

Faculty of Health  
Department of Psychology

PSYC 2030 3.0 Section M:  
Introduction to Research Methods  
Winter 2026

Tuesdays, 11:30 AM – 2:30 PM  
Curtis Lecture Halls (CLH) F

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**Course Description:**

This course will introduce you to the different stages of the research process. We will discuss how to find and read research articles, how to come up with a research idea and hypothesis, how to design a research study, issues pertaining to measurement and sampling, and ethical research practices. We will also cover in-depth the advantages and disadvantages of a number of research designs and methodologies used in psychological research, including non-experimental (correlational), experimental, and quasi-experimental approaches, as well as how to select statistical analyses appropriate for different research questions and data characteristics. This course emphasizes students' application of knowledge, such that by the end of the term, students will be able to locate the desired empirical psychological research reports, comprehend them, and evaluate them critically.

**Instructor and T.A. Information**

**Instructor:** Udi Alter

**Office Hours:** By appointment (see Contact Teaching Team folder on eClass to book an appointment)

**Email:** [udialter@yorku.ca](mailto:udialter@yorku.ca)

<b>T.A.</b>	<b>Sarah Campbell</b> (Surnames <b>A-L</b> )	<b>Michael Ruderman</b> (Surnames <b>M-Z</b> )
<b>Email</b>	<a href="mailto:scampb@yorku.ca">scampb@yorku.ca</a>	<a href="mailto:ruderman@yorku.ca">ruderman@yorku.ca</a>
<b>Office Hours</b>	By appointment (via email)	By appointment (via email)

When emailing the teaching team, please include **PSYC2030M** in the subject line and your **full name + student ID** in the email body.

**Course Prerequisite(s):** HH/PSYC 1010 6.00 (Introduction to Psychology).

**Course Credit Exclusions:** Please refer to [York Courses Website](#) for a listing of any course credit exclusions.

## Course website: [eClass](#)

All course materials will be available through eClass. This includes important details about the course format & schedule, weekly lecture slides and videos, Q&A submissions for each week's class, in-class activity instructions, assignment instructions and submission link, and appointment sign-ups for instructor & TA office hours. Important communications from instructor to students will take place through eClass's Course Announcements.

It is absolutely necessary that you regularly access eClass to be successful in this course. "I didn't know it was on eClass" or "I don't know how to use eClass" are not acceptable excuses for missing any course component. It is the student's responsibility to review and become comfortable with using eClass for the purposes of this course.

## Class Format and Attendance Policy

This course includes one **in-person meeting of roughly 3 hours each week**. You are expected to come prepared—having read or listened to the assigned reading or podcast episode—and ready to engage in discussions, ask questions, and participate in in-class activities. Each class will include approximately 2 hours of lecture (with a break midway, of course!) and about 40 minutes of an in-class activity and/or applied exercise. Lectures will cover conceptual material, including discussions on the readings, along with concrete examples. The in-class activity component will offer hands-on application of the course content.

**Attendance and active participation are crucial to your success in this course.** However, **if you are unwell or have a justified reason for missing class, please stay home.** Refer to the Participation and Missed Evaluation sections for detailed instructions on what to do in these situations.

## Program Learning Outcomes

Upon completion of this course, students should be able to:

1. Distinguish between experimental and non-experimental designs.
2. Demonstrate critical thinking in identifying the strengths and weaknesses of different research designs.
3. Define hypotheses, independent and dependent variables, validity and reliability.
4. Demonstrates an ability to locate and identify valid, credible, and rigorous psychological research.
5. Identify the problems that arise during sampling, measurement, and making inferences from data.
6. Understand the ethical obligations of researchers.

## Specific Learning Objectives

1. Locate published research online.
2. Synthesize information from published research articles.
3. Identify hypotheses, operational definitions of variables, research design and/or measurement strategy from research examples.
4. Create hypotheses, operational definitions, research design, and measurement strategy for a given research question.
5. Propose a hypothetical research study based on a research idea of your own interest.

## Required Text

All course materials are **free and openly accessible**. The primary textbook is:

Jhangiani, R. S., Chiang, I.-C., Cuttler, C., & Leighton, D. C. (2019). *Research Methods in Psychology* (4th ed.). Kwantlen Polytechnic University, BC, Canada.

