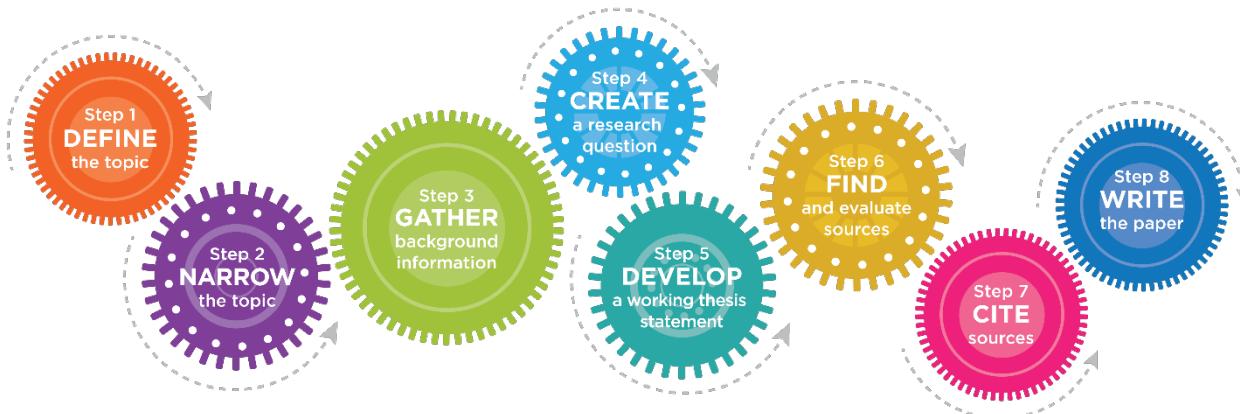# SUL ROSS STATE UNIVERSITY – BEHAVIORAL AND SOCIAL SCIENCE (BASS) DEPARTMENT
PSY 4330 Course Syllabus – Spring 2026

Course Title:	Research in Psychology
Required Text:	Heath, W. (2025). *Psychology research methods: How to think about and write about research*. (2nd ed.). Sage.
Contact Information:	Alicia M. Trotman, Ph.D. – alicia.trotman@sulross.edu
Office (LH 306) Hours:	Mondays (2:30 to 4:30pm); Tuesdays (2:00 to 4:00); Wednesdays (11:00am to 12:00pm; 3:00 to 5:30pm) Appointment: https://calendly.com/amtsulross/office-hours-appointment
Office Phone:	432-837-8147
Prerequisites:	PSY 1302 & PSY 3305 (Statistics for the Behavioral Sciences)

Course Description:

This course reviews experimental research in psychology, with a preliminary focus on qualitative research designs (case studies) and quantitative research designs (true experiments and t-tests and ANOVA). The course takes the form of half-seminar and half-lecture. The lecture format will cover basic concepts in research methods and statistics and the seminar format offers you the opportunity to practice these techniques in your real study. You are required to read course materials before each week's meeting and participate in course discussions during the class, such as giving oral presentations to the assigned course materials, working in groups critiquing published research papers, and participating in various class activities. For your personal study, you will conduct a class project, from generating a research question, conducting a literature review, forming a testable hypothesis, choosing a methodology and designing the method, collecting data, to analyzing and interpreting the data. Toward the end of the semester, you are required to write your research study using the techniques learned throughout the semester.

Course Objective:

In this research in psychology course, you will learn how to strengthen your research skills through working individually and collaboratively and with a strong emphasis on what you **can** do. You will build knowledge in constructing a coherent argument to position your interest in the discipline of psychology. Your argument will eventually be linked to ethical concerns and limitations, epistemology, methods and analytic lens used to generate results and discussion.

