

Rutgers University, Department of Psychology
Research in Psychology

PROFESSOR

	Office Hours	Office	Phone	Email/Web
Vanessa LoBue	TBA	Smith 341	353-3950	vlobue@psychology.rutgers.edu

TEXT (REQUIRED):

- Selected papers and articles (see weekly lab notes).

COURSE OBJECTIVES:

The goal of this course is to help you to become proficient researchers. You will be involved in every aspect of developmental research (subject payments, laboratory upkeep, experimental design, data collections, data coding and analyses, literature reviews, and presenting results in various formats). In addition to gaining firsthand knowledge about infant and child learning and development, you will also acquire technical and practical skills that you can use in other avenues of research (critical thinking, oral and written presentations, collaboration, personal responsibility). You will also have the opportunity to participate in professional activities in the academic community (e.g., conference presentations, colloquia, journal articles).

- Careful attention to detail
- Address your questions empirically
- Respect your students, participants, materials
- Strive for personal excellence

REQUIREMENTS & EVALUATION:

The methods and tutorial courses provide a year-long research apprenticeship. You must maintain an A or B grade to continue this course in the following semester. Your grade will depend on the following:

- Pass Human Ss tutorial here: <https://www.citiprogram.org/>
- Attend & participate in weekly lab meetings
- In addition to lab meeting, complete 9 hours of lab work per week including:
 - project meetings
 - weekly lab upkeep
 - data collections
 - coding and analyses
 - preparing manuscripts for presentation and publication
- Master hands-on procedures for data collections by end of first semester in lab
- Each research assistant is required to spend 1.5 hours per week calling participants from the lab database to elicit participation
- Preparation of readings, talks, written material for lab meetings & formal presentations
- Oral presentation of your work (depending on the state of the project, this may be in the form of a poster or talk)

- Ability to describe and discuss all ongoing work in the lab
- Assist in end-of-semester lab clean
- Failure to complete any of these tasks could result in the loss of one or more letter grades, or not being invited back to the lab for future semesters.

At your weekly project meeting, you will update a working **weekly lab log**. This document represents an agreement among the members of your group about the appropriate goals for the week. The weekly lab log will keep your project on track so that you can achieve the goals that you have set for yourself over the academic year.

Your graduate student/post-doc mentor will also give you a **mid-semester evaluation**. This evaluation is an assessment of your progress for the first half of the semester. It will list your strengths, weaknesses, and areas in which you have or have not met your lab responsibilities. You will also receive a mid-semester grade. Your mid-semester grade will not necessarily reflect your final grade; it is just a way for your mentor to provide you with feedback about your performance in the lab while there is still time to improve your skills. If your mid-semester grade is lower than you expected, you still have the second half of the semester to improve on your weaknesses and raise your final grade by the end of the semester.

Finally, you will write formal, **written evaluations** at the end of each semester to summarize your work and your contributions to the lab.

LAB POLICIES

- **If you must miss an experimental session for which you have been assigned to participate, you must alert us in sufficient time to find a replacement. Failure to do so may result in losing a letter grade or failing the course. Arrive one half-hour prior to the data collection (allow extra time for set-up).** For emergencies the night before a data collection or the morning of a data collection, email and/or telephone the other researchers on the data collection.
- If you are unable to make your regular schedule hours on a given day, you are required to give notice at least one week prior. If you are taking vacation days, you are also required to give one week's notice.
- Every lab member will be responsible for recruiting participants through a database of names that we have collected over the years. It is important that these names be kept safe and confidential, so we require that every lab member sign a non-disclosure form (located in the Administrative folder of labdocs) before they can begin working in the lab. By signing this form, you promise to keep all information you see in the lab and its database confidential.
- Allow sufficient time for set-up and clean-up for data collections. Wash & dry all toys and put them away after data collections. Don't leave toys on changing table/counter.
- Keep us updated about permanent and occasional changes in your schedules.
- **Never under any circumstances remove original data from the lab.** This includes all paperwork, videotapes, and coded data. Any original data outside the lab violates guidelines for subject confidentiality and if you were to lose data, we would have to run additional subjects. The lab is organized so that all lab documents

and data are shared on a password protective server. You can access the data from any computer in the lab.

- **Be extremely careful about notating data.** Pay special attention to filling out cover sheets, returning altered files to LABSHARE (**any files that are left on other computers will be deleted**), putting computer files and hard copies in their appropriate folders, and notating the top of each spreadsheet and hard copy. Follow the protocols for set-up and procedures (if protocol is unclear, fix it).
- Put all supplies and equipment away when you are finished with them.
- Take your weekly jobs seriously and be responsible about **keeping the lab tidy and hygienic**. Throw away your trash. If you are the last one in the lab, make sure all lab doors are locked.

You should understand everything you do. If you don't understand a procedure, lab rule, analysis, concept, etc., ask someone. Please do not do things by rote without understanding the rationale.

IMPORTANT LAB INFORMATION:

The lab website is located at <http://childstudycenter.rutgers.edu/Home.html>

The email address and calendar are located at www.gmail.com

SECURITY:

Lab doors should be locked at all times when you are not in the lab in sight of the door. You must protect yourself and your belongings from intruders and the lab equipment from theft. If you share the door code with anyone who is not a member of the lab, we'll have to recode all of the doors.

LAB MEETINGS:

We will meet each week as a group to make plans for the following week, schedule data collections (bring your schedule books to each meeting!), evaluate weekly progress, learn procedures, and discuss presentations or readings. Lab meetings and readings are mandatory. You will present the progress of your weekly project meeting.

DATA COLLECTION ATTIRE:

During data collections, you should dress in clean, neat clothes. Wash your hands after you enter the waiting room with the parents. Wash your hands immediately after you change infants' diapers. Wash your hands immediately after the baby/child leaves the lab. Keep your fingernails clipped to the skin so that you don't scratch the babies. Remove rings on your fingers that stick up, dangling jewelry (necklaces, bracelets, earrings), & all rings not in your ears (tongue rings, eyebrow rings, nose rings). Wear washable shirts that do not gap at the neck & skirts that cover your legs when you sit on the floor. Pin your hair back. Carry parents' belongings, not their babies going in and out of lab/building.

PROFESSIONALISM:

This is a professional lab. You are expected to behave in a professional manner at all times while you are in the lab, in your interactions with anyone associated with the lab, and if you are representing the lab in a professional setting such as a data collection,

seminar or conference. During data collections, do not answer personal questions from parents and do not ask personal questions of parents. Do not comment about parents' behaviors.

COLLABORATION:

There are no projects that can function without the help of many researchers, for some of whom it is not their primary project. As a lab member, you are involved in some way with all lab projects. You should be as careful, meticulous, and responsible with secondary projects as with your primary project. Please use the opportunity to discuss and think about secondary projects as a way to expand your knowledge and further your own work. What you learn in helping others will serve you and your issues.

AUTHORSHIP:

When possible, students and staff will have the opportunity to submit ongoing work to professional conferences. If you would like to participate, names will be listed by order of contribution (conceptual) or alphabetically. Students/staff who make a substantial conceptual contribution to projects will also have the opportunity to be named as authors on the journal articles. Authors are responsible for preparing the manuscripts and presentations, revising them after review, and reading page-proofs. Additional information about the lab's authorship guidelines can be found in a word document in LABSHARE called "Authorship Guidelines."