

**SYLLABUS FOR PSYCH 317: Introduction to Probability and Statistics for Psychology**  
Fall 2010

**Instructor:** Laura M. Little, Ph.D.

Office: Chemistry Library Building, Rm. 116

Contact: llittle@uw.edu

**Graduate TAs:** Colin Beam ([beamc@uw.edu](mailto:beamc@uw.edu)), Tom Soare (twsoare@uw.edu)

Office: SAMLab (Guthrie Annex 4, room 101) (map location J/K-10/11)

**Undergrad TAs:** Kellen Andrienas, Rachel Armstrong, Damian Cade, Chaz Casazza, Sarah Dove, Rachel Kramer, Christina Messak, Greg Wyant

Office: Psychology Study Center and SAMLab (Guthrie Annex 4, rooms 113 and 101)

## **COURSE ORGANIZATION**

Psych 317 is a 5-credit course with three lecture hours per week and two quiz sections per week. Tuesday quiz section is designed as a discussion section, and emphasizes problem solving and communication of quantitative concepts. Topics covered in Tuesday sections will follow those covered in lectures. Thursday sections are your computing laboratory, and on Thursdays we emphasize techniques of computation using statistical software on personal computers. Topics covered in labs will include the organization of data files, transformations of variables, graphical representations of data, descriptive statistics, and elementary inferential statistical analyses.

## **COURSE MATERIALS and RESOURCES**

Text: Howell, D.C. (2010). Fundamental Statistics for the Behavioral Sciences, 7th ed.

Additional resources are available at

<http://www.uvm.edu/~dhowell/fundamentals7/index.html>

Calculator: please bring with you to class a basic scientific/statistical calculator (one that allows you to input data)

**Course website:** <http://courses.washington.edu/II317>

- course schedule
- discussion group
- office hours schedule
- course materials

SMARTPsych website: <http://depts.washington.edu/smartpsy>

- lessons and tutorials
- refresher materials (math concepts, research methods glossary)

Supplementary materials: Handouts and supplementary materials will often be distributed during class. You are responsible for obtaining copies of these materials if you miss class the day they are distributed. All homework assignments will be announced in class and posted to the Assignments section of the course website.

SAMLab: The SAMLab (Statistics and Methodology Laboratory) is located in the Guthrie Annex 4, room 101. It is equipped with new, fast computers that have MS Excel and SPSS. Your TAs hold office hours in the SAMLab, too.

Psychology Study Center: Also in Guthrie Annex 4, but in room 113. The study center is open 9-4 weekdays and is the perfect place to meet friends and classmates for group study.

## **COURSE OBJECTIVES**

Your goals in taking this course should be (1) to learn the basic methods of describing data in psychological research, (2) to learn the principles of interpreting data in psychological research, (3) to become acquainted with the fundamental issues concerning the use of statistical inference, (4) to prepare yourself to conduct and interpret the results of your own research, and (5) to develop competence in the use of computer software for data analysis (SPSS, Excel).

## **COURSE POLICIES AND GRADING**

Attendance at all lectures and both weekly quiz sections is expected. You are and will be responsible for all announcements made during class meetings regarding exam scheduling and homework due dates.

Exams: There will be three exams. They will each count 30% of your grade. All exams will be open notes and open book. The first exam will actually be a composite of two mini-exams given during the first five weeks of the course. The third exam will be given during the final exam period.

Assignments: There will be near-weekly assignments. Your work product must be neat and organized in order for it to be accepted. Computer and textbook assignments will together count as 10% of your grade.

Course grades: Your final GPA for this class will be determined by calculating a course percent grade (based on the weighted average of your four exams, assignments and computer assignments as stated above). Once your course percent grade has been calculated, the following formula is used to transform this percent to a GPA:  $[\text{course percent} - 55]/10 = \text{GPA}$ .

**Timeliness policies:** Assignments will not be accepted late unless cleared by your TA before it is due. Assignments are due at the beginning of class on the due date. There are no exceptions to this policy. Similarly, no makeup exams will be given unless: (1) notice is given to the instructor, in writing, prior to the regularly scheduled exam time, or (2) exceptional circumstances prevail for which documentation is available, in the form of an airline ticket receipt (in the case of family emergencies) or a doctor's case note (not an appointment card) for serious illness or injury. This documentation must be presented to the instructor. All makeup exams must be taken on the Wednesday prior to the Thanksgiving break. There are no exceptions to this policy. If you are unable to take the final exam at the time it is scheduled by the university, you should drop this class and enroll in Psych 317 for winter quarter.

PLEASE do not ask us to set aside a separate time for you to take any of the exams. Because we are not able to accommodate every student's request for special consideration, it is not fair to all students in the class to accommodate specific individuals.

## **IMPORTANT UNIVERSITY POLICIES**

**Academic dishonesty:** The University of Washington has a set of guidelines on how to respond to suspected cases of academic dishonesty, or "cheating." These cases include plagiarism (using another person's work without giving due credit) in written assignments and referring to contraband/getting help from someone else in testing situations. You should familiarize yourself with these guidelines. As a student at the University of Washington you are held to "high standards of academic and professional honesty and integrity" by the Student Conduct code. The Student Conduct Code can be read on the University of Washington's website at: <http://www.washington.edu/students/handbook/conduct.html>. If academic dishonesty occurs, I will refer the matter to the Dean of Student Life. I respect each of you, and I expect each of you to honor that respect.

**Students with disabilities:** I am happy to accommodate students with disabilities in my class, and I follow the University's guidelines for these accommodations. The University is committed to ensuring facility and program access to students with either permanent or temporary disabilities through a variety of services and equipment. The Disability Resources for Students (DRS) Office coordinates academic accommodations for enrolled students with documented disabilities. Accommodations are determined on a case-by-case basis and may include classroom relocation, sign language interpreters, recorded course materials, note taking, and priority registration. DSS also provides needs assessment, mediation, referrals, and advocacy as necessary and appropriate. Requests for accommodations or services must be arranged in advance and require documentation of the disability, verifying the need for such accommodation or service.

### **10 important things you should know about how to succeed in Psych 317:**

1. We want you to succeed in this class.
2. Your chances of succeeding in this class are improved by:
  - a. reading the textbook before class, and again after the lecture
  - b. working on assignments early enough to get help if you need it
  - c. coming to every lecture and quiz section
  - d. learning to tolerate frustration
  - e. forming a study group and using the online discussion group
3. Please use your study group or the newsgroup to check your homework answers. We will NOT check your answers during office hours or class.
4. Please do not send broad content questions (such as, "Can you explain 'variance' to me?") to Psych 317 staff by email. It is very difficult to explain statistical concepts using email! Use the discussion board!! It's great!
5. If you must miss a class, please do NOT ask us, "Did I miss anything important in class?" The answer is, "YES. You must first get someone's lecture notes and go over them. Then come to us if you have any questions."
6. Do not ask your peer tutors to handle administrative questions.
7. Use a pencil on your homework and exams. Do NOT use a pen.
8. Please try to avoid bringing up personal matters immediately before class starts. Wait until after class to see me, and I will be glad to talk to you then.
9. Do NOT hesitate to ask questions in class. If you do not understand something, the right time to get matters clarified is RIGHT AWAY.
10. Come to our office hours. We are there to help you.