



TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY
SAN ANTONIO

Writing in Psychology

PSYC 2385-004 | CRN 12889 | Fall 2024

Science & Technology Building | Room 169 | MWF 9:00 AM – 9:50 AM

Professor: Jacqueline Lechuga, Ph.D.

E-mail: jlechuga@tamusa.edu

Office Hours: MW 12:30 PM to 1:30 PM or by appointment

Office: STEM 249B

COURSE DESCRIPTION

An introduction to APA style and writing in psychology. Focus will be placed on interpretation of published psychological research and refining writing skills for different communication purposes.

Prerequisites: PSYC 2301 (Introduction to Psychology); Co-requisites PSYC 2388 (Research Methods & Statistics 1).

REQUIRED COURSE MATERIALS

Handbook: American Psychological Association. (2019). Publication manual (7th ed).

CONTACT GUIDELINES

I will strive to be available to aid your learning process by providing several ways to contact me:

- **Email:** Please only use official university e-mail and include the course, section, and full name in the subject line. Please do not use Blackboard messages. The email noted above is my primary and preferred point of contact outside of the classroom.

I will check my email regularly on Monday – Friday from 8:00 am to 5:00 pm. I will generally respond within 24 hours of your email. If you do not receive a reply after 24 hours, please email again and/or follow up directly with me in class or during office hours (see above). I will not be available by email during the weekends. Any emails received during the weekend will be replied to on the subsequent Monday. Please plan accordingly. Especially when it comes to clarifying assignment instructions and/or submission requirements.

In all communications, please be professional in your tone and specific in your message (i.e., avoid informal correspondence styles like text messaging which lack appropriate punctuation and capitalization). Your correspondence **MUST** include the information specified above. If you send an email without sufficient information, I likely will not reply or may reply asking for clarification about your inquiry (this can result in an

unnecessary delay). Please begin a new email thread instead of responding to older emails if you are beginning a new conversation unrelated to the previous email (this helps minimize confusion caused by chain replies).

- **Office Hours:** I will be available in my office (STEM 249B) to meet during office hours (see above) or by appointment. Office hours are dedicated to interacting with and providing students assistance regarding coursework. An appointment is not necessary to attend these hours, but interactions are limited to a first come, first served basis. If there is a specific assignment/materials or topic you want to discuss, providing advance notice will allow me to have these resources ready. If students cannot meet during these times, an alternative time can be requested via email, and I will do my best to try to accommodate students accordingly. For discussions involving more personal and/or sensitive information, some form of advance notice is recommended.

SPECIFIC LEARNING OUTCOMES

Student learning outcomes are based on the Specific Learning Objectives from APA Guidelines for Psychology Majors: <http://www.apa.org/ed/precollege/about/psymajor-guidelines.pdf>

In this class, the following student learning outcomes are expected:

This course will assess your ability to:	Specific Outcomes
2.2 Demonstrate psychology information literacy	2.2a Read and summarize general ideas and conclusions from psychological sources accurately
	2.2b Describe what kinds of additional information beyond personal experience are acceptable in developing behavioral explanations (i.e., popular press reports vs. scientific findings)
	2.2c Identify and navigate psychology databases and other legitimate sources of psychology information
	2.2d Articulate criteria for identifying objective sources of psychology information
	2.2e Interpret simple graphs and statistical findings
2.4 Interpret, design, and conduct basic psychological research	2.4c Define and explain the purpose of key research concepts that characterize psychological research (e.g., hypothesis, operational definition)
	2.4e Explain why conclusions in psychological projects must be both reliable and valid
4.1 Demonstrate effective writing for different purposes	4.1a Express ideas in written formats that reflect basic psychological concepts and principles

	4.1b Recognize writing content and format differ based on purpose (e.g., blogs, memos, journal articles) and audience
	4.1c Use standard English, including generally accepted grammar
	4.1d Write using APA style
	4.1e Recognize and develop overall organization (e.g., beginning, development, ending) that fits the purpose
	4.1g Use expert feedback to revise writing of a single draft

ASSESSMENT & EVALUATION

All assignments, with the exception of in-class work, will be administered from and turned into Blackboard. No paper copies will be accepted unless otherwise noted. Late work will not be accepted without a university-approved excuse and/or advance notice with instructor approval. Additionally, you are expected to complete all work independently (see Academic Integrity section for more details on independent work).