Student Learning Outcomes:

The primary student learning outcome is "You will be able to demonstrate your critical thinking skills, via tasks related to student thought complexity and originality". Throughout the course, these are the outcomes that we will aspire to gain:

1. Characterize the nature of psychology as a discipline and describe the basic characteristics of the science of psychology. Describe basic research and statistical concepts in scientific psychology, including qualitative, experimental and/or correlation methods.
   Method of Formative Assessment: Quiz and Study assignment
2. Investigate the purpose of research in psychology, and establish familiarity with, and critically think about major concepts, theoretical perspectives, empirical findings, and historical trends in psychology. Explain the necessity for ethical behavior and social responsibility in all aspects of the science and practice of psychology.
   Method of Formative Assessment: Quiz and Study assignment
3. Design effective and respectful research questions, review literature, and understand and apply quantitative and qualitative research designs. Learning the English language, controlling your tense and recognizing the power of numeracy and/or written excerpts to enhance your arguments
   Method of Formative Assessment: Final project
4. Apply psychological principles in research to guide learning trajectory of psychology in practice. Strengthen intercultural competence and civility when engaging psychological principles to present the testability (and falsifiability) of your argument. Evaluate how psychological knowledge, skills, and values are used in professional pursuits in a variety of settings, and everyday life.
   Method of Summative Assessment: Final project

Course Requirements:

1. **The text must be obtained** so you have access to the PsycLearn Research Methods platform.
2. Respect for students and lecturer must be maintained at all times when we meet online and in person. Importantly, this class will foster free expression, critical investigation, and the open discussion of ideas. This means that all of us must help create and sustain an atmosphere of tolerance, civility, and respect for the viewpoints of others. Similarly, we must all learn how to probe, oppose and disagree without resorting to tactics of intimidation, harassment, or personal attack. No one is entitled to harass, belittle, or discriminate against another on the basis of race, religion, ethnicity, age, gender, national origin, or sexual preference. We will do our best to embrace the difficulty of fruitfully discussing controversial and sensitive issues. Respect is a basic human characteristic that entitles each person to their own rights and identity. It also helps to nurture a healthy learning environment. If you recognize that respecting others may be a problem, please be courteous and alert me or more suitable personnel (e.g. Sul Ross State University psychologists, family members, lecturers, close friends) and or refer to the Student Conduct and Discipline section of the SRSU Student Handbook.

SRSU Accessibility and Counseling Services:

SRSU Accessibility Services. Sul Ross State University (SRSU) is committed to equal access in compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1973. It is SRSU policy to provide reasonable accommodations to students with documented disabilities. It is the student's responsibility to initiate a request each semester for each class. Students seeking accessibility/accommodations services must contact Ronnie Harris, LPC, SRSU's Accessibility Services Director, at 432-837-8203 or ronnie.harris@sulross.edu. Our office is located on the first floor of Ferguson Hall, room 112, and our mailing address is P.O. Box C122, Sul Ross State University, Alpine, Texas, 79832.

Sul Ross has partnered with TimelyCare where all SR students will have access to nine free counseling sessions. You can learn more about this 24/7/356 support by visiting Timelycare/SRSU. The SR Counseling and Accessibility Services office will continue to offer in-person counseling in Ferguson Hall room 112 (Alpine campus), and telehealth Zoom sessions for remote students and Sul Ross International students.

Library Services Statement

The Bryan Wildenthal Memorial Library in Alpine offers FREE resources and services to the entire SRSU community. Access and borrow books, articles, and more by visiting the library's website, library.sulross.edu. Off-campus access requires logging in with your LoboID and password. Librarians are a tremendous resource for your coursework and can be reached in person, by email (srsulibrary@sulross.edu), or by phone (432-837-8123).

No matter where you are based, public libraries and many academic and special libraries welcome the general public into their spaces for study. SRSU TexShare Cardholders can access additional services and resources at various libraries across Texas. Learn more about the TexShare program by visiting library.sulross.edu/find-and-borrow/texshare/ or ask a librarian by emailing srsulibrary@sulross.edu.

