

BRIERCREST

PSY 701 Psychological Research Methods Spring 2020

"We start off confused, and end up confused on a higher level." -A. F. Chalmers

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Course Dates: April 20-24, 2020

3 Credit Hours

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course will serve as an introduction to the approaches and techniques involved in research within psychology, will provide an opportunity for firsthand experience in the use of these techniques, and will assist seminary students in the preparation of their SRP or Thesis proposal. Students will be required to participate in class practice.

COURSE TEXTS

American Psychological Association. (2010). *Publication manual of the American Psychological Association* (6th Edition). Washington, DC: American Psychological Association.
([HTTPS://WWW.APASTYLE.ORG/](https://www.apastyle.org/))

Nestor, P.G., & Shutt, R. K. (2019). *Research Methods in Psychology: Investigating Human Behavior* (3rd Edition, ISBN: 9781544323770). Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE Publications, Inc. **Either digital version or print copy works.**

Students are expected to refer "Guide for Writing Research Papers at Briercrest Seminary" and Guide for Writing Research Papers, available as PDF documents here: <https://www.mybriercrest.ca/seminary/documents/>

These texts are available in store and online at the Briercrest Bookstore: <http://briercrest.ca/bookstore>.

Students are responsible for course materials and communication on Canvas (<https://briercrest.instructure.com>; cf. <http://briercrest.ca/online/canvas>) and their myBriercrest.ca email account.

COURSE OUTCOMES

Successful completion of this course will help students to:

1. Sharpen their ability to identify research topics, and identify the research methods best suited to addressing those topics.
2. Become familiar with general principles of research.
3. Become informed readers of the research literature.
4. Acquire competence at preparing written research proposals.
5. Acquire competence at writing up the results of research projects.
6. Understand research ethics and navigate the Review Board approval process.

COURSE FORMAT

Lectures and in-class exercises will be used to present and clarify material from the text, to present and clarify extratextual material, to answer questions the students might have concerning the material, and to provide examples of the principles and concepts being taught.

ASSIGNMENTS

Pre-Course Assignments:

The following must be completed before the beginning of class. **Assignments are due at the beginning of the first day of classes.**

- Readings: The Nestor & Shutt text is to be read ahead of time.
- Preliminary Topic (20%): One purpose of this course is to assist students in the Counselling/MFT programs as they prepare to submit proposals for the SRP or Thesis. After having read Nestor & Shutt, prepare a preliminary paper (2 pages minimum, not counting references) in which you introduce and develop an original idea for an **empirical** study that could serve as your SRP/Thesis (it's better to make this become the actual topic for your SRP/Thesis).
 - Essential points to cover in the paper include (but are not limited to):
 1. Explaining why the topic is important.
 2. Briefly reviewing some key prior research on this topic.
 3. Stating what theoretical approach you are considering using (and why).
 4. Translating your research question into a specific testable hypothesis.
 5. Defining the major terms/concepts in your research question.
 6. Stating what kind of design appears best suited to the question (and why).
 7. Describing (and justifying) how you plan to operationalize variables.

This paper must be written using proper APA format. Use the *APA Publication Manual* and the Briercrest APA style guide available online at:

<https://www.mybriercrest.ca/doc/?ID=207>

<https://www.apastyle.org/>

Mid-Course Assignments:

There will be a series of practice/quizzes undertaken during the week, in which students will gain real experience in some of the practical aspects of preparing and evaluating studies (10%).

Post-Course Assignments:

The due date for these projects is **June 19, 2020**. Assignments should be submitted through Canvas. Professors are expected to return graded assignments within six weeks of the due date. Any questions regarding the return of graded assignments can be directed to Academic Services. When an extension is taken, the professor is no longer obligated to meet this deadline.

- Research Proposal (35%): Following up on your pre-course Preliminary Topic Idea, prepare a paper (10 pages minimum, not counting references) in which you propose your topic and detail how you plan to go about carrying out that study. In addition to a more fleshed-out coverage of the major points that you covered in your preliminary paper, include such details as where (and how) you intend to obtain participants, what procedures you intend to

carry out in the testing of your hypothesis, your anticipated results, and your conclusions regarding the implications of those anticipated results. Include copies of any measures that you intend to use. The paper must be written using proper APA format.