The following descriptions are intentionally brief. Detailed instructions will be available in class and through Blackboard throughout the semester. Each assignment will have a specific set of instructions students will be required to follow. For longer writing assignments, there will be specific rubrics provided that will be used to determine the grade students earn on these assignments.

- **Scientific Communication, Organization, and Planning Exercises (SCOPE) – 20 points each.** There will be several weeks where students will practice their scientific communication, organization, and/or planning skills with SCOPE. Students must attend class to be eligible to earn points on these assignments. Without a university-approved excuse, no make-up for SCOPE assignments will be accepted. These assignments will help develop and reinforce important skills related to the term paper required in this course (see below).
- **Writing Appointments – 40 points each.** There are two occasions when students will individually meet with their instructor to discuss their term paper (see calendar). These appointments are mandatory and will be held in my office or via Zoom (depending on the student’s preferences). During these individual meetings, students will have an opportunity to discuss various aspects related to their research topic and receive expert feedback and guidance from their instructor. For these meetings to be successful, students will need to be organized, arrive promptly on time, and have their various writing documents open/accessible including their APA manual. If students are using an electronic device, make sure it is fully charged and connected to the university Wi-Fi prior to arrival. Additionally, students are strongly encouraged to have specific questions

prepared to ask and should take notes during these meetings to serve as helpful reminders when writing later.

- **Review Assignments – 40 points each.** Writing is a practice-driven craft. These review assignments will let us practice and share what we know and exchange feedback and ideas among peers.
- **Writing Assignments – 100 points each.** Writing assignments will vary but will include summaries of a literature review and empirical articles, outlining a paper with APA citations, and producing a first APA-style draft of the final term paper. These assignments will serve as additional means for instructor and peer feedback in route to the creation of the final term paper.
- **APA Mastery Exam – 100 points.** After we cover the APA Manual, students will take an at-home, online test on Blackboard to assess their understanding and application of its principles. More details will be provided prior to finals week.
- **Final Term Paper – 200 points.** The writing assignments all contribute to a final term paper. This paper will include no fewer than 10 peer-reviewed sources on a topic of the student’s choosing (options to be discussed in detail in class). To be eligible to earn points for this final paper, students must adhere to instructions for writing assignments that contribute to this final work.

GRADING

Course Component	Value	Number	Total	% of Final Grade
SCOPE Assignments	20	10	200	20%
Writing Appointments	40	2	80	8%
Review Assignments	40	3	120	12%
Writing Assignments	100	3	300	30%
APA Mastery Exam	100	1	100	10%
Final Term Paper	200	1	200	20%
TOTAL			1000 possible points	100%

A: 900 and above **B:** 800-899.99 **C:** 700-799.99 **D:** 600-699.99 **F:** Below 600

MISSED/LATE ASSIGNMENTS POLICY

Missed assignments will be assigned a grade of zero. You must e-mail your instructor about a missed assignment before the due date or as soon as possible after the emergency that causes you to miss the deadline. *You will not be allowed to earn credit for late assignments and will receive a zero for that assignment unless you experience an emergency/illness. Excused absences include family emergencies and death in the family. Work conflicts or difficulty with parking do not count as legitimate reasons.*

- Legitimate reasons include, but are not limited to:

- Illness and/or injury (personal)
- Illness of a friend or family member that requires your assistance
- Transportation
- Athletic and/or organizational obligation
- Death or injury of a friend or family member
- Non-legitimate reasons:
 1. Vacation
 2. Lack of preparation and/or just not feeling like it

Late coursework will not be accepted for reasons other than those outlined above.
Blackboard will not display grades attempted after the deadline posted on Blackboard.

IMPORTANT POLICIES AND RESOURCES

ACADEMIC ACCOMMODATIONS FOR INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES

Texas A&M University-San Antonio is committed to providing all students with reasonable access to learning opportunities and accommodations in accordance with The Americans with Disabilities Act, as amended, and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act.

