Evaluation

Final Course grade: The following percentages will be used to determine your final course grade:

- **A** = 93-100
- **B** = 83-86
- **C** = 73-76
- **D** = 63-66
- **A-** = 90-92
- **B-** = 80-82
- **C-** = 70-72
- **D-** = 60-62
- **B+** = 87-89
- **C+** = 77-79
- **D+** = 67-69
- **F** = 0-59

1) **Mid term and Final:** To evaluate your knowledge of research you will be given a mid-term and a comprehensive final exam. Exams will consist of multiple-choice, identify, and essay questions. Answers to the identify and essays must be well-written, coherent, and clearly indicate your understanding of the material.

Grading of exams: Students who have missed an exam will be permitted to take a make-up exam only if they can provide sufficient documentation for their absence (e.g., a doctor's note). Otherwise, the student will receive a grade of ‘zero’ for the quiz or exam.

2) **APA Exam:** One of the goals of this class is for you to learn how to write according to scientific standards, specifically the standards of the American Psychological Association (APA). To that end, I hope that you “somewhat” master APA style (mastery can take years). I will cover the basics of APA style in class, and you will then take exams on APA. On traditional exams you are given a grade which represents the “percentage” of the content that you understand, and that is the final exam grade. Mastery works a little differently. The goal is to learn the material well; not just take one test and stop learning. I will administer four topical APA exams (e.g., grammar; citations). The grades on those exams will be averaged to compute your score for an overall APA exam performance. However, you then have the opportunity to take as many as four more comprehensive APA exams, or until you have mastered the material (an A). (Note the exams will have different questions but will cover the same material.) If you are satisfied with your grade at any time, you may stop taking the exams. The last date to take an APA exam will be two weeks prior to the final exam. Your highest grade on the exams will be used in my grade sheet.

3) **Research Papers:** You will be involved in two phases of research design during the course of the semester. For the first phase, you will learn how to write parts of a research manuscript (e.g., literature review, summaries, method, results and discussions). The second phase will require you to write a research proposal. The goal of this aspect of the course is to teach you how to critique and synthesize existing research, to formulate your own research projects, and to communicate a research endeavor in an effective written format. See Guidelines on page 6 of syllabus.

Learning how to write using APA style and to write professional reports (such as an experimental paper) is extremely important for two reasons. First, while you are Xavier, you will be required to write other papers in psychology (as well as other disciplines such as nursing and social work) using APA style. Second, regardless of your career, it is extremely likely that you will be required to write reports that are professional in appearance and clear and concise in content (hallmarks of APA style). These skills will serve you well in the future.

Grading of papers: Any graded item turned in after the beginning of class will receive an automatic 10% deduction for each 24-hour late period (a graded item turned in after class begins is considered late). No assignment will be accepted beyond one week after the due date.

On occasion you may email an assignment or paper to me in order to meet a due date deadline, which is not during regular class time. However, you are required to give me a hard copy of the assignment/paper within 24 hours of the due time or it will be treated as a late assignment. (Exceptions to this policy may be made, but only with advanced agreement between the student and me.)

4) **Peer Reviews:** Through out the semester you will bring typed, double-spaced drafts of your work to class to be reviewed by your peers. In addition, you will be completing peer review of your classmates’ drafts. This peer review process will provide you feedback from your peers prior to turning in an assignment for a grade. Furthermore, you may be surprised by how much you learn about your own writing by critiquing the work of others. On peer review days you will need to bring in three, typed photocopies of your draft (feel free to print double-sided to save a tree). Two of your peers will critique your draft in class.
Grading of Peer Review: You will be graded on the quality of the peer review you complete for your classmates as well as the effort you put into the draft you turn in for peer review. In order to receive a good grade on the peer review, you will need to be familiar with APA style and be conscientious and thoughtful in your reviews. 

