



Psychological Research

PSY203H1 F

Summer 2025

University of Toronto, St. George Campus

In-Person

Tuesday & Thursday, 6pm-9pm

Woodsworth College Residence (WO) 35

Instructor: Jennifer J. Phillips, Ph.D.

How to use this syllabus document:

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Land Acknowledgement:

"We wish to acknowledge this land on which the University of Toronto operates. For thousands of years it has been the traditional land of the Huron-Wendat, the Seneca, and the Mississaugas of the Credit. Today, this meeting place is still the home to many Indigenous people from across Turtle Island and we are grateful to have the opportunity to work on this land."

Instructor Contact Information



Name: Jennifer J. Phillips, Ph.D.

Pronouns: She/Her/Hers

Email: jenniferjulia.phillips@utoronto.ca (I will respond within 24 hours unless it is a weekend or a holiday)

Office: Sidney Smith Hall (SS) 4001

Office Hours: Thursdays, 3:00 PM – 5:30 PM or by appointment (email me to set one up). My office hours are in-person, but if you would like to meet with me virtually, send me an email.

Course Description, Prerequisite, and Objectives



Description: This course provides an introduction to conceiving, designing, and conducting research in psychology. It prepares students to be both consumers and producers of scientific research, and also addresses basic issues related to the work of psychological scientists such as theory development, research ethics, and scientific writing. Students in this course will gain insight into the scientific process as a whole – its advantages, difficulties, and limitations. As such, students will be able to better evaluate the knowledge that psychological science can provide, and integrate that knowledge into a broader worldview.

Prerequisite: PSY100H1/ PSY100Y5/ (PSYA01H3 and PSYA02H3)/ COG250Y1

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

1. **Identify** the features of scientific research in psychology, including ethics, design, and basic data analysis.
2. **Write** clearly and effectively using APA style.
3. **Consume** empirical research articles in an effective and scholarly way.
4. **Understand** the different ways that psychological research is conducted, including, methods, and sampling.
5. **Evaluate** research claims through a critical lens.
6. **Communicate** scientific research and ideas effectively and concisely in an engaging manner.

Course Webpage



I use Quercus to post readings, assignments, grades, quizzes, and announcements pertinent to the course. I update the home page weekly with announcements, readings, PowerPoint slides, and assignments. It is your responsibility to check Quercus regularly for due dates, announcements, and course materials.

Course Materials



Required Readings:

- Scholarly/Empirical articles that will be posted to Quercus
- Scholarly/Empirical articles that you will find for your final paper and presentation

Required Free Resources:

- [American Psychological Association Style and Grammar Guide](#)
- [Purdue OWL APA Formatting and Style Guide](#)

There is no textbook for this course. You are expected to read the articles posted to Quercus prior to coming to class. The resources for APA style (linked above) are expected to be used to correctly write in APA style.

Point Distribution and Grading Scale



Assignment Category	# Assignments	Points	Weight
In-Class Activities	10	100 (10/activity)	25% (2.5%/activity)
Reading Quizzes	4	80 (20/quiz)	20% (5%/quiz)
Draft Peer Review	1	20	5%
Research Proposal Rough Draft	1	20	5%
Presentation Peer Review	2	20 (10/review)	5% (2.5%/review)
Research Proposal Paper	1	100	25%
Research Presentation	1	60	15%
TOTALS		400 points	100%

Grade Meaning	Letter Grade	Percentage	Points	Grade Point Value
Excellent	A+	90 – 100%	360 – 400	4.0
	A	85 – 89%	340 – 359	4.0
	A-	80 – 84%	320 – 339	3.7
Good	B+	77 – 79%	308 – 319	3.3
	B	73 – 76%	292 – 307	3.0
	B-	70 – 72%	280 – 291	2.7
Adequate	C+	67 – 69%	268 – 279	2.3
	C	63 – 66%	252 – 267	2.0
	C-	60 – 62%	240 – 251	1.7
Marginal	D+	57 – 59%	228 – 239	1.3
	D	53 – 56%	212 – 227	1.0
	D-	50 – 52%	200 – 211	0.7
Inadequate	F	0 – 49%	0 – 199	0.0

Grades .5 and above will be rounded up to the nearest whole number. Grades .4 and below will be rounded down to the nearest whole number. This is the [University of Toronto Undergraduate Grade Scale](#).

