

“Idleness is the parent of psychology.”

Friedrich Nietzsche (1844-1900)
German Philologist, Philosopher, & Inveterate Crank

“Crowds are somewhat like the sphinx of ancient fable: It is necessary to arrive at a solution of the problems offered by their psychology or to resign ourselves to being devoured by them.”

Gustave le Bon (1841-1931)
French Social Psychologist, Sociologist, & Amateur Physicist

Directions: Congratulations! You’ve survived AP Psychology up to this point (ah, only first semester)…but the journey is not yet complete. Your task for this last challenge is to select an appropriate psychological topic to analyze and evaluate in terms of its significance to the field of psychology. Once you have selected your topic (and had it approved by Mrs. Niland), you will need to design an approach to your research: in other words, how (and in what form) are you going to address your topic and present it to the class (you can find appropriate topics - this will be a far-from-inclusive list - in your review packets, textbook, etc). More specific instructions (and suggestions) follow below. Good luck!

Research Topics:	27 February 2009 [FRI]
Research Proposal:	27 February 2009 [FRI]
Study Surveys/Methodology Due:	16 March 2009 [MON]
Written Component:	1 June 2009 [MON]
Presentation Component:	1 June – 12 June 2009

Presentation slots available on a first-come, first-served basis.

Every final project, regardless of format, will include a written component (open-ended) in which you will analyze the body of work, both in terms of its content and its significance within the field. In other words, you will need to explain what it is saying, and why should we (as psychologists) care? Why is this important? Your project may take any of the following forms (once again, not an inclusive list):

- multiple journal (6-8 journals on same topic or issue) analysis
- create & run a study (qualitative, quantitative, or both)
- read current works (books; 2+) in the field (compare/contrast, analysis, etc.)
- analyze psychological study/research (single or multiple related studies)
- traditional research (inquiry-based, thesis) paper
- All papers must also include a bibliography and in paper citations in APA format. Please see the Purdue Writing Lab (OWL Site) for help and suggestions on APA format.
- Past Topics:
 - ◆ Do men wash their hands after going to the bathroom? Will they feel more obligated to do so if another man is washing his hands?
 - ◆ How prevalent is cheating: a comparison of freshman v. senior classes.
 - ◆ Do personality types have an effect on the political affiliation of students?
 - ◆ Which parenting styles are most effective for successful students?
 - ◆ Are social norms consistent in high school?
 - ◆ Does Yerkes-Dodson Law apply to high school students?
 - ◆ Which defense mechanisms do high school and middle school students use most?
 - ◆ How does sleep deprivation affect high school students?
 - ◆ How does caffeine withdrawal affect high school students and high school teachers?
 - ◆ Case Study: eating disorders
 - ◆ The development of the insanity defense and its use in court.
 - ◆ Do all serial killers fit the antisocial personality disorder diagnosis?
 - ◆ Case Study: A comparison of killers – VT Tech and Columbine

- ◆ Case Study on Child Development (following a child & explaining development – Piaget, Erikson, Kohlberg, etc)
- ◆ Effects of sleep deprivation on motor skills
- ◆ Is there a difference between moral reasoning between freshman and seniors?
- ◆ How does cell phone use effect driving?
- ◆ Memory distortion though eyewitness testimony
- ◆ Does birth order effect personality?
- ◆ What genre of music is best for memory?
- ◆ Is culture or genetic more important to the development of gender identity?
- ◆ What effect has the steroid era of MLB had on the next generation of baseball players?
- ◆ Do serial killers fit a typical psychological profile?

Once you have completed the research and written components of this assignment, you will need to prepare and present a Microsoft PowerPoint presentation to your peers. More information pertaining to the proper formatting of this presentation, as well as a rubric and list of expectations, can be found at the conclusion of this assignment. Briefly, however, you can expect your project (in its entirety) to be judged on the basis of the following criteria:

- your ability to select relevant/pertinent topics (is this worth studying?)
- your ability to analyze psychology-stuff (what is it saying? why?)
- your ability to engage in critical/logical thinking (what does it mean?)
- your ability to generate questions (where can/should I go from here?)
- your ability to communicate information in coherent fashion (written)
- your ability to convey information in an oral/verbal presentation (MS PowerPoint)
- your ability to cite all relevant sources in proper APA format (both parenthetical and bibliographic references)