**Attendance is necessary to complete this part of your grade. Failure to attend class, except under extenuating circumstances, will result in a 0% for the assignment for that day.**

5) **Other Assignments:** If you are not in class on the day of an in-class assignment, you will receive a zero for that assignment. If you are not in class the day a homework assignment is given, it is your responsibility to find out about those assignments, and to turn them in at the scheduled time. Late assignments will receive a 10% deduction for each day it is late, and no assignment will be accepted beyond one week after the due date. The assignments include: xu.tutor, online experiment, proposed topic and method forms (to be distributed in class), participate in department research pool.

**Xu.tutor:** You are required to complete the first five quizzes on the xu.tutor with a 90% score or better: [http://www.xavier.edu/library/xututor/index.cfm](http://www.xavier.edu/library/xututor/index.cfm). I also encourage you to complete the last section (Finding full-text articles), but you will also receive coverage of this topic when we meet with the librarian about how to do literature searches. In addition to the required completion of xu.tutor, you can find general help for psychology-related research links at [http://www.xavier.edu/library/guides/psychology.cfm](http://www.xavier.edu/library/guides/psychology.cfm).

**NIH Certificate:** All students are required to successfully complete the NIH Certificate training for the Protection of Human Participants. You are required to turn in your certificate to the IRB office ([IRB@xavier.edu](mailto:IRB@xavier.edu)) and to me by the due date indicated on the schedule, else you will receive an F for the course, and you will need to take it another semester. Clearly the severity of not completing this assignment informs you of just how important it is to take ethics in this course very seriously.

**Online experiment:** You will receive instructions in class regarding the link to the online experiment.

**Design-relevant articles (DRA) summaries:** On several occasions you will be required to read an empirical article that used a design methodology we are covering in class. You will need to write a summary of the article prior to class. However, these summaries are informal (in contrast to the ones you write for the Research Paper requirement). I will just be looking for evidence that you read the article prior to class, so that we can have a fruitful discussion of the article and the design decisions made in order to test the researchers’ hypotheses. You will need to identify the research hypothesis, the design type, independent and dependent variables, and control issues (e.g., random assignment, counterbalancing).

**Research Participation:** Each student will be required to complete five hours of research participation using the Psychology Department Research Pool. You will serve as a participant in research conducted by someone in the psychology department (e.g., graduate student, faculty member, or undergraduate student taking Psyc 222/224). You will be helping others with their research and gaining perspective of what it is like to be a participant. For those of you taking Psyc 222: Research Method and Design II in a subsequent semester, you will be allowed to use the Psychology Department Participant Pool for data collection for your independent project (conducted as part of Psyc 222). If you are unable to participate in research, we will negotiate an equitable alternative for you (typically a written summary of an empirical article). Failure to show up for participation in a research project for which you signed up will result in a decrement in your grade equivalent to the amount of credit you would have received had you completed the participation for that project.
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<th>Percent</th>
<th>Due Date</th>
<th>Grade</th>
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<td>Oct 3</td>
<td>5</td>
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<tr>
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<td>Dec 3</td>
<td>12</td>
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<td>Final Proposal</td>
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<td>Dec 10</td>
<td>15</td>
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<td>Research Participation (five hours)</td>
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<td>4</td>
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<td>Dec 17</td>
<td>14</td>
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<td>Total:</td>
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Grading Policies

Minimal Requirements: You must complete the NIH certificate, both exams, and the research proposal to complete this course. For example, even if you do well on exams and quizzes, such that you had a 60% or greater for the class, you are still required to complete a research proposal to receive a passing grade for the class.

You must also turn in all drafts of work that you submitted for peer review as well as the peer reviews you received from your classmates at the time your paper section or proposal is due. I will maintain these in a folder for you, and you may retrieve these from me at the beginning of the following semester.

Changing Grades: Every year a student requests that I raise his/her grade (e.g., because he doesn’t want a C on his transcript, or she needs an A to maintain a scholarship). Try your hardest from the very first exam, and visit my office to discuss learning strategies, etc. DO NOT ASK me to raise your grade or allow you to do extra credit work. I will say no to either.