Students can access it for free here: <https://kpu.pressbooks.pub/psychmethods4e/>

Course content will be drawn from **lecture slides, the textbook, and other assigned open-access materials**, including select readings, short videos, and/or podcast episodes posted on eClass and the syllabus. **Additional explanations, examples, and discussions presented during class are also considered required material and may appear on tests.**

These materials collectively provide everything needed to succeed on tests, assignments, and lab activities—**no purchases are required!**

Cost: All required course materials are open access and free (\$0) for all students.

## Course Requirements and Assessment:

Assessment	Date of Evaluation (if known)	Weighting
URPP	January – April	2%
In-class participation	weekly	4%
4 in-class quizzes (best 4 out of 6)	January – March	4%
Test 1	February 3	20%
Test 2	March 10	25%
Test 3	April 8-24	25%
Research proposal assignment	April 2	20%
<b>Total</b>		<b>100%</b>

## Description of Assessments

### *URPP (Undergraduate Research Participant Pool)*

The Department of Psychology requires PSYC2030 students to earn 2% of their final grade by participating in research OR by writing a paper that analyzes a published research report. URPP participation is not managed by the Teaching Team for this course; if you have questions about it, you must reach out to the URPP team directly at [urpp@yorku.ca](mailto:urpp@yorku.ca).

**Research option.** The URPP 2% is earned by participating in a total of 2 hrs of research. This research is conducted by psychology faculty members or graduate students and has received ethical approval. Each hour of research participation is worth 1 credit (2 credits = 2%, you get an extra credit for in-person participation). You can choose from a variety of types of research, both online and in person. This is a great opportunity to experience the different research designs you will learn about in this course. Sign up early in the semester to ensure you have a good selection of studies to choose from. See the “URPP Participation” folder on eClass for more information.

Research participation through URPP opens on January 5<sup>th</sup> 2025 and the last day to participate is April 14<sup>th</sup>, 2026

**Paper Alternative.** There is also a paper option for those who would prefer not to participate in research. This alternative is also a good opportunity to practice your skills in reading and understanding published research. Please see the URPP website for more details. The deadline to sign up for the paper-stream is February 19, 2026, and the paper must be submitted by March 31, 2026.

For more details, see: <https://www.yorku.ca/health/psychology/research/undergraduate-research-participant-pool/>, as well as the folder on eClass.

### ***In-class Participation***

Students can earn participation grades by attending each week's class. To earn participation points, students will complete iClicer surveys, quizzes, applied exercises, and/or written reflections during each in-person class. Written reflections and applied exercises must be submitted (on paper!) during the in-person class to earn 1 participation point per class. All students will get 1 "freebie week", building in flexibility to miss a class's worth of in-class participation with no penalty. Students who miss more than a class due to truly exceptional and unavoidable circumstances should speak with the professor about possible alternatives well before the end of the course.

### ***In-class Quizzes***

To encourage consistent engagement and help students stay on top of course material, short in-class quizzes will be administered throughout the term using iClicker or eClass. These quizzes will focus on the week's key concepts, examples, and applied reasoning discussed in lectures and readings. These quizzes are intended as brief comprehension checks—not high-stakes tests—and should help you monitor your understanding before each major evaluation.

There will be **6 quizzes** scheduled between January and April; only your **best 4 scores** will count toward your final grade. Quizzes will typically take place **during class time, often at the beginning of the session**. Students must be present and logged in to participate; there are no make-up quizzes except in cases of documented, exceptional circumstances.

### ***Tests***

Students will complete three in-person tests throughout the semester (see Course Schedule below). Tests will be comprised of both multiple-choice and short-answer questions. Each test will be non-cumulative. More information about the test format and expectations will be provided during class time closer to their scheduled dates. Students should be prepared to bring an official YorkU student card.

### ***Research Proposal Assignment***

Students will complete a cumulative assignment at the end of the course. Specifically, you will propose a hypothetical research study! This assignment requires students to draw on knowledge gained from course lecture content and readings, as well as skills developed through in-class activities completed throughout the semester. More details and specific instructions for the

assignment will be posted in the “Assignment Instructions & Submission” folder on eClass early on in the course.

