Instructor: James Forbes, Professor of Psychology
Email: james.forbes@angelo.edu
Phone: 325-486-6120
Office: 204-B Academic Building
Office Hours: MTWRF 9-11am, or by appointment

Course Information

Course Description
We will engage in the process of identifying suitable research topics, selecting variables, considering a research design and methods, reviewing the literature, and writing a proposal for empirical research. Your research proposal will address an applied or fundamental question of interest to you. A written report of your research proposal will be due at the end of the semester. You may collaborate with others on the same project, but each of you complete an individually written proposal.

To help you with your research proposal development, we will discuss myriad details of conducting empirical research and communicating findings. We will also read and discuss individual research articles with the aim of learning directly from the published work of successful researchers.

Course Credits
Three Semester Credit Hours (3-0-0)

Prerequisite
Graduate Student Classification

MS Applied Psychology Program Outcomes
Upon completion of the program of study for the master’s in applied psychology, the graduate will be prepared to: access and use relevant knowledge and skills in psychology; apply
psychological concepts, research findings, and methods to explain how to go about solving a practical problem concerning health, safety, education, prosperity, decision making, or social responsibility; demonstrate comprehension and use of ethical principles appropriate to psychology.

Student Learning Outcomes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Student Learning Outcome</th>
<th>Assignments and activities validating outcome achievement:</th>
<th>Mapping to Program Outcomes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Develop an empirical applied or fundamental research topic or question.</td>
<td>Assignments, discussion forums, blog, empirical research proposal</td>
<td>Psychological Knowledge and Skills; Applying Concepts and Research; Psychological Ethics</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Apply psychological research findings and methods to address personal, applied, fundamental, or professional issues.</td>
<td>Assignments, discussion forums, blog, empirical research proposal</td>
<td>Psychological Knowledge and Skills; Applying Concepts and Research; Psychological Ethics</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Write an empirical research proposal for a topic and question of importance to you.</td>
<td>Assignments, discussion forums, blog, empirical research proposal</td>
<td>Psychological Knowledge and Skills; Applying Concepts and Research; Psychological Ethics</td>
</tr>
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</table>

Course Delivery

This is an online course offering. The course will be delivered via the Blackboard Learning Management System. The course site can be accessed at [http://blackboard.angelo.edu](http://blackboard.angelo.edu)

Recommended Texts

*Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association (recent edition).*

It is a conventionally good idea to have a copy of the APA publication manual. Practices change over time and having a current version of the APA manual to consult for questions about manuscript preparation is invariably useful.


Scott Miller’s book is to writing in psychology as William Strunk’s *The Elements of Style* is to writing in general. Writing well in psychology is the key ingredient to giving your proposal some chance for continued existence beyond this course. Reading Scott Miller’s book will help you write your research proposal well. Miller’s book will help you develop your psychology writing
voice. Crucially, the book will help you with your search of the relevant literature, as well as answer your questions about what to write and how to write it for each section of your proposal.

**To participate in one of ASU’s distance education programs, you need this technology:**

- A computer capable of running Windows 7 or later, or Mac OSX 10.8 or later
- The latest version of one of these web browsers: internet Explorer, Firefox, or Safari
- Microsoft Office Suite or a compatible Open Office Suite
- Adobe Acrobat Reader
- High Speed Internet Access
- Ethernet adapter cable required (wireless connections can drop during tests and Collaborate sessions)
- Webcam

Refer to Angelo State University’s Distance Education website for further technology requirements: [Angelo State University's Distance Education Website](#)

**Communication**

I will typically respond to your questions posted on Bb or sent via email and/or telephone messages within 24 hours during working hours Monday through Friday. Weekend and holiday questions messages may not be returned until the next school weekday.

**Assignment and Activity Descriptions**

1. **Assignments** (30% of your course grade). Assignments are embedded within four learning modules (Module 1, Module 2, Module 3, Module 4). All of the assignments will help you develop your proposal for empirical research, relate course material to your own experiences, and give you an opportunity to construct (*belief architecture*) or reveal (*belief archeology*) your own beliefs about psychology and its applications. Many of the assignments will help you learn skills needed to write an APA style research proposal.

