

**Psy 688**  
**Research Methods in Social Psychology**  
**Spring 2024**

**I Basic Information**

Instructor: William G. Graziano  
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Meeting Time: 1:30-4:20M Tuesday  
Meeting Place: Psychology 2102  
Final Exam: TBA

**II Purpose**

The Purdue University catalogue describes Psy 688 this way:

A seminar covering a special topic in personality or social psychology. Specific topics vary from seminar to seminar.

My interpretation of this description is more specific. This course was designed to provide a broad but rigorous, graduate-level overview of contemporary research methodology in social psychology and personality. This course will follow a discussion seminar format. It is for students who have a serious interest in understanding the rationale for the use of different methods. The focus will be on planning, implementing, and analyzing social psychology research. It is presumed that you are familiar with traditional laboratory experimental procedures, as these will be the "ground" against which the "figure" of other methods will be contrasted. It is also presumed that you have completed at least the equivalent of one undergraduate course in statistical methods and one graduate-level statistical methods course.

**III Course Requirements**

(1) There will be approximately 100 pages of textbook-type reading each week. Later weeks build on earlier weeks, so it is essential that you keep up with the reading. If possible, try to read the articles in the order that they appear in the syllabus.

(2) The major text is: Robins, R. W., Fraley, R. C., & Krueger, R. F. (2009). *Handbook of research methods in personality psychology*. New York: Guilford. ISBN:10:1606236121.

(3) A second text is also required: Shadish, W., Cook, T.D., & Campbell, D.T. (2002). *Experimental and Quasi-Experimental Designs for Generalized Causal Inference*. Chicago: Houghton Mifflin. ISBN: 0-395-61556-9.

(4) The third required text: Silver, N. (2012). *The signal and the noise: Why so many predictions fail-but some don't*. New York: Penguin. ISBN: 978-1-59420-411-1. Each person in this seminar will select a chapter from Silver or from a list I will

provide, and present that reading to the seminar. The presentation should use Power Point, and not be a mere restatement of the reading. It will be graded and provide 25% of your course grade. We will discuss this assignment in detail.

Q: Can methodology become obsolete? Yes. In the past I assigned Reis & Judd (2000), but it is dated. The social psychologist Lowell Gaertner offered the quote "There is no statute of limitation on a good idea." Reis & Judd was revised, carefully retaining good ideas. The revision is already a classic in the area. The book's chapters are cited extensively in the social psychology literature (and beyond). It is:

Reis, H. T., & Judd, C. M. (Eds.). (2014). *Handbook of research methods in social and personality psychology* (2nd ed.). Cambridge University Press.

(5) This is a graduate seminar class, so students should come to our meetings prepared to discuss the reading material, especially the material other students are presenting. Most of the assigned articles have a complex idea or two. You must learn how to read such material if you plan to succeed in graduate or professional school, much less become a professional researcher.

(6) Class attendance is mandatory. Each of you contributes to your classmates' seminar experiences. If you expect to miss more than one class, then you should consider taking this class some other time.

(7) There will be a mid-term exam on March 6 and a second exam on April 24. Performance on each of these two exams will account for 25% of your course grade. This is the content-mastery aspect of the course. This provides at best the sound of one hand clapping (McGuire's phrase, to be explained later).

(8) The remaining 50% of your course grade will be divided equally between three other active-engagement elements: (a) a review of an empirical research submission, not to exceed 3 typed pages; (b) a methodology-focused research proposal; and (c) performance in class.

(9) We will discuss details of all course requirements later during the course.

(10) Sometimes instructors can make statements that seem unclear, inappropriate, or out-and-out wrong. If you have comments that you want to make to me, but for some reason prefer not to raise the issue in class, there is a solution. I have an envelope pinned to the wall outside my office.

#### IV General Comments

Most instructors believe that the material they teach is important. My belief is that this material is exceptionally important, especially for people who plan careers as social & personality researchers. The focus of this course is on classic issues of research that should apply to virtually any topic in social and

personality psychology, or even any of the behavioral sciences. Once you have a feel for the basic ideas, you can apply them directly to whatever topic interests you personally.