Grading Dispute: If you want to dispute a score you receive on an exam, paper or assignment, you must submit your reasons in writing. This policy is helpful for two reasons: First, if a score change is justified, it gives us a paper document as a record of the change. Second, it gives you a chance to think through and present your argument carefully, to maximize your chances of success. If you wish to dispute a grade after the end of the semester, see the University Catalog for details of procedure.

Plagiarism and Other Cheating: “All work submitted for academic evaluation must be the student’s own. The direct and unattributed use of another’s efforts is prohibited as is the use of any work untruthfully submitted as one’s own. Penalties for violations of this policy may include one or more of the following: A ‘zero’ for that assignment or quiz, an ‘F’ in the course or expulsion from the University” (Xavier University Catalog). Note that you will be required to complete a Plagiarism Contract, which outlines the consequences of plagiarism in this course. All instances of plagiarism will result in a report sent to the Department Chair and the Dean of your college. Furthermore, most instances of plagiarism will result in an F for the course.

Please read pages 8 and 9 of this syllabus, which includes a more detailed description of plagiarism.

General Classroom Comments and Guide to Success

“Any student who feels s/he may need an accommodation based on the impact of a documented disability should contact the Learning Assistance Center at 513-745-3280 on the Fifth Floor of the Conaton Learning Commons, Room 514, to coordinate reasonable accommodations.”

Be on time for class. I will generally make announcements and comments on assignments, etc. at the beginning of class. Furthermore, it can be difficult to catch up with what is going on if you miss the first few minutes of class (and disruptive if you ask the person sitting next to you to catch you up). It is also disruptive to the entire class if you come in late.

If you do not understand something that is discussed in class, please do not hesitate to ask a question. Chances are if you don’t understand it, other students in the class are also confused.

If you plan to do well in this class, you should start working hard from the beginning as the class materials build on each other through out the semester. It is much harder and stressful to try to catch up with the material and skills at the end of the semester.

If you feel you are having trouble with writing, research, or understanding material, PLEASE see me early in the semester so that we can address the difficulties. We will develop a plan to assist you in mastering the material.

Go over your notes within a day or two after the class, while your notes are still relatively fresh in your head. I also recommend rewriting your notes and filling in with textbook materials as you rewrite. When you study for exams, don’t just memorize the material. Also make sure you can provide examples of and apply the material.
Because the exams and your writing assignments depend heavily on in-class material, it is important that you attend every class.

Be aware that most of your assignments are typed and computers, storage devices, and printers do crash; power outages do happen! Plan ahead for such occurrences! Do not wait until the last minute to complete an assignment or print a copy of the assignment. Save the document in several places (e.g., hard drive and flashdrive) and perhaps email it to yourself so you have it stored in another place. (However, some email accounts do not allow for easy opening or printing of documents, so check this out ahead of time if you are using it for a backup).

In case you were not aware, the credit system is designed such that a one semester credit should require approximately three hours of academic work per week. According to that formula, an A in this course should require approximately nine hours of academic work per week. I think you will see rather quickly that that formula is appropriate for this course—you will put in a lot of time and effort for this course.

Although you are expected to attend and participate in all classes, your cell phone is not. Please turn off your cell phone prior to entering the classroom. If a cell phone rings in class, it is disruptive to the class and disrespectful to the instructor and your classmates. If you need your cell phone on for a special situation, please notify me prior to the beginning of that class meeting.

Guidelines for Proposal

1. Experimental Design: The project must use an experimental design (e.g., not a correlational study or an opinion survey). Thus, you must manipulate a variable in your study. I generally will not allow you to use subject variables as one of your manipulated variables (e.g., gender), but I have allowed individuals to examine subject variables if the literature strongly warrants it (e.g., young vs. older adults). Under unusual circumstances, I might make an exception to this requirement.

