

**Professor** Sierra Miller, M.A

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**Office** Virtual

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**Student Office Hours** By appointment

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### **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).

This is a Hybrid course, meaning that we will meet in-person each week and will have assigned work to complete outside of class.

### **Required Course Materials:**

- *Handbook*: American Psychological Association. (2019). *Publication manual* (7th ed). Washington, DC: Author.

### **Contact Guidelines:**

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

- **Email**: Only use official university e-mail through Blackboard and include the course and section (e.g., PSYC 2385) and full name in subject line. Please do not use Blackboard messages. My university email is my primary and preferred point of contact outside of the classroom.

I check my email regularly on Monday – Friday from 8 to 5. Within that timeframe, I will generally respond back within 24 hours. If you do not hear back from me, email again in the event your message went to my Junk email box and/or follow up directly with me in class or during office hours (see above). On the weekends, I am generally not available by email, but will reply on the subsequent Monday. If you need to contact me, please plan ahead especially when it comes to clarifying assignment instructions and/or submission requirements.

In all communications, please be professional and be specific in your message (i.e., avoid informal correspondence styles like text messaging). 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 in lieu of responding back to one of my emails if you are beginning a new conversation unrelated to the previous email (this helps minimize confusion cause by chain replies).

- **Student Hours**: I will be available by appointment only. Students are asked to request meeting times at least 24 hours in advance to provide ample time for response/scheduling.

### **Assessment and 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. A more full and complete set of instructions will be available in class and through Blackboard throughout the semester. Furthermore, 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.

### **Weekly Assignments – 20 points each**

For several topics, we will practice our skills with Weekly Activities. Students must attend class in order to be eligible to earn points on these assignments. Without a university approved excuse, no make-up for Weekly Activities will be accepted.

### **Writing Appointments – 40 points each**

As per course requirements, there are two occasions when students will individually meet with their instructor to discuss their term paper (see syllabus calendar). These appointments are mandatory and will be held [insert location of choice]. 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 wifi 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. As a wise person once said, “There are no great writers and very few great rewriters.” (Tracy Henley, personal communication). These review assignments will let us practice and share what we know before creating a final product.

### **Writing Assignments – 100 points each**

Writing assignments serve as assessments of writing skill across the semester. These exercises include summaries of literature review and empirical articles, which will serve as additional means for instructor and peer feedback in route to the creation of the 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.

### **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 over 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
Weekly 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%
Term Paper	200	1	200	20%
<b>TOTAL</b>			<b>1000 possible points</b>	<b>100%</b>

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

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### **Missed / Late Homework Policy**

Missed assignments will be assigned a grade of zero. You must e-mail me 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 experienced an emergency/illness. Excused absences include family emergency 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 friend or family member that requires your assistance
- Transportation
- Athletic and/or organizational obligation
- Death or injury of friend or family member

Non-legitimate reasons for missing exams, but **NOT** for make-ups include:

- Vacation
- 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.

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## IMPORTANT POLICIES AND RESOURCES

**Academic Accommodations for Persons with Disabilities:** The Americans with Disabilities Act Amendments Act (ADAAA) of 2008 and the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 are federal anti-discrimination statutes that provide comprehensive civil rights protection for persons with disabilities. Title II of the ADAAA and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act require that students with disabilities be guaranteed equal access to the learning environment through the provision of reasonable and appropriate accommodation of their disability. If you have a diagnosed disability that may require an accommodation, please contact Disability Support Services (DSS) for the coordination of services. The phone number for DSS is (210) 784-1335 and email is [dsupport@tamusa.edu](mailto:dsupport@tamusa.edu).

**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](mailto: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/or 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 Modular C, Room 166 (Rear entrance).

All mental health services provided by the SCC are free and confidential (as the law allows). The Student Counseling Center provides brief individual and group therapy, crisis intervention, consultation, case management, and prevention services.

**Crisis support is available 24/7 by calling the SCC at 210-784-1331 (after-hours select option '2').** For more information and self-help resources, please visit [www.tamusa.edu/studentcounseling](http://www.tamusa.edu/studentcounseling)

**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, email with instructions and updates. To register or update your information visit: <https://tamusa.bbcportal.com/>.

More information about Emergency Preparedness and the Emergency Response Guide can be found here:

<https://www.tamusa.edu/uploadfile/folders/sdbowen23/pdf/pdf-635073426137928167-10.100.20.116.pdf>

**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. Faculty will provide the Office of Financial Aid with an electronic notification if a student has not attended the first week of class. Any student receiving federal financial aid who does not attend the first week of class will have their aid terminated and returned to the DoE. Please note that any student who stops attending at any time during the semester may also need to return a portion of their federal aid.

**Jaguar Writing Center:** The Jaguar Writing Center provides writing assistance to graduate and undergraduate students in all three colleges. Writing tutors work with students to develop reading skills, prepare oral presentations, and plan, draft, and revise their written assignments. Students can make individual or group appointments with a writing tutor. The Writing Center is located in the