

San Jose State University
Psychology Department
PSYC 291, Methods and Design for Applied Research
Spring 2025

Instructor: Jill Citron, Ph.D. (jill.citron@sjsu.edu)

Class Format: In-person

Class Meeting Time: Tuesday 9:00-11:45 a.m., Room DMH 353

Office Hours: Mondays & Thursdays, 11:00 – 11:50 a.m. & by appointment

Office: DMH 352

Course Description

From the course catalog:

Development and management of applied research programs based on psychological contributions, research, and methodology. Criticizing existing and proposed research. Reporting and communicating research results. Prerequisite: PSYC 18 or PSYC 120A; STAT 95 and STAT 115.

Notes: MS program priority.

This class is designed to give you an overview of applied psychological research, focusing on research most directly relevant to the scientific study of psychotherapeutic interventions. We will discuss methods used in experimental group designs and single-subject designs in applied settings. The methodology, time-series design, and how to conduct and report clinical findings are provided, emphasizing the importance of accountability in clinical psychological practice in the modern era.

Course Goals and Student Learning Objectives

Specifically, the goals of this course are for students to gain an understanding of research methods, data analysis, the use of research to inform evidence-based practice, the importance of research in advancing the profession of counseling, and data analytic methods used in conducting research, needs assessment, and program evaluation.

Course Learning Outcomes (CLOs)

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

1. Discuss dimensions of reliability and validity to applied psychological research.
2. Critically appraise the strengths and limitations of research studies on psychotherapeutic intervention and processes that drive mental health problems.
3. Discuss the strengths and weaknesses of different methodological approaches for evaluating research questions related to psychotherapeutic interventions.

Required Material

Kazdin, A., (2024). *Research Design in Clinical Psychology*. Cambridge University Press. 6edition. Please note that this might be an expensive text to purchase. You are encouraged to work from the fifth or fourth editions if that is a better option. You are welcome to use the fourth edition if it is easier to access through online resources. Use this [LINK](#) for options on borrowing from regional libraries. The ISBN for paperback is ISBN: 9781108972338 and is \$89.99 retail. Other class readings are available on Canvas.

Course Website/Canvas

All the material shown on the lecture slides will be available on Canvas after class. However, these materials are not meant to substitute for attending class, and many times, they will not be available until after the material is discussed in class.

Attendance, In-Class Participation, and Late Work

You are expected to attend all class meetings following the MS Clinical Psychology program's class attendance policy

(<http://www.sjsu.edu/psych/Graduates/clinicalProgram/Current/Policy%20regarding%20missing%20classes%20in%20MS%20Clinical%20program.pdf>).

If you know that you will need to miss class for training at your practicum, you must let me know at least 2 weeks in advance (ideally during the first week of class) to coordinate a plan for you to keep up with our class. If you experience a significant illness or other major life disruption that affects your participation across multiple weeks of the class, I will work with you to devise a plan for you to make up work and catch up with what you miss.

I expect you to participate actively in each class meeting, which counts toward your grade.

I generally do not accept late work, but given the pace of life, I will consider brief extensions due to personal and family circumstances beyond students' control. If you need to request this kind of extension, please do so before the assignment's due date. This is meant to provide flexibility for illness, family emergencies, etc. I will *not* give extensions for other reasons. The course has been built with the understanding that you will be writing and defending your Comps.

Gender Inclusive Language

This course will follow the APA ethical standards affirming people of all gender expressions and gender identities. Please let me know if you go by a name that is different from what is on the class roster. Using correct gender pronouns is essential to me, so I encourage you to share your pronouns with me and correct me if I make a mistake. If you have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact me. For more on personal pronouns, see www.mypronouns.org

Respect for Diversity

Our class community is a safe space. This includes mutual respect for all individuals from all backgrounds. The diversity in experience students bring to class is a resource, strength, and benefit to all. I intend to present materials and activities that respect diversity: gender, sexuality, disability, age, socioeconomic status, ethnicity, race, and culture. Your suggestions and discussion are encouraged and appreciated.

Classroom Protocol and Etiquette

Students are expected to behave professionally, respectfully, and courteously in all in-class and out-of-class communications with classmates and the instructor. This includes actively participating in class discussions. If you anticipate any issues based on your situation, please discuss this with me in advance.

Course Requirements

Grades

This class uses a grading contract. If you pass the Core Course Requirements below, you will receive a B+.

1. 5 of 6 Article Review Notes (due before weekly class meetings)
2. 7 of 9 Reading Responses (due before weekly class meetings)
3. Community-based Organizations and Public Health Departments Activity, completed in two parts

For each core requirement you do not complete, your grade will decrease by 1/2 of a letter grade (e.g., if you do not do the required number of article review notes but complete the other two requirements, you'd earn a B- as your course grade).

