Administrative Unit: History and Social Sciences Department

Course Prefix and Number: PSYC 325

Course Title: Research Design

Number of Credit Hours: 3
Lecture Hours: 3
Laboratory Hours: 0

Catalog Description: The study of applied research in the behavioral sciences, with an emphasis on design, methodology, results, interpretation, and theory building. Both qualitative and quantitative approaches are addressed with the latter employing both parametric and nonparametric analyses. Prerequisite: Grade of “C” or higher in PSYC/SOCI 324; junior standing. Cross-listed as SOCI 325.

Prerequisite(s)/Corequisite(s): Grade of “C” or higher in PSYC/SOCI 324; junior standing.

Text(s): Most current editions of the following:


Adler, E.S., & Clark, R. *An Invitation to Social Research.* Wadsworth.


Course Objectives:
- To understand the complexities of research design.
- To apply understanding to an individualized research project.

Measurable Learning Outcomes:
- Demonstrate knowledge of research designs, techniques and concepts commonly used in social and behavioral research.
- Conduct a literature search and demonstrate the ability to critically evaluate published research.
- Produce at least one creative paper in APA format and style.
- Demonstrate comprehension of the ethics involved in doing research.

Topical Outline (major areas of coverage):
- Generating ideas for research projects
- Scientific theories and Hypothesis testing
- Searching the literature
- Critical evaluation of published information
• Ethics of research (including Columbia College’s PHS committee—called IRB at most institutions)
• Professional writing in APA format and style
• Reliability and validity issues in research
• Sampling Issues
• Parametric and nonparametric statistics: evaluating data and graphs
• Research Method/Designs: Basics, limitations, strengths, techniques, concepts, etc. for at least 7 of the following:
  – Case Study
  – Archival
  – Survey / Questionnaire
  – Naturalistic / Observational / Field
  – Correlational
  – Quasi-Experimental
  – Single-Subject Experimental, Small n
  – True Experimental
  – Program Review
  – Historical

Material from this course may be tested on the Major Field Test (MFT) administered during the Culminating Experience course for the degree.

Recommended maximum class size for this course: 20

Library Resources: Online databases are available at http://www.ccis.edu/offices/library/resources.asp. You may access them from off-campus using your eServices login and password when prompted.

Prepared by: Cheryl Hardy, Ph.D.  
Name ___________________________  Signature ___________________________

Date: January 14, 2005

NOTE: The intention of the master syllabus is to provide an outline of the contents of this course, as specified by the faculty of Columbia College, regardless of who teaches the course, when it is taught or where it is taught. Faculty members teaching this course for Columbia College are expected to facilitate learning pursuant to the course objectives and cover the subjects listed in the topical outline. However, instructors are also encouraged to cover additional topics of interest so long as those topics are relevant to the course’s subject. The master syllabus is, therefore, prescriptive in nature but also allows for a diversity of individual approaches to course material.

Office of Academic Affairs
12/04