

SCIENTIFIC COMMUNICATION IN PSYCHOLOGY (PSYC02H3 F)

Course Syllabus – Fall 2015

Instructor: Anthony C. Ruocco, Ph.D., C.Psych

Class Time and Location: Tuesdays 3:00-5:00pm in Bladen Wing (BV), Room 260

Office Hours and Location: Tuesdays @ 2:00-3:00pm in Science Wing (SW), Room 513

Email: anthony.ruocco@utoronto.ca

Required Textbooks:

1. American Psychological Association (2009). *Publication manual of the American Psychological Association* (6th ed.). Washington, DC: Author.
2. American Psychological Association (2009). *Mastering APA style: Student's workbook and training guide* (6th ed.). Washington, DC: Author.

Prerequisites: PSYB01H3 & [PSYB07H3 or (SOCB06H3) or STAB22H3]

Corequisite: PSYC08H3

Additional Material: Additional readings and/or other course material may be placed on the Blackboard course page over the course of the semester, and will be announced in class or tutorial.

Please note: Course announcements will generally be made through Blackboard. Please monitor the course website regularly for important announcements and updates. Class emails will also be sent through Blackboard; please make sure your listed email address is correct.

Tutorials and Teaching Assistants:

Tutorial 1 (Thursdays @ 9:00-11:00am in BV363)

Teaching Assistant: Leanh Dinh-Williams

Email: leanh.dinh.williams@mail.utoronto.ca

Tutorial 2 (Thursdays @ 11:00am-1:00pm in MW110)

Teaching Assistant: Dean Carcone

Email: dean.carcone@mail.utoronto.ca

Tutorial 3 (Thursdays @ 1:00-3:00pm in IC212)

Teaching Assistant: Kathleen Walsh

Email: k.walsh@mail.utoronto.ca

Please note: Attendance at lectures and tutorials is mandatory.

Course Description and Objectives:

The purpose of this course is to demonstrate how we communicate in psychology and why. 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.

By the end of this course, students should be able to do the following:

1. Format written work according to guidelines described in the 6th Edition of the Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association;
2. Systematically search for scholarly articles using major research databases;
3. Critically evaluate the presentation of scientific information in the media, and the effective communication of information by psychologists;
4. Compare and contrast reports of psychological research from popular press articles vis-à-vis original research reports; and
5. Summarize and synthesize scientific information on a given topic in psychology, and present this information clearly and concisely.

Course Structure:

This course will consist of weekly class sessions and weekly tutorials. Class sessions will largely be lecture-based, in order to introduce the weekly topic (as listed below). However, lectures will be supplemented with other methods to help illustrate course material and class discussion will be encouraged throughout. Weekly tutorials led by teaching assistants will complement lecture topics by providing hands-on practice and skill development, as well as support for the completion of assignments.

Important Class Dates:

September 29: Assignment due on Blackboard by 11:59pm EST

October 20: In-class test #1

November 5: Presentations begin in tutorials

December 1: In-class test #2

December 3: Term paper due on Blackboard by 11:59pm EST (Note that this is the last day of classes and the last day for submission of term assignments in Fall semester courses.)

There is no final examination for this course.

Lecture Schedule and Required Readings

Week	Date	Topics	Required Readings and Sample papers
1	September 8	Writing for the Behavioral and Social Sciences	<i>APA Publication Manual (6th Edition): Chapter 1, and Mastering APA Style: Student's Workbook: Chapters 1 and 2</i>
2	September 15	Manuscript Structure and Content Writing Clearly and Concisely	<i>APA Publication Manual (6th Edition): Chapters 2 & 3, and Appendix: Journal Article Reporting Standards (pp. 245-253)</i>
3	September 22	The Mechanics of Style Displaying Results	<i>APA Publication Manual (6th Edition): Chapters 4 & 5</i>
4	September 29	Crediting Sources References	<i>APA Publication Manual (6th Edition): Chapters 6 & 7</i>
5	October 6	The Publication Process	<i>APA Publication Manual (6th Edition): Chapter 8</i>
READING WEEK			
6	October 20	In-class Test #1: All chapters from APA Publication Manual (6 th Edition) and Student Workbook	
7	October 27	Organizing Literature Searches, Reading Critically, and Extracting Information	UTSC Library—The Writing Process http://www.utsc.utoronto.ca/twc/writing-process <i>Sample Article:</i> Daros, Uliaszek & Ruocco (2014) http://simplelink.library.utoronto.ca/url.cfm/480255
8	November 3	Constructing a Logical Argument, Thesis Statement, and Writing an Introduction and Conclusion	UTSC Library—The Writing Process http://www.utsc.utoronto.ca/twc/writing-process <i>Sample Article:</i> Ruocco (2005) http://simplelink.library.utoronto.ca/url.cfm/480247
9	November 10	Writing a Review Article	<i>Sample Article:</i> Carcone, Tokarz, & Ruocco (2015) http://simplelink.library.utoronto.ca/url.cfm/480191
10	November 17	Writing an Original Empirical Report	<i>Sample Article:</i> Williams et al. (2015) http://simplelink.library.utoronto.ca/url.cfm/480192
11	November 24	Other Types of Scientific Communications in Psychology	Rowe & Illic (2011) http://simplelink.library.utoronto.ca/url.cfm/480244
12	December 1	In-class Test #2: Short-essay questions based on all lectures and assigned readings throughout the course.	