WHEN YOU CHOOSE TO RUN A STUDY:

If you to complete a research study as your final project, this may be a survey or study that represents an inquiry into some aspect of psychology. Group projects are acceptable (no more than three persons per group) only if the nature and scope of the experiment warrants more than one person’s time, energy, and effort. Be prepared to justify each person’s role and/or responsibilities on a group project. ***Each group member will be responsible for submitting a section of the overall research paper.***

STUDY GUIDELINES:

For a study, students must have all of the following sections in your research paper a review of literature; discussion of results (lab format for experiment), and all raw data must accompany the formal paper as proof of research. Surveys or experiments should be conducted carefully and with propriety. Participants must be volunteers. In no case should the identity of any of the participants be revealed. Experiments must be conducted with proper scientific methodology (hypothesis, methodology, procedure, etc.). In addition, experiments must meet all APA ethical guidelines and mine. Subjects may not be exposed to undue stress. I must approve all questionnaires before distributing to subjects. Questionnaires must be typed with correct spelling, grammar, punctuation, and sentence structure before I give approval for distribution. All questionnaires must also have the approval of Mr. Moore. Remember that if you choose to complete a survey, it is the responsibility of the group members to make sure that their survey is distributed. Do not rely on anyone else although I will help groups when needed (like to arrange distribution for homerooms). In presenting the results of a survey or study, the following APA approved lab report format MUST be used (see *APA lab report template* at <http://depts.washington.edu/psywc/handouts/>). There are no exceptions to this.

LAB FORMAT	
<u>Title Page</u>	Contains the title of the paper, the author(s) of the paper, and date due
<u>Statement of Problem</u>	This first part of your paper should be an explanation of the problem you are researching as well as the hypothesis you will be trying to prove.
<u>Review of Literature</u>	The purpose of a literature review is to identify and document existing information of sources (including books, journal articles, and web documents) that are most relevant to your search. This section is dedicated to a summary and discussion of

	research already conducted on your subject. (minimum of 8 sources)
<u>Subjects</u>	This is a discussion of the subjects of your study or experiment. Don't forget to include a rationale for why you chose the subjects.
<u>Procedures</u>	This section details the steps (all of the steps) you took in completing your study or experiment.
<u>Findings</u>	This section should contain all of your statistical analysis of your research.
<u>Conclusion</u>	This should be one of the longest parts of your paper. This is where you discuss the results of your study or experiment.
<u>Critique</u>	This part is an opportunity to explain anything that did not go exactly as planned and that could compromise your data, study, or experiment. It is also a time for you to explain how you would or could improve on your study or experiment.

Finding the topic:

Skim through various textbooks in Psychology and/or Social Psychology to be a broad overview of the issues and topics that fall within the domain of these disciplines. Make a list of topics that interests you. Don't forget to check out professional journals and magazines such as *Discovery* and *Scientific American Mind*. A list of journal and their web sites are available on my web site. Also, check out the Psychological websites on the Internet including www.APA.org. See me for help or guidance. Don't rule out topics we have not covered yet like social psychology.

MS POWERPOINT PRESENTATIONS: A "HOW-TO GUIDE"

1. Maintain Depth & Complexity

- use transitional words and phrases to weave ideas & evidence into a logical, coherent sequence
- explore the complexities and deeper aspects of the issue
- do not rush to judgment, oversimplify or make hasty conclusions

2. Provide Sufficient Evidence

- carefully construct an argument that is tied to convincing examples
- discredit counter arguments & alternative theories by offering facts, evidence, or arguments that show their inadequacies

3. Supplement Slides with Text & Data

- slides = visual summary of findings that supplement oral presentation
- 1st step = carefully construct argument which lays out the key ideas in considerable detail and depth (pre-writing or "storyboard")

4. Consider Audience

- goal = inform, enlighten, and alter opinions
 - what is already known? how much background is needed?
 - how much vocabulary can they handle?
 - what strategies, examples and arguments will help them understand the key points?