### **Tasks & Assignments**

Batson (1975) List + Create a Measure  
Journal review  
Exams (2)  
Class Presentation  
Research Proposal

### **Critical Content**

Limits on Human Knowledge  
Deduction vs. Induction  
Three components (theory, evidence, methods)  
Publication Norms & JARS  
Causation  
Causal Inference  
Mill's Three Methods  
Validity as causal inference  
Rules for causal inference  
"Plausible Alternative Explanations" (PAE's)  
Construct Validity  
Reliability (measures)  
Classical Test Theory (True Score Theory)  
Error vs. bias  
Multitrait Multimethod Matrix (MTMM)  
"Method variance"  
Subordinate Forms of validity (e.g., convergent, discriminant)  
Randomized ("True") Experiments vs. Correlations  
Traditional Logic of Randomized Experiments  
Counterfactual Modeling  
Control Groups and Comparison Groups  
ANOVA, ANCOVA, MANOVA  
Factorial designs & interactions  
Non-equivalent Control Groups Designs (Quasi-Experiments)  
PAE's & Strategies of Design in Quasi-experiments  
Statistical Power  
Regression & ANOVA  
Factor Analysis as Reliability Inference Tool  
Replication as Reliability  
Time Series Designs  
Missing Data  
Significance Test Controversy  
Bayesian Inference

## First Assignment: Identifying Methodological Issues

### The Task:

Each student will generate a list of potential methodological issues in Batson's (1975) research. The paper was published in *JPSP*, arguably the most prestigious journal in social/personality psychology. It should be flawless, right?

Ideally, each list will fit on one page, but please do not exceed two pages. Each student will be randomly assigned to a "tribe" in which each tribe member's items are discussed. The three tribes are named for important contributors to the methodological literature: Aiken, Campbell and Kenny.

Until you turn in your list, please do not discuss the research or the paper with others in the class. Let's hear your ideas. Bring to class paper copies for fellow tribe members, and one for the instructor. Let's see if individuals agree and converge on which issues are most important.

### Format: Keep it simple

-----<Running head>--  
Pearson, K.  
Tribe Aiken  
Psy 688 (S24)

### Reference:

Batson, C. D. (1975). Rational processing or rationalization?: The effect of disconfirming information on a stated religious belief. *Journal of Personality & Social Psychology*, 32(1), 176-184.

### Potential Methodological Issues:

1. Sole reliance on English language
2. Used only human participants (and labeled them as "subjects")
3. \*\*\*\*\*
4. \*\*\*\*\*
5. \*\*\*\*\*
6. .... N

## Second Assignment: Create a Measure

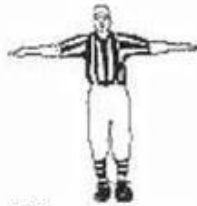
Criticizing is easier than creating. Your second task is to create a new measure of a variable that interests you. The variable should be something novel in that it is not one that has already been published in a scientific journal. Please don't create another measure of self-esteem or locus of control unless you have something new to offer. Bring your new measure with you next week and be prepared to present and discuss it in class. Please make paper copies of your measure. One will be for me and the others to share with your tribe, putting your name on the top of the sheet. Notice that I am purposefully not giving you a model to use. I do not want to constrain your creativity.

Here are a few issues to consider as you create your measure. We will revisit these issues, perhaps using your measure, as we move forward in the class.

1. Exactly how do you propose to measure this variable? Will you need any special equipment? Will special expertise be needed to collect the measure?
2. How many items/observations/data points will be needed to measure this variable? Exactly what are these items? Bring them with you, including the response format.
3. How will the items be treated? Summed into a single score? Segregated into components with separate sub-scores?
4. To what hypothetical construct/latent variable do scores for this variable correspond?
5. What limitations and boundary conditions apply to this measure? Can meaningful scores be collected from children, people with trouble hearing/seeing/feeling? People whose first language is something other than standard English? People with limited vocabulary?
6. How do you plan to show this is a new variable and not just another measure of a well-known variable?
7. What do you expect scores on this variable to predict?



You need to link this  
back to prior research



Where are your  
operational definitions?



Your claims and  
evidence need to be  
tightly linked



Unsupported  
claim



Your argument is  
unpersuasive



Irrelevant to your  
research question



This is unclear, go back  
and restructure



Rerun your  
statistical analyses



Submitted  
late



Continue with this  
line of reasoning



Extend this idea



Excellent  
point!