Please note: The class schedule is subject to change due to unforeseen circumstances.

Tutorial Schedule and Required Readings

Week	Date	Topics	Required Readings and Exercises
1	September 3	First week of class – No tutorial	
2	September 10	Library workshop – during tutorial time in library computer lab (AC 286A)	
3	September 17	Manuscript Structure and Content Writing Clearly and Concisely Note: Presentation dates will be assigned during this tutorial session.	<i>Mastering APA Style: Student’s Workbook: Chapters 1 and 2; and Selected Learning and Integrative Exercises, from “Parts of a Manuscript” (pp. 32-37); “Headings and Series” (pp. 38-41); “Guidelines to Reduce Bias in Language” (pp. 42-47); and “Grammar” (pp. 48-57)</i>
4	September 24	The Mechanics of Style Displaying Results	<i>Mastering APA Style: Student’s Workbook: Selected Learning and Integrative Exercises, from “Punctuation” (pp. 58-69); “Spelling and Hyphenation” (pp.70-73); “Capitalization” (pp.74-77); “Italics” (pp.78-79); “Abbreviations” (pp. 80-83); and “Tables” (pp.174-191)</i>
5	October 1	Crediting Sources References	<i>Mastering APA Style: Student’s Workbook: Selected Learning and Integrative Exercises, from “Quotations” (pp.84-87) “Reference Citations in Text” (pp. 88-93); and “Reference Lists” (pp. 94-101)</i>
6	October 8	Review Session for In-class Test #1	<i>APA Publication Manual, Chapters 1-8 and Appendix (pp. 245-253), and Student Workbook (pp. 1-101 and 174-191)</i>
READING WEEK			
7	October 22	Organizing Literature Searches, Reading Critically, and Extracting Information	Assigned by your teaching assistant
8	October 29	Constructing a Logical Argument, Thesis Statement, and Writing an Introduction and Conclusion	Assigned by your teaching assistant
9	November 5	Student Presentations	
10	November 12	Student Presentations	
11	November 19	Student Presentations	
12	November 26	Student Presentations	

Please note: The tutorial schedule is subject to change due to unforeseen circumstances.

Course Evaluations:

5%	Assignment
10%	Presentation (in tutorial)
25%	Term Paper
20%	Test #1
20%	Test #2
20%	Participation (in tutorial)

Assignment (5%): Students must find a popular press news story that reports on a recent research study in the psychological literature. The story must be written in English, published in the past two years (i.e., after September 1st, 2013) and **must be a news article** (not a blog or other online post) from one of the following newspapers: The Globe and Mail, The National Post, The Toronto Star, The Wall Street Journal, The New York Times, or The Washington Post. *Questions about whether a story qualifies as a news article for this assignment should be directed to the teaching assistant well in advance of the assignment deadline.* Students must then find the original academic research article that is discussed in the popular press story, as well as five additional empirical articles on the same research topic. The assignment will consist of a properly formatted reference list containing these seven citations.

- Due date: September 29, 2015, by 11:59pm EST. The assignment will be submitted electronically through Blackboard as a Word document only (do not upload a PDF). No email or paper submissions will be accepted.

Presentation (10%): Students will present a 20-minute presentation during the tutorial that summarizes the original article and five additional empirical articles located in the first assignment. The purpose of this assignment is for students to learn how to present research clearly and concisely with the effective use of visual aids (i.e., presentation slides). Further details will be discussed in tutorial.