Honoring Academic Integrity

Students in this class are expected to demonstrate scholarly behavior and academic honesty in the use of intellectual property. A scholar is expected to be punctual, prepared, and focused; meaningful and pertinent participation is appreciated. Students should submit work that is their own and avoid the temptation to engage in behaviors that violate academic integrity, such as turning in work as original that was used in whole or part for another course and/or professor; turning in another person's work as one's own; copying from professional works or internet sites without citation; collaborating on a course assignment, examination, or quiz when collaboration is forbidden. Other instances of academic misconduct are lying in connection with your academic work, cheating, misrepresenting facts and/or collusion and using open AI sources unless permission is expressly given for an assignment or course. Violations of academic integrity can result in failing assignments, failing a class, and/or more serious university consequences. These behaviors also erode the value of college degrees and higher education overall All these are contrary to the purpose of any educational institution and will be dealt with most severely to the extent of the university's disciplinary policy and/or through legal action if indicated. An instructor who determines that a student has been dishonest academically can at a minimum issue no credit for the assignment/exam, and/or pursue more severe penalties, including but not limited to failing the course. Further information about Academic Honesty can be read in the SRSU Student Handbook.

In this course, we may use generative AI tools (such as ChatGPT) to examine the ways in which these kinds of tools may inform our exploration of the topics of the class. You will be informed as to when and how these tools will be used, along with guidance for attribution if/as needed. Your use of generative AI tools must be properly documented and cited for any work

submitted in this course. *Any use of generative AI tools outside of these parameters constitutes plagiarism and will be treated as such.*

Marketable Skills:

1. <u>Speaking Effectively</u>: Students will demonstrate competency in public speaking and communicating scientific information to diverse audiences.
2. <u>Describing Feelings</u>: Students will demonstrate empathic or active listening and conversational skills, and/or write clearly about their affective stance, respectfully attuned to the needs of their audiences.
3. <u>Identifying Resources</u>: Students will demonstrate the aptitude to locate, organize and evaluate the credibility of information from multiple sources.
4. <u>Analyzing</u>: Students will demonstrate ability to examine the underlying issues of a scientific problem, attending to the pertinent details and creating a plan of action, recognizing ambiguity and complexity as essential components.

Observing Class Guidelines

Class Participation

This is a course that requires online and in-class discussion and experiences. **Class attendance IS REQUIRED and participation is important**. Class participation and attendance will be worth 15% of the final grade, and includes *prompt and regular attendance, active listening, writing, participating via polls or quizzes, and engaging in discussions*. Besides attendance, all other forms of participation judged subjectively by me that showcases active involvement will increase your participation grade. Excused absences due to established religious observance, or emergency, university-authorized, legal or medical issues and events will not count toward the absence limit but do require written documentation. At your earliest convenience, arrange to make up any missing work as far in advance of your absence as possible. If you are unable to attend a class session for other circumstances, please discuss the reason with me and make arrangements with another student to obtain any notes, handouts or assignments you may have missed. **Excessive unexcused absences (more than 4 missed class sessions) WILL result in a failing grade for the course**.

DISTANCE EDUCATION STATEMENT - Students enrolled in distance education courses have equal access to the university's academic support services, such as library resources, online databases, and instructional technology support. For more information about accessing these resources, visit the SRSU website. Students should correspond using Sul Ross email accounts and submit online assignments through Blackboard, which requires secure login. Students enrolled in distance education courses at Sul Ross are expected to adhere to all policies pertaining to academic honesty and appropriate student conduct, as described in the student handbook. Students in web-based courses must maintain appropriate equipment and software, according to the needs and requirements of the course, as outlined on the SRSU website. Directions for filing a student complaint are located in the [Student Handbook](#).

REGULAR COMMUNICATIONS WITH THE PROFESSOR - It is essential that you keep me current on your progress and any difficulties you may be having so that I can respond in real time to support your success. GENERAL QUESTIONS are to be posted to *Messages* in Blackboard. For PERSONAL or PRIVATE ISSUES email me at alicia.trotman@sulross.edu or call me at 432-837-8147 or make an appointment with me (https://calendly.com/amtsulross/office-hours-appointment) or text me on Microsoft Teams. I strive to respond as soon as possible. If you do not receive a reply within 48 hours during the work week, please resend your email.

COURSE BEHAVIORS - RESPECT AND DISRUPTIONS
Watch the VIDEO on NETTIQUETTE - https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FWMk_Zv7nB8 and
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=80uRE972uQ0

All full-time and part-time students are responsible for familiarizing themselves with the Student Handbook and the Undergraduate & Graduate Catalog and for abiding by the University rules and regulations. Additionally, students are responsible for checking their Sul Ross email as an official form of communication from the university. Every student is expected to obey all federal, state and local laws and is expected to familiarize themselves with the requirements of such laws.