If you experience barriers to your education due to a disability or think you may have a disability, the Disability Support Services office is located in the Central Academic Building, Suite 210. You can also contact us via phone at (210) 784-1335, visit us at <https://www.tamusa.edu/Disability-Support-Services/index.html> or email us at dss@tamusa.edu.

Disabilities may include, but are not limited to, attentional, learning, mental health, sensory, physical, or chronic health conditions. All students are encouraged to discuss their disability-related needs with Disability Support Services and their instructors as soon as possible.

ACADEMIC LEARNING CENTER

The Academic Learning Center provides free course-based tutoring to all currently enrolled students at Texas A&M University-San Antonio. Students wishing to work with a tutor can make appointments through the Brainfuse online tutoring platform. Brainfuse can be accessed in the Tools section of Blackboard.

You can contact the Academic Learning Center by emailing tutoring@tamusa.edu, calling (210) 784-1307, or visiting the Central Academic Building, Room 202.

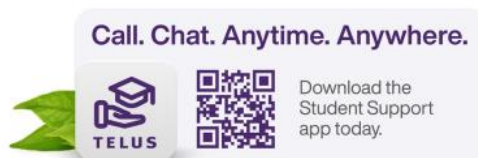
COUNSELING/MENTAL HEALTH RESOURCES

As a college student, there may be times when personal stressors interfere with your academic performance and negatively impact your daily functioning. If you are experiencing emotional difficulties or mental health concerns, support is available to you through the Student Counseling Center (SCC). To schedule an appointment, call 210-784-1331 or visit MADLA, Room 120.

All mental health services provided by the SCC are free and confidential (as the law allows). The SCC provides brief individual and group therapy, crisis intervention, consultation, case management, and prevention services. For more information on SCC services visit tamusa.edu/studentcounseling

Crisis support is available 24/7 by calling the SCC at 210-784-1331 (for after-hours select option '2').

Additionally, the TELUS Student Support App provides a variety of mental health resources including support for in-the-moment distress, an anonymous peer-to-peer support network, mental health screenings, podcasts, and articles to improve your mental well-being.



EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS

JagE Alert is Texas A&M University-San Antonio's mass notification. In the event of an emergency, such as inclement weather, students, staff, and faculty - who are registered - will have the option to receive a text message and/or email with instructions and updates. To register or update your information visit: <https://tamusa.bbcportal.com/>.

More information about the Emergency Operations Plan and the Emergency Action Plan can be found here: <https://www.tamusa.edu/about-us/emergency-management/>.

Download the SafeZone App (<https://safezoneapp.com/>). For emergencies call (210) 784-1911. Non-Emergency (210) 784-1900.

FINANCIAL AID AND VERIFICATION OF ATTENDANCE

According to the following federal regulation, 34 CFR 668.21: U.S. Department of Education (DoE) Title IV regulation, a student can only receive Title IV funds based on Title IV eligibility criteria which include class attendance. If Title IV funds are disbursed to ineligible students (including students who fail to begin attendance), the institution must return these funds to the U.S. DoE within 30 days of becoming aware that the student will not or has not begun attendance. Any student receiving federal financial aid who does not attend by the census date will have their financial aid terminated and returned to the DoE. Please note that for any student who stops attending at any time during the semester, a Care Report will be submitted, and you will possibly be dropped from the class. Your financial aid may have to be recalculated and a portion of your federal aid may have to be returned to the DoE.

WRITING, LANGUAGE, AND DIGITAL COMPOSING CENTER

The Writing, Language, and Digital Composing Center supports graduate and undergraduate students in all three colleges as well as faculty and staff. Tutors work with students to develop reading skills, prepare oral presentations, and plan, draft, and revise their written assignments. Our language tutors support students enrolled in Spanish courses and students composing in Spanish for any assignment. Our digital studio tutors support students working on digital projects such as e-portfolios, class presentations, or other digital multimedia projects.