### **Grading as per Senate Policy**

The grading scheme for the course conforms to the 9-point grading system used in undergraduate programs at York (e.g., A+ = 9, A = 8, B+ = 7, C+ = 5, etc.). Assignments and tests\* will bear either a letter grade designation or a corresponding number grade (e.g. A+ = 90 to 100, A = 80 to 89, B+ = 75 to 79, etc.)

For a full description of York grading system see the York University Undergraduate Calendar – [Grading Scheme for 2025-2026](#)

### **Missed Tests/Midterm Exams/Late Assignment**

#### ***Missed Tests***

All tests will be completed in person. **Student MUST complete the Missed Test form found on eClass within 48 hours of the original test date in the event of a missed test.** Failure to complete the form within 48 hours of the original test dates will result in a grade of 0 for the missed test. At this time, an Attending Physician’s Statement (APS) is *not* required; however, a reason or explanation for missing a test must be provided, and you may provide documentation should you wish to do so. Missed tests for reasons other than illness may be subject to documented evidence.

Once you have notified us of a missed test, a TA will contact you with the date of a make-up test, which will be roughly a week following the original test date; all make-up tests will be completed in person. *If you miss a scheduled make-up test, you must again complete the Missed Test form within 48 hours of the make-up test date with a reason and, assuming this reason is approved, the weighting of the missed test will be redistributed across the remaining tests in the course.* **All students must complete at least two tests to finish the course. It is strongly recommended that you avoid missing tests unless entirely unavoidable to avoid falling behind in the course.**

[HH PSYC: Missed Tests/Exams Form](#). Failure to complete the form within 48 hours of the original deadline will result in a grade of zero for the missed quiz or late assignment.

#### ***Late Assignments***

The Research Proposal Assignment has a 2-day grace period where students can submit after the deadline at *no* penalty. Assignments submitted beyond this 2-day grace period will receive a 5% (of the total assignment grade) per day penalty up to a total of 3 days (i.e., up to 5 days after the original due date). No assignments will be accepted 5 days beyond their due date; assignments more than 5 days late will receive a grade of 0.

**Example.** The deadline for the assignment is April 2nd at 11:59 PM. If additional time is needed (due to illness, falling behind, having a lot of deadlines around then, perfectionism, etc.), students can submit their assignment with no late penalty until April 4th at 11:59 PM. Assignments submitted on April 5th, 6th, and 7th will receive a 5% per day late penalty (e.g., 5%, 10%, 15% total penalty, respectively). Assignments not submitted by April 7th at 11:59 PM will receive a grade of 0.

## Add/Drop Deadlines

For a list of all important dates, please refer to [Undergraduate Fall/Winter 2025-2026 Important Dates](#)

	Fall (TERM F)	Year (TERM Y)	Winter (TERM W)
Last date to add a course <b>without permission</b> of instructor (also see Financial Deadlines)	September 16	September 16	January 15
Last date to add a course <b>with permission</b> of instructor (also see Financial Deadlines)	September 23	September 30	January 26
Drop deadline: Last date to drop a course without receiving a grade (also see Financial Deadlines)	November 4	February 3	March 9
Course Withdrawal Period (withdraw from a course and receive a grade of "W" on transcript – see note below)	November 5- December 2	February 4- April 6	March 10 - April 6

## Add and Drop Deadline Information

There are deadlines for adding and dropping courses, both academic and financial. Since, for the most part, the dates are **different**, be sure to read the information carefully so that you understand the differences between the sessional dates below and the [Refund Tables](#).

You are strongly advised to pay close attention to the "Last date to enrol without permission of course instructor" deadlines. These deadlines represent the last date students have unrestricted access to the registration and enrolment system.

After that date, you must contact the professor/department offering the course to arrange permission.

You can drop courses using the registration and enrolment system up until the last date to drop a course without receiving a grade (drop deadline).

You may [withdraw from a course](#) using the registration and enrolment system after the drop deadline until the last day of class for the term associated with the course. When you withdraw from a course, the course remains on your transcript without a grade and is notated as 'W'. The withdrawal will not affect your grade point average or count towards the credits required for your degree.