- Dates: November 5, 12, 19 and 26

Term Paper (25%): The term paper will consist of (1) **a critical analysis** of the popular press story selected in the first assignment, as well as (2) **a literature review** integrating the empirical articles selected in the first assignment. The paper will be 8 pages long, not including the title page or reference page(s). Please follow all formatting guidelines from the American Psychological Association (6th Edition) Publication Manual when writing the term paper.

- Due date: December 3, 2015, by 11:59pm EST. The term paper will be submitted electronically through **Turnitin.com AND Blackboard** as a Word document only (do not upload a PDF). No email or paper submissions will be accepted. Note that this is the last day of classes and the last day for submission of term assignments in Fall semester courses.
- 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.

- Steps for you to set up your own Turnitin.com account and submit papers are described on this web site: <http://www.teaching.utoronto.ca/teaching/academicintegrity/turnitin/guide-students.htm>
- To submit your term paper on Turnitin.com, students will need the following information (please only submit your term paper to the one appropriate Tutorial Section/Teaching Assistant):

Tutorial 1 (Teaching Assistant: Leanh Dinh-Williams)

Section Class ID: 10608937

Section Enrollment Password: apastyle1

Tutorial 2 (Teaching Assistant: Dean Carcone)

Section Class ID: 10608943

Section Enrollment Password: apastyle2

Tutorial 3 (Teaching Assistant: Kathleen Walsh)

Section Class ID: 10608958

Section Enrollment Password: apastyle3

Recommended Structure for the Term Paper:

Section (you can use the headings provided below with the exception of "Introduction") *Recommended Page Length*

Introduction	1 page
Critical Analysis of Newspaper Article	2 pages
Summary of Literature	4 pages
Limitations and Future Directions	1 page

Guidelines for Writing Each Section:

- **Introduction**—Introduce the research topic and describe any background information that would be useful for the reader (e.g., useful statistics for understanding a particular problem, rationale for addressing a research question). Remember that ONLY the newspaper article, original empirical article, and five additional empirical articles are required for your term paper. If you cite more references in your introduction or other sections of your term paper, you will not earn extra credit.

- **Critical Analysis of Newspaper Article**—Summarize the newspaper article and critically analyze how well it represented the original empirical article. Mention key aspects of the original research article that are relevant to the critical analysis. Both the strengths and weaknesses of the newspaper article’s representation of the original empirical article should be described.
- **Summary of Literature**—Review all six of the empirical articles and include additional details not mentioned about the original empirical article in the critical analysis section. Demonstrate that you can provide an integrated and synthesized summary of the state of the research area, rather than solely summarizing each study separately. You can use subheadings to organize your summary of the literature.
- **Limitations and Future Directions**—Briefly summarize the limitations of the research studies described in the original and five additional empirical articles. Describe future directions for research that might address the limitations of the studies.

In-class Test #1 (20%): The first test will cover all chapters from the APA Publication Manual (6th Edition) and Student’s Workbook. The test will consist of multiple choice and short answer questions.

- Date: October 20, 2015.

In-class Test #2 (20%): The second test will include short-essay questions based on all lectures and assigned readings throughout the course.

- Date: December 1, 2015

Participation (20%): Students will be evaluated based on their tutorial attendance, participation in tutorial discussions, and engagement with skill exercises (15%). Furthermore, during student presentation weeks, students must formulate one discussion question each for **five other student presentations** (5%). The discussion questions must include presentations from each of the three weeks of presentations.

Due date: The five discussion questions will be submitted to the teaching assistant in hard copy during the final tutorial session (November 26, 2015), using the *Discussion Questions Form* that will be provided.

Policies for Assignments, Tests and Presentations in this Course

Please Note: You must bring **photo identification** with you to each test or you will not be permitted to write the tests.

Missed in-class tests: A make-up test will be held approximately one week following the date of the original test. Students will be permitted to take the make-up test only if they were absent on the date of the test due to a verified illness, a serious family emergency (e.g., death of a close family member), or religious observance. For absences due to illness, students must provide a valid and complete **Verification of Student Illness or Injury** form. The form must indicate: (a) that the student sought medical attention on the day of the test; (b) the nature/timeline of the student's problem and the diagnostic tests that were performed; and (c) how the problem prevented the student from writing the test. Students who miss the test must submit their documentation within five business days of the test date either to Dr. Ruocco (SW513) or to the Department of Psychology's Administrative Assistant, Nina Dhir (SW427F). Students will then be informed whether or not their documents have been accepted. Students whose documents are not accepted, who do not contact Dr. Ruocco within five business days of the test, or who do not appear for the make-up test, will receive a grade of zero on the test.

