

Faculty of Health
Department of Psychology
PSYC 2010 3.0 N: WRITING IN PSYCHOLOGY
Thursday 7:00 PM – 10:00 PM in ACE 004
Winter 2023

This section of Writing In Psychology is listed as **in-person** on the York University course website, which means that we will be meeting weekly on Thursdays at 7:00pm. Any changes in the future will be appropriately communicated both in lecture and on eClass.

Instructor and T.A. Information

Instructor: George Tomou

Office Hours: TBD – Zoom meeting list posted on eClass

Email: gtomou@yorku.ca

T.A.	Samantha Motola	Alaina Thomas
Email	smotola@yorku.ca	athomas7@yorku.ca

Land Acknowledgement

We recognize that many Indigenous nations have longstanding relationships with the territories upon which York University campuses are located that precede the establishment of York University. York University acknowledges its presence on the traditional territory of many Indigenous Nations. The area known as Tkaronto has been care taken by the Anishinabek Nation, the Haudenosaunee Confederacy, the Wendat, and the Métis. It is now home to many Indigenous Peoples. We acknowledge the current treaty holders and the Mississaugas of the Credit First Nation. This territory is subject of the Dish With One Spoon Wampum Belt Covenant, an agreement to peaceably share and care for the Great Lakes region.

Course Prerequisite(s): Course prerequisites are strictly enforced

- HH/PSYC 1010 6.00 (Introduction to Psychology), with a minimum grade of C.

Course Credit Exclusions

Please refer to [York Courses Website](#) for a listing of any course credit exclusions.

Course website: eClass

All course materials will be available on the course eClass site, unless otherwise indicated by the instructor. The site will be your central access point for course materials such as slides, assignment documentation, and assignment submission links. My Zoom office hour link will also be available on eClass.

Course Description

PSYC 2010 - Writing in Psychology aims to assist students in developing their university-level writing and written communication skills. Over the coming semester, students will develop

several writing assignments that cumulate to an argumentative academic paper on a psychological topic of interest. Students will be encouraged to identify controversial topics in psychology with an emphasis on developing their views and supporting these with arguments in order to communicate effectively with the reader. Throughout the process, students will receive feedback from the course director, TAs, and their peers that will assist them in improving their writing before submitting the final paper. Essential to this purpose will be identifying relevant published literature in psychology and using these works to support their views while implementing appropriate referencing and citations. Class discussions will address the varying elements students will be expected to learn on a weekly basis in an engaging and interactive manner. In-class written exercises and workshops will foster collaborative learning and encourage the implementation of writing principles. The overarching goal of the course is to prepare students for written assignments they may be expected to submit in higher-level courses such as honours thesis or seminar level work. At the conclusion of the course, students will be able to develop and effectively communicate written arguments on both psychological issues and more generally.

Program Learning Outcomes

Upon completion of this course, students should be able to:

1. Demonstrate knowledge of the basics of scientific writing.
2. Demonstrate effective written communication.
3. Demonstrate the ability to think critically about written communication.
4. Demonstrates an ability to locate and identify valid, credible, and rigorous psychological research.
5. Demonstrate knowledge of the basics of referencing using APA style.

Specific Learning Objectives

1. Demonstrate ability to cite sources appropriately according to APA standards.
2. Place a claim into context within the relevant academic literature
3. Distinguish and effectively use different types of research literature (i.e. reviews, meta-analyses, individual studies etc.) to support an argument
4. Demonstrate proficiency with spelling, punctuation, grammar and sentence structure
5. Demonstrate ability to adhere to the conventions of academic writing in psychology
6. Develop a clear written claim statement and provide evidence from scholarly sources to support it
7. Structure academic writing to effectively communicate a claim and supporting detail with logical flow
8. Explore, consider, and rebut alternative points of view in academic prose
9. Consider and communicate the implications of a claim
10. Give and receive peer feedback as part of a regular revision process
11. Appreciate the difference between conjecture and interpretation of data

12. Appreciate when empirical observation vs. theoretical analysis / synthesis is needed to support a claim

Required Text

There are **no required texts** for this course, but the following resources are strongly recommended:

- Greene, A. E. (2013). *Writing science in plain English*. University of Chicago Press.
- Lipschutz, G., Scarry, S., & Scarry, J. (2020). *The Canadian Writer's Workplace*. 9th Ed. Nelson Education.

Course Requirements and Assessment

Assessment	Date of Evaluation (if known)	Weighting
Engagement Activities: Grammar and Style (6); Mini-Reflections (5); Essay Components (7);	Throughout the semester Best 15-of-18	10%
Essay Bundle (Components 1-4)	Date of Evaluation 2	20%
Essay Bundle (Components 1-6)	Date of Evaluation 3	30%
Grammar and Style Quiz	Date of Evaluation 4	5%
Final Essay	Date of Evaluation 5	35%
Total		100%

Description of Assignments

Engagement Activities: Engagement Activities include a variety of different assessments that must be completed regularly throughout the semester. Each of these will due after the class where they are discussed (see below *Course Schedule* for a detailed list). These will be graded on a **pass/fail** criterion. No extensions for Engagement Activities will be provided; instead, the best 15 will be considered toward your overall course grade.