**Course Overview**

<b><u>Week</u></b>	<b><u>Date</u></b>	<b><u>Focus &amp; Events of Note</u></b>	<b><u>Reading Assignments</u></b>
1	January 9, 2024,	Introduction; topics & Conceptual preliminaries.  >>> Batson (1975) list	SCC-preface & 1; Cunningham 2022 Haellie (2022) Kerr (1998) HARKing Wicklund (1990) Nosek et al (2022)
2	January 16	MLK Day Monday 1/15/24.	No scheduled class on Mon 1-16. Batson list Journal submission.
3	January 23	Reliability: Square One?	Gupta 2022 John & Soto (2009). Morizot et al. (2009). Spellman (2015) New measure
4	January 30	Internal & Statistical Conclusion Validity.  SPSP (February 2024, San Diego)	SCC-2; McClelland (2000) Paulhus & Vazire (2009).
<p>Take a look: Biesanz, J. C., West, S. G., Millevoi, A. (2007). What do we learn about someone over time? The relationship between length of acquaintance, consensus, and self-other agreement in judgments of personality. <i>Journal of Personality &amp; Social Psychology</i>, 92, 119-135.</p>			
5	February 6	Construct Validity  Journal reviews due. Charles Darwin born (2/12/1809)	SCC-3; Simms & Watson (2009). R&J-18 (John & Benet-Martinez) Solow(2023) In models...
6	February 13	Quasi-Experiments I: Behavioral Observations.	SCC-4; R&J-15 (Reis & Gable); Furr & Funder (2009)

Take a look: Rutter, M. (2007). Proceeding from observed correlations to causal inference: The use of natural experiments. *Perspectives on Psychological Science*. 2(4), 377-395.

7	February 20		
8	February 27	Quasi-Experiments II: Adding Controls & Pretests	SCC-5; R&J-4 (West, Cham)
9	March 5	Time Series, Growth, & Change Exam 1	McCrae & Weiss (2009). SCC-6; R&J-21(Schoemann) Mroczek (2009).
10	March 12?	Regression Discontinuity Spring Break (3/11-3/16/24 St. Patrick's Day (3/17/2024) J. S. Bach born (3/21/1685)	Hill (2009) "When to Stop" SCC-7; Goldberg Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus (a little academic humor there) St. Joseph's Day
11	March 19	Randomized Experiments	SCC-8; Revelle (2009); Ozer (2009). Silver: Introduction, 1, 2
12	March 26	Random Experiments II	SCC-9 & 10; R&J-23 (McClell) SILVER: 3, 4
13	April 2	Generalized Causal Inference	SCC-11; R&J-Kenny & Kashy) SILVER: 5, 6
14	April 9	GCI-2: Methods for Single Cases  Leonardo d' Vinci born (4/15/1452)	SCC-12; R&J-(Smith) Fleeson (2009) Elms (2009) SILVER: 7, 8
15	April 16	GCI-3: Multiple Studies	SCC-13; R&J-26 (Johnson & Eagly). Roberts et al. (2009). Special section: <i>Current Perspectives in Psychological Sciences</i> , 2012, 7 (6), 528-688. SILVER: 9, 10

16      April 23, 2024      Last Class Meeting; Wrap Up      Campbell ("Fish-scale Model"), MPA, Exam 2 due

Ω      Amen Ω      **FINAL GRADES (Due): May 11, 2024.**

**Week 1 & 2**  
Introduction

We begin with some readings on public loss of confidence in science. One of the main themes of the European Enlightenment was that humans could improve their lot better through reason than through “superstition.” Why has the public lost confidence in reason’s main envoy science? What are some reasons proposed for this decline? How does the evidence fit this claim? How does the Replication Crisis fit into the puzzle board?

Careful specifications of basic definitions of replication, cause, effect, and causal relationships would help. What are the major kinds of replications? How does related to causes? What are some common assumptions about the relations between cause and effect? What is the difference between “synthetic” and “analytic” propositions? What are “confounds,” and how are they related to the difference between manipulable and non-manipulable causes? How do randomized experiments fit into the picture? What is validity, and why is it relevant to the issues we just raised?

