

## PSYCo2H: SCIENTIFIC COMMUNICATION IN PSYCHOLOGY

Winter 2011

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### **Required Books**

American Psychological Association. (2009). *Publication manual* (6th ed.). Washington, DC: Author.

Gelfand, H., & Walker, C.J. (2009). *Mastering APA Style* (5th ed.). Washington, DC: American Psychological Association.

Stanovich, K. (2009). *How to think straight about psychology* (9th ed.). Needham Heights, MA: Allyn & Bacon.

### **Introduction**

Welcome to Psychology Co2! This is probably one of the most important courses that you will ever take. This course will teach you the fundamentals of written communication, which are skills that may be applied in any setting. Discussion and questions are encouraged, both in class and in tutorials!

### **Objectives**

The course deals with how we communicate in psychology, and why. The differences between scientific and non-scientific approaches to behaviour are stressed, and their implications for communication are discussed. The focus is on improving the student's ability to obtain and organize information and to communicate it clearly and critically, using the conventions of the discipline.

Skills acquired in this course are important to success in upper level courses, particularly for independent research courses and the thesis, and should be taken as early in the program as possible. Students will be reading the primary research literature, requiring the interpretation of research data; hence, PSYB01H and PSYB07H are prerequisites, and PSYCo8H is a co-requisite for this course.

### **Assignments and Evaluation**

APA Style: Students will work towards the mastery of APA Style by doing the exercises and practice tests for the two units in *Mastering APA Style*: the Term Paper Unit and the Research Report Unit. Observation of style is also a criterion in the evaluation of all written assignments.

Short Writing Assignments: There will be two short writing assignments. The first short assignment will be one page in length, and the second three pages in length. Content and style will be equally weighted in the evaluation. Further details will be given in separate handouts.

Major Writing Assignment: Each student will write a review article comprising some 10 to 12 pages of text on a topic that must be approved in advance. Content and style will be equally weighted in the evaluation. Further details will be given in a separate handout. An *outline* and a *draft* are to be submitted by specified dates.

Classroom Presentation: Students will make a short presentation in their tutorial of an empirical article that will be included in the review paper. The choice of article for presentation must be approved in advance. All students are expected to attend presentations by other students.

Final Examination: An examination of 2 hours will be scheduled during the final exam period, relating to the text by Stanovich and lecture material.

### **Weighting of Evaluation Components**

	Weight
Midterm #1--APA Style: Term Paper Mastery Test	10
Midterm #2--APA Style: Research Report Mastery Test	10
Short Writing Assignments (5 and 15 respectively)	20
Classroom Presentation	7.5
Tutorial Participation	2.5
Outline of review article	2
Draft of review article	3
Review Article (final manuscript)	25
Final Examination	20

### ***Policy on Extensions and Lateness***

Short Writing Assignments. Short extensions may be granted for good reason, such as illness, conflict of due dates with assignments for other courses, etc., but normally not more than once for a given student. If an extension has been granted before the assignment is due, there will be no penalty for lateness. If no extension has been granted, assignments will not be accepted more than 2 days (48 hours) late and a late penalty of 10% per day will apply. Please talk to the instructor or tutorial leader **before the due date** if you are having difficulties of any kind.

Outline and Draft: If no extension has been granted in advance, 1 point per day will be deducted.

Mastery Tests. Make-ups will be provided only in the case of properly documented illness.

Classroom Presentation. In the case of properly documented illness, the presentation may be rescheduled, as class time permits.

Term Paper. Unfortunately, extensions for the final paper (of up to one week) require the approval of the Chair of Life Sciences and can be recommended only in the case of properly documented illness or other extreme adverse circumstances beyond the control of the student. Longer extensions require submission of a formal petition.

***Psy Co2 Winter 2011--Important Dates***

Week of:

Jan 12th: No Tutorials

Week of Jan 17<sup>th</sup>: First tutorial with group leaders (refer to blackboard for sign up and classroom numbers). Introduction and discussion of possible topics for major writing assignment

Jan 26<sup>th</sup>: Library workshop (see blackboard sign up sheet, room number, and further details)

Week of Jan 31<sup>st</sup>: Last day (during your tutorial) for approval of empirical article for first short writing assignment.

Week of Feb 7<sup>th</sup>: Last date for approval of empirical article for presentation.  
Presentation dates to be scheduled in tutorial

February 9<sup>th</sup>: First short writing assignment due in class

Week of Feb 14<sup>th</sup>: Outline of review paper due in tutorial (attach article abstracts).

Week of February 21<sup>st</sup>: READING WEEK—NO CLASS!

Week of March 2, 9, 16, 23, 30: Student presentations in tutorial period.

March 2<sup>nd</sup>: Second Short writing assignment due  
Midterm #1 (Term Paper Unit)

March 9<sup>th</sup>: Draft of Review Article due in class.

March 23<sup>rd</sup>: Midterm #2 (Research Report Unit)

April 4<sup>th</sup>: Final Review Paper due in class.

During Final Exam Period (April 12<sup>th</sup> to May 1<sup>st</sup>): Final exam on Stanovich and lecture material.