   Your idea does not have to be “original.” That is, you are allowed to conduct replications of previous research. However, such projects should be replications with a “twist.” That is, you basically replicate with a minor change in variable(s) or you test the same hypothesis in a different way.

2. Feasibility of project: You must propose a design that is feasible. If you are taking Research Method and Design II, you will actually complete your study within a semester. Therefore, you will most likely need to consider using college students due to their easy access. However, students in the past have conducted research with elderly individuals, for example. If you would like to conduct a study that requires off-campus resources, be aware that it may require a lot of extra work. I do not discourage such extra effort, I just want to make sure you are aware of such additional requirements. If you are not taking Research Method and Design II, I may allow a bit more flexibility in the participant population, as you will not actually be conducting the study the following semester. Also keep in mind that you only have one semester (Research Method and Design II) to complete the project. Although you may have grand ideas for an elaborate project, you can save those ideas for your graduate research.

3. Special populations or topics: Per Xavier’s IRB, you cannot propose studies with children or on sexual or drug-related behavior, etc. without an approval by Xavier Universities IRB (see IRB website for more guidelines). However, you can ask students about their opinions of such behaviors, etc.

4. Ethics: Your proposed study will be required to follow ethical standards of research, as outlined by APA and XU’s IRB. This semester, I will be responsible for overseeing that requirement. If you are taking Research Method and Design II, you will learn more extensive details about XU’s IRB requirements.

Note to those students who intend to actually complete the proposed research in another semester (e.g., for Research Method and Design II or Occupational Therapy): Although you are only required to have four research articles for this course, you will need more when you actually conduct the research. Therefore, I strongly encourage you to consider what additional articles you may need as some articles may need to be ordered through interlibrary loan. Articles ordered through Inter-library loan can take several weeks to arrive.
### Psyc 221 and 223: Research Method and Design I

***This schedule is tentative. If there are any changes to this schedule, the changes will be announced during class. Therefore, it is your responsibility to attend class so that you will be aware of any changes to this schedule.***

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<th>Week</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Readings</th>
<th>Assignment Due</th>
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<td>Overview</td>
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<tr>
<td>29</td>
<td>Scientific Thinking</td>
<td>Evans and Rooney, Ch. 1</td>
<td>Syllabus Quiz</td>
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<td>Sept 3</td>
<td>Evaluating Research Articles &amp; APA Components of a Lit. Review APA Quiz 1 (clarity, bias, &amp; style)</td>
<td>Evans and Rooney: Ch. 2 and 14 (APA Ch. 3; Ch 4, pp. 87-111)</td>
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<td>5</td>
<td>APA, plagiarism, and Summaries Ethics plagiarism handout</td>
<td><a href="http://www.apa.org/ethics">http://www.apa.org/ethics</a></td>
<td>Read Article 1</td>
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<td>How to do literature searches Guest: Vicki Young, Librarian</td>
<td><a href="http://www.xavier.edu/library/xututor/index.cfm">http://www.xavier.edu/library/xututor/index.cfm</a></td>
<td>Meet in Elet 101 Xu.tutors due</td>
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<td>APA Quiz 2 (citations and quotes); Ethics cont. Evans and Rooney: Ch. 4, 5, and 6 plagiarism handout (APA Ch. 6 p. 169-179)</td>
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<td>Measurement &amp; Sampling Peer Review</td>
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<td>Intro to Experimental Research APA Quiz 3 (numbers)</td>
<td>Evans and Rooney: Ch. 4, 5, and 6 (APA Ch. 4 pp. 111-124)</td>
<td>Summary 1 APA Quiz 3</td>
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<td>24</td>
<td>Peer Review Research Proposal Ideas</td>
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<td>26</td>
<td>Control Problems APA Quiz 4 (references) (APA Ch. 6, p.174 -224)</td>
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<td>Evans and Rooney: Ch. 7 and 8</td>
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<td>proposal draft Last day for APA exam</td>
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Plagiarism

The guidelines on plagiarism set forth by the American Psychological Association (1992) states that "psychologists do not present substantial portions or elements of another's work or data as their own, even if the other work or data source is cited occasionally" (p. 21). Furthermore, Xavier University's policy on plagiarism states "All work submitted for academic evaluation must be the student's own. Certainly, the activities of other scholars will influence all students. However, the direct and unattributed use of another's efforts is prohibited as is the use of any work untruthfully submitted as one's own. Penalties for violations of this policy may include one or more of the following: A 'zero' for that assignment or test, an 'F' in the course, and expulsion from the University" (Xavier University Catalog, p. 52).

