

**San José State University**  
**Department of Psychology**  
**PSYC 280, General Seminar, Section 1, Fall, 2022**

**Course and Contact Information**

Instructor(s):	Dr. Evan M. Palmer
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Email:	<a href="mailto:evan.palmer@sjsu.edu">evan.palmer@sjsu.edu</a> [← Best way to reach me!]
Office Hours:	Tues / Thurs 11:00 am – 12:00 pm [via Zoom or in person] (Office hours are a time every week when I will hang out in my office and be available to talk to any student who wants to visit. You can ask questions about the course or review material with me, we could talk about grad school or your career, or just chat!)
Class Days/Time:	Tues / Thurs 9:00 – 10:15 pm
Classroom:	356 Dudley Moorhead Hall
Prerequisites:	Graduate Standing

**Course Description**

Welcome to the *General Seminar* of the Research and Experimental (REx) Psychology MA program. In this graduate course we will examine current psychological literature in selected fields which will lead to the development of a potential thesis topic by the student. In a larger sense though, this course is meant to lay the foundation for a successful graduate career, culminating in a thesis which contributes new knowledge to the discipline of psychology. Next steps for the student may be to pursue a PhD, or to use the skills and knowledge to pursue a career in another field. To this end, the course will focus on three broad goals: Have students...

1. ... develop the analytical and critical thinking skills needed to understand and evaluate psychological research, broadly construed (theoretical reviews of the literature, experiments, correlational studies, studies which use multiple regression and path analyses techniques, longitudinal studies, meta-analyses).
2. ... develop and deeply explore research interests, one of which may become the topic for his or her thesis.
3. ...develop skills and knowledge of resources for future career paths (PhD or career pursuits)

The course is structured to develop skills needed for a successful graduate experience, but to get the most out of this class – and graduate school in general – students should work to take control and initiative in their own learning.

**Graduation Writing Assessment Requirements.** Note that this course satisfies [SJSU's Graduation Writing Assessment Requirements](#) (GWAR).

**MYSJSU Messaging**

Course materials such as syllabus, handouts, notes, assignment instructions, etc. can be found on [Canvas Learning Management System course login website](#). You are responsible for regularly checking with the messaging system through [MySJSU](#) on [Spartan App Portal](#) to learn of any updates.

## Program Learning Outcomes (PLO) and Course Learning Outcomes (CLO)

Upon successful completion of this course, students will be able to:

- 1. Critically evaluate empirical research in psychology.** Students will be able to evaluate the strengths of various types of study designs, critically evaluate the internal and external validity of those studies, and come to sound and nuanced judgements about the contribution of studies to psychological science..
- 2. Develop a plan for thesis completion, and in particular communicate a critical assessment of the research in an area that may develop into their thesis topic.** Students will develop a plan for completing their thesis, and make some steps toward defining their thesis topic (i.e., literature review on an area of interest). Specific skills and topics to be covered are: developing thesis ideas, establishing a thesis adviser, critically assessing the state of research in their area(s) of interest, and communicating that assessment in written (APA style literature review) and verbal (oral presentation) presentations.
- 3. Develop a plan and skills pursuing a PhD or a career.** Students will be able to identify the steps in the PhD application process and resources to help them improve their chances at being accepted to a PhD program (e.g., CV development, gaining research experience, writing effective statements of purpose). Students will also be able to identify the steps in pursuing a career and resources to help them reach their career aspirations (e.g., resume development, networking, improving interviewing skills).

## Program Learning Outcomes (PLOs)

Upon successful completion of MA in Research and Experimental Psychology degree, students will have acquired the following:

- 1. Knowledge Base.** Students completing the MA in Research and Experimental Psychology program will understand the major theoretical perspectives and research methods across areas of experimental psychology (i.e., Developmental, Social, Cognitive, and Physiological).
- 2. Research Skills.** Graduates of our program will possess an advanced level of competence in research methods, statistical techniques, and technical writing skills.
- 3. Career Enhancement.** Students completing the MA in Psychology program will achieve career enhancement through placement in a doctoral program or acceptance of a position requiring a master's in psychology in the public or private sector.

## Required Texts/Readings

### Textbook

#### APA Manual (Required)

American Psychological Association. (2019) *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association* (7th ed.).

#### Other Readings and Resources

All readings for the course will be posted on Canvas.

[SJSU MA Psychology Student Handbook](#)

[APA Style Tutorial](#)

[Owl APA style resource](#)

[SJSU Library: Psychology-specific tutorials, resources](#)

## Other technology requirements / equipment / material

You will need reliable access to the internet to access Canvas and receive e-mails about the course. Course materials such as syllabus, handouts, notes, assignment instructions, etc. can be found on the Canvas site. You are responsible for regularly checking with the messaging system through one.sjsu.edu.

## Library Liaison

Christa Bailey, [christa.bailey@sjsu.edu](mailto:christa.bailey@sjsu.edu), [web link](#).

## Course Requirements and Assignments

### Readings & Discussions

This seminar will include student discussions of assigned readings. The success of any advanced seminar depends upon the active participation of its members. Students will be expected to have done the assigned readings prior to each class and be ready to participate.