Assignment Descriptions



In-Class Activities: There will be one in-class activity per class meeting, except during the last two class meetings of the semester. These activities will vary in format and may include quizzes, collaborative discussions, or worksheets. Their purpose is to help elaborate on the information being taught and serve as a learning check. Sometimes activities will require you to work with a classmate, but everyone should always submit their own activity to Quercus. **If you leave class before the in-class activity is presented, your activity will not be accepted for credit.** In-class activities can only be made up in cases of legitimate absences as outlined by the university (e.g., illness, religious accommodation). In-class activities are due by the end of class. As in-class activities are done during class time, **late submissions will not be accepted** (except in cases of legitimate absences).

Reading Quizzes: You will take four reading quizzes this semester (1/week, from week 2 through week 5). These quizzes will be based off of all of the readings that are assigned each day a quiz is due. Readings will be obtained from Quercus. Quizzes will be taken on Quercus, will be multiple-choice format, are not timed, and you will have two chances for each quiz, where the highest score will be counted towards your final grade. Quizzes are open, meaning that you can use the readings to help you complete them, but you should complete them **independently**. You are encouraged to take the quiz as early as possible, but they are due by **6:00 PM** on their respective due dates. Late submissions will be accepted, but will incur a 10%/day late penalty. On the Quizzes more than 9 days late will automatically receive a 0. Penalties are only waived due to legitimate absences.

Research Proposal Rough Draft and Draft Peer Review: You will submit a rough draft of your research proposal during week 4 of the semester and work with a peer to get feedback on it. You will be randomly assigned a peer review partner. This is to ensure that your proposal is sound and following APA style prior to your final submission. In order to receive credit for your peer review, you must submit your draft to Quercus before class (20 points) and complete your peer review worksheet (20 points) and submit it to Quercus after class. See below for specific due dates. Late submissions on either part will incur a 10%/day late penalty and peer reviews that are more than 9 days late will automatically receive a 0. Penalties are only waived in extenuating circumstances. If you miss draft peer review, you must contact me within 1-week hours to schedule a make-up. Requests after 1-week may be denied.

Presentation Peer Review: You will also provide feedback on peers' research presentations on each presentation day. You will be randomly assigned 5 presentations to review. You must submit feedback forms for each presentation to receive full credit. Feedback forms are due after class- see below for specific due dates- and will incur a 10%/day late penalty. Forms more than 9 days late will automatically receive a 0. Penalties are only waived in extenuating circumstances. Presentation peer review can only be made up in extenuating circumstances; if you are not in class, do not assume you will be able to make this up.

Research Proposal Paper: Your final for the course will involve developing a research proposal and writing a paper according to APA style. More details and a descriptive rubric will be provided at a later date. This project is to be completed independently.

Research Proposal Presentation: You will create a presentation of your research proposal that will be presented to the class on one of the two presentation dates on the schedule below. Presentation dates will be assigned during the first week of class. More details and a descriptive rubric will be provided at a later date. This project is to be completed independently.

IMPORTANT: SEE BELOW FOR SPECIFIC DETAILS RELATED TO MISSING WORK, LATE PENALTIES, AND LEGITIMATE ABSENCES

Course Schedule



Please note that this schedule is subject to change depending on the needs of the class (we may need additional time to cover a topic). Any changes to the syllabus will be announced in class one week before.

