

**Faculty of Health**  
**Department of Psychology**  
**PSYC 4180 3.0 Section B: CRITICAL THINKING IN PSYCHOLOGY**  
**Thursday 7:00 – 10:00PM (in-person)**  
**Fall 2023/Winter 2024**

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**Instructor and T.A. Information**

Instructor: Lesley Zannella, PhD (she/her/hers)

Office Hours: Please email me to book an appointment in-person or via zoom

Email: lzannell@yorku.ca

If you have any questions or concerns, please contact me from your York University email with the subject line as “PSYC 4180 Section B Critical Thinking in Psychology”

<b>T.A.</b>		
<b>Email</b>		
<b>Office Hours</b>		

**Course Prerequisite:**

- HH/PSYC 1010 6.00 (Introduction to Psychology)
- HH/PSYC 2020 6.00 (Statistical Methods I and II) or substitutes
- HH/PSYC 2030 3.00 (Introduction to Research Methods) or substitutes
- Students must be in an Honours program in Psychology and have completed at least 84 credits

**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.

**Course Description**

Welcome to Critical Thinking in Psychology! In this course, students will develop and practice critical thinking skills required to become responsible and analytical consumers of research in psychology. Overall, this course will include lectures, discussion, in-class workshops, peer review sessions, and student presentations. In the winter term, students will have the opportunity to engage in a community-based project that was designed to bridge the gap between course content and real-world application.

## **Program Learning Outcomes**

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

1. Demonstrate ability to think critically about applications of psychological findings reported in the media.
2. Demonstrate knowledge of variety of ways to express psychological findings in everyday life.
3. Critically identify myths or stereotypes in common discourse.
4. Recognize limits of conclusions based on inferential statistics.

## **Specific Learning Objectives**

1. Demonstrate the ability to collect, describe, understand, and think critically about research results and inference, and how they are communicated in both scientific journals and in the media.
2. Demonstrate ability to gather, interpret, evaluate and integrate research from distinct (and sometimes conflicting) sources to arrive at an informed opinion.
3. Effectively communicate scientific research and informed conclusions on research in a range of communication media for a general public audience understanding level.
4. Demonstrate understanding of the strengths and limitations of different communication media and use this understanding to communicate science within them.
5. Demonstrate the ability to evaluate credibility of evidence using reason and logic.
6. Collaborate effectively as part of a team and apply various psychological principles and critical thinking skills to develop a project that solves a real-world problem.

## **Required Text**

- There are no required textbooks for the course. All required readings will be provided through eClass.

## **‘I am interested in learning more’ Texts (optional)**

- Chambers, C. (2017). *The seven deadly sins of psychology: A manifesto for reforming the culture of scientific practice*. Princeton University Press. <https://doi.org/10.1515/9781400884940>

## Course Assessment:

Assessment	Date of Evaluation	Weighting
FALL TERM		
Course engagement	throughout the term	30%
Cause and effect analysis	Thursday, October 5 at 11:59PM	7.5%
Two truths & a myth presentation	Thursday, November 17 in-class	7.5%
WINTER TERM		
Course engagement	throughout the term	20%
Community-based project reflections	throughout the term	10%
Final project deliverable (group)	Wednesday, March 13 at 11:59PM	15%
Final project presentation (group)	Presentations dates are March 14, 28 <sup>th</sup> , or April 4	10%
<b>Total</b>		<b>100%</b>

\*\*For a more detailed assessment and deadline table, refer to the ‘Track your Assignments’ optional document on eClass

### Description of Assignments

I will post all assignment instructions and rubrics on eClass. Please feel free to reach out to your TA or myself if you have any questions about the assignments. I will also be discussing all assignments in class with opportunity for questions.

### Class Format and Attendance Policy

I will post all mandatory course content on eClass. I will not be recording attendance, and I do not have a mandatory attendance policy. So, why should you come? This course is delivered in-person and discussion driven, which means I will be giving lectures, facilitating class activities and discussions, and discussing assignments in more detail. In class, you also have the opportunity to ask me questions, work with your groups, and earn bonus marks. In the winter term, students will be participating in a community-based project that will involve group work each week which will require your presence. Over and above all that, I am committed to creating an inclusive and engaging classroom environment where you succeed, and I need you there to do that!

### 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 2023-24](#)

## Missed Tests/Midterm Exams/Late Assignment

In this course, we do not have any tests or exams. If you are feeling overwhelmed or double booked, you can use my extension coupons! All students will have three, 24-hour extension coupons (per term) that can be used on any assignment in the course, no questions asked, no documentation required. This means that if an assignment is due Friday at 11:59PM, using one extension coupon would mean a new deadline of Saturday at 11:59PM. You can also use all three at one time if you would like. Using three coupons at once would mean a new deadline of Monday at 11:59PM. To redeem these coupons, email your TA and let them know which assignment you are using a coupon on, and how many coupons you are using. **The only rules:** these coupons **must** be redeemed before an assignment deadline and you **cannot** use these coupons on in-class presentations or group work assessments. After that, the late penalty for an assignment is 2% per day, including weekends. I will accept assignments up to 10 days late, including weekends (resulting in a 20% grade deduction). Following that, the missed assignment will result in a grade of zero.