### Assessment in this class will include

Assessment Item	% of Final Grade
Create Accounts And Connect With Other Students/Faculty	2
Citation Software Practice Assignment	3
Dissecting a Literature Review	5
Faculty Interviews	5
Citation Network Analysis	5
Aronson & Mills (1959) Follow-Up Presentation	5
Literature Exploration Presentation 1	5
Literature Exploration Write-Up 1	5
Literature Exploration Presentation 2	10
Literature Exploration Write-Up 2	10
Literature Exploration Presentation 3	20
Literature Exploration Write-Up 3	20
Revised Personal Statement – Concise Writing	5
<b>Total</b>	<b>100%</b>

### Participation –Discussion

**Discussion.** A major goal of this course is that students will develop the skills to evaluate, apply, and ultimately communicate their knowledge and insights about psychology. Students are expected to contribute to class discussions.

Much of the class is devoted to developing the skills to identify strengths and limitations of theoretical and empirical articles in psychology. To this end, students will be expected to participate in discussions of each day's readings and may be asked to turn in a response journal for the readings. At minimum, students should be ready to discuss and comment on each article's

- a) hypotheses and background theory leading to the hypotheses,
- b) manner in which the hypotheses were tested,
- c) understanding of the main results and whether they supported the hypotheses,
- d) evaluation of the strengths and limitations of the research design, and
- e) questions, comments, insights, applications, ideas for further research, and so forth.

## Literature Exploration Papers

Another major goal of this course is that students will develop ideas for their thesis. To this end, students will write 3 Thesis Exploration Papers. In each paper, the student will review several papers relevant to a research question, describe a single “focus article” in detail, and then propose a follow-up study that would extend the area of research. The first paper will be 3-5 pages, double-spaced, APA 7<sup>th</sup> Edition style. The second paper will have higher expectations, 5-10 pages, double-spaced, APA 7<sup>th</sup> Edition style. The third and final paper will have the highest expectations in terms of writing quality and content, 12-15 double-spaced pages, APA 7<sup>th</sup> Edition style.

## Literature Exploration Presentations

Students will give a 15 minute presentation for each of the literature exploration assignments. The first 5 minutes of the presentation should be devoted to theoretical background to help the audience understand the background and context of the study. The next 5 minutes of the presentation should review a focus article and discuss the methods, results, and conclusions from the article. The last 5 minutes of the presentation should include a “pitch” for a follow-up study that would either address shortcomings in the original research article or else extend the findings of the article. After each 15 minute presentation, there will be a 5 minute period of questions and discussion with the class.

## Late Assignments

Assignments are due on the day indicated on the course schedule. If due dates are changed, the new due date will be announced in lecture and posted on Canvas in a timely fashion. Assignments will be charged a 20% penalty for every day they are late, pro-rated hourly.

Please contact me if there is a personal or professional conflict or obligation that will interfere with submitting assignments by the due date. I am very lenient with extensions to deadlines if I am contacted *ahead of time*.

## Tentative Grade Determination

Course grades will be based on the percentage of the final grade accumulated throughout the semester. The table below summarizes the final grades associated for the total percentage achieved on assignments in the course. Rubrics for all major assignments can be found on the course Canvas shell. Final grades in this course will be assigned as indicated below.

### Grading Scale:

96.5 – 100%	A plus
92.5 – 96.4%	A
89.5 – 92.4%	A minus
86.5 – 89.4%	B plus
82.5 – 86.5%	B
79.5 – 82.4%	B minus
76.5 – 79.4%	C plus
72.5 – 76.4%	C
69.5 – 72.4%	C minus
66.5 – 69.4%	D plus
62.5 – 66.4%	D
59.5 – 62.4%	D minus
≤ 59.4%	F

**Review and Preparation Activities:** In addition to engagement with the learning environment of the classroom, you will be required to independently prepare yourself for future classes by various out of class review and preparation activities. The university definition of a credit hour suggests that “Success in this course is based on the expectation that students will spend, for each unit of

credit, a minimum of 45 hours over the length of the course (normally 3 hours per unit per week with 1 of the hours used for lecture) for instruction or preparation/studying or course related activities including but not limited to internships, labs, clinical practica. Other course structures will have equivalent workload expectations as described in the syllabus.”

## **Final Examination or Evaluation**

**Lit Exploration 3 Presentations:** The culminating experience in this course will be students presenting their third literature exploration findings during the final exam period on Wednesday, December 14, 2022 from 7:15 – 9:30 AM.

## **Classroom Protocol**

All students are expected to exhibit professionalism and respect for each other and the instructor. Specifically, this means arriving to class on time, being prepared for class, participating in discussions, being civil to your fellow classmates and instructor, and paying attention to in-class demonstrations and lectures. If you arrive late to class or need to leave early from class, please sit near the door so as not to disturb the rest of the class. Please silence and put away cell phones during class. If I see that you are using your cell phone during lecture, I will ask you to put it away. Repeated violations of the cell phone policy may result in further disciplinary action. You may record lectures only if you obtain my permission first, and such recordings are only to be used for personal study and may not be posted online.