Clearly, plagiarism is a very serious offense. Given the serious nature of plagiarism, it is important to ensure that every student understands what is meant by plagiarism. What follows are descriptions, and examples of, various types of plagiarism, as well as some suggestions to help prevent plagiarism.

Copying and Paraphrasing

Direct copying, without proper citation. This type of plagiarism occurs when a student copies the published work of another author, word for word, and turns in the paper with no credit to the original author. Another instance of this type of plagiarism occurs when a student turns in a paper written by another student, however, the student turning in the paper treats it as his/her own work rather than that of the other student (Smyth, 1996).

Paraphrasing, without proper citation. In this type of plagiarism the student changes the wording of the original work but does not give the original author credit for his/her work. The following example was taken directly from Smyth, 1996.

Original version: The problem is that, whilst more severely affected children's impaired performance of motor skills is likely to evident, it can be difficult to recognize the cause of the difficulties experienced by those who are moderately or mildly affected (Smyth, 1992, p. 297).

Student version: By comparison with children who are seriously affected, the problems of those who have a minor motor skill impairment can be difficult to identify.

Comment: To avoid plagiarism, the student should cite Smyth, 1992.

Direct copying, citing, but not using quotations. This type of plagiarism occurs when a student cites an author and uses the author's exact words but does not put those same words in quotes. Because quotes are not provided, the reader assumes that the student has put the author's ideas in his/her own words rather than the author's.

Examples (taken directly from Hacker, 1991):

Original Source: If the existence of a signing ape was unsettling for linguists, it was also startling news for animal behaviorists (Davis, p. 26).

Student Version: Davis noted that although the existence of a signing ape was unsettling for linguists, it was also startling news for animal behaviorists.

Comment: Even though the student cited the source, the student version would still be considered plagiarism because quotations were not used for the exact wording taken from the original source.

Using the structure and/or phrasing of the original source. Rather than putting the information in the student's own words, the student uses many of the author's word. Or the student substitutes the author's words with words similar in meaning, but maintains the author's original sentence structure. This form of plagiarism is typically the result of laziness on the part of the student.

Student Version: If the presence of a sign-language-using chimp was disturbing, it was also surprising to scientists studying animal behavior. (Example taken from Hacker, 1991)

Student Version: If the presence of a signing chimpanzee was unsettling for psycholinguists, it was also surprising information for comparative behaviorists.
**Public Domain/Common Knowledge**

Information that is considered to be common knowledge or in the public domain does not require the student to attribute that information to an original source. Common knowledge is defined as "facts that can be found in numerous places and are likely to be known by a lot of people" (Writing Tutorial Services, n.d., p. 3).

(Note: The following examples were taken directly from Writing Tutorial Services (n.d., p. 3).

*Example:* John F. Kennedy was elected President of the United States in 1960.

The above example presents information that is considered common knowledge and does not require a citation. However, the student should document interpretations of common knowledge, such as presented in the following example:

*Example:* According to the American Family Leave Coalition's new book, *Family Issues and Congress*, President Bush's relationship with Congress has hindered family leave legislation.

*Comment:* The phrase regarding President Bush's relationship with Congress is an interpretation made by someone and therefore a citation of that source should be provided.

