

**Psychology 499  
Special Study  
Spring 2011  
Fridays, 12:30PM-2:30PM  
N107 (SDSU-IV Callexico campus)**

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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 nine units of Psychology 497 and 499 may be counted toward the major and no more than 12 units of courses numbered Psychology 491, 494, 495, 497, 499 may be counted toward the major” (p. 392).

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

- Learn how to conduct standardized research
- Understand ethical principles involved in proper research
- Utilize computer programs used to analyze data
- Present yourself as a budding professional in psychology

### **Course Requirements**

**Meetings** - You are required to attend all group meetings. Group meetings will be **Fridays, 12:30PM-2:30PM in N107**. 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>

You must complete the tutorial, print the certificate you receive upon completion, and give the certificate to me on January 28, 2011.

**Running Experiments and Data Entry** (4 hours/week) - You will be responsible for collecting

data for various studies I am currently conducting. The times, days, and locations for the data collections will vary according to various factors (e.g., the lab's availability, your schedule, etc.). All students will share in the responsibilities of data management, as well.

Team Study – You will work with other students together on a literature review, data analysis, and presentation of a study of your own. Correspondingly, you will put together a proposal to present your project at the 2011 San Diego State University Student Research Symposium and the 2011 annual conference of the Western Psychological Association.

Article Summaries – You will read up to two articles per week from scientific journals related to our studies, especially in the beginning of the semester. You are required to use the “Article Summary Form” on our Blackboard site under the Course Documents section to summarize each article you read. The amount of reading done will depend upon the existing literature. You are expected to be able to summarize verbally what you read, too.

Happy Fun Stats Concept of the Week – The team will discuss one statistics or research-methodology concept at each meeting. Each concept will build upon the last meeting's topic. Between meetings, you should study each concept reviewed so that you can verbally describe it at the next meeting. The best way to do this is to share what you learn in each meeting with people throughout the week. Spread the word about the marvels of statistics!

Participant Recruitment – You will be asked to post advertisements and make announcements as needed about the studies we are running in order to recruit participants.

Paper: Research Experiences/Personal Statement – You will turn in a rough draft and a final draft of a 3-page paper that summarizes your research experiences. You are strongly encouraged to write this paper as a personal statement that accompanies graduate-school applications. You will turn in your rough draft on **Friday, April 22, 2011**; you are required to bring in a draft for me and copies of your draft without your name for the teaching assistant and each of your fellow students 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 **9:00AM on Friday, May 13, 2011**.

## **Grading**

The course is offered for credit/no credit and you 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, if you need accommodation for a disability, please contact me privately to discuss specific accommodations for which you 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 Couple More Things**

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 in the SDSU General Catalog.

This course requires students to participate in field trips, research, or studies that include course work that will be performed off-campus. Participation in such activities may result in accidents or personal injury. Students participating in these events are aware of these risks, and agree to hold harmless San Diego State University, the State of California, and Trustees of the California State University and Colleges and its officers, employees, and agents against all claims, demands, suits, judgments, expenses, and costs of any kind on account of participation in the activities. Student using their own vehicles to transport other students to such activities should have current automobile insurance.