## **Statement on Diversity, Equity & Inclusion**

We all have diverse personal experiences, identities, and values that bias how we view the world. I hope that we can embrace this diversity and work together to ensure each student feels like a valued member of the learning community. It is my intent to present materials and activities that are respectful of diversity: gender, sexuality, disability, age, socioeconomic status, ethnicity, race, and culture. It is also my intent that students from all backgrounds and perspectives be well served by this course, that students’ learning needs be addressed both in and out of class, and that the diversity that students bring to this class be viewed as a resource, strength, and benefit.

## **Academic Integrity**

I do not tolerate any forms of academic dishonesty in my courses. I take issues of academic dishonesty very seriously and pursue disciplinary action rigorously, so please take extra care to avoid this sort of unpleasant situation. All writing assignments will be checked for plagiarism by TurnItIn on Canvas. Plagiarized assignments automatically receive a score of 0 in this course. Any incidents of cheating on exams result in an automatic grade of 0 for the exam. If the academic dishonesty is particularly egregious, you may receive an automatic F in the course. All incidents of academic dishonesty are reported to the Office of Student Conduct and Ethical Development (SCED) and students may appeal any accusations of academic dishonesty through SCED.

Note: At the graduate level, violations of academic integrity are especially serious.

## **University Policies**

Per [University Policy S16-9](#), relevant university policy concerning all courses, such as student responsibilities, academic integrity, accommodations, dropping and adding, consent for recording of class, etc. and available student services (e.g. learning assistance, counseling, and other resources) are listed on [Syllabus Information web page](https://www.sjsu.edu/curriculum/courses/syllabus-info.php) (https://www.sjsu.edu/curriculum/courses/syllabus-info.php). Make sure to visit this page to review and be aware of these university policies and resources.

# PSYC 235 / Cognition Seminar

## Fall, 2022

### Course Schedule

(Schedule is subject to change. Changes will be announced in class or via email.)

DATE	TOPIC	ASSIGNMENTS DUE
Tues, 8/23	Introductions & Ice Breakers Syllabus, MA Overview, Q&A	
Thurs, 8/25	Create accounts on LinkedIn, explore Google Scholar Download and install citation management software	Create accounts and connect with other students and professors.
Tues, 8/30	Christa Bailey @ MLK Library (?) [TBD] Literature search tutorial	Citation Software Practice Assignment Due
Thurs, 9/1	Discuss Heppner & Heppner (2004) Article	Read Heppner & Heppner (2004) before class
Tues, 9/6	Select a literature review article and discuss its effectiveness	Dissecting a Literature Review Assignment Due
Thurs, 9/8	Aronson & Mills (1959) Discussion	Read Aronson & Mills (1959) before class
Tues, 9/13	5 Min Presentation of an Article that Cites Aronson & Mills (1959)	Aronson & Mills (1959) Follow-Up Presentation Due
Thurs, 9/15	Systematic Literature Review Tutorial	
Tues, 9/20	Citation Network Analysis Tutorial (?) [TBD]	Faculty Interview Assignment Due
Thurs, 9/22	Faculty Presentations I	
Tues, 9/27	Faculty Presentations II	Citation Network Analysis for Literature Exploration 1 Due
Thurs, 9/29	Faculty Presentations III	
Tues, 10/4	Lit Exploration 1 – Presentations 1	Literature Exploration 1 Write-Up Due
Thurs, 10/6	Lit Exploration 1 – Presentations 2	
Tues, 10/11	Lit Exploration 1 – Presentations 3	
Thurs, 10/13	Lit Exploration 1 – Presentations 4	
Tues, 10/18	Lit Exploration 1 – Presentations 5	
Thurs, 10/20	Open Science Discussion	Read <Open Science Article TBD> before class
Tues, 10/25	Internal and External Validity	Read Gravetter & Forzano (2006) before class
Thurs, 10/27	Lit Exploration 2 – Presentations 1	Lit Exploration 2 Due
Tues, 11/1	Lit Exploration 2 – Presentations 2	
Thurs, 11/3	Lit Exploration 2 – Presentations 3	
Tues, 11/8	Lit Exploration 2 – Presentations 4	
Thurs, 11/10	Lit Exploration 2 – Presentations 5	
Tues, 11/15	Concise Writing Tutorial	
Thurs, 11/17	Academic Alumni Visit	

<b>DATE</b>	<b>TOPIC</b>	<b>ASSIGNMENTS DUE</b>
Tues, 11/22	Industry Alumni Visit	Revised Personal Statement Due
Thurs, 11/24	<b>THANKSGIVING – NO CLASS</b>	
Tues, 11/29	Lit Exploration 3 – Presentations 1	
Thurs, 12/1	Lit Exploration 3 – Presentations 2	
Tues, 12/6	Lit Exploration 3 – Presentations 3	
<b>Wed 12/14 7:15 – 9:30 AM</b>	Lit Exploration 3 – Presentations 4 Lit Exploration 3 – Presentations 5	Lit Exploration 3 (Major Lit Review) Due