How do I earn an A? You can earn a grade higher than a B+ by completing the Literature Review and the above core requirements. Your specific grade would then be as follows, assuming you also complete the four required elements:

- “Satisfactory” on the Community Project = A- in the course
- “Above Expectations” on the Literature Review = A in the course
- “Outstanding” on the Literature Review = A+ in the course

Assignments

Article Review

On seven occasions, you will read and analyze a research article in detail *before* class. Then, you will come to class and discuss the article with a small group of classmates. You will take notes on the Clinical Research Review Guide for these articles. To earn credit, you must answer at least 12 (3 from each of the four sections) of the 21 questions in your own words. You may also include copy-pasted content from the article to help guide your thinking and small-group discussion, but you **must** also include some responses in your own words. Your responses to many questions may be brief and do **not** need to be written in a highly formal style (bullet points are not acceptable).

Reading Responses

Each week, you will write a one-page (~250 words) reaction to the readings. On weeks when article review notes are due, your Reading Response should focus on the *other* readings assigned. You should write about the 2-3 things that stood out most from the readings. In weeks where multiple chapters or readings are assigned, you must discuss content from more than one chapter or reading. Please reference the specific page(s) in the reading to help clarify what you are responding to.

Community-based Organizations and Public Health Departments Activity

The objective of this activity is to assess the community's needs and the agencies' capacity to address those needs effectively. By conducting these assessment activities, we aim to identify gaps, strengths, and areas for improvement, ultimately fostering a more informed and collaborative approach to community development and support. We will examine various methods and tools for data collection (e.g., surveys, interviews, focus groups, existing data analysis). And how to analyze and interpret the collected data to identify trends, priorities, and gaps. We will work in groups to explore potential strategies and interventions to address identified needs and strategies for enhancing the agency's capacity to serve the community better.

Participation

Participation is a part of your class grade. You are expected to participate actively in all class meetings. This means that you are actively, constructively, and collegially engaging in small-group and whole-class discussions for each class. If you are not in attendance, then you cannot participate. Students will get one warning if they do not participate; after that, each session they do not participate will decrease their letter grade by 1/3. (e.g., from B+ to B).

Course Schedule

WEEK	In Class	Before Class	Class Topic	Assignment(s) Due End of day, before class	
Week 1 <i>Jan 28</i>	Learning Goals	Kazdin 1	Course Overview of Clinical Research and Ethics	Subscribe to the NYT	
Week 2 <i>Feb 4</i>	Discuss Readings	Kazdin 17 OSC (2015) & Comments	Reliability & Reproducibility	RR 1- Kazdin Ch. 17 OSC	
Week 3 <i>Feb 11</i>	Discuss Readings	Kazdin 2 & 3	Drawing Valid Inferences	RR 2- Kazdin 2&3	
Week 4 <i>Feb 18</i>	Discuss Readings	Kazdin 4 Woods, Wettenbeck & Flessner, 2005	Ideas that Begin the Research Process	RR3- Kazdin 4 ARN 1 Woods, 2005	
Week 5 <i>Feb 25</i>	Discuss Readings	Kazdin 6 Kirsch & Saperstein (1998)	Control and Comparison Groups	RR 4- Kazdin 6 ARN 2 Kirsch & Saperstein	
Week 6 <i>Mar 4</i>	Discuss Readings	Kazdin Ch 5 Gaynor et al., 2008	Participant Selection, Therapist Effects, and Investigator Integrity	RR 5- Kazdin 5 ARN 3 Gaynor, et al, 2008	
Week 7 <i>Mar 11</i>	Discuss Readings	Kazdin Ch 7 & 8 Arch et al., (2012)	Randomized Clinical Trials (Treatment Integrity)	Read- Kazdin 7 & 8 ARN 4 Arch et al., 2012	
Week 8 <i>March 18</i>	Discuss Readings	Kazdin Ch. 10, 11	Assessments Understanding child anxiety within the family unit	RR6- Keaton, et.al., (2013) Kazdin Ch. 10, 11	
Week 9 <i>Mar 25</i>	Discuss Readings	Kazdin Ch. 12 Casas & Conn, 2024, Williams, et al., 2023		Read Ch. 12 Casas & Conn, 2024, Williams, et al., 2023	
Week 10 <i>April 1</i>			Spring Break!		

Week 11 <i>April 8</i>	Professional skills	No Preparation	Easy Week. Expectations for the writing process, tips, and tricks.	
Week 12 <i>April 15</i>	Discuss Readings	Thai, et al., 2024	Considering Procedure, Assessment, and considering internal and external variability	RR7 on article Reducing Social Media Use Improves Appearance and Weight Esteem in Youth with Emotional Distress Thai, et al., 2024
Week 13 <i>April 22</i>	Discuss Readings	Juarascio, et al., 2013 Denning, et al., 2023	Considering Procedure, Assessment, and considering internal and external variability	RR 8 on one of the articles below DBT and ACT Juarascio, et al., 2013 Denning, et al., 2023
Week 14 <i>April 29</i>	Assessing. Community Needs and Agency	Gandelman, DeSantis, Rietmeijer, 2006	Evidence-Based Interventions for Community-based organizations.	RR 9 Gandelman, DeSantis, Rietmeijer, 2006
Week 15 <i>May 6</i>	Assessing. Community Needs and Agency Activity		In-class activity on evaluating CBO's using tools learned. Wrap-up	