Week	Day	Date	Topic	Readings	Assignment Due
1	T	May 06	Course Introduction; Psychology as a Science		In-Class Activity 1
	R	May 08	Finding and Reading Journal Articles; Research Ethics	Keshav, 2012; Smith, 2003 Subramanyam, 2013	In-Class Activity 2
2	T	May 13	Research Designs; Variables and Measurement; Analytical Methods	Blanca et al., 2018; Bodner, 2006; Putnick & Bornstein, 2016	Reading Quiz 1 In-Class Activity 3
	R	May 15	APA Style; Writing Workshop <u>Guest Lecturer:</u> <i>Emilie Kovalik, ALM</i>		In-Class Activity 4
3	T	May 20	Observational and Survey Methods	Duell et al., 2018; Phillips et al., 2024 Planalp et al., 2017; Weekers et al., 2019	Reading Quiz 2 In-Class Activity 5
	R	May 22	Behavioural and Psychophysiological Methods		In-Class Activity 6
4	T	May 27	Effective Science Communication; Research Proposal Work Time	Dahlstrom, 2007; Hwong et al., 2017; Lewis & Wai, 2017	Reading Quiz 3 In-Class Activity 7
	R	May 29	Draft Peer Review		Final Paper Draft 1 (6:00 PM) In-Class Activity 8
	F	May 30	Draft Peer Review due at 11:59 PM		
5	T	June 03	Evaluating Associative Claims	Gershman & Ullman, 2023 List, 2024 Muller & Coon, 2013	Reading Quiz 4 In-Class Activity 9
	R	June 05	Evaluating Causal Claims		In-Class Activity 10
6	T	June 10	Research Presentations		Presentation (6:00 PM)
	W	June 11	Presentation 1 Peer Review due at 11:59 PM		
	R	June 12	Research Presentations		Presentation (6:00 PM)
	F	June 13	Presentation 1 Peer Review due at 11:59 PM		
7	M	June 16	Research Proposal Paper due at 11:59 PM		

All assignments are due to Quercus. All In-Class Activities are due by 9:00 PM. All Reading Quizzes are due by 6:00 PM. Any assignments due at times different from these are noted above. There is no final exam.



Attendance

Attendance is crucial to success in the course. Students who come to class regularly are more likely to have a higher grade (Credé et al., 2010). I have seen these findings come to fruition in the courses that I have taught. That being said, course attendance is not mandatory and you are not going to receive a mark for attendance. Some of your marks, however, will rely on you being present in class, such as in-class activities, presentations, and peer reviews. These assignments can only be made up in cases of legitimate absences, such as illness, family/personal emergencies or religious observances (see below for information on making up missed assignments). Excuses such as (but not limited to) missing the bus/train or having work are not legitimate absences and requests for make-up work will not be entertained in these cases.

If you become ill and it affects your ability to attend class and/or do your academic work, consult me right away. Normally, I will ask you for documentation in support of your specific medical circumstances. This documentation can be an Absence Declaration (via ACORN) or the University's Verification of Student Illness or Injury (VOI) form. The VOI indicates the impact and severity of the illness, while protecting your privacy about the details of the nature of the illness. If you cannot submit a VOI due to limits on terms of use, you can submit a different form (like a letter from a doctor), as long as it is an original document, and it contains the same information as the VOI (including dates, academic impact, practitioner's signature, phone and registration number). For more information on the VOI, please see <https://www.registrar.utoronto.ca/policies-and-guidelines/verification-of-illness-or-injury/>.

For information on Absence Declaration Tool for A&S students, please see <https://www.artsci.utoronto.ca/absence>. If you get a concussion, break your hand, or suffer some other acute injury, you should register with Accessibility Services as soon as possible. According to University policy, the ACORN Absence Declaration Tool is intended to be used in the following circumstances:

- A health condition or injury (e.g., illness, serious physical harm, mental health issue, scheduled surgery)
- A personal or family emergency (e.g., unanticipated and unavoidable familial incident beyond the student's control)
- Bereavement (e.g., the death a student's immediate family member or close friend)

For extended absences and for absences due to non-medical reasons, students may be in contact with their College Registrar's office. The colleges can help students decide if they want to request an extension or seek other forms of academic consideration.

Please see below for information on [accommodations](#) for disabilities and religious observances.



Late/Missed Assignments and Make-Up Policy

Late assignments are defined as assignments that are submitted after the due date. Late assignments will be accepted but will incur a 10% per day late deduction. After 9 days, a 0 will automatically be given and late assignments will no longer be accepted and the assignment becomes a **missed assignment**.