- Research Ethics Application (10%): Complete the *Application for Review by Research Ethics Board* form for your proposed study. Submit the form (with all necessary attached documents) to me. If your topic does not require REB approval (e.g., meta-analysis or archival research), provide instead a written explanation for why it does not, including a reference to the section of the REB policy statement describing what research does and does not require approval. Briercrest's REB policy statement and the Application for Review form are both available online at <https://www.mybriercrest.ca/seminary/documents/>
- Exam (25%): You will be given a take-home exam.

Grading Rubric For The Proposal:

Research (8 points maximum – 20%)

- Sufficient depth and breadth of research indicated
- Proper sources used
- Primary sources as main evidence
- Secondary sources used judiciously
- No second-hand citations
- No references without citations

Content (10 points maximum – 30%)

- Hypothesis clearly stated
- Essential points (as described above) covered
- Topic fits the course requirements
- Evidence supports conclusion
- All sources cited
- All sections relevant to the topic
- Interpretation logical
- Ideas sufficiently developed
- No citations without references
- Judicious use of direct quotes

Structure (9 points maximum – 26.7%)

- Paragraphs logically structured
- Sections in the correct order
- Minimum length requirement met (not too short, no obvious paper-padding)
- References in proper APA format
- Citations in proper APA format

Style, Grammar, Spelling (6 points maximum – 16.7%)

- Writing style suits the assignment (professional, not casual or flowery)
- Correct use of technical terms
- Avoid commonly-misused words and phrases
- No anthropomorphization of research
- Neutral language when referring to groups
- Correct grammar, spelling, and punctuation

Details (2 points maximum – 6.7%)

- Full name and Course Code included
- Pages properly numbered

Correct font and margins

Total: 35 points

Grading: Students' final grades will be based on their accumulated point total for the course based on the following percentages-

Preliminary Topic Idea	20%	Grade Scale:		
In-Class Projects	10%	0-59% = F		
Research Proposal	35%	60-62% = D-	63-66% = D	67-69% = D+
REB Application	10%	70-72% = C-	73-76% = C	77-79% = C+
Exam	25%	80-82% = B-	83-86% = B	87-89% = B+
Total	100%	90-92% = A-	93-97% = A	98-100% = A+

SEMINARY CALENDAR

Students are expected to be aware of the policies that govern course work at Briercrest Seminary, all of which are published in the current Seminary Calendar:

<https://www.briercrestseminary.ca/doc/?ID=64>

Attendance Policy

Students are expected to attend 100% of each modular for which they register. If this is impossible due to extenuating circumstances, arrangements must be made with the course professor before the first day of class. If extenuating circumstances prevent a student from attending class, a maximum of one full day of class can be foregone. If additional time is missed, the student will fail the course unless they first request to withdraw from the course or move the course to an audit.

Course Schedules

Classes begin at 9:00 a.m. on Monday morning and run a minimum of 30 hours through the course of the week. The schedule is determined by the course professor. Students should check the syllabus for specifics. When the syllabus does not state class times, students are responsible to check with the professor prior to making travel plans.

Assignment Submission

All assignments must be submitted no later than eight weeks after the last day of class as stated in the syllabus. The correct due dates will be clearly noted in the syllabus and each faculty member will state in their syllabus how assignments should be submitted. Assignments submitted within a week after the due date will be accepted with a 10 per cent penalty. For additional information refer to the late assignment policy or the extension policy in the [academic calendar](#).

Return of Graded Assignments

Professors are expected to return graded assignments within six weeks of the due date. If they fail to do so, students may submit an inquiry to the [Seminary](#). If an extension is granted, the professor is no longer obligated to meet this deadline.

Academic Honesty

Students are accountable to perform each task according to principles of academic honesty. Please refer to pages 24-25 in the [academic calendar](#) for more information.

Academic Accommodations

Any student with a disability, injury, or health condition who may need academic accommodations (permanent or temporary) should discuss them with the course instructor after contacting the Director of the Academic Resource Centre in person (L234 in the Library), by telephone (1-306-756-3230) or by email (academicresourcecentre@briercrest.ca). Documentation from a qualified practitioner will be required (i.e., medical doctor, psychologist, etc.).