

# PSCH 303 Writing in Psychology

3 Credit Hours

Fall 2015

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## Course Description, Goals, and Objectives

The main purpose of this course is to improve your writing skills in general, and to develop your scientific writing in particular. To that end, you will work on an empirical research report throughout the semester, following the guidelines of the American Psychological Association (APA). In parallel, you will go through the process of developing your own research project. You will first have to come up with a general research topic and perform a thorough literature search. Based on your reading of the relevant literature, you will go on to formulate a precise research question and design a suitable empirical study that will enable you to address that question. The task is to report all of these activities, as well as describe (hypothetical) results of your empirical study, and discuss their implications, in the research report.

A secondary goal of this class is to explore issues about moral psychology. As will become clear from lectures and readings, moral psychology is a topic of study with connections to all of the major subdisciplines of psychology (i.e., neuroscience, developmental, clinical, cognitive, personality and social psychology). The focus on moral psychology will thus enable students to pursue research areas of particular interest, as well as provide a common ground for class discussions and exercises.

## COURSE MATERIALS

### Required Text

Beins, B. C., & Beins, A. M. (2012). *Effective writing in Psychology: Papers, posters, and presentations*. (2<sup>nd</sup> Ed.). Malden, MA: Wiley-Blackwell.

Additional readings will be posted on Blackboard.

### Recommended readings

American Psychological Association. (2001). *Publication manual of the American Psychological Association* (6<sup>th</sup> ed.). Washington, DC: Author.

## Assignments and Grading.

Assignments for the class are all directly related to the development of a final, complete research proposal. Grades will be based on your total points from the assignments listed below. Specific descriptions of each assignment will be posted on Blackboard under 'Assignments' and will be discussed in lecture. For each assignment, you must upload **an electronic copy of the assignment to Safe Assign on Blackboard before lecture/discussion**. For some assignments, you also have to submit a hard copy (see specific assignments for details).

1. Research question and article summaries (40 points)
2. Draft of Introduction section (7-9 pages; 100 points)
3. Draft of Methods section (3-5 pages; 60 points)
4. Draft of Results section (2-3 pages; 60 points)
5. Draft of Discussion section (4-6 pages; 80 points)
6. Power point slides (10-15 slides; 40 points)
7. Draft of Abstract (150-250 words; 20 points)
8. Final report (16-22 pages; 320 points) including Introduction, Methods, Results, Discussion. The Cover page, Abstract, References, Tables, Figures, and Appendices are not counted towards the page total. The final assignment must be *turned in together with all previous assignments and a statement of revision*.
9. Attendance (50 points)

*NOTE regarding length of assignments:* Writing assignments include a *minimum to maximum* amount of pages (e.g., 5-6 pages). If you do not meet the *minimum*, *10% of the points that you can earn* on that assignment will be deducted. In other words, if you can earn 100 points on an assignment, 10 points would be deducted. If you exceed the *maximum*, points will also be deducted, specifically *5% of the points that you can earn would be deducted for each page over the maximum*. For example, if you can earn 100 points on an assignment, 5 points would be deducted for each page over the maximum.

Grade	Points	Percent
A	689.15-770	89.5 – 100
B	612.15-689.14	79.5 – 89.4
C	535.15-612.14	69.5- 79.4
D	458.15-535.14	59.5 – 69.4
F	< 458.15	0 – 59.4

## COURSE POLICIES

### Late work

It is crucial that you turn in assignments on-time. You must upload **an electronic copy of the assignment to Safe Assign in 'Course Assignments' on Blackboard before lecture/discussion and turn in one hard copy at the beginning of the lecture/discussion** on the day that it is due. Late assignments will be penalized 10% for each day (up to 24 hours) that it is turned in late. The only late work that will be accepted without penalty will be work presented with a **documented excuse** (such as a documented case of illness or death in the family). In this case,

you must contact the professor by email (and copy the TA) as soon as possible to document your excuse.

### **Attendance**

Your presence is expected in all lectures and discussions. You can be absent once from lecture and once from discussion without penalty. After one absence, only **documented excused absences** (such as a documented case of illness or death in the family) will **not** count against the points awarded for attendance. You must contact the professor by email (and copy the TA) as soon as possible to document your excuse. Attendance will be taken at the start of each lecture/discussion. If you arrive after attendance is taken, you may let your professor/TA know that you were late the first time it occurs. If lateness becomes a chronic problem you will be marked absent in the future. In addition, if you leave early, after attendance has been taken but before you complete that day's activity, you will be marked absent from the section. If you need to leave early on a particular day, see your TA. Your attendance grade will be based on the percentage of lectures and discussion sections attended.