Scoring & Grading. Assignments will be graded using a 5-, 10-, or other point scale, where a 5, 10, or other point total are the highest scores obtainable. *Please note that assignment scoring and grading are separate processes.* Your assignment score will be the proportion of the total points you obtain. At the very end of the semester, I will sum your assignment scores, evaluate the class assignment score distribution, then assign assignment grades that reflect the difficulty of the exercise. The highest total assignment scores will receive an "A," the next group of scores will receive a "B," and so on. Hence, your assignment grade will be based more on your performance relative to your peers than to some arbitrary standard of excellence.
2. **Discussion Boards** (20% of your course grade). Discussion forums are posted on the Discussions tab. I will add forums as we progress through the semester. Participating in the discussion forums will help you consider a variety of issues regarding proposal development. Reflecting on others’ posts, and posting your thoughts about proposal development will help you clarify and enrich your thinking.

Scoring & Grading. Discussion forum posts will be evaluated using a 10-point scale. The highest scores will be awarded to those who make insightful comments or responses. Echoing others' opinions and comments made only at the very end of the discussion forum due date will be awarded the lowest scores. Scoring and grading are separate processes. A single discussion score is not a grade. Your cumulative discussion boards score will be the proportion of the total points you obtain (e.g., 96 of 115). At the very end of the semester, I will sum your discussion forum scores, evaluate the class discussion forum score distribution, then assign discussion boards grades that reflect the difficulty of the exercise. The highest total discussion boards scores will receive an "A," the next group of scores will receive a "B," and so on. Hence, your discussion boards grade will be based on your performance relative to your peers—not to some arbitrary standard of excellence. Your discussion boards grade will count as 15% of your final course grade.

Blackboard Location: Discussion board forums are posted under the Discussion Boards tab on Blackboard. Each forum will have availability dates posted during with time the forum will be open and accessible.

3. **Empirical Research Proposal** (50% of your course grade). You will write an empirical research proposal using APA style on a topic and question of interest to you. Your proposal will link your topic and question(s) to the existing published literature. Your proposal will evaluate, explain, compare, findings and methods from published research that have been or could be used or revised or adapted to better address your question and topic. Your proposal will also identify a sample, describe materials needed for the conduct of the research, and describe research design and procedures.

**Proposal Format (APA style).** Your written proposal will include a title page, an abstract, a literature review, a method section, and references. Your proposal will also include appendices of any materials needed to conduct the proposed research (e.g., photos, prose passages, questionnaires,...). The body of your proposal (introduction through method section) should be about 8 to 10 pages.

**Assignment Submission**
All assignments MUST be submitted through the Assignments link in the Blackboard site. This is for grading, documenting, and archiving purposes. Issues with technology use arise from time to time. If a technology issue does occur regarding an assignment submission, email me at james.forbes@angelo.edu and attach a copy of what you are trying to submit. Please contact the IT Service Center at (325) 942-2911 or go to your Technology Support tab to report the
issue. This lets your faculty know you completed the assignment on time and are just having problems with the online submission feature in Blackboard. Once the problem is resolved, submit your assignment through the appropriate link. This process will document the problem and establish a timeline. Be sure to keep a backup of all work.

**Late Work or Missed Assignments Policy**
The course is set up on weekly modules. The week begins on Monday and ends on Sunday. Assignment due dates are shown on the calendar/schedule or posted within Blackboard. Late assignments are not accepted without prior approval of faculty. Faculty reserve the right to deduct points for late assignments that are accepted past the original due date.

**Course Schedule**
A complete course schedule with all topics and assignments, included all due dates is posted on the course BlackBoard web page. Click on the Syllabus & Course Schedule tab on the navigation bar.

