

# PsyA90 - WikiScholar

## Syllabus for the Summer of 2012

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### Contact Information



**Instructor:**

**E-mail:**

**Office Hours:**

**Room Number:**

Steve Joordens

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Mondays, 10:30 - 11:30 am, Tuesdays 3:30 -  
4:30 pm  
S560

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### General Course Information

Now for something different! Sure you can learn things from listening to someone lecture at you, but sometimes you learn a whole lot more by actively seeking information yourself and doing something with the information you find. That is the idea behind this course; it's all about active learning, learning by doing.

In fact, there is no predetermined content for this course; to a large extent you will decide what this course ends up being about. At a very general level the course will work like this ... there will be four group projects and one individual project. In the group projects you will work with 2 or 3 other undergraduates and one graduate student. Together you will choose a topic from psychology, a topic that is not currently described well within Wikipedia. Then working together you will learn more about that topic and ultimately describe what you learn within a properly formatted Wikipedia article. Groups will initially review each-others articles and will provide feedback intended to help improve it. Once revisions have been made the articles will be posted, the groups will be re-assigned, and it will all happen again. Each student will also be asked to create their own article in the same way, with that individual article revised and posted online on the last day of classes.

We will meet in classes, but those meetings may often focus more on organizing the process and discussing various issues that arise, or on providing you with some of the research and Wikipedia editing skills you will need to perform the assignments. So you will not be lectured at, you will be taught skills and asked to employ them, and we will discuss progress as we achieve it.

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## Presentation of Lectures

There will be no lectures per se, just gatherings. Early on we will teach you all you need to know about editing a Wikipedia article, we will discuss the Wikipedia culture in some detail, and we'll highlight some goals we have for the course (i.e., getting some "did you know" mentions and aiming to achieve "Best Article" status). We will also highlight the general goal of science to disseminate research findings and show how this course will do this in a new and innovative way.

Latter classes will provide an opportunity for us to discuss issues as they arise. Did your article get removed from Wikipedia? Why? How do we react to this? Are you having difficulties figuring out how to structure a given article? What can we be doing to insure our articles get attention from the outside world?

Along the way we will also be discussing good pedagogy. Does it matter that the assignments in this class will have a much broader impact than typical assignments? Does this make the work more interesting for you ... why? What else can we do to make an educational experience especially engaging for students. Thus, to some extent this course itself will become a subject of what we discuss.

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## The Course Textbook

There is also no textbook for this course, though there are some online resources we will expect you to get to know well. These will be provided to you and there will be no cost associated with them.

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## Evaluation

This course is distinct in several ways and that includes evaluation. Students accepted into this course are generally high performing students, so it will not be considered unusual or troublesome if the final average in this course is relatively high. That said, grades will not be "easy" ... you will have to work for them ... and in this case the work will not involve memorizing, it will involve contributions to the pages you create.

Each of the group projects will be worth 20%, half of which will reflect the project as a whole (i.e., all members of the group will receive it), and half will represent your contribution to it (i.e., these

parts will differ across group members). The mark will be based on both the quantity and quality of the information added to the page as assessed primarily by the TAs working in your group, and those that assess the work along the way.

The final individual project will also be worth 20% and will be graded in the same manner.

There will be no exams, and no testing of the content per se.

**Academic Integrity:** The University highly values scholarship and academic achievement and takes very seriously any suspected or known cases of cheating and plagiarism. Students are highly encouraged to read the guide on [How Not To Plagiarize](#) and to take advantage of [writing resources](#) on campus. "Normally, students will be required to submit their course essays to Turnitin.com for a review of textual similarity and detection of possible plagiarism. In doing so, students will allow their essays to be included as source documents in the Turnitin.com reference database, where they will be used solely for the purpose of detecting plagiarism. The terms that apply to the University's use of the Turnitin.com service are described on the Turnitin.com web site". Please note that students are permitted, under our conditions of use, to opt-out of using Turnitin and will not be penalized for doing so.

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If you have questions about the course that are not answered in this syllabus, please first proceed to the [Ask a Question page](#), and if your question is not answered there you will find appropriate e-mail addresses provided there. Thanks and good luck!!

Finally, let me emphasize that students with diverse learning styles and needs are welcome in this course. In particular, if you have a disability/health consideration that may require accommodations, please feel free to approach me and/or the AccessAbility Services Office as soon as possible. The UTSC AccessAbility Services staff (located in S302) are available by appointment to assess specific needs, provide referrals and arrange appropriate accommodations (416) 287-7560 or [ability@utsc.utoronto.ca](mailto:ability@utsc.utoronto.ca). The sooner you let us know your needs the quicker we can assist you in achieving your learning goals in this course.

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