Week 1

Lost Faith in Science PEW 2022  
*New York Times* Adam Mastroianni (2023)  
Wiggins & Christopherson 2019  
Purdue Vet Med must repay \$700,000 (*Exponent*)  
Nosek,, B. et al. 2022. Replicability, robustness, and reproducibility in psychological science. *Annual Review of Psychology*

Week 2

SCC-preface & 1;  
Cunningham 2022  
Haellie (2022)  
Gupta, S. (2022). Fuzzy definitions mar social science: A lack of conceptual clarity impedes research progress. *Science News*. Nov 19, 2022, p. 10

>>>> [Batson (1975) list]

Kerr (1998) HARKing  
Wicklund (1990)

Rubin, Donald B. (2008). For objective causal inference, design trumps analysis. *Annals of Applied Statistics*. 2(3), 808--840. doi:10.1214/08-AOAS187.  
<https://projecteuclid.org/euclid.aos/1223908042>

**Week 3 (Evolution of an "Orthodox Position" on Methodology)**

Observation is the single most elementary concept in empiricism. What is reliability, and how is it important to scientific observation? What are the main ways of assessing reliability in observational studies? How is reliability different from validity? What are the two major ways of assessing reliability? How is reliability related to the validity of measurement? What is "method variance?" What kind of errors and problems are most likely to occur as social scientists conduct research? What methodological safeguards have been suggested for overcoming these deficiencies?

### **Week 3**

#### Validity: Basic Issues

Many of the problems noted by the critics of behavioral science methodology involve validity. What is validity, and its various forms? What is the relative priority typically assigned to different kinds of validity by behavioral scientists? How does the typical laboratory experiment fit into this validity scenario? What are "plausible rivals" and why do so many writers think that their identification is important?

\* Gergen, K.H. (1984). An introduction to historical social psychology. In K.J. Gergen & M. Gergen (Eds.) *Historical social psychology*. Hillsdale, NJ: Erlbaum. pp. 3-36.

Solow, D. (2023). In models we trust-but first validate. *American Scientist*, 111, 42-49.

Buddy Holly plane crash (2/2/59)

### **Week 4**

#### Validity: Advanced Issues

Some writers argue that the problems facing behavioral science research are not solved by improving internal validity and statistical techniques. Methodological refinements like multiple operationism and multi-method matrices solve only a small part of the problem. What are these other problems, and what are the proposed ways of confronting them? How does qualitative research, grounded in theory, fit into the picture?

Darwin born 2/12/1809  
SPSP (2024, San Diego)

### **Week 5**

#### Quasi-Experiments I

Some common criticisms of laboratory experiments are that they lack realism, that they are artificial and contrived, and results from such experiments will not generalize to the "real world." In short, it is alleged lab experiments lack validity. Can we solve this problem by using naturalistic observation, or taking behavior as it comes to us without manipulations or control groups?

### **Week 6**

Quasi-Experiments II  
“A fact is a difference.” -- E. G. Boring

This week we examine refinements in quasi-experimental methodology. How does the addition of control groups and pretests increase valid inference? How well do they diffuse plausible alternative explanations (PAE's)? How is moderation different from mediation? What are the main purposes of factor analyses (FA)? How is exploratory FA different from confirmatory FA?

**Week 7**  
The Analysis of Sequences, Change & Growth

The ideas of time/sequence and change are closely tied to ideas of causation. How is change conceptualized in behavioral research? What are the main problems in assessing change? Here we will look at various ways of modeling change. In class, we look at the problems that appeared when cross-lag panel correlation (CLPC) procedures were introduced. Technically, CLPCs are a specialized kind of quasi-experiment, involving a limited time series format. It was one of the first techniques developed specifically to overcome causal inference problems associated with nonexperimental correlational data. In recent years, theorists showed that CLPC could be seen in terms of structural equation modeling. But let us not get ahead of ourselves. How does CLPC deal with the spuriousness problem? What are the major assumptions of this technique, and other sequence-based analyses?