5. Eliminate Distractions

- do not distract audience from the argument/evidence being presented
- settle for a few special effects
- best presentation is the most persuasive, not the most dazzling

6. Select Powerful Images

- clip art is limited and limiting
- deliver more punch and power by employing images scanned from the press or downloaded from Web sites
- honor copyright and "fair use" practices

7. Distill Words

- main ideas, phrases, key points
- rarely use more than a dozen words per slide
- speak concisely and effectively
- do not read the slides

8. Artistic Criteria

- Harmony
 - how well do the elements (ideas/images/sounds, etc.) fit together?
 - does the lack of harmony help to create meaning, or is it jarring?
- Proportion
 - templates can sometimes skew the emphasis placed on one part of the slide – decide how big elements should be
 - give template elements the space on the page their value warrants
- Balance
 - do the elements of the page stand together visually?
- Restraint
 - do the devices and special effects contribute to meaning?
 - do fonts and styles match intention?
- Originality
 - personal style and inventiveness evident in slides, design, and ideas?
 - thoughtful, intentional design?

Material & Ideas Adapted from: “Scoring Power Points” – by Jamie McKenzie, *From Now On: The Educational Technology Journal* Vol 10|No 1|September|2000
<http://www.fno.org/sept00/powerpoints.html>

Category	Exemplary (4 points)	Commendable (3 points)	Adequate (2 points)	Flawed (1 points)
Depth & Complexity	Transitional words & phrases. Evidence & ideas woven into logical, coherent sequence.	Transitional words & phrases. Sequence of ideas/evidence present, but lacks continuity.	Few transitional words & phrases. Presentation lacks logical sequence & continuity.	Evidence of hastily drawn conclusions. Oversimplified. Lack of continuity.
Evidence	Carefully constructed argument tied to convincing examples. Discredits counter arguments/theories.	Carefully constructed argument tied to convincing examples. Counter argument not addressed.	Argument presented, but lacks convincing examples. Counter argument not addressed.	Incoherent argument or lack of supporting evidence.
Originality	The presentation demonstrates a high degree of originality and inventiveness.	Ideas expressed in the presentation demonstrate a degree of originality and inventiveness.	The ideas expressed in the presentation demonstrate a low degree of originality and inventiveness.	Few original ideas expressed. Limited expression of inventiveness.
Graphics	All graphics are relevant and balanced with text use.	All graphics are relevant, but there appear to be too few or too many.	Some graphics are relevant and their use is balanced with text use.	The graphics are not relevant.
Balance & Proportion	The presentation's formatting; ideas, images, and sounds are balanced and attractive.	Most of the presentation's formatting; ideas, images, and sounds are balanced and attractive.	Some of the presentation's formatting; ideas, images, and sounds are balanced and attractive.	Presentation suffers from incoherent or inappropriate formatting and organization.
Writing	Each slide in the presentation is clear, concise and free from wordiness.	Almost all slides in the presentation are clear, concise and free from wordiness.	Most of the slides in the presentation are clear, concise and free from wordiness.	Most of the slides in the presentation are not clear, concise or free from wordiness
Sources	Source information collected and cited for all graphics, facts and quotes.	Source information collected for all graphics, facts and quotes. Most cited.	Source information collected for graphics, facts and quotes, but not cited.	Very little or no additional source information was collected.
Grammar, Format, and Spelling	The presentation is free of grammar, spelling, and formatting errors.	The presentation has minor errors related to grammar, spelling, and formatting.	Presentation has many grammar, spelling, and formatting errors.	Presentation has major grammar, spelling, and formatting errors.
Presentation	Maintains eye contact with audience. Projects voice without prompting.	Maintains eye contact with audience and projects voice most of the time. .	Maintains eye contact with audience and projects voice some of the time. .	Minimal eye contact with audience. Fails to project voice.
Total	31-36 excellent, 23-30 good, 15-22 adequate, 9-14 flawed, please redesign your presentation			TOTAL POINTS: _____/36

FINAL PROJECT: RESEARCH TOPIC AND PROPOSAL

Please complete the following information on your final project topics due by Wednesday, February 27, 2009.
Proposals are due Wednesday, February 27, 2009.

TOPICS:

<p><i>Name(s):</i> [one sheet per group]</p>	
<p><i>Topic or Research question:</i></p>	
<p><i>Type of Project & Description of project:</i></p>	

PROPOSAL:

<p><i><u>Final Topic or Research Question:</u></i></p>	
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<p><i><u>Hypothesis:</u></i></p>	
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<p><i><u>Specific Method of Inquiry</u></i></p>	
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