You are encouraged and expected to openly engage in discussions, ask questions, share ideas, and express your thoughts in this web-based course in the same manner as in a face-to-face course. Please treat each other with dignity and respect and avoid disruptive behaviors. You are responsible for knowing what behaviors are acceptable versus unacceptable as referred to in the Student Conduct and Discipline section of the SRSU Student Handbook.

CHILDREN IN THE CLASSROOM
The policy described here is a reflection of my own beliefs and commitments to student, staff, and faculty parents.

1. All exclusively nursing/breastfeeding babies are welcome in class as often as is necessary to support the nursing/breastfeeding relationship. Because not all nursing parents can pump sufficient milk, and not all babies will take a bottle reliably, I never want students to feel like they have to choose between feeding their baby and continuing their education. You and your nursing baby are welcome in class anytime.
2. For older children and babies, I understand that minor illnesses and unforeseen disruptions in childcare often put parents in the position of having to choose between missing class to stay home with a child and leaving him or her with someone you or the child does not feel comfortable with. While this is not meant to be a long-term childcare solution, occasionally bringing a child to class in order to cover gaps in care is perfectly acceptable.
3. I ask that all students work with me to create a welcoming environment that is respectful of all forms of diversity, including diversity in parenting status.
4. In all cases where babies and children come to class, I ask that you sit close to the door so that if your little one needs special attention and is disrupting learning for other students, you may step outside until their need has been met. Non-parents in the class, please reserve seats near the door for your parenting classmates.
5. Finally, I understand that often the largest barrier to completing your coursework once you become a parent is the tiredness many parents feel in the evening once children have finally gone to sleep. The struggles of balancing school, childcare and often another job are exhausting! I hope that you will feel comfortable disclosing your student-parent status to me. This is the first step in my being able to accommodate any special needs that arise. While I maintain the same high expectations for all student in my classes regardless of parenting status, I am happy to problem solve with you in a way that makes you feel supported as you strive for school-parenting balance.
6. Don't forget to check out and utilize the ADA-compliant SRSU Lactation Room on the 2nd floor (Room 205) of Lawrence Hall!

Late Assignments/Projects/Quizzes
You are expected to meet assignment/quizzes deadlines. Quizzes and assignments for the final project are marked **zero** after the due dates. Late study exercises will be reduced by 5% of the overall exercises for the first day of lateness and 10% for lateness beyond that for unexcused absences. In other words, your grade for all assignments connected with the Final Project may be reduced up to 50% with excessive unexcused absences. For excused

absences (university-authorized, legal or medical issues), speak with me **before the absence** so arrangements can be made.

Discussing Evaluation

Exercises – These two exercises (Bias & Control and Ethics) are to ensure you understand the most pertinent concepts of scientific research in psychology. These exercises may be discussed in class and are **<u>due</u>** by the date listed in the course outline. They will be available in our Blackboard course.

Sage Vantage Assignments – These assignments are short exercises to ensure that you understand the major elements of the textbook chapters. As you review the chapters, these assignments will be integrated with the readings. They will help you as you craft the sections you are assigned to in this class. They will be marked as zero after their due dates. Assignments that are given to provide extra practice have more flexible due dates.

Final Project – The goal of this assignment is for you to participate fully in your role in the class research project. You will glean all that you have learned from this and previous psychology courses you have taken to collaboratively engage with the assigned research study. This project counts to a total of **620 points** involving each stage of the research process – draft literature review, draft proposal design (with methods), ethical procedures (Institutional Review Board and Consent Forms), data collection, analysis, final manuscript and presentation. In addition, we will present this study in April as a poster presentation at our Undergraduate and Graduate Student Research Conference (<mark>Friday April 10th</mark>).

Extra Credit Activity **–** These points may be received for completing the following training (20 points):

1. **CITI Training** – [Make sure to scroll to the bottom of the page to link to CITI training and follow the instructions to access your account](). Once you complete the Social and Behavioral Science module, you will receive 20 points. You will receive certification for three years once you have completed it.