I have a grace period for late work, meaning that there is a certain amount of time after time that an assignment is due before the late penalty applies. The grace period varies and depends on the submission time of the assignment. I have them outlined below:

Time Due	Time the Assignment Becomes Late
6:00 PM Tuesday	12:00 AM Wednesday
6:00 PM Thursday	12:00 AM Friday
9:00 PM Tuesday	12:00 AM Wednesday
9:00 PM Thursday	12:00 AM Friday
11:59 PM Monday	6:00 AM Tuesday
11:59 PM Wednesday	6:00 AM Thursday
11:59 PM Friday	6:00 AM Saturday

For example, reading quizzes are always due at 6:00 PM on Tuesdays. If you submit the one due on May 13 it at 8:00 PM on May 13, it will be marked without a penalty. If you submit it at 12:01 AM on May 14, it will be marked with a 10% penalty. If you submit it at 3:00 AM on 16, it will be marked with a 30% penalty, and so on. As of 12:01 AM on May 23, it will be marked as missing and you will receive a 0 on the quiz.

Late penalties may be waived if you have a legitimate [absence](#) (see above) or if you have an [accommodation](#) (see below). If you have a legitimate absence that prevents you from completing your work on time, you must notify me within 1 week of your absence. Requests made after 1 week will be considered on a case-by-case basis and **may be denied**. If you have an accommodation, you must notify me within the time range outlined in your letter or within 1 week if you do not have a range outlined. Failure to follow these directions may result in late penalties being denied.

If you miss an assignment and would like to **make it up**, you must have a legitimate [university excuse](#) (see above) or [accommodation](#) (see below) and you must notify me within 1 week of the missed assignment. For instance, if you miss the reading quiz that was given on May 13, you must notify me by May 20 that you would like to make it up. Requests made after 1 week will be considered on a case-by-case basis and **may be denied**. If you have an accommodation, you must notify me within the time range outlined in your letter or within 1 week if you do not have a range outlined. Failure to follow these directions may result in late penalties being denied.

Regrading Policy



If you would like bring a grading concern to my attention, you must wait **24 hours following the return of a grade**. Use this time to reflect on your performance and grade and to give me a chance to breathe after posting grades. Requests made before 24 hours will be ignored. If, after review, you are still concerned about the grading of an assignment, you may request a regrade by emailing me. Regrade requests **must be made within 14 business days of the return of an assignment**. Regrade requests after this deadline will not be considered. Only reasonable and well-justified concerns will be considered and all decisions are final.

Note: In agreeing to resubmit your work for remarking, you are agreeing to a re-evaluation of the entirety of your work. **Your grade may go up, go down, or stay the same as a result of the regrade**. You may only submit one regrade request per assignment and requests based on proximity to a desired grade will not be considered.

Academic Integrity



Academic integrity is essential to the pursuit of learning and scholarship in a university, and to ensuring that a degree from the University of Toronto is a strong signal of each student's individual academic achievement. As a result, the University treats cases of cheating and plagiarism very seriously. The University of Toronto's Code of Behaviour on Academic Matters outlines the behaviours that constitute academic dishonesty and the processes for addressing academic offences. Potential offences include, but are not limited to:

In Papers and Assignments:

- Using someone else's ideas or words without appropriate acknowledgement (including artificial intelligence)
- Submitting your own work in more than one course without the permission of the instructor in all relevant courses
- Making up sources or facts
- Obtaining or providing unauthorized assistance on any assignment

In Academic Work:

- Falsifying institutional documents or grades
- Falsifying or altering any documentation required by the University, including (but not limited to) doctor's notes

All suspected cases of academic dishonesty will be investigated following procedures outlined in the Code of Behaviour on Academic Matters. If you have questions or concerns about what constitutes appropriate academic behaviour or appropriate research and citation methods, please reach out to me. Note that you are expected to seek out additional information on academic integrity from me or from other institutional resources (for example, the [University of Toronto website on Academic Integrity](#)).