1. Grammar and Style (6): Grammar and Style exercises will present small activities with a common grammar or writing issue that students often encounter.
2. Mini-Reflections (5): Mini-Reflections will be submitted at various points throughout the semester. These brief reflections should take approximately 10-15 minutes to complete and will be based on questions provided by the instructor that will ask you to reflect on your own writing and experiences in the course.
3. Essay Components (7): Throughout the course you will be building toward an argumentative essay on a controversial topic in psychology. To assist you on this writing process, the essay will initially be broken down into a series of Essay Components. We will spend time in each class working on these components and you will submit your progress at various times throughout the semester.

Essay Bundles: Students will submit bundles of Essay Components for grading and feedback on two occasions through out the course. The due dates for these are listed in the *Course Schedule* below.

1. Essay Bundle 1 (Components 1-4): Essay Bundle 1 will contain Essay Components 1-4 and is worth 20% of the course grade.
2. Essay Bundle 2 (Components 1-6): Essay Bundle 2 will contain Essay Components 1-6 and is worth 30% of the course grade.

Grammar and Style Quiz: There will be a small Grammar & Style Quiz that will be available on the final day of the course on eClass. The quiz will cover the content students learned from the various Grammar & Style exercises throughout the course.

Final Essay: The ultimate project for this course is the completion of an argumentative essay on a controversial issue in psychology. You will develop this essay throughout the course by completing your Essay Components.

Choosing an Essay Topic: Your essay for this class must be *argumentative*. This means that you will choose a controversial issue in psychology and taking a side that you will argue in favour of (and support with empirical evidence) regarding that topic.

Example essay topics*:

- Is helicopter parenting an effective parenting style?
- Should we use animals in psychological research?
- Are children with ADHD prescribed medication too often?
- Why has depression become such a widespread illness?
- Why are superhero movies so popular?
- Should psilocybin be legalized?

These topics are examples. You may use one of these or choose your own topic. Be aware that your topic **must be a controversial issue that may be **reasonably** argued from two sides.*

Grading as per Senate Policy

The grading scheme for the course conforms to the 9-point grading system used in undergraduate programs at York (e.g., A+ = 9, A = 8, B+ = 7, C+ = 5, etc.). Assignments and tests* will bear either a letter grade designation or a corresponding number grade (e.g. A+ = 90 to 100, A = 80 to 89, B+ = 75 to 79, etc.)

For a full description of York grading system see the York University Undergraduate Calendar – [Grading Scheme for 2022-23](#)

Late Work/Missed Tests

Late assignments will be accepted up to one week after the deadline including weekend days. If your assignment is late, you will be deducted a late penalty of 5% per day, including weekend days. Late assignments will NOT be accepted after one week of the missed deadline (25% off).

Engagement Activities (Grammar and Style, Mini-Reflections, and Essay Components) **cannot** be made up. Do not email late work to your TAs or instructor; you will not receive credit for late engagement work.

Students with a documented reason for missing a deadline, such as illness, compassionate grounds, etc., which is confirmed by supporting documentation may request accommodation from the Course Instructor. Further extensions or accommodation will require students to submit a formal petition to the Faculty. Students **must** complete the following online form which will be received and reviewed in the Psychology undergraduate office:

<https://psychology.apps01.yorku.ca/machform/view.php?id=16179>

Failure to complete the form within 48 hours of the original deadline will result in a grade of zero for the missed quiz or late assignment

If you are missing a deadline due to illness, compassionate grounds, etc., you must contact me to submit documentation within 48 hours of missing the deadline in order to have your work considered for grading without a late penalty.

Add/Drop Deadlines

For a list of all important dates please refer to: [Fall/Winter 2022-23 Important Dates](#)

	Fall (Term F)	Year (Term Y)	Winter (Term W)
Last date to add a course without permission of instructor (also see Financial Deadlines)	Sept. 20	Sept. 20	Jan. 22
Last date to add a course with permission of instructor (also see Financial Deadlines)	Oct. 4	Oct. 25	Feb. 6
Drop deadline: Last date to drop a course without receiving a grade (also see Financial Deadlines)	Nov. 11	Feb. 10	Mar. 17
Course Withdrawal Period (withdraw from a course and receive a grade of "W" on transcript – see note below)	Nov. 12 - Dec. 7	Feb. 11 - April 11	March 18 - April 11

Add and Drop Deadline Information

There are deadlines for adding and dropping courses, both academic and financial. Since, for the most part, the dates are **different**, be sure to read the information carefully so that you understand the differences between the sessional dates below and the [Refund Tables](#).

You are strongly advised to pay close attention to the "Last date to enrol without permission of course instructor" deadlines. These deadlines represent the last date students have unrestricted access to the registration and enrolment system.

After that date, you must contact the professor/department offering the course to arrange permission.

