

**Faculty of Health  
Department of Psychology  
PSYC 4180 6.0 Section B  
CRITICAL THINKING IN PSYCHOLOGY  
Weds/11:30 am – 2:30 pm/RS 205  
Fall/Winter 2018-19**

---

**Instructor and T.A. Information**

Instructor: Julie Conder  
Office: 281 BSB  
Office Phone: ext. 55125  
Office Hours: Weds 3 pm or by appt  
Email: conder@yorku.ca

T.A.	Karolina Bearss
Email	skrzypek@yorku.ca
Office	072L BSB
Office Hours	By appt

**Course Prerequisite(s): Course prerequisites are strictly enforced**

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

**Course Credit Exclusions**

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

**Course website:** [Moodle](#)

**Course Description**

In this course, students will develop and practice critical thinking skills required to become responsible and analytical consumers of research in psychology. This course will include lectures, tutorials, peer review sessions, and student presentations.

**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**

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.

Demonstrate ability to gather, interpret, evaluate and integrate research from distinct (and sometimes conflicting) sources to arrive at an informed opinion.

Effectively communicate scientific research and informed conclusions on research in a range of communication media and at a range of audience understanding levels.

Demonstrate understanding of the strengths and limitations of different communication media and use this understanding to communicate science within them.

Demonstrate the ability to evaluate credibility of evidence using reason and logic.

### **Course Requirements and Assessment:**

<b>Assessment</b>	<b>Date of Evaluation (if known)</b>	<b>Weighting</b>
iClicker questions	Throughout terms	5%
Research Snapshot – Individ.	Oct 3	5%
Myth-busting Exercise	Oct 24	10%
Podcast	Nov 21	10%
General news article	Nov 28	10%
Infographic	Jan 30	5%
NYT-style article	Feb 20	15%
Research Snapshot – Group	Mar 6	10%
Group public lecture	March 13 through April 3	10%
SciAm-style article	April 3	20%
<hr/>		
Total		100%

### **Description of Assignments**

**iClicker questions (5%):** Throughout the course, iClicker questions may be asked during class time for points. These points cannot be made up if missed.

#### **Research Snapshots Module (15%)**

**a) Individual Research Snapshot (5%):** You will work together in groups to discuss journal articles provided, and create an individual Research Snapshot of an article.

**b) Group Research Snapshot (10%):** You will work together in groups to interact with a Psychology Faculty member's research and create a group Research Snapshot of the

research.

### **Communications Module (25%)**

- a) Podcast (10%):** You will write and record a brief podcast, focusing on delivering your media report with brevity and accuracy. You will select a topic of interest in psychology and identify your audience (i.e., who will listen to the podcast?). Your podcast should create a an engaging audio story with a beginning, middle, and end.
- b) Infographic (5%):** You will select a myth in psychology and create an accurate and visually appealing infographic explaining your myth and the truth.
- c) Public Lecture (10%):** You will work in groups to delve deeply into a selected myth in psychology, and present a comprehensive 20-30 minute public lecture. Your public lecture should create a compelling explanation of the myth, its causes and consequences, and a clear language explanation/analysis of the facts.

### **Writing Module (55%)**

- a) Myth-busting assignment (10%):** For this assignment, you will find a media report of a scientific finding, and trace the report back to its original primary research article. Your assignment will consist of brief summaries of the article and media report, and your assessment of whether the media report accurately portrayed the results of the research article. Finally, you will include a brief commentary explaining what you, as a media report writer, would have done differently.
- b) General news article (15%)** For this assignment, you will write a report on a myth for an approximately 8<sup>th</sup>-grade reading level, incorporating 1 to 2 sources (which should include at least one primary research article, and may include interviews or quotes from experts).
- c) NYT style news article (15%):** For this assignment you will write a content- focused media report for an approximately a 10<sup>th</sup>- to 12<sup>th</sup> grade reading level. In your NYT- style article, you should integrate and discuss 2 or more related empirical articles, and include some analysis of what the results mean to your reader.
- d) Scientific American style article (20%):** In your Scientific American report, you will integrate several sources relevant to your topic and tell an engaging story focused on a myth in psychology with a beginning, middle, and end. This work will be aimed at an educated and highly engaged audience.

## Late Work/Missed Tests or Exams

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 3% per day, including weekend days. Late assignments will not be accepted beyond one week after the missed deadline (21% off).

Presentations can neither be rescheduled nor made up. If you miss your group's presentation, you will receive a grade of zero.

Missed iClicker points cannot be made up.

Students with a documented reason for missing a deadline, such as illness, compassionate grounds, etc., which is confirmed by supporting documentation (Attending Physician Statement which can be found at:

<http://myacademicrecord.students.yorku.ca/pdf/attending-physicians-statement.pdf> may request accommodation from the Course Instructor. Further extensions or accommodation will require students to submit a formal petition to the Faculty.

If you are missing a deadline due to illness, compassionate grounds, etc., you must contact the instructor within 48 hours of missing the deadline.

## Important New Information Regarding Missed Tests

For any missed tests or late assignments, students MUST complete the following online form which will be received and reviewed in the Psychology undergraduate office.

[HH PSYC: Missed Tests/Exams Form](#). Failure to complete the form within 48 hours of the original deadline will result in a grade of zero for the test/assignment.

## Add/Drop Deadlines

For a list of all important dates please refer to: [Fall/Winter 2018-19 - Important Dates](#)

	FALL (F)	YEAR (Y)	WINTER (W)
Last date to add a course <b>without permission</b> of instructor (also see Financial Deadlines)	Sept. 18	Sept. 18	Jan. 16
Last date to add a course <b>with permission</b> of instructor (also see Financial Deadlines)	Oct. 2	Oct. 23	Jan. 30
Drop deadline: Last date to drop a course without receiving a grade (also see Financial Deadlines)	Nov. 9	Feb. 8	March 8
Course Withdrawal Period (withdraw from a course and receive a grade of "W" on transcript – see note below)	Nov. 10 - Dec. 4	Feb. 9 - Apr. 3	March 9 - Apr. 3

**\*Note:** *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.*

### **Electronic Device Policy**

It is required for this course that you install iClicker software on a mobile device or laptop so that you may participate in iClicker questions in class.

### **Attendance Policy**

Attendance is not mandatory. However, there will be participation points in the form of iClicker questions in class. These points cannot be made up if you miss class.

### **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.

### **Electronic Devices During a Test/Examination**

Electronic mobile devices of any kind are not allowed during a test or examination. Students are required to turn off and secure any electronic mobile device in their bag which is to be placed under the chair while a test/exam is in progress. Any student observed with an electronic device during a test/exam may be reported to the Undergraduate Office for a potential breach of Academic Honesty.

### **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 [York University Accessibility Hub](#) is your online stop for accessibility on campus. The [Accessibility Hub](#) provides tools, assistance and resources. Policy Statement.

**Policy:** York University shall make reasonable and appropriate accommodations and adaptations in order to promote the ability of students with disabilities to fulfill the academic requirements of their programs.

The nature and extent of accommodations shall be consistent with and supportive of the integrity of the curriculum and of the academic standards of programs or courses. Provided

that students have given sufficient notice about their accommodation needs, instructors shall take reasonable steps to accommodate these needs in a manner consistent with the guidelines established hereunder.

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 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](#).

### **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 90, B+ = 75 to 79, etc.)

(For a full description of York grading system see the York University Undergraduate Calendar - [Grading Scheme for 2018-1](#))