**Tips for Avoiding Plagiarism**

*Make careful notes.* "It is easy to copy material from a book or article verbatim and, if this material is not enclosed within quotation marks, to forget that it is a direct quotation. Subsequently, when writing a paper the copied material can inadvertently be included without enclosing it within quotation marks and giving the page number of the source. Similarly, if you make a note of some idea which you find in a book or an article, be careful to record the source. Again it is easy to forget later that this was an idea suggested by another author, and to include it in a paper without proper acknowledgement. In such instances, plagiarism would be unintentional, and could be attributed simply to carelessness or forgetfulness. However, students cannot use carelessness or forgetfulness as excuses for, or defenses of, plagiarism" (Smyth, 1996, p. 65).

*Use quotations.* If you do use any verbatim sentences or phrases from the original source, put that information in quotation marks and provide the source.

*Paraphrase.* Make sure you are paraphrasing and not just substituting or rearranging a few words. The best way to ensure that you do not use the author's original words is to read the original source, set it aside for a few minutes, then write your version of the original source, without referring back to the original source. This technique will encourage you to use your own words and sentence structure rather than the author's.

*Check your work.* After writing your version of the original, compare your version with the original version. You should check to ensure that you did not use the author's wording and structure and also to check for the accuracy of your version.

*Joint Projects.* Note that some instructors may allow students to work together on projects/papers. However, unless explicitly mentioned by the instructor, assume that each student is required to turn in his/her independently-written version of the project/paper.

**References**


**Classroom Etiquette**

The following expectations are to enhance your ability to learn in this class, to avoid disruption and distraction, and to improve the quality of the classroom experience. Repeated failure to meet these expectations may result in a lower grade for the course.

**Entering/Exiting Class:**

- Please arrive on time to class and stay for the entire class period. Late arrivals and early departures are disruptive.
- If despite your best effort you arrive late, please quietly take a seat at the back of the classroom. Similarly, in the rare event that you must leave class early (e.g. for a medical appointment), email me in advance to let me know, then sit close to the rear door and leave as unobtrusively as possible. If you can't be there on time or must always leave early because of a class or work conflict, either seek specific permission from me or do not take the class.
- During class time and exams, ask permission before leaving to use the restroom. Try to use the restroom before coming to class.

**Noise:**

- When class begins, please stop your conversations.
- Wait until class is completely over before putting your materials away in your backpack, standing up, or talking to friends.

**Electronic Devices:**

- No taping, filming, or photography in class without my prior permission (whether by camera, cell phone, or other means). These activities are distracting and inhibiting to faculty and other students, may infringe upon privacy or copyright, and have a chilling effect on classroom discussion.
- Cell phones should be turned off. No talking on cell phones, text messaging, or emailing on laptops during class. Wait until after class to return any calls received.
- No listening to iPods or other electronic recording devices during class.

**Email Etiquette:**

- You are expected to write as you would in any professional correspondence. Email communication should be courteous and respectful in manner and tone. Do not send emails that are curt or demanding.
- Do not expect an immediate response via email (normally, a response will be sent within two business days). If your email question is sent at the last minute it may not be possible to send you a response before an assignment is due or a test is given.
- Do not post personal information about yourself or others about third parties to the class list serve. For example, if you are having trouble with a classmate, you should see the instructor in person to discuss the specifics of the issue.

**Participation:**

- Keep on the topic at hand. If you have questions off the current topic, address these outside of class at office hours or by email with the TA or instructor.
- Do not talk out of turn. Wait to be recognized before speaking and do not try to dominate a discussion with your questions or comments – give others a fair opportunity to participate.

**Common Courtesy:**

- Do not read the newspaper during class. The shuffling of pages can be very distracting.
- Food and drink are discouraged in class. There may be times that you need a beverage or small snack during class. Avoid bringing in large meals or food that is noisy when unpackaged or chewed.
- Show respect for me and fellow classmates. Do not interrupt another who is speaking. It is okay to disagree with an idea but not okay to ridicule or make fun of another person and his/her ideas.
- Do not disturb others by engaging in disruptive behavior. Disruption interferes with the learning environment and impairs the ability of others to focus, participate, and engage.