- \*) McKinley, J.B., & McKinley, S.M. (1977). The questionable contribution of medical measures to the decline of mortality In the US In the twentieth century. *Milbank Memorial Fund Quarterly: Health & Society*, (reprint).
- \*) Crano, W., Kenny, D., & Campbell, D.T. (1972). Does intelligence cause achievement? A cross-lagged panel analysis. *Journal of Educational Psychology*, 63, 258-275.
- \*) Kenny, D. (1975). Cross-lagged panel correlation: A test for spuriousness. *Psychological Bulletin*, 82, 887-903.
- \*) Kahle, L.R., & Berman, J.J. (1979). Attitudes cause behavior: A cross-lagged panel analysts. *JPSP*, 37, 315-321.
- \*) Mazur-Hart, S.F. & Berman, J.J. (1977). Changing from fault to no-fault divorce: An interrupted time series analysis. *Journal of Applied Social Psychology*, 4, 300-312.

## Week 8

### Regression Discontinuity Designs

This week we continue themes we discussed last week, but consider them within the context of “everyday statistical analysis” and related interpretations. How do regression techniques help us make refined causal statements? Are regression equations better predictors than human “clinical judgment” (Goldberg)? What are the major ways of analyzing time-based designs? What are “nuisance variables,” and how are they usually analyzed? What three major interpretative problems do they create for quasi-experiments and related techniques like the ex post fact design (Meehl)?

- 1) Goldberg, L. R. (1991). Human mind vs. regression equations: Five contrasts. In D. Cicchetti & W.M. Grove (Eds.). *Thinking clearly about psychology: Matters of public interest*. (173-184). Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.
- \*) Reichert, C. (1979). The statistical analysis of data from nonequivalent group designs. In Cook & Campbell as Chapter 4.
- \*) Meehl, P.E. (1970). Nuisance variables and the ex post facto design. In M. Radner & S. Winokur (Eds.) *Minnesota studies in the philosophy of science*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, Vol. 4, 373-402.

**Spring Break:** March 11-16, 2024

## Week 9

### Randomized Experiments

Now it is time to move forward. We need to build on what we have covered previously. Yes, readings are becoming more complex. We also need to exercise the creative aspect of research methodology. It is time to start work on the research proposals. This week we continue themes we discussed previously. Laboratory experiments provide great control over nuisance variables at the price of mundane realism. Field experiments provide more mundane realism but can be very difficult to implement. The analysis of so-called “experiments of nature” faces special conceptual and logical problems, a la Paul Meehl. Maybe the experiment is a better option than we believed previously. We need to reexamine the randomized experiment for strengths as well as weaknesses. How can the logic of randomized experiments be applied to the analysis of existing dyads and relationships (Kashy & Kenny?). What is a “round robin design?”

- 1) Cunningham, A. (2022). Colonoscopy study comes with caveats. *Science News*, Nov 19, 2022, p. 8.
- 2) Silver (2012).
  - a) Introduction & Chapter 1: A Catastrophic Failure of Prediction
  - b) Chapter 2: Are You Smarter than a TV Pundit?

## **Week 10**

### **Randomized Experiments II**

Some researchers argue that there are many problems with randomized experiments beyond validity. What are the factors that undermine the random assignment process? Beyond that, what are the ethical complexities of manipulating and assigning people to conditions? Behavioral scientists as a professional group are more sensitive to ethical matters in their research than they were 15 years ago. Are there scientifically credible options? How does the theory-based structured interview fare for ethics and valid inference compared with a randomized experiment? In a pretzel-shaped world, we need pretzel-shaped analyses, don't we?

- 1) Silver (2012)
  - a) Chapter 3: All I Care about are W's and L's
  - b) Chapter 4: For Years You've Been Telling Us Rain is Green
  
- \*) Smith, S.S., & Richardson, D. (1983). Amelioration of deception and harm in psychological research: The important role of debriefing. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 44, 1075-1082.
- \*) Greenberg, J., & Folger, R. (1988). *Controversial issues in social research methods*. New York: Springer Verlag.
  - a) Informed Consent (pp. 21-38)
  - b) Debriefing (pp. 139-160)
- \*) West, S.G., et al. (1975). Ubiquitous Watergate: An attributional analysis. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 32, 55-65.

## **Week 11**

### **Generalized Causal Inference I: A Grounded Theory**

When the Shadish et al. book first appeared and was reviewed in professional publications, the critics claimed that if only Chapter 11 were published, the book would make a major contribution. Chapter 11 offered a grounded theory for causal inference. What is their theory? How does sampling fit into their scheme? What are the five principles of generalized inference? How are they applied? What are "outliers," and how are they related to the issue of valid inference?

