

Psychological Science and Society
PSYCH-UA.53
New York University, Fall 2023

Instructor: Prof. Madalina Vlasceanu, Ph.D. [mov209@nyu.edu]
Office hours in Meyer 505 on Fridays 9:30am-10:30am

Lecture time: Mondays and Wednesdays 2–3:15pm
Lecture location: 12 Waverly Place, Room G08

Course goals: This course will prepare students to be active consumers of empirical psychological research and understand the implications psychological science has in society, for example by informing effective policy. Students will engage with published scientific articles and trace the translation of research findings into popular media and public policy. By the end of the course students will be able to (1) critically examine the origin of claims based on psychology research, (2) interpret statistics in research articles (3), understand the societal relevance of psychology research, and (4) communicate research to a general audience.



Understand the research process



Learn how to read science articles



Learn how to translate science articles into general-audience pieces (press releases)



Understand the science dissemination process and importance



Understand the path from research to practice or policy

Class Schedule:

Day	Date	Lecture	Read before lecture	Assignment
1	Sept 6	Lecture 1: Introduction		
2	Sept 11	Lecture 2: Finding, assessing, citing, summarizing research articles	Wallisch, 2020	
3	Sept 13	Lecture 3: Research design	Gureckis, 2021	
4	Sept 18	Lecture 4: Statistics: Group Differences	Stats. Review	A1 due
5	Sept 20	Lecture 5: Statistics: Correlations	Data analysis lab	
6	Sept 25	Lecture 6: Data visualization	Data visualization	
7	Sept 27	Lecture 7: Data analysis and visualization in Python	Intro Python	
8	Oct 2	Lecture 8: Research integrity	Munafo, 2017	A2 due
9	Oct 4	Guest 1: Dr. Matthew Goldberg, Yale Climate Communication	Goldberg, 2019	
10	Oct 9	FALL BREAK		
11	Oct 10	Lecture 9: Science communication	Goldstein, 2021	
12	Oct 11	Lecture 10: Exam review	Hassol, 2015, TEDx	A3 due
13	Oct 16	Exam 1 (testing content from lectures 1-10)		
14	Oct 18	Lecture 11: From research to practice and policy: Behavioral Model	Shafir, 2013, Intro	
15	Oct 23	Lecture 12: From research to practice and policy: Behavioral Mapping	van der Linden, 2015	
16	Oct 25	Guest 2: Meghan Ingerick, Ideas42	Weber, 2019	
17	Oct 30	Guest 3: Dr. Anne Hill, NYC Mayor's office	Shafir, 2011	A4 due
18	Nov 1	Guest 4: Prof. James Devitt, NYU press office	Devitt, 2022	
19	Nov 6	Guest 5: Angelica Hill, New York Times	Journalism	
20	Nov 8	Guest 6: Rachel Xu, Google	Weber, 2013	
21	Nov 13	Lecture 13: The Psychology of the Climate Crisis	Communication	A5 due
22	Nov 15	Lecture 14: The Psychology of the Solutions to the Climate Crisis		
23	Nov 20	Exam 2: Take home exam.		
24	Nov 22	FALL BREAK		
25	Nov 27	Guest 7: Dr. Ida Momennejad, Microsoft Research	Momennejad, 2020	
26	Nov 29	Guest 8: Jacob Pine, LCSW, Center for the Study of Anorexia and Bulimia		A6 due
27	Dec 4	Guest 9: Prof. Sara Constantino, Northeastern Public Policy		

28	Dec 6	Guest 10: Jessica Leifer, Canadian Government		Exam 2 due
29	Dec 11	Guest 11: Dr. Joanna Sterling, Meta		
30	Dec 13	Lecture 15: Concluding remarks and review	Ruggeri et al 2023	FinalPaper Due
31	Dec 19	Exam 3: 2pm-3:50pm (testing content from the entire course)		

Administrative Details

Prerequisites

PSYCH-UA 1, PSYCH-UA 10, and PSYCH-UA.22 or 25 or 29 or 30 or 32 or 34 or 35

Grading

The total grade will be calculated as follows:

Exams (highest 2 out of 3) = 40%; Writing assignments = 35%; Final paper = 15%; Participation in class = 10%

Missed writing assignments will count as a grade of 0. We will also not accept any late work.