### **Electronic Communication**

Provided that you ask a reasonable question and articulate yourself clearly in your message, I will respond to e-mails. However, please understand that I receive a lot of e-mails in a given day. Each semester I teach up to three classes and have approximately 350 students. Therefore, please expect that it may take up to 48 hours until you receive my response.

Many things I am asked in emails are things that are addressed in this document. I will not respond to these emails. If what you ask is a question that is relevant to the rest of the class, I may address your question in class instead of responding to the e-mail.

If you e-mail the instructor or your TA and you would like a response, your message should be well thought out, well-written, and include information about who you are and what course you are in (or discussion section for the TA).

### **Academic Integrity**

A student who submits work, at any stage of the writing process, which in whole or part has been written by someone else or which contains passages quoted or paraphrased from another's work without acknowledgment (quotation marks, citation, etc.) has plagiarized. Maintain your integrity when completing assignments and be overzealous to give credit where it is due. If you are ever unsure about what constitutes plagiarism, ask me. Students who are found to have plagiarized work may be subject to various disciplinary actions, including a failing grade on a particular assignment, failure of the entire course, and possible expulsion from the university.

**For any case of academic dishonesty, my policy is to file a complaint with the Office of the Dean of Students.** For more information about violating academic integrity and its consequences, consult the website of the UIC Office of the Dean of Students at <http://www.uic.edu/depts/dos/studentconduct.html>.

### **RELIGIOUS HOLIDAYS**

Campus Policy States: The faculty of the University of Illinois at Chicago shall make every effort to avoid scheduling examinations or requiring that student projects be turned in or completed on religious holidays. Students who wish to observe their religious holidays shall notify the faculty member by the tenth day of the semester of the date when they will be absent

unless the religious holiday is observed on or before the tenth day of the semester. In such cases, the student shall notify the faculty member at least five days in advance of the date when he/she will be absent. The faculty member shall make every reasonable effort to honor the request, not penalize the student for missing the class, and if an examination or project is due during the absence, give the student an exam or assignment equivalent to the one completed by those students in attendance. If the student feels aggrieved, he/she may request remedy through the campus grievance procedure.

### **DISABILITY ACCOMMODATION**

Students with disabilities who require accommodations for access to and/or participation in this course are welcome, but must be registered with the Disability Resource Center (DRC). You may contact DRC at 312-413-2183 (v) or 312-413-0123 (TTY).

### **RULES DURING CLASS**

When you are in class, I ask that you be courteous to me as well as your fellow students. **Please do not have conversations with fellow students during lecture. In addition, please do not listen to music, send text messages, or engage in similar distracting behaviors during lecture.** If I ask that you stop doing some behavior and you persist, I may ask you to leave the class.

**It will be your responsibility to keep track of your scores on Blackboard.** Be sure to keep copies of all of your graded assignments in case any discrepancies arise. If you notice that a score has been incorrectly entered into Blackboard, you must show the original paper with the correct grade to your TA by Monday of finals week. If you are unable to produce the graded work, you will receive the grade that appears in Blackboard.

### **CALENDAR OF MAJOR COURSE EVENTS AND DEADLINES**

<i>Week/Day/Date</i>	<i>Course Event</i>
Week 3, Friday 29 Jan	Assignment 1 Due
Week 6, Friday 19 Feb	Assignment 2 Due
Week 8, Friday 4 Mar	Assignment 3 Due
Week 10, Friday 18 Mar	Assignment 4 Due
Week 12, Friday 8 April	Assignment 5 Due
Week 13, Friday 15 Apr	Assignment 6 Due
Week 14, Monday 20 Apr	Assignment 7 Due
Week 16, Wednesday 4 May	Final paper Due

### **UIC RESOURCES**

If you find yourself having difficulty with the course material or any other difficulties in your student life, don't hesitate to ask for help! Come to me, or if it is about an issue beyond this class, please contact your college advisors, or get help from any number of other support services on campus. You can get a referral to the right place, or help on the spot, from concerned advisor in the Undergraduate Success Center (USC) at [usc@uic.edu](mailto:usc@uic.edu).

