

**Faculty of Health**  
**Department of Psychology**  
**HH/PSYC 2010 D**  
**WRITING IN PSYCHOLOGY**  
**Wednesday 4:00 PM -7:00 PM**  
**Fall 2020**

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**Instructor and T.A. Information**

Instructor: Dr. Sayyed Mohsen Fatemi

Email: [smfatemi@hotmail.com](mailto:smfatemi@hotmail.com)

[smfatemi@yorku.ca](mailto:smfatemi@yorku.ca)

Office Hours: Based on appointment (Using Zoom Link)

<b>T.A.</b>	Claire Lauzon	Vicente Alba Suarez
<b>Office Hours (Zoom details on eClass):</b>	Tuesday 9-10 AM	Thursday 2-3 PM

Email: [psych2010d@gmail.com](mailto:psych2010d@gmail.com) (monitored by both TAs)

**Course Prerequisite(s):**

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

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

**Course Description:**

This course develops university-level writing and communication ability. Students will write about psychological content; however, this course aims to develop general written communication skills that are broadly transferable. Emphasis will be placed on learning to write coherent arguments and explanations. Students will learn how psychological texts present information to effectively communicate with a reader. Students will develop the capacity to critique and improve their own writing. Critical thinking and logical reasoning skills are taught and practiced for the purpose of improving written communication. By analyzing exemplary psychological writing students will discover the form and structure of effective writing in Psychology. Readings and class discussions will increase understanding of how to write effectively. In-class writing exercises will be used to practice principles and ideas discussed. Providing feedback on the writing of peers will increase students' capacity to reflect on and improve their own writing. Students will be guided, step-by-step, through

the process of completing a larger writing assignment. Extensive feedback will be provided and multiple drafts of writing assignments will be completed. This course will prepare students for advanced writing assignments in upper year University courses and contribute to overall progress towards the advanced level of literacy expected of an educated citizen. At the end of the course, students will be able to develop a written argument on a controversial issue in psychology.

### **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. Demonstrate the ability to find and evaluate credible scholarly literature.

### **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 Texts**

- There is no required text for this course; required readings will be posted on eClass.

### **Recommended texts:**

Greene, A. E. (2013). *Writing science in plain English*. Chicago, IL: The University of Chicago Press.

## Course Requirements and Assessment

Assessment	Date of Evaluation	Weighting
Engagement Points: includes Writing exercises (7x2 drafts, plus peer feedback); Essay components (9); Mini-reflections (12)	throughout	15%
Components 1-4 of Essay	Oct 7 – Oct 14, 2020 (rolling)	20%
Components 1-6 of Essay	Oct 28 – Nov 4, 2020 (rolling)	20%
Best writing exercise	Dec 1 2020	10%
Final Essay	Dec 2 – Dec 15, 2020 (rolling)	35%
Total		100%

### General Class Structure:

- 50 mins: Lecture/Class discussion
- 25 mins: Classroom writing exercises (~ 250 words, submitted online for feedback)
- 15 mins: Provide feedback to peer on classroom writing exercises
- 20 min: Break
- 50 mins: Classroom work on Essay (i.e. in class peer review and instructor led guidance)

### Homework per week:

- 30 minutes revising classroom writing exercise & uploading drafts and feedback
- 1.5 hours reading assigned books / articles
- 2 hours working on essay outside of class (essay components, and overall development)

### Description of Assignments:

#### Writing Exercises (P/F for Engagement Points):

During week 2 to week 8 you will have time at the end of class to write on a topic related to the lecture. What you write in class (i.e., first draft of the writing exercise) must be uploaded to eClass by *10 pm the next day (Thursday)*. Then, you must provide feedback to a peer's first draft by *10 pm the following Thursday*. Finally, you will revise your writing based on the feedback you receive and upload a final draft by *10 pm on the day before the next class (Tuesday)*. Writing exercises will overlap so that you will be working on a different stage of up to 2 writing assignments per week. See your **Writing Exercises Guide** for more details. Given everything is being done online, you will still be able to participate if you have to miss class. **However, the deadlines for uploading drafts and feedback are fixed and cannot be extended.** Therefore, if you are unable to submit a draft or feedback, for ANY reason, you will lose the opportunity to receive participation marks for the missed work. At the end of the course, you will be asked to select your Best Writing Exercise and submit it for evaluation. In appropriate circumstances, and with appropriate

documentation, the deadline for the submission of your Best Writing Exercise can be extended.