## Information on Plagiarism Detection

All submitted work for this course must be completed by the student submitting the work. Any submitted assessments that are suspected to have been completed in part or entirety by someone other than the student who submitted the work (including work that has been AI-generated) will be considered a breach of academic honesty. For more information on the university's perspective on AI, visit this [website](#). For more information about Senate policies on Academic Honesty, see the links in the previous section.

## Electronic Device Policy

Students may find it helpful to have access to a laptop or tablet during in-person classes to work on assigned learning activities. Students will need access to a computer and an internet

connection to retrieve lecture content and assigned readings through eClass in addition to weekly in-person classes.

Laptops, tablets, and phones can support learning when used purposefully. However, research consistently shows that multitasking during class—such as checking messages or browsing unrelated websites—is associated with lower grades for both the user and nearby peers. So please be considerate to yourself (you’re paying a lot of money to be here), but also to others around you. To minimize distraction and foster focus:

- Use devices only for course-related activities (e.g., note-taking, reviewing slides).
- If you need to take a call or use your phone for non-course reasons, step outside briefly.
- Consider handwriting notes: studies suggest it improves understanding and memory.

Being respectful and mindful with technology helps everyone stay engaged and perform better.

Any sharing of pictures or videos from class and/or from personal feedback received from completed course assessments will be considered a violation of the electronic device policy, and there will be consequences for this behaviour. The unauthorized sharing of these details or any other course materials or updates/announcements by any means (e.g., WhatsApp group, student forum, Reddit, Facebook group, etc.) is strictly prohibited!

### **Academic Conduct for Students**

York University takes academic integrity very seriously; please familiarize yourself with [Information about the Senate Policy on Academic Honesty](#).

It is recommended that you review Academic Integrity by completing the [Academic Integrity Modules](#) and [York University Library Workshops](#)

### ***Test Banks***

The offering for sale of, buying of, and attempting to sell or buy test banks (banks of test questions and/or answers), or any course specific test questions/answers is not permitted in the Faculty of Health. Any student found to be doing this may be considered to have breached the Senate Policy on Academic Honesty. In particular, buying and attempting to sell banks of test questions and/or answers may be considered as “Cheating in an attempt to gain an improper advantage in an academic evaluation” (article 2.1.1 from the Senate Policy) and/or “encouraging, enabling or causing others” (article 2.1.10 from the Senate Policy) to cheat.

### ***Course Group Chats***

Participating in group chats other than the Student Forum on eClass (e.g., WhatsApp, Discord, Reddit, etc.) in the interest of forming a course community that is solely for the students enrolled in this course is permitted, but students should proceed with caution for the following reasons:

1. **Jurisdiction and safety.** The professor, teaching assistants, department, and York University have no authority over external platforms. Although the instructor or TAs may be able to observe these spaces, they cannot regulate them. If inappropriate or unsafe behaviour occurs, close the group and create a new one. Report any concerning behaviour

by another PSYC2030M student to the professor. To reduce the risk of external individuals joining a course chat group, please only share links to the group through private means (i.e., don't post the link publicly on Reddit) and share only with other members of PSYC2030B (there is a Student Forum on eClass you can use for this purpose).

2. **Academic integrity.** Group messaging tools can support collaboration, but can also lead to breaches of academic honesty when students share *or* use answers to graded work or collaborate on individual assignments. Participation in illicit activity (e.g., cheating) that occurs in such groups may put your academic integrity at risk. Sharing of answers or asking for an answer on a graded assessment through such a group chat is considered an act of academic dishonesty and is strictly prohibited. Any violations will be reported to the Department of Psychology and are subject to consequences. It is strongly recommended that participants who violate these guidelines be immediately blocked/removed from the group by the group administrator. Moderators should clearly state the group's purpose and remind participants of academic honesty expectations. If you witness academically dishonest behaviour, it is strongly recommended that you leave the group and consult your TA or instructor if unsure about whether the behaviour constitutes a violation. For detailed information about expectations for academic honesty, please refer to York's [Senate-approved Academic Conduct Policy and Procedures](#).
3. **Privacy of communication.** The sharing of screenshots of emails or answers provided by the professor or other members of the teaching team through emails or during office hours appointments is not permitted in course community group chats. All email communications between student and professor/teaching team are considered private and should not be shared without express written permission from the professor/teaching team.