This course will be taught entirely on-line. We will not meet in person, unless you choose to visit me in my campus office. Consequently, much responsibility for developing a viable research proposal rests with you. I will give you a schedule of events (viz., readings, assignments, exercises, applications, discussion topics, and due dates); you will have to ensure that you keep pace with the schedule. If you manage your time effectively and focus your interests and energy on the course objectives, you will fare well in this on-line course.

**Teaching Strategies**
Students are expected to be “active learners.” It is a basic assumption of the instructor that students will be involved (beyond the materials and lectures presented in the course) discovering, processing, and applying the course information using peer-review journal articles, researching additional information and examples on the Internet, and discussing course material and clinical experiences with their peers.

**Grading**

**Evaluation and Grades**
Course grades will be determined as indicated in the table below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assessment</th>
<th>Percent of Course Grade</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Assignments</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Discussion Board Forums</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assessment</td>
<td>Percent of Course Grade</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------------------------------</td>
<td>-------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Empirical Research Proposal</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Final course grades will be calculated as follows:

- **A** = 90 – 100%
- **B** = 80 – 89%
- **C** = 70 – 79%
- **D** = 60 – 69%
- **F** = < 60%

**General Policies Related to This Course**

All students are required to follow the policies and procedures presented in these documents:

- [Angelo State University Student Handbook](#)¹
- [Angelo State University Catalog](#)²

**Student Responsibility and Attendance**

This class is asynchronous, meaning you do not have to be on-line at a certain time. There are readings which you will have to complete to be able to adequately participate in individual and group assignments. In order to complete this course successfully, you do have to participate in all course activities i.e. discussion boards, course projects, reflective logs, etc. Students are expected to engage in course activities and submit work by due dates and times. The hope is that students will make substantive contributions which reflect integration of assigned materials as well as any outside readings as appropriate. Scholarly contribution is an expectation. For planning purposes, this class will probably require a minimum of 6-9 study hours per week on average.

**Academic Integrity**

Students are expected to maintain complete honesty and integrity in all work. Any student found guilty of any form of dishonesty in academic work is subject of disciplinary action and possible expulsion from ASU.

The College of Health and Human Services adheres to the university’s [Statement of Academic Integrity](#)³.
Accommodations for Students with Disabilities

ASU is committed to the principle that no qualified individual with a disability shall, on the basis of disability, be excluded from participation in or be denied the benefits of the services, programs or activities of the university, or be subjected to discrimination by the university, as provided by the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA), the Americans with Disabilities Act Amendments of 2008 (ADAAA) and subsequent legislation.

Student Disability Services is located in the Office of Student Affairs, and is the designated campus department charged with the responsibility of reviewing and authorizing requests for reasonable accommodations based on a disability. It is the student’s responsibility to initiate such a request by contacting an employee of the Office of Student Affairs, in the Houston Harte University Center, Room 112, or contacting the department via email at ADA@angelo.edu. For more information about the application process and requirements, visit the Student Disability Services website. The employee charged with the responsibility of reviewing and authorizing accommodation requests is:

Dallas Swafford
Director of Student Disability Services
Office of Student Affairs
325-942-2047
dallas.swafford@angelo.edu
Houston Harte University Center, Room 112

Incomplete Grade Policy

It is policy that incomplete grades be reserved for student illness or personal misfortune. Please contact faculty if you have serious illness or a personal misfortune that would keep you from completing course work. Documentation may be required. See ASU Operating Policy 10.11 Grading Procedures for more information.

Plagiarism

Plagiarism is a serious topic covered in ASU’s Academic Integrity policy in the Student Handbook. Plagiarism is the action or practice of taking someone else’s work, idea, etc., and passing it off as one’s own. Plagiarism is literary theft.

In your discussions and/or your papers, it is unacceptable to copy word-for-word without quotation marks and the source of the quotation. It is expected that you will summarize or paraphrase ideas giving appropriate credit to the source both in the body of your paper and the reference list.
Papers are subject to be evaluated for originality. Resources to help you understand this policy better are available at the ASU Writing Center. 