Students can schedule appointments through JagWire under the Student Services tab. Click on "Writing, Language, and Digital Composing Center" to make your appointment. The Center offers face-to-face, synchronous online, and asynchronous digital appointments. More information about what services we offer, how to make an appointment, and how to access your appointment can be found on our website at <https://www.tamusa.edu/academics/>.

MEETING BASIC NEEDS

Any student who has difficulty affording groceries or accessing sufficient food to eat every day or who lacks a safe and stable place to live and believes this may affect their performance in the course, is urged to submit a CARE referral (<https://www.tamusa.edu/university-policies/Student-Rights-and-Responsibilities/file-a-report.html>) for support. Furthermore, please notify the professor if you are comfortable in doing so. This will enable them to direct you to available resources.

MILITARY AFFAIRS

Veterans and active-duty military personnel are welcome and encouraged to visit the Office of Military Affairs for any questions involving federal or state VA Education Benefits. Visit the Patriots' Casa building, Room 202, or contact the Office of Military Affairs with any questions at military.va@tamusa.edu or (210)784-1397.

RELIGIOUS OBSERVANCES

Texas A&M University-San Antonio recognizes the diversity of faiths represented among the campus community and protects the rights of students, faculty, and staff to observe religious holidays according to their traditions. Under the policy, students are provided an opportunity to make up any examination, study, or coursework requirements that may be missed due to a religious observance provided they notify their instructors before the end of the second week of classes for regular session classes.

THE SIX-DROP RULE

Students are subject to the requirements of Senate Bill (SB) 1231 passed by the Texas Legislature in 2007. SB 1231 limits students to a maximum of six (6) non-punitive course drops (i.e., courses a student chooses to drop) during their undergraduate career. A non-punitive drop does not affect the student's GPA. However, course drops that exceed the maximum allowed by SB 1231 will be treated as "F" grades and will impact the student's GPA.

STATEMENT OF HARASSMENT AND DISCRIMINATION: Texas A&M University-San Antonio is committed to the fundamental principles of academic freedom, equal opportunity, and human dignity. To fulfill its multiple missions as an institution of higher learning, Texas A&M-San Antonio encourages a climate that values and nurtures collegiality and the uniqueness of the individual within our state, nation, and world. All decisions and actions involving students and employees should be based on applicable law and individual merit. Texas A&M University-San Antonio, in accordance with applicable federal and state law, prohibits discrimination, including harassment, on the basis of race, color, sex, religion, national origin, age, disability, genetic information, veteran status, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, or pregnancy/parenting status. Individuals who believe they have experienced harassment or discrimination prohibited by this statement are encouraged to contact the appropriate offices within their respective units.

Texas A&M University-San Antonio faculty are committed to providing a safe learning environment for all students and the university as a whole. If you have experienced any form of sex- or gender-based discrimination or harassment, including sexual assault, sexual harassment, domestic or dating violence, or stalking, know that help and support are available. Texas A&M-San Antonio's Title IX Coordinator can support those impacted by such conduct in navigating campus life, accessing health and counseling services, providing academic and housing accommodations, and more. The university strongly encourages all students to report any such incidents to the Title IX Coordinator. Please be aware that all Texas A&M-San Antonio employees (other than those designated as confidential resources such as counselors and trained victim advocates) are required to report information about such discrimination and harassment to the university. This means that if you tell a faculty member about a situation of sexual

harassment, sexual violence, or other related misconduct, the faculty member must share that information with the university's Title IX Coordinator (titleix@tamusa.edu, 210-784-2061, CAB 439K). If you wish to speak to a confidential employee who does not have this reporting requirement, you can contact the Student Counseling Center at (210) 784-1331 or visit them in MADLA 120.

PREGNANT/PARENTING STUDENTS

Texas A&M-San Antonio does not require a pregnant or parenting student, solely because of that status or issues related to that status, to (1) take a leave of absence or withdraw from their degree or certificate program; (2) limit the student's studies; (3) participate in an alternative program; (4) change the student's major, degree, or certificate program; or (5) refrain from joining or cease participating in any course, activity, or program at the University. The university will provide such reasonable accommodations to pregnant students as would be provided to a student with a temporary medical condition that is related to the health and safety of the student and the student's unborn child. These could include maintaining a safe distance from substances, areas, and activities known to be hazardous to pregnant individuals and their unborn child; excused absences because of illness or medical appointments; modified due dates for assignments; rescheduled tests/exams; taking a leave of absence; and being provided access to instructional materials and video recordings of lectures for excused absences, if these would be provided to any other student with an excused absence. Pregnant/parenting students are encouraged to contact the Title IX Coordinator with any questions or concerns related to their status (titleix@tamusa.edu; 210-784-2061; CAB 439K).