Grading

Students are expected to complete reading assignments prior to class sessions and to engage in thoughtful discussions in light of these assignments. In addition, students will complete a final project.

Grading:	1000 points total		Final Grade
Sage Vantage Assignments:	200 points		20%
Attendance/Participation:	150 points total		15%
Exercises (2):	30 (2 @ 15 points each)		3%
Literature Review:	40 points		4%
Draft Literature Review (with RQ):	80 points		8%
Draft Proposal (with Methods):	120 points		12%
IRB (50) & Consent Form (30):	80 points		8%
Final Manuscript (with Discussion):	200 points		20%
Final Presentation (of project):	100 points		10%

Course Outline

(*This schedule and the topics listed below are subject to modification by the instructor.*)

Unit 1 – What is Research in Psychology? Why conduct a study?

Day	Content
Week of January 15th	Introductions Familiarizing yourself with the syllabus and accessing our textbook with **Kortext**
	Syllabus Quiz
Week of January 20th **MODULE 1**	Chapter 1: Introduction to Research Methodology Jan. 20th: LAST Day for late registration and schedule changes
Homework	Sage Vantage Assignments
Week of January 27th **MODULE 2**	Chapter 2: Developing Research Ideas and Hypotheses Reviewing Past Students' Proposals (Jan. 30th: LAST Day for late registration and schedule changes) (Jan. 30th: Deadline to apply for Spring 2025 graduation without LATE FEE)
Homework	Ethical Practices, Reviewing the Literature & Research Questions & Designs
Week of February 3rd **MODULE 3**	Chapter 3: Ethics Article Summary Reviews
Homework	Working on article summaries
Week of February 10th **MODULE 4**	Chapter 4: Defining and Measuring Variables
Homework	Working on article summaries Sampling and External Validity and working on your IRB proposal

Week of February 17th **MODULE 5**	Review of Chapters 5 through 8; IRB Guidelines & Research Designs **Thursday February 19th – Organizing Proposal; Draft Literature Review (with Research Questions) Due**
Homework	Correlational Design and Construct Validity, Measuring and Reliability, Within Group and Between Groups Research Design and working on your IRB proposal…

UNIT II: Generating Research Questions & Implementing Designs

Day	Content
Week of February 24th **MODULE 6**	Review of Chapters 5 through 8; IRB Guidelines & Research Designs
Homework	Finishing *Proposal, Consent Forms, and IRB Protocol*
Week of March 3rd **MODULE 7**	Review of Chapters 5 through 8; IRB Guidelines & Research Designs All Documents Due on **Tuesday March 3rd at 11:59pm [Soft DEADLINE]**
Homework	Finishing touches on Proposal, Consent Forms, and IRB Protocol; Submit to irbnet.org
Homework	**Enjoy Spring Break!**
Week of March 17th **MODULE 8**	Chapter 12: External Validity All Documents Due on **Tuesday March 19th at 11:59pm [Hard DEADLINE]**
Homework	Finishing touches on Proposal, Consent Forms, and IRB Protocol; Submit to irbnet.org
Week of March 24th **MODULE 9**	Chapter 13: Writing about and presenting your research March 27th: Deadline to apply for Spring 2025 graduation with LATE Fee
Homework	Working on Research Poster

UNIT III: Research Analysis & Discussion; Translating your study for your audience

Day	Content
Week of March 31st **MODULE 10**	Working on Research Poster Summer and Fall 2026 graduation applications open April 3rd: LAST Day to withdraw from the 16-week course with grade of 'W'
Homework	Working on Poster and Getting ready for Data Analysis
Week of April 7th **MODULE 11**	Data Analysis **SRSU Student Research Conference (Friday April 10th)**
Homework	Statistical or Qualitative Analysis;
Week of April 14th **MODULE 12**	Data Analysis
Homework	Statistical or Qualitative Analysis;
Week of April 21st **MODULE 13**	Manipulating Variables, Analyzing and Interpreting Data
Homework	Writing Results and Discussion
Week of April 28th **MODULE 14**	Reporting Results
	Finalizing Results and Writing Discussion (Editing our Study)
Wednesday May 6th **10:15am to 12:15pm**	**Cake Party & Class Presentations**