## Add/Drop Deadlines

For a list of all important dates please refer to: [Fall/Winter 2023-24 Important Dates](#)

	Fall (Term F)	Year (Term Y)	Winter (Term W)
Last date to add a course <b>without permission</b> of instructor (also see Financial Deadlines)	Sept. 20	Sept. 20	Jan. 22
Last date to add a course <b>with permission</b> of instructor (also see Financial Deadlines)	Sept. 28	Sept. 28	Jan. 31
Drop deadline: Last date to drop a course without receiving a grade (also see Financial Deadlines)	Nov. 8	Feb. 8	March 11
Course Withdrawal Period (withdraw from a course and receive a grade of "W" on transcript – see note below)	Nov. 9 - Dec. 5	Feb. 9 - April 18	March 12 - April 8

## 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**

All assignments will be submitted online using eClass and Turnitin. Students who do not want their work submitted to Turnitin must, by the end of the second week of class, consult with Dr. Z to make alternate arrangements.

### **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](#)

### **Artificial Intelligence Apps**

According to York's Senate Policy on Academic Honesty, using AI apps such as such as ChatGPT, GPT-3, DALL-E, among others to complete academic work without your instructor's knowledge or permission, is **a breach of academic honesty**.

This course was designed to develop your written communication skills, guiding you and supporting you through the process of writing a large essay. This course will not only prepare you for the remainder of your university career, but beyond the classroom. Through step-by-step assignments, low-stakes tasks, and mastery grading, we aim to provide a low-risk, supportive environment for you to practice and refine your writing. While AI tools can assist in generating ideas, it's important to remember that the skill of writing is invaluable and irreplaceable. The practice you gain here will serve you well in your future courses and professional endeavors.

### **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](#).

### **Calumet and Stong Colleges' Student Success Programming:**

[Calumet](#) and [Stong](#) Colleges aim to support the success of Faculty of Health students through a variety of **free programs** throughout their university career:

- [Orientation](#) helps new students transition into university, discover campus resources, and establish social and academic networks.
- [Peer Mentoring](#) connects well-trained upper-year students with first year and transfer students to help them transition into university.
- [Course Representative Program](#) aims to build the leadership skills of its Course Reps while contributing to the academic success and resourcefulness of students in core program classes.
- [Peer-Assisted Study Session \(P.A.S.S.\)](#) involve upper-level academically successful and well-trained students who facilitate study sessions in courses that are known to be historically challenging.
- [Peer Tutoring](#) offers one-on-one academic support by trained Peer Tutors.
- Calumet and Stong Colleges also support students' [Health & Wellness](#), [leadership and professional skills development](#), [student/community engagement and wellbeing](#), [career exploration](#), [Indigenous Circle](#), [awards and recognition](#), and [provide opportunities to students to work or volunteer](#).
- Please connect with your Course Director about any specific academic resources for this class.
- For additional resources/information about our student success programs, please consult our websites ([Calumet College](#); [Stong College](#)), email [scchelp@yorku.ca](mailto:scchelp@yorku.ca), and/or follow us on Instagram ([Calumet College](#); [Stong College](#)), Facebook ([Calumet College](#); [Stong College](#)) and [LinkedIn](#)

- Are you receiving our weekly email (Calumet and Stong Colleges - Upcoming evens)? If not, please check your Inbox and Junk folders. If you do not find our weekly emails, then please add your 'preferred email' to your Passport York personal profile. If you need support, please contact [ccscadm@yorku.ca](mailto:ccscadm@yorku.ca), and request to be added to the listerv.

### Course Materials Copyright Information

These course materials are designed for use as part of the PSYC 4180 course 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](#).

### Fall 2023 Course Schedule

Week & Date	Topic
Week 1: September 7	What is critical thinking? Why is it important?
Week 2: September 14	If it is on the internet, it must be true: Fact vs. opinion
Week 3: September 21	Investigating cause & effect relationships
Week 4: September 28	Beyond the surface: The issues with faulty generalizations & oversimplification
Week 5: October 5	<b>MENTAL HEALTH DAY (no class)</b>
Week 6: October 12	<b>READING WEEK (no class)</b>
Week 7: October 19	The psychology of persuasion: Using propaganda
Week 8: October 26	Twisted truths: Distorting & deception
Week 9: November 2	Minds or machines? Artificial Intelligence & Psychology
Week 10: November 9	What now? Exploring pathways with a B.A in Psychology
Week 11: November 17	Two truths and a myth: Student presentations
Week 12: November 23	Unmasking bias: Stereotyping and ethnocentric thinking
Week 13: November 30	Dialogue across difference: Virtual guest lecture (no class)

## Winter 2024 Course Schedule

Week & Date	Topic
Week 1: January 11	Let's get started: introduction to your community-based project
Week 2: January 18	Pitches: Choosing a community-based organization (virtual class over zoom)
Week 3: January 25	Team success: Collaborating with each other
Week 4: Feb 1	Professionalism: Running your project
Week 5: Feb 8	Applying theories and values of critical thinking to your project
Week 6: Feb 15	Mid-project review and adaptation
Week 7: Feb 22	<b>READING WEEK (no class)</b>
Week 8: Feb 29	Turning numbers into narratives: Guest lecture
Week 9: March 7	Project retreat (with snacks) + checkin with Dr. Z
Week 10: March 14	Final project presentations
Week 11: March 21	<b>WORK FROM HOME (no class)</b>
Week 12: March 28	Final project presentations
Week 13: April 4	Final project presentations + final course reflections

**Refer to eClass for a more detailed schedule of our readings and assignment due dates**