**Student Absence for Observance of Religious Holy Days**

A student who intends to observe a religious holy day should make that intention known in writing to the instructor prior to the absence. See ASU Operating Policy 10.19 Student Absence for Observance of Religious Holy Day for more information.

**Copyright Policy**

Students officially enrolled in this course should make only one printed copy of the given articles and/or chapters. You are expressly prohibited from distributing or reproducing any portion of course readings in printed or electronic form without written permission from the copyright holders or publishers.

**Syllabus Changes**

The faculty member reserves the option to make changes as necessary to this syllabus and the course content. If changes become necessary during this course, the faculty will notify students of such changes by email, course announcements and/or via a discussion board announcement. It is the student’s responsibility to look for such communications about the course on a daily basis.

**Title IX at Angelo State University**

Angelo State University is committed to providing and strengthening an educational, working, and living environment where students, faculty, staff, and visitors are free from sex discrimination of any kind. In accordance with Title VII, Title IX, the Violence Against Women Act (VAWA), the Campus Sexual Violence Elimination Act (SaVE), and other federal and state laws, the University prohibits discrimination based on sex, which includes pregnancy, and other types of Sexual Misconduct. Sexual Misconduct is a broad term encompassing all forms of gender-based harassment or discrimination and unwelcome behavior of a sexual nature. The term includes sexual harassment, nonconsensual sexual contact, nonconsensual sexual intercourse, sexual assault, sexual exploitation, stalking, public indecency, interpersonal violence (domestic violence or dating violence), sexual violence, and any other misconduct based on sex.

You are encouraged to report any incidents involving sexual misconduct to the Office of Title IX Compliance and the Director of Title IX Compliance/Title IX Coordinator, Michelle Boone, J.D. You may submit reports in the following manner:

Online: www.angelo.edu/incident-form
Note, as a faculty member at Angelo State, I am a mandatory reporter and must report incidents involving sexual misconduct to the Title IX Coordinator. Should you wish to speak to someone in confidence about an issue, you may contact the University Counseling Center (325-942-2371), the 24-Hour Crisis Helpline (325-486-6345), or the University Health Clinic (325-942-2171).

For more information about resources related to sexual misconduct, Title IX, or Angelo State’s policy please visit: www.angelo.edu/title-ix.

**Student Evaluation of Faculty and Course**

Students in all programs are given the opportunity to evaluate their courses and the faculty who teach them. Evaluations are most helpful when they are honest, fair, constructive, and pertinent to the class, clinical experience, or course. Faculty value student evaluations, and use student suggestions in making modifications in courses, labs and clinical experiences. Angelo State University uses the IDEA (Individual Development and Educational Assessment) system administered through Kansas State University for all course evaluations. The Office of Institutional Research and Assessment administers IDEA for the entire university, online and has established a policy whereby students can complete course evaluations free from coercion.

1. Gaining a basic understanding of the subject (e.g., factual knowledge, methods, principles, generalizations, theories)
2. Learning to apply course material (to improve thinking, problem solving, and decisions)
3. Developing specific skills, competencies, and points of view needed by professionals in the field most closely related to this course
4. Developing skill in expressing oneself orally or in writing
5. Learning how to find, evaluate, and use resources to explore a topic in depth
6. Developing ethical reasoning and/or ethical decision making
7. Learning to analyze and critically evaluate ideas, arguments, and points of view
8. Learning appropriate methods for collecting, analyzing, and interpreting numerical information

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1 [https://www.angelo.edu/student-handbook/](https://www.angelo.edu/student-handbook/)
2 [https://www.angelo.edu/catalogs/](https://www.angelo.edu/catalogs/)
3 https://www.angelo.edu/student-handbook/community-policies/academic-integrity.php
4 https://www.angelo.edu/services/disability-services/
5 https://www.angelo.edu/content/files/14197-op-1011-grading-procedures
6 https://www.angelo.edu/student-handbook/community-policies/academic-integrity.php
7 https://www.angelo.edu/dept/writing_center/academic_honesty.php
8 https://www.angelo.edu/content/files/14206-op-1019-student-absence-for-observance-of