**\*\*For a complete guide to Writing Exercises and deadlines, see Writing Exercises Guide on eClass.**

### **Mini-reflections (P/F; for Engagement Points):**

Mini-reflections will be completed in class, and must be submitted to eClass by *10pm the day of class (Wednesday)*. These reflections will be based on provided questions regarding your learning and experiences throughout the course, and should take approximately 10 minutes to complete. **Missed mini-reflection points cannot be made up.** Therefore, if you are unable to participate in a class, for whatever reason, you will lose the opportunity to receive marks for whatever you miss.

### **Essay and Essay Components (weekly EC submissions P/F for engagement points. EC bundles 1-4 and 1-6 for evaluation):**

Over the duration of the course you will write one argumentative essay on a controversial issue in psychology. This essay will be broken down into smaller assignments (Essay Components) that together will build to the final essay. Each week you will have time at the end of class to work on your essay. You will also be expected to spend some time outside of class working on your essay. From week 2 through week 11, you will be expected to submit one essay component to eClass by 3pm the day of class (for grading on a pass/fail basis). You should also have a digital copy available for peer review during class. **The deadlines for uploading individual Essay Components to eClass and participating in peer review are fixed.** Therefore, if you are unable to participate in a class, for whatever reason, you will lose the opportunity to receive marks for whatever you miss.

You will also submit essay components via eClass for TA/instructor feedback and graded credit on two occasions:

Essay components 1-4; due Oct 7 through Oct 14

Essay components 1-6; due Oct 28 through Nov 4

Please note that these assignments have **rolling deadlines**, which means submission is open from the beginning date to the end date of the submission period. It is up to you to manage your time appropriately and decide when the best submission time for you is. Due to the range of days provided for submission, **no extensions will be granted on EC 1-4 and EC 1-6.** (See below for details on submission of late work, special circumstances and required documentation).

**\*\*For a complete guide to Essay Components and deadlines, see Essay Components Guide on eClass.**

### **Choosing an Essay Topic**

Your essay for this class must be argumentative. This means that you will choose a controversial issue in psychology and choose a position that you will argue (and support with empirical evidence) regarding that topic.

Example essay topics\*:

- Can people be addicted to video games?
- Are children with ADHD prescribed medication too often?
- Why has depression become such a widespread illness?
- Why are superhero movies so popular?
- Should marijuana be legalized?
- Should students be allowed to use laptops in the classroom?

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

**IMPORTANT NOTE REGARDING ENGAGEMENT POINTS:** Writing Exercises (7x2 drafts, plus peer feedback), weekly Essay Components (9), and Mini-reflections (12). **The deadlines for these are fixed and cannot be extended.** Therefore, if you are unable to submit a draft or feedback, **for ANY reason**, you will lose the opportunity to receive participation marks for the missed work. At the beginning of the course, you will be awarded 3 “free” points – the equivalent of missing 3 participation assignments. In light of this policy, requests to submit missed work will not be entertained. Please note that the maximum possible score for engagement points is 100%; unused “free” engagement points will not count as bonus.

### **Discussion Forum and Contacting TAs:**

We will set up a Discussion Forum for you and fellow classmates to discuss questions regarding the course, technical issues, and any content. We encourage you to **PLEASE** ask questions here first, as your classmates may have the same or similar questions, and some might have the answer. The T.As and course director will frequently check this forum to help in answering any questions you may have. If your question is not answered in the discussion forum within 24-48 hours, or if you have an urgent request and would prefer to ask your question privately, you may contact the T.As through the course email: [psyc2010d@gmail.com](mailto:psyc2010d@gmail.com) We will respond to your message in 24-48 hours.

### **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 – <https://calendars.students.yorku.ca/2020-2021/grades-and-grading-schemes>)

## 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 5% per day, including weekend days. **Late assignments will not be accepted after one week of the missed deadline (35% penalty).**

## Points missed for Writing Exercises, weekly Essay Components, and Mini-Reflections 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 me ([smfatemi@yorku.ca](mailto:smfatemi@yorku.ca) or [smfatemi@hotmail.com](mailto:smfatemi@hotmail.com)) to submit documentation within 48 hours of missing the deadline in order to have your work considered for grading without a late penalty.

## 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: [Important Dates](#)

<b>Important dates</b>	<b>Fall</b>
Last date to add a course <b>without</b> permission of instructor (also see Financial Deadlines)	Sept. 22
Last date to add a course <b>with permission</b> of instructor (also see Financial Deadlines)	Oct. 6
Last date to drop a course without receiving a grade (also see Financial Deadlines)	Nov. 6
Course Withdrawal Period (withdraw from a course and receive a "W" on the transcript – see note below)	Nov. 7 - Dec. 8

## Academic Integrity for Students

York university takes academic integrity very seriously, please visit [an overview of Academic Integrity at York University](#) from the Office of the Vice-President Academic.