Late submission of assignments: Unless you have legitimate documentation for a late assignment, 10% of the total value of the assignment will be deducted for each day that it is late. An assignment is considered late as soon as the due date and time passes, so you are strongly encouraged to submit your assignments early in order to avoid any technical delays. Difficulties with the Blackboard portal will not be accepted as a legitimate reason for a late assignment. If you have legitimate documentation to explain your late assignment (e.g., a valid and complete **Verification of Student Illness or Injury** form), you must contact Dr. Ruocco as soon as possible to discuss your situation and to establish a new deadline for your assignment.

The **Verification of Student Illness or Injury** form can be found at the following link:

http://www.utsc.utoronto.ca/~registrar/resources/pdf_general/UTSCmedicalcertificate.pdf

Missed Presentations: Students who are absent on their assigned presentation date without legitimate documentation will receive a mark of zero for their presentation. If you have legitimate documentation to explain your inability to present on your assigned date, you must contact Dr. Ruocco and your assigned teaching assistant within five business days of the missed presentation (ideally, before your presentation date) to discuss alternative arrangements.

Grading: Any complaint about grading on an assignment, test or presentation should be made in writing to your Teaching Assistant within one week of receiving the graded material or as soon as is reasonably possible and should detail the point of contention.

Video and Auditory Recording

For reasons of privacy as well as protection of copyright, unauthorized video or audio recording in classrooms is prohibited. This is outlined in the Provost's guidelines on *Appropriate Use of Information and Communication Technology*. Note, however, that these guidelines include the provision that students may obtain consent to record lectures and, "in the case of private use by students with disabilities, the instructor's consent must not be unreasonably withheld."

Accessibility:

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. I will work with you and AccessAbility Services to ensure you can achieve your learning goals in this course. Enquiries are confidential. 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.

Academic Integrity:

Academic integrity is essential to the pursuit of learning and scholarship in a university, and to ensuring that a degree from the University of Toronto is a strong signal of each student's individual academic achievement. As a result, the University treats cases of cheating and plagiarism very seriously. The University of Toronto's *Code of Behaviour on Academic Matters* (<http://www.governingcouncil.utoronto.ca/policies/behaveac.htm>) outlines the behaviours that constitute academic dishonesty and the processes for addressing academic offences. Potential offences include, but are not limited to:

In papers and assignments:

- Using someone else's ideas or words without appropriate acknowledgement.
- Submitting your own work in more than one course without the permission of the instructor.
- Making up sources or facts.
- Obtaining or providing unauthorized assistance on any assignment.

On tests and exams:

- Using or possessing unauthorized aids.
- Looking at someone else's answers during an exam or test.
- Misrepresenting your identity.

In academic work:

- Falsifying institutional documents or grades.
- Falsifying or altering any documentation required by the University, including (but not limited to) doctor's notes.

All suspected cases of academic dishonesty will be investigated following procedures outlined in the Code of Behaviour on Academic Matters. If you have questions or concerns about what constitutes appropriate academic behaviour or appropriate research and citation methods, you are expected to seek out additional information on academic integrity from your instructor or from other institutional resources (see <http://www.utoronto.ca/academicintegrity/>).

Some important dates for Fall 2015 semester (from UTSC Course Calendar):

September 17 - Last day to add F and Y courses.

October 12 - Thanksgiving Day (University closed)

October 13 to Saturday, October 17 - Reading Week. (Note: No UTSC classes held. Classes or exams on other campuses may be held.)

November 19 - Last day to drop F courses without academic penalty and have them removed from the transcript.

December 3 - Last day of classes and last day for submission of term assignments in F courses. (Note: classes are held on this day only for courses that normally meet on a Monday.)

December 4 to December 7 - Study Break

December 7 - Last day to drop UTSC F courses (on eService only) and have them remain on the transcript with a grade of LWD indicating withdrawal without academic penalty. After this date grades are assigned whether or not course work is completed (with a '0' assigned for incomplete work) and they are calculated into GPAs.

Grade Scale

NUMERICAL MARKS	LETTER GRADE	GRADE POINT VALUE
90 - 100%	A+	4.0
85 - 89%	A	4.0
80 - 84%	A-	3.7
77 - 79%	B+	3.3
73 - 76%	B	3.0
70 - 72%	B-	2.7
67 - 69%	C+	2.3
63 - 66%	C	2.0
60 - 62%	C-	1.7
57 - 59%	D+	1.3
53 - 56%	D	1.0
50 - 52%	D-	0.7
0 - 49%	F	0.0