Texas A&M-San Antonio has also designated the Title IX Coordinator as the liaison officer for current or incoming students who are the parent or guardian of a child younger than 18 years of age. The Title IX Coordinator can provide students with information regarding support services and other resources.

STUDENTS' RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The following statement of students' rights and responsibilities is intended to reflect the philosophical base upon which University Student Rules are built. This philosophy acknowledges the existence of both rights and responsibilities, which are inherent to an individual not only as a student at Texas A&M University-San Antonio but also as a citizen of this country.

- Students' Rights
 1. A student shall have the right to participate in a free exchange of ideas, and there shall be no University rule or administrative rule that in any way abridges the rights of freedom of speech, expression, petition, and peaceful assembly as set forth in the U.S. Constitution.
 2. Each student shall have the right to participate in all areas and activities of the University, free from any form of discrimination, including harassment, on the basis of race, color, national or ethnic origin, religion, sex, disability, age, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, and pregnancy/parenting or veteran status in accordance with applicable federal and state laws.

3. A student has the right to personal privacy except as otherwise provided by law, and this will be observed by students and University authorities alike.
 4. Each student subject to disciplinary action arising from violations of university student rules shall be assured a fundamentally fair process.
- **Students' Responsibilities**
 1. A student has the responsibility to respect the rights and property of others, including other students, the faculty, and the administration.
 2. A student has the responsibility to be fully acquainted with the published University Student Rules found in the Student Handbook, Student Code of Conduct, on our website, and University Catalog, and to comply with them, as well as with federal, state, and local laws.
 3. A student has the responsibility to recognize that student actions reflect upon the individuals involved and upon the entire University community.
 4. A student has the responsibility to recognize the University's obligation to provide a safe environment for learning.
 5. A student has the responsibility to check their university email for any updates or official university notifications.

We expect that students will behave in a manner that is dignified, respectful, and courteous to all people, regardless of sex, ethnic/racial origin, religious background, sexual orientation, or disability. Conduct that infringes on the rights of another individual will not be tolerated.

Students are expected to exhibit a high level of honesty and integrity in their pursuit of higher education. Students engaging in an act that violates the standards of academic integrity will find themselves facing academic and/or disciplinary sanctions. Academic misconduct is any act, or attempt, which gives an unfair advantage to the student. Additionally, any behavior specifically prohibited by a faculty member in the course syllabus or class discussion may be considered as academic misconduct.

For more information on academic misconduct policies and procedures please review the Student Code of Conduct (<https://www.tamusa.edu/university-policies/student-rights-and-responsibilities/documents/Student-Handbook-2022-23.pdf>) or visit the resources available in the OSRR website (<https://www.tamusa.edu/university-policies/student-rights-and-responsibilities/academic-integrity.html>).

ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE

The use of generative AI, such as ChatGPT, is prohibited *without my express permission*, except in the following ways:

- To ensure proper usage of English in students' original self-written materials
 - Prompt: Review the text below and note any grammatical errors. Be detailed and provide examples/explanations
- To clarify or condense portions of students' original self-written materials
 - Prompt: Review the text below and concise the information. Be detailed and provide examples/explanations.

- To identify areas of improvement in students' original self-written materials
 - Prompt: Review the text below and identify areas of improvement. Be detailed and provide examples/explanations.

Students who choose to utilize generative AI tools for this purpose MUST:

- Declare the use of AI tools by identifying the program and purpose (i.e., allowed uses)
- Cite the tool in the reference section
- Include their original writing as an appendix to any assignment submission

Students are cautioned that all written assignments are checked for integrity using Turnitin, an AI program that detects plagiarism and language based generative AI content.