The following links will assist you in gaining a better understanding of academic integrity and point you to resources at York that can help you improve your writing and research skills:

- [Information about the Senate Policy on Academic Honesty](#)
- [Online Tutorial on Academic Integrity](#)
- [Information for Students on Text-Matching Software: Turnitin.com](#)
- [Beware! Says who? A pamphlet on how to avoid plagiarism](#)
- [Resources for students to help improve their writing and research skill](#)

### **Test Banks:**

The use of test banks is not permitted in this course and may be considered a potential breach of academic honesty. This includes but is not limited to; buying or selling test banks.

### **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:** 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 2010 3.0 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](#)

### Course Schedule:

*(topics are subject to change)*

	<b>Date</b>	<b>Topic</b>	<b>Due:</b>
Week 1	Sep 9	Introduction	
Week 2	Sep 16	Conducting research, APA style, paraphrasing, library resources	Weekly Writing Exercises begin (eClass; see Writing Exercises Guide for deadlines –Starting this week, you will submit 3 Writing Exercises online per week)  Essay Components weekly submission begins (EC 1 due, <b>digital copy</b> in class; starting this week, you will submit one digital copy EC per week - see Essay Components Guide on eClass for details)
Week 3	Sep 23	Evaluating sources; summarizing	EC 2
Week 4	Sep 30	Context, key definitions; comparing points of view	EC 3
Week 5	Oct 7	Understanding claims & support	EC 4 <b>EC 1-4 due submission period begins</b>
	Oct 14	<i>Reading Week – no classes</i>	<b>EC 1-4 due submission period ends</b>
Week 6	Oct 21	Constructing an argument; counterarguments; rhetorical analysis; assumptions	EC 5



Week 7	Oct 28		EC 6 due Writing workshop <b>EC 1-6 submission period begins</b>
Week 8	Nov 4	Organizational structure; conclusions	(no weekly EC due) <b>EC 1-6 submission period ends</b>
Week 9	Nov 11	Critiquing arguments	EC 7
Week 10	Nov 18	Revision	EC 8
Week 11	Nov 25	Editing	EC 9
Week 12	Dec 2		Writing workshop <b>Best Writing Exercise due</b> <b>Final paper submission period begins</b>
	Dec 15		<b>Final Paper submission period ends</b>

## Instructor's bio



Dr. Sayyed Mohsen Fatemi, Ph.D. completed his postdoctoral studies in the department of psychology at Harvard University where he has also served as a Teaching Fellow, an Associate and a Fellow.

He is a frequently published author and has been the keynote speaker of numerous international conferences.

His publications appear in Springer, Wiley, Templeton Press, Routledge, Cambridge University Press and Oxford University Press, Lexington publication, Palgrave McMillan, American Psychiatric Association, and Journals such as APA's Journal of Theoretical and Philosophical Psychology and International Journal of Clinical and Experimental Hypnosis.

In addition to teaching at Harvard, he has also taught for the department of psychology at the

University of British Columbia, Western Washington University, University of Massachusetts in Boston, University of Toronto, Endicott College and Boston Graduate School of Psychoanalysis.

He brings mindfulness in his psychological and therapeutic interventions and has run training and coaching programs for clinicians, practitioners and corporate people in North America, Europe and overseas. He has been practicing psychotherapy for more than a decade.

Dr. Fatemi is the recipient of the Ellen Langer international Mindfulness Award and is active member of APA with numerous presentations at APA annual meetings.

Furthermore, Dr. Fatemi has served as an associate professor of psychology and the chair of the Desk of North America at Ferdowsi University of Mashhad one of the top five universities in Iran.

Dr. Fatemi is also an adjunct faculty member in the Graduate Program in Psychology in the department of psychology at York University, Canada.

## Bios for T.A.s



Claire Lauzon is a first year master's student in the Clinical Neuropsychology stream. She completed her undergrad at the University of Toronto, where she studied Neuroscience, Psychology, and Art History. Her current research focuses on hippocampal structure and function in patients who have received electroconvulsive therapy for severe depression. Feel free to reach out to her with questions about the course, the field of psychology, or anything else you want to chat about!

Hey everyone!

My name is Vicente, I will be one of your Tas for PSYC 2010. I'm starting my Master's this year in the field of cognitive neurosciences and genetics (though things are a little complicated now due to COVID-19). I did my undergrad here at York, so I've been in your shoes! I think this is going to be a challenging class, but myself, Claire, Dr. Fatemi will be with you every step of the way to help you become a better writer. Please be kind and helpful to your peers! We want to create an environment for open discussion, so don't be shy!

I'm looking forward to meeting you all through Zoom and getting to know you throughout the semester!

