

**Psychology 499
Special Study
Spring 2008**

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Course Description

From the SDSU course catalog:

“Individual study, including library or laboratory research and a written report. Maximum credit six units. No more than 12 units of courses numbered Psychology 491, 494, 495, 497, 499 may be counted toward the major” (p. 396).

Psychology 499 is designed to provide students with first-hand experience with psychological research. As part of this course, students will participate in the several responsibilities that are involved in conducting research. Some of these responsibilities include running experiments, entering data, performing literature reviews, writing reports, and creating a research presentation. By the end of the semester, students will:

- Learn how to conduct standardized research
- Understand ethical principles involved in proper research
- Utilize computer programs used to analyze data
- Summarize extant literature pertinent to a research question
- Experience the ins and outs of writing a presentation proposal

Course Requirements

Meetings - Students are required to attend all group meetings with the instructor. Group meetings will be **Tuesdays, 10AM-12PM in the research lab (LA-0)**. These meetings are *mandatory*. If your schedule does not allow you to attend *all* the scheduled meetings you should not enroll in this course. **Tardiness to or absence from three meetings (or more) will result in a no-credit for the course.**

Completion of Human Subjects Tutorial - All individuals who participate in research at SDSU must complete an online tutorial from the Human Research Protection Program. This tutorial will provide important information about ethical research and appropriate treatment of participants. The tutorial can be found at the following website:

<http://www-rohan.sdsu.edu/~gra/login.php>

Students must complete the tutorial, print the certificate they receive upon completion, and give the certificate to the instructor on January 29, 2008.

Running Experiments – Students will be responsible for contacting participants and running the instructor’s experiments. The times and days for the experiments will vary according to various factors (e.g., the lab’s availability, participants’ schedules, your schedule, etc.).

Data Entry – Students will participate in data entry, as well. All students will share in the responsibilities of entering and coding data into the lab’s computer for analysis.

Paper: Research Experiences/Personal Statement – Students will turn in a rough draft and a final draft of a 3-page paper that summarizes their research experiences. Students are strongly encouraged to write this paper as a personal statement that accompanies graduate-school applications. Students will turn in their rough drafts on **Tuesday, March 11, 2008**; students will bring in a draft for the instructor and copies of their drafts without their names for each student in the course. Each student in the course will provide written feedback on each student’s draft. The final draft will be emailed to the instructor by **Tuesday, May 6, 2008**.

Grading

The course is offered for credit/no credit and students will receive a credit grade for completion of the aforementioned requirements. Students who do not meet the requirements listed above will not receive a credit grade.

Please let me know if you encounter any difficulties with completion of the course requirements. I’d like to facilitate you having as much of a positive experience as possible. Additionally, students who need accommodation of their disabilities should contact me privately to discuss specific accommodations of which they have received authorization. If you have a disability, but have not contacted Student Disability Services at (619) 594-6473, please do so before making an appointment to see me.

A few words about cheating and plagiarism from the SDSU Faculty Handbook 2006, p 22:

“Cheating and plagiarism are serious violations of academic standards and, if they occur in connection with an academic program at SDSU, may warrant academic sanctions..as well as disciplinary sanctions..(such as probation, suspension, or expulsion..).”

In order to preserve academic integrity and encourage students to make responsible choices, all students found cheating or plagiarizing will receive an automatic fail for the course and will be sent to the appropriate administrative body for review for the aforementioned consequences. Please review the university’s definition of plagiarism on page 449 of the General Catalog.