Your numerical grade will be rounded to the nearest integer and turned into a letter grade as follows:

93-100 A
90-92 A-
87-89 B+
82-86 B
79-81 B-
76-78 C+
71-75 C
68-70 C-
65-67 D+
60-64 D
0-59 F

Exams

- There will be 3 exams. Your lowest score of the three will be dropped.
- You may skip one exam entirely and have it count as your lowest exam.
- The exams will be held on Oct/16/2023, Nov/20/2023, and Dec/19/2023.
- Exams cannot be rescheduled after the official time they are given.
- Exams will cover all course material reviewed until that date.
- Each will be a combination of multiple choice and/or short answer questions based on the lectures and readings.

Extra credit

- Pick one book from this [list](#), read it, then stop by one of my office hours to talk about it.
- The day before you plan on coming to my office hours to discuss the book, please email me.
- This can increase your grade by 3%

Email Policy

We aim to respond to your emails within 48 hours. For this reason, if there are any questions that have some deadlines (e.g., HW or final project), please try to reach out to us at your earliest possible convenience!

Assignments

- No late work will be accepted.
- Information regarding homework assignments will be posted on NYU Brightspace. Please remember that all writing assignments – including the final paper – must be uploaded to NYU Brightspace.
- Readings will be posted to NYU Brightspace.
- Methods for locating and selecting your own research articles will be discussed in class.
- The final paper will include a general-audience piece based on several original research articles.

Policy on Late Assignments

Unless otherwise stated, all assignments are due AT THE BEGINNING of class on the date due. Late assignments will not be accepted.

How to Upload Assignments

You should upload your homework on the relevant spot in "Assignments" on Brightspace before the beginning of the class (2:00PM). Please make sure to submit it as a word document with the HW number and your name in the document title (e.g., HW01_Vlasceanu.docx).

Lecture Slides

Slides used in class will be posted to Brightspace after class (typically within a few hours after class).

Policy on Plagiarism

Students are required to abide by New York University's and the College of Arts & Science's academic integrity policies, which can be found [here](#) and [here](#), respectively. If you are in doubt about what constitutes academic dishonesty, speak with me before the assignment is due and/or examine the University website. Academic dishonesty includes, but is not limited to, plagiarism of a paper (e.g., taking material from readings without citation, copying another student's paper). Failure to adhere to this policy may result in a failing grade in the class and/or expulsion from the University.

Policy on Absences

The class will be more valuable and better for everyone if all students show up, ask questions, and contribute to our regularly scheduled meeting times, so it is expected that you attend class. That said, if you do not feel well, please don't come to class. If you are going to miss the exam, for whatever reason, notify me by emailing me before the time of the exam. If you have legitimate health-related or personal problems, you **MUST** make appropriate arrangements **BEFORE** the date of the examination. If you will miss a class, you are responsible for doing the readings, reviewing slides, getting course notes from a classmate to ensure that you are caught up, and turning in assignments on time.

Academic conduct

Students are expected to adhere to the University's standard of academic ethics. Students caught cheating or plagiarizing will be subject to forfeiting their exams, a failing grade for the exam and/or the course, and notification of the Dean's office. NYU's Academic Integrity policies are listed [here](#).

Cell phones and electronics

Please remember to silence and put away all electronics, except for those being used to take notes or do exercises during lectures. Please be considerate to your fellow students and keep distractions to a minimum. Recording of the lectures in any format is not permitted without first speaking with me.

Academic Accommodations & Disability Disclosure Statement

Academic accommodations are available for students with documented disabilities. I encourage students with disabilities, including invisible disabilities like chronic diseases or learning disabilities, to contact the Moses Center. Students requesting academic accommodations are advised to reach out to the Moses Center as early as possible in the semester for assistance. I cannot help you if you have not documented things with the Moses Center, so please do use this resource.

Henry and Lucy Moses Center for Students with Disabilities

Telephone: 212-998-4980

Website: www.nyu.edu/csa

Email: mosescsa@nyu.edu