You can drop courses using the registration and enrolment system up until the last date to drop a course without receiving a grade (drop deadline).

You may [withdraw from a course](#) using the registration and enrolment system after the drop deadline until the last day of class for the term associated with the course. When you withdraw from a course, the course remains on your transcript without a grade and is notated as 'W'. The withdrawal will not affect your grade point average or count towards the credits required for your degree.

Information on Plagiarism Detection

The final paper will be submitted on eClass through the plagiarism detection software **Turnitin**. More information on the paper and Turnitin will be provided in class. Please note that suspected cases of plagiarism will be dealt with following procedures outlined in the Senate Policy on Academic Honesty (see section below).

Electronic Device Policy

Laptops in class should be used for note-taking purposes only. Did you know that research has found that multi-tasking with a laptop (e.g., taking notes while also searching the web) results in poorer course grades, not just for the person doing the multi-tasking but for those sitting behind and within view of the screen? Be considerate to others and do not multi-task if you choose to use a laptop. Along similar lines, if someone's laptop-use is distracting you, feel free to ask him/her to stop. Use of cellphones is not allowed during lectures. If you must use your phone during a lecture, please leave the classroom to do so.

Academic Integrity for Students

York University takes academic integrity very seriously; please familiarize yourself with [Information about the Senate Policy on Academic Honesty](#).

It is recommended that you review Academic Integrity by completing the [Academic Integrity Tutorial](#) and [Academic Honesty Quiz](#)

Test Banks

The offering for sale of, buying of, and attempting to sell or buy test banks (banks of test questions and/or answers), or any course specific test questions/answers is not permitted in the Faculty of Health. Any student found to be doing this may be considered to have breached the Senate Policy on Academic Honesty. In particular, buying and attempting to sell banks of test questions and/or answers may be considered as “Cheating in an attempt to gain an improper advantage in an academic evaluation” (article 2.1.1 from the Senate Policy) and/or “encouraging, enabling or causing others” (article 2.1.10 from the Senate Policy) to cheat.

Academic Accommodation for Students with Disabilities

While all individuals are expected to satisfy the requirements of their program of study and to aspire to do so at a level of excellence, the university recognizes that persons with disabilities may require reasonable accommodation to enable them to do so. The university encourages students with disabilities to register with Student Accessibility Services (SAS) to discuss their accommodation needs as early as possible in the term to establish the recommended academic accommodations that will be communicated to Course Directors as necessary. Please let me know as early as possible in the term if you anticipate requiring academic accommodation so that we can discuss how to consider your accommodation needs within the context of this course.

<https://accessibility.students.yorku.ca/>

Excerpt from Senate Policy on Academic Accommodation for Students with Disabilities

1. Pursuant to its commitment to sustaining an inclusive, equitable community in which all members are treated with respect and dignity, and consistent with applicable accessibility legislation, York University shall make reasonable and appropriate accommodations in order to promote the ability of students with disabilities to fulfill the academic requirements of their programs. This policy aims to eliminate systemic barriers to participation in academic activities by students with disabilities.

All students are expected to satisfy the essential learning outcomes of courses. Accommodations shall be consistent with, support and preserve the academic integrity of the curriculum and the academic standards of courses and programs. For further information please refer to: [York University Academic Accommodation for Students with Disabilities Policy](#).

Course Materials Copyright Information

These course materials are designed for use as part of the course PSYC 2010 Section N at York University and are the property of the instructor unless otherwise stated. Third party copyrighted materials (such as book chapters, journal articles, music, videos, etc.) have either been licensed for use in this course or fall under an exception or limitation in Canadian Copyright law.

Copying this material for distribution (e.g. uploading material to a commercial third-party website) may lead to a violation of Copyright law. [Intellectual Property Rights Statement](#).

Course Schedule (*subject to change*)

Week	Date	Topic	Due
Week 1	January 12	Introduction to Course; Pre-Writing	Mini-Reflection 1
Week 2	January 19	Academic Literature: Conducting Research	Grammar & Style 1 Essay Component 1
Week 3	January 26	APA Style; Paraphrasing & Summarizing	Grammar & Style 2 Essay Component 2 Mini-Reflection 2
Week 4	February 2	Introduction & Context	Grammar & Style 3 Essay Component 3
Week 5	February 9	Making a Claim	Grammar & Style 4 Essay Component 4 Mini-Reflection 3
Week 6	February 16	Writing Workshop	Essay Bundle 1
--	February 23	<i>Reading Week – no classes</i>	--
Week 7	March 2	Supporting Arguments	Grammar & Style 5 Essay Component 5
Week 8	March 9	Counterclaim	Grammar & Style 6 Essay Component 6 Mini-Reflection 4
Week 9	March 16	Writing Workshop	Essay Bundle 2
Week 10	March 23	Conclusions; Planning a Final Draft	Grammar and Style Quiz
Week 11	March 30	Revising and Editing	Essay Component 7 Mini-Reflection 5
Week 12	April 6	Writing Workshop	Final Essay