**The Writing Center**, located in Grant Hall 105, offers one-on-one consultation with student writers who need help developing ideas, or need advice, guidance or additional instruction on any aspects of writing in any class. Tutors are prepared to spend fifty minutes per appointment, and there is no limit to the number of tutoring sessions you can have each semester. Make an appointment and be on time! Bring the paper on which you're working, as well as any related drafts or notes, and information about the assignment. For an appointment, call the Writing Center at (312) 413-2206, or stop by room 105 of Grant Hall. Visit the Writing Center website at [www.uic.edu/depts/engl/writing](http://www.uic.edu/depts/engl/writing) for more information.

**Public Computer Labs** are available throughout campus where you may write and/or print out your work. For a list of labs and the hours they're open, go to [www.acc.uic.edu/pclabs](http://www.acc.uic.edu/pclabs). NOTE: Do not wait until the last minute to print out papers. Sometimes labs have long lines of students waiting for access.

**The Academic Center for Excellence** can help if you feel you need more individualized instruction in reading and/or writing, study skills, time management, etc. Phone: (312) 413-0031.

**Counseling Services** are available for all UIC students. You may seek free and confidential services from the Counseling Center [www.counseling.uic.edu](http://www.counseling.uic.edu). The Counseling Center is located in the Student Services Building; you may contact them at (312) 996-3490. In addition to offering counseling services, the Counseling Center also operates the InTouch Crisis Hotline from 6:00 p.m.-10:30 p.m. They offer support and referrals to callers, as well as telephone crisis interventions; please call (312) 996-5535.

### Tentative schedule

The following pages contain a listing of topics and assigned readings. Students are expected to have read the required readings for the week each topic is covered. Chapters are from the Beins & Beins (2012) textbook.

Note: This topic schedule is **tentative**. Topics may take more or less time to cover depending on class understanding of various topics. It is your responsibility to track these changes.

Week #	Date	Readings	Topic
1	M 1/11		Introduction
	W 1/13		Introduction to moral psychology
	F 1/15	Ch. 1-4	Discussion section: Finding relevant research
2	M 1/18	Ch. 9	***No class MLK Day
	W 1/20	Ch. 5	Formulating a research question
	F 1/22		Discussion section: Work shop research question
3	M 1/25	Ch. 5	Reading and summarizing research articles
	W 1/27		Formulating hypotheses

	F 1/29		<b>Research question &amp; article summaries due</b>
<b>4</b>	M 2/1	Ch. 6, 10	The art of argumentation
	W 2/3	Ch. 7	Elements of style in writing
	F 2/5		Discussion section: Workshop introduction
<b>5</b>	M 2/8	Ch. 14	APA guidelines: citations, refs
	W 2/10		<b>**Independent writing day</b>
	F 2/12		Discussion Section: Work shop introduction
<b>6</b>	M 2/15		Research design I
	W 2/17		Research design II
	F 2/19		<b>Draft of Introduction due; Workshop design selection</b>
<b>7</b>	M 2/22	Ch. 11	Writing the methods section
	W 2/24		Writing methods continued
	F 2/26		Discussion Section: Workshop methods section
<b>8</b>	M2/29	Ch. 8, 12	The results section
	W 3/2		The role of statistics; tables & figures
	F 3/4		<b>Draft of methods section due; Workshop results section</b>
<b>9</b>	M 3/7		The peer review process
	W 3/9		Giving/receiving feedback from peers
	F 3/11		Discussion Section: Revision
<b>10</b>	M 3/14		<b>**Independent writing day</b>
	W 3/16	Ch. 13	Writing the discussion
	F 3/18		<b>Draft of results section due</b>
	M 3/21		SPRING BREAK
	W 3/23		SPRING BREAK
	F 3/25		SPRING BREAK
<b>11</b>	M 3/28		Writing the discussion
	W 3/30	Ch. 17	Oral presentation
	F 4/1		Discussion section: Work on Discussion
<b>12</b>	M 4/4		<b>**Independent writing day</b>

	W 4/6 F 4/8		<b>**Independent writing day</b> <b>Draft of Discussion due; work on presentation slides</b>
<b>13</b>	M 4/11 W 4/13 F 4/15	Ch. 15	The abstract  <b>Feedback from peers</b>  <b>Presentation slides due</b>
<b>14</b>	M 4/18 W 4/20 F 4/22		<b>**Independent writing day</b>  <b>Draft of abstract due; **Independent writing day</b>  <b>**Independent writing day</b>
<b>15</b>	M 4/25 W 4/27 F 4/29		Concluding remarks  <b>**Independent writing day</b>  Discussion section: Final revisions
<b>Final Exams</b>	W 5/4	---	<b>Final version of paper due</b>