

# Stat 5101 Notes: Greek Letters

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Table 1: Table of Greek Letters (Continued on following page.)

name	capital letter	small letter	pronunciation	sound
alpha	A	$\alpha$	AL-fah	short a
beta	B	$\beta$	BAY-tah	b
gamma	$\Gamma$	$\gamma$	GAM-ah	g
delta	$\Delta$	$\delta$	DEL-tah	d
epsilon	E	$\epsilon$	EP-si-lon	e
zeta	Z	$\zeta$	ZAY-tah	z
eta	H	$\eta$	AY-tah	long a
theta	$\Theta$	$\theta$ or $\vartheta$	THAY-tah	soft th (as in thin)
iota	I	$\iota$	EYE-oh-tah	i
kappa	K	$\kappa$	KAP-ah	k
lambda	$\Lambda$	$\lambda$	LAM-dah	l
mu	M	$\mu$	MYOO	m
nu	N	$\nu$	NOO	n
xi	$\Xi$	$\xi$	KSEE	x (as in box)
omicron	O	$\omicron$	OH-mi-kron	o
pi	$\Pi$	$\pi$	PIE	p
rho	R	$\rho$	RHOH	rh <sup>1</sup>
sigma	$\Sigma$	$\sigma$	SIG-mah	s
tau	T	$\tau$	TAOW	t
upsilon	$\Upsilon$	$\upsilon$	UP-si-lon	u

<sup>1</sup>The sound of the Greek letter  $\rho$  is not used in English. English words, like *rhetoric* and *rhinoceros* that are descended from Greek words beginning with  $\rho$  have English pro-

Table 2: Table of Greek Letters (Continued.)

name	capital letter	small letter	pronunciation	sound
phi	$\Phi$	$\phi$ or $\varphi$	FIE	f
chi	X	$\chi$	KIE	guttural ch <sup>2</sup>
psi	$\Psi$	$\psi$	PSY	ps (as in stops) <sup>3</sup>
omega	$\Omega$	$\omega$	oh-MEG-ah	o

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nunciations beginning with an “r” sound rather than “rh” (though the spelling reminds us of the Greek origin).

<sup>2</sup>The sound of the Greek letter  $\chi$  is not used in English. It is heard in the German *Buch* or Scottish *loch*. English words, like *chemistry* and *chorus* that are descended from Greek words beginning with  $\chi$  have English pronunciations beginning with a “k” sound rather than “guttural ch” (though the spelling reminds us of the Greek origin).

<sup>3</sup>English words, like *pseudonym* and *psychology* that are descended from Greek words beginning with  $\psi$  have English pronunciations beginning with an “s” sound rather than “ps” (though the spelling reminds us of the Greek origin).