- 1) Silver (2012)
  - a) Chapter 5: Desperately Seeking Signal
  - b) Chapter 6: How to Drown in Three Feet of Water

## **Week 12**

### **Generalized Causal Inference II: Methods for Single Studies**

One of the most fundamental aspects of science is uncovering a basic connection. How do we develop a prediction that is not necessarily true just by definition (i.e., synthetic proposition)? This week we shall examine some discovery procedures, and their application to generalized inference. What is "purposive sampling?" What are the major assumptions of these procedures? What are the major limitations? How is the Context of Discovery different from the Context of Justification?

- 1) Silver (2012)
  - a) Chapter 7: Role Models

b) Chapter 8: Less & Less & Less Wrong

### Week 13

#### Generalized Causal Inference III: Methods for Multiple Studies

Scientific truths (validity claims?) are found not in a single research project, but in general patterns across many studies. How do we generalize from multiple studies? How is a narrative review different from a quantitative review of studies? What is meta-analysis? What conclusions are more likely and less likely to emerge from meta-analyses?

- 1) Silver (2012)
  - a) Chapter 9: Rage Against the Machines
  - b) Chapter 10: The Poker Bubble
  - c) Chapter 11: If You Can't Beat 'Em

### Week 14 (to end)

#### Wrap Up

We have covered a lot of ground this term. We began with discussions of the purpose of research. In particular, critical attention was directed toward the randomized laboratory experiment as the major tool of behavioral science research and causal inference. What conclusions can we reach now that we have examined the criticisms and the alternatives carefully? Are we merely sadder but no wiser? Is one method necessarily better than another? How does converging methods promote valid inference? What are the links between theory and methodology? What is the link between methodology and statistical significance testing? How do disciplinary boundaries block scientific progress? What new approaches should we consider as we move further into the 21<sup>st</sup> century?

- 1) Silver
  - a) Chapter 12: A Climate of Healthy Skepticism
  - b) Chapter 13: What You Don't Know Can Hurt You
  - c) Conclusions
- 2) Campbell, D.T. (1969). Ethnocentrism of disciplines and the fish scale model of omniscience. In M. Sherif & C. Sherif (Eds.) *Interdisciplinary relations in the social sciences*. Hawthorne, NY: Aldine, pp. 328-348.
- \*) Meehl, P.E. (1979). Theoretical risks and tabular asterisks: Sir Karl, Sir Ronald, and the slow progress of soft psychology. *Journal of Consulting & Clinical Psychology*, 46, 806-834.
- \*) Lykken, D.J. (1991). What's wrong with psychology anyway? In D. Cicchetti & W.M. Grove (Eds.). *Thinking clearly about psychology: Matters of public interest*. (3-39). Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.
- \*\*\*) Kruschke, J. K. (2011). Introduction to special section on Bayesian data analysis. *Perspectives in Psychological Sciences*, 6(3), 274-290.
- 88) Wetzels, et al. (2011). Statistical evidence in experimental psychology: An empirical comparison using 855 t tests. *Perspectives in Psychological Sciences*, 6(3), 291-298.

\*\*\*) Kruschke, J. K. (2011). Bayesian assessment of null values via parameter estimation and model comparison. *Perspectives in Psychological Sciences*, 6(3), 299-312.

Silver (2012) Presentations

1. SILVER- 1	Introduction & A Catastrophic Failure	-----	Wk-10
2. SILVER-2	Are You Smarter	_____	Wk-10
3. SILVER-3	All I Care About	_____	Wk-11
4. SILVER-4	For Years You've Been	_____	Wk-11
5. SILVER-5	Desperately Seeking	_____	Wk-12
6. SILVER-6	How to Drown	_____	Wk-12
7. SILVER-7	Role Models	_____	Wk-13
8. SILVER-8	Less & Less	_____	Wk-13
9. SILVER-9	Rage Against	_____	Wk-14
10. SILVER-10	Poker Bubble	_____	Wk-14
11. Silver -11	If You Can't Beat 'EM	_____	Wk-15
12. SILVER-12	Climate of Skepticism	_____	Wk-15
13. SILVER-13	What You Don't Know	_____	Wk-15
14. SILVER	Conclusions	_____	Wk-15
15. Option	_____	_____	Wk-15

Email Addresses