### **Use of Artificial Intelligence (AI) in this Course**

AI tools (e.g., ChatGPT, Copilot, Claude, Gemini, etc.) are increasingly common in academic and professional settings, and they can support learning when used responsibly. However, the goal of this course is for you to practice core skills in research thinking, critical analysis, problem solving, and clear communication. These skills cannot be outsourced.

To support your learning while maintaining academic integrity, the following rules apply:

#### ***1. In-Person Evaluations (Tests, Quizzes, In-Class Activities)***

AI tools are **NOT permitted under any circumstances** for any in-person evaluations. This includes tests, in-class quizzes, written reflections, applied exercises, participation activities, and any other graded or ungraded work completed during class.

Because these evaluations assess your real-time understanding:

- Do **not** use AI to answer, assist with, or look up test or quiz questions.
- Do **not** use AI during in-class reflections or applied exercises.

- Any attempt to use AI for in-person evaluations is considered a serious breach of academic honesty, equivalent to cheating on a test.

## 2. *Research Proposal Assignment*

You may use AI tools **only in limited, transparent, and supportive ways**. AI may **NOT** be used to generate content, reasoning, or writing for your assignment.

### **Permitted Uses (Support Only)**

- brainstorming early/general topic ideas
- clarifying concepts
- searching for useful resources (e.g., identifying relevant topics or keywords to look up)

### **Not Permitted**

- generating paragraphs, sentences, hypotheses, variables, or study designs
- generating summaries or interpretations
- generating or fabricating citations
- asking AI to choose your methods, reasoning, or analytical approach
- asking AI to make methodological choices or reasoning decisions
- writing your paragraphs
- submitting any material, ideas, or text not created by you

Your final submission must reflect *your* thinking, writing style, and understanding of the course material. If it does not, it may be subject to additional review.

## 3. *Required AI Use Statement + Correspondence Appendix*

If you use AI in any of the permitted ways, your assignment must include:

### a) **AI Use Statement**

A short paragraph at the end of your assignment describing:

- which AI tool(s) you used
- what you used them for
- how (or whether) any output was incorporated
- confirmation that all reasoning and writing are your own

### b) **AI Correspondence Appendix**

You must also include an appendix containing a **printout or pasted transcript** of your full AI correspondence, including:

- your exact prompts
- the AI's full responses

This appendix does **not** count toward page limits.

Failure to provide this documentation will be treated as **undisclosed AI use**, which may constitute a breach of academic honesty.

### **Example of a Complete AI Use Statement**

***AI Use Statement:*** I used ChatGPT (GPT-4.1) to help brainstorm broad research topic areas. I reviewed the suggestions and independently selected my topic. I also asked the AI to clarify the conceptual difference between reliability and validity using definitions we covered in class. I did not use any AI-generated text, summaries, or design elements in my assignment. All writing, operational definitions, hypotheses, and methodological decisions are entirely my own. A full transcript of my AI correspondence is included in the Appendix.

#### ***4. Screening for AI-Generated Work***

All written submissions for the Research Proposal Assignment are screened using tools that detect AI-generated text patterns. These tools are used to support academic integrity, not to determine grades.

If your work appears inconsistent with your in-class performance or is flagged for potential AI generation, the instructor may request:

- drafts of your work
- your AI transcripts associated with your work
- an oral or written explanation of your assignment
- in-person clarification of your reasoning

#### ***5. Academic Integrity and Consequences***

Misuse of AI, including submitting AI-generated writing, ideas, reasoning, or citations; failing to disclose AI use; or omitting the required AI appendix, is considered a violation of York University's Senate Policy on Academic Honesty.

Misuse of AI is treated **equivalently to cheating on a test**, unauthorized collaboration, or submitting work completed by someone else.

Cases may be escalated to the Department of Psychology or Faculty of Health for formal academic integrity review and sanctions. Misuse of AI falls under multiple categories of academic misconduct as defined in York University's Senate Policy on Academic Honesty.

## 6. Purpose of This Policy

The goal is not to ban technology. The goal is to ensure that you genuinely learn the skills this course is designed to teach: questioning information, thinking critically, designing research plans, and communicating clearly. Appropriate AI use can support this work; inappropriate use prevents learning and violates academic integrity.