If generative AI usage is detected and not declared upon assignment submission, the student may be held accountable for violating the Academic Integrity Policy. The first step following any flagged material is a one-on-one conversation in a timely manner with the student to discuss the situation further and to determine what course of action is appropriate.



COURSE SCHEDULE

The course schedule is subject to change with notice.

Italicized assignments will be completed in the corresponding class.

Bolded assignments will be started in class, but due by Sunday at 11:59 pm on the corresponding week.

Week	Start of Week	Topic	Assessment Type	Points
1	Aug 26	Syllabus Why APA? & Different Types of Academic Writing	<i>SCOPE #1 (APA Style and Reverse Outlining)</i> <i>Knowledge Assessment (Quiz Blackboard)</i>	20
2	Sept 2	NO CLASS on Monday, Sept 2nd (Labor Day) Library & Literature Search Strategies	<i>SCOPE #2 (Lit Search Strategies)</i>	20
3	Sept 9	How to Cite In-text, References, Citation Managers (Ch. 8, 9, & 10)	<i>SCOPE #3 (Citation/References)</i>	20
4	Sept 16	Reading and Interpreting Peer-Reviewed Literature Summarizing and Critiquing Peer-Reviewed Literature	Writing Assignment #1 (APA template with template sections for future assignments, and completed Annotated References Section with three references)	100
5	Sept 23	Plagiarism, Quoting, and Paraphrasing	<i>SCOPE #4 (Plagiarism/Paraphrasing)</i>	20
6	Sept 30	Establishing Topics Practice Peer Review	Review Assignment 1 (Peer Review of Writing Assignment 1) <i>SCOPE #5 (Talking Points & Appointment Prep)</i>	40 20
7	Oct 7	Revisiting the Process: Writing Center, Read Out Loud, Office Hour Appointments	Individual Appointments with Professor	40
8	Oct 14	Organization & Building Arguments	Writing Assignment 2 (APA template with template sections for future assignments, and completed Introduction Outline with citations,	100

			Expanded Annotated References Section with 6 references)	
9	Oct 21	Grammar (Ch. 4) & Mechanics (Ch. 6)	<i>SCOPE #6 (Grammar & Mechanics)</i>	20
10	Oct 28	Style: Tone, Clarity, Smoothness (Ch. 4)	Review Assignment 2 (Peer Review of Writing Assignment 2) <i>SCOPE #7 (Writing Skills Reflection)</i>	40 20
11	Nov 4	Reducing Bias	Writing Assignment 3 (APA template with template sections for future assignments, all sections completed to create a <u>first draft</u> of their final paper)	100
12	Nov 11	Reading Week and Individual Appointments	Individual Appointments with Professor <i>SCOPE #8 (Appointment Reflection)</i>	40 20
13	Nov 18	The Publication Process (Ch. 12)	Review Assignment 3 (Critical Self Review of Writing Assignment 3) <i>SCOPE #9 (Term Paper Planning)</i>	40 20
14	Nov 25	Writing for Different Audiences: Academic Conferences and General Public, Wrap-Up NO CLASS on Wednesday, Nov 27th (Study Day) NO CLASS on Thursday, Nov 28th & Friday, Nov 29th (Thanksgiving Break)	<i>SCOPE #10 (Different Audiences)</i>	20
15	Dec 2	Working on Term Paper & Revisions	Term Paper due Friday, Dec 6th	200
Final	Dec 9	Final (See academic calendar for date and time)	APA Mastery Test (Due Date TBD Based on Academic Calendar / Exam Will BE Administered Through Blackboard)	100

IMPORTANT DATES

- August 26 First Day of Class
- September 2 Labor Day – No Classes
- September 11 Census Day
- November 11 Last Day to Drop with an Automatic “W”
- November 19 Last Day to Drop a Course or Withdraw from the University
- November 27 Study Day – No Classes
- November 28-30 Thanksgiving Holiday – No Classes
- December 5 Last Day of Classes
- December 6 Study Day – No Classes
- December 7-13 Final Exams

The complete academic calendar is available online: <https://www.tamusa.edu/academics/academic-calendar/index.html>