Generative Artificial Intelligence



Generative Artificial Intelligence (AI), and specifically foundational models that can create writing, computer code, and /or images using minimal human prompting, are proliferating and becoming ubiquitous. This includes not only tools such as ChatGPT, Claude, and Microsoft Copilot, but many writing assistants that are built on these or similar AI technologies and may be integrated into existing tools, such as Word or Google Docs.

In this course, students may use AI tools for:

- Creating an outline for an assignment, but the final submitted assignment must be original work produced by the individual student alone.
- Critiquing and editing an assignment for purposes of revision, but the first draft must be original work produced by the individual student alone. **Generative AI MAY NOT be used for your peer review/feedback assignments.**

Accommodations



Students with Disabilities: The University provides academic accommodations for students with disabilities in accordance with the terms of the Ontario Human Rights Code. This occurs through a collaborative process that acknowledges a collective obligation to develop an accessible learning environment that both meets the needs of students and preserves the essential academic requirements of the University's courses and programs. Students with diverse learning styles and needs are welcome in this course. If you have a disability that may require accommodations, please feel free to approach me and/or the [Accessibility Services](#) office.

Religious Observances: The University provides reasonable accommodation of the needs of students who observe religious holy days other than those already accommodated by ordinary scheduling and statutory holidays. Students have a responsibility to alert members of the teaching staff in a timely fashion to upcoming religious observances and anticipated absences and instructors will make every reasonable effort to avoid scheduling tests, examinations or other compulsory activities at these times. Please reach out to me as early as possible to communicate any anticipated absences related to religious observances, and to discuss any possible related implications for course work.

Family Care Responsibilities: The University of Toronto strives to provide a family-friendly environment. You may wish to inform me if you are a student with family responsibilities. If you are a student parent or have family responsibilities, you also may wish to visit the Family Care Office website at familycare.utoronto.ca.

Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion



The University of Toronto is committed to equity, human rights and respect for diversity. All members of the learning environment in this course should strive to create an atmosphere of mutual respect where all members of our community can express themselves, engage with each other, and respect one another's differences. U of T does not condone discrimination or harassment against any persons or communities.

Other Student Resources



The University of Toronto offers a wide range of services and support for undergraduate students. Below are some of the resources available at the St. George Campus. Visit the [Student Services and Support](#) website for more details and for supports at other campuses.

- **First Nations House:** Provides culturally-relevant services to indigenous students that support and unite academic success with personal growth and offers learning opportunities for all students to engage with Indigenous communities.
- **Centre for Learning Strategy Support:** Dedicated professionals from diverse academic backgrounds who help students develop the skills, strategies, and competencies that they need to succeed across all faculties and disciplines.
- **Anti-Racism and Cultural Diversity Office:** Serves students in various ways to help facilitate a supportive environment within which to live, learn, and work.
- **Career Exploration and Education:** Explore career possibilities, learn about the latest job-search strategies, or build on your professional skills.
- **Centre for International Experience:** Serves international students coming to the University of Toronto and domestic students looking to go abroad.
- **Family Care Office:** Provides confidential guidance, resources, referrals, and educational programming and advocacy for the University of Toronto community and their families.
- **Health and Wellness:** Offers students a wide range of services to help support them in achieving their personal and academic best.
- **Mental Health:** Through the Health and Wellness Centre, you can access self-guided, peer, group, and individual support, as well as workshops for mental health treatment and maintenance. The university also helps provide community referrals when necessary.
- **Sexual and Gender Diversity Office:** Provides innovative education, programming, resources, and advocacy on sexual and gender diversity for students.

Departmental Guidance for Undergraduate Students in Psychology



The Department of Psychology recognizes that, as a student, you may experience disruptions to your learning that are out of your control, and that there may be circumstances when you need extra support. Accordingly, the department has provided a helpful guide (<https://www.psych.utoronto.ca/current-program-students/guidance-undergraduate-studentspsychology>) to clarify your and your instructor's responsibilities when navigating these situations. This guide consolidates Arts & Science Policies for undergraduate students in one place for your convenience. As an instructor in the department, I will frequently consult with these recommendations when providing you with support, and I recommend that you also consult it to learn more about your rights and responsibilities before reaching out to me.