### Academic Accommodation for Students with Disabilities

While all individuals are expected to satisfy the requirements of their program of study and to aspire to do so at a level of excellence, the university recognizes that persons with disabilities may require reasonable accommodation to enable them to do so. The university encourages students with disabilities to register with Student Accessibility Services (SAS) to discuss their accommodation needs as early as possible in the term to establish the recommended academic accommodations that will be communicated to Course Directors as necessary. Please let me know as early as possible in the term if you anticipate requiring academic accommodation so that we can discuss how to consider your accommodation needs within the context of this course. <https://accessibility.students.yorku.ca/>

### Excerpt from Senate Policy on Academic Accommodation for Students with Disabilities

1. Pursuant to its commitment to sustaining an inclusive, equitable community in which all members are treated with respect and dignity, and consistent with applicable accessibility legislation, York University shall make reasonable and appropriate accommodations in order to promote the ability of students with disabilities to fulfill the academic requirements of their programs. This policy aims to eliminate systemic barriers to participation in academic activities by students with disabilities.

All students are expected to satisfy the essential learning outcomes of courses. Accommodations shall be consistent with, support and preserve the academic integrity of the curriculum and the academic standards of courses and programs. For further information please refer to: [York University Academic Accommodation for Students with Disabilities Policy](#).

### Course Materials Copyright Information

These course materials are designed for use as part of the PSYC2030 course at York University and are the property of the instructor unless otherwise stated. Third-party copyrighted materials (such as book chapters, journal articles, music, videos, etc.) have either been licensed for use in this course or fall under an exception or limitation in Canadian Copyright law.

Copying this material for distribution (e.g. uploading material to a commercial third-party website) may lead to a violation of Copyright law. [Intellectual Property Rights Statement](#).

### Course Schedule\*

Class	Date	Topics	Reading/Listening
1	Jan 6	Welcome to the course	eClass + syllabus
2	Jan 13	Psychology as a science	<b>Chp. I</b> (the Science of Psychology) <a href="#">Reading scientific papers</a>

		How to read and understand a research paper	Optional: <a href="#">Ten simple rules for reading a scientific paper</a>
3	Jan 20	Research fundamentals and the scientific method	<b>Chp. II</b> (Overview of the Scientific Method)
4	Jan 27	Conducting ethical research Library workshop on lit. review	<b>Chp. III</b> (Research Ethics)
5	Feb 3	<b>TEST 1</b>	<b>Bring YorkU ID/Student Card</b>
6	Feb 10	Measurement and sampling	<b>Chp. IV</b> (Psychological Measurement) + <b>Chp. VII</b> ( <i>only</i> subsection 36: Conducting Surveys/sampling)  Optional: <a href="#">The weirdest people in the world?</a>
	Feb 17	<b>READING WEEK (YAY!)</b>	
7	Feb 24	Replication crisis Questionable research practices Open science	<a href="#">Measurement Schmeasurement: Questionable Measurement Practices and How to Avoid Them</a>  <b>Chp. XIII</b> ( <i>only</i> subsection 60: From the “Replicability Crisis” to Open Science Practices)  <a href="#">The replication...dilemma</a> (podcast) <a href="#">In defense of researchers’ degrees of freedom</a> (podcast)
8	Mar 3	Basic experimental designs	<b>Chp. V</b> (Experimental Research)
9	Mar 10	<b>TEST 2</b>	<b>Bring YorkU ID/Student Card</b>
10	Mar 17	Non-experimental designs Observational methods Self-report methods	<b>Chp. VI</b> (Non-Experimental Research) <b>Chp. VII</b> ( <i>the rest of the chapter</i> )
11	Mar 24	Quasi-experimental designs Complex experimental designs	<b>Chp. VIII</b> (Quasi-Experimental Research) <b>Chp. IX</b> (Factorial Designs)
12	Mar 31	Buffer zone / catching up Final exam + assignment perp.	
<b>DEADLINE: Research Proposal Assignment Due April 2 @ 11:59 PM (+ 2 day grace period)</b>			
April 8 -24 (winter examinations period)	<b>TEST 3 (Bring YorkU ID/Student Card)</b>		

\* This course schedule is a general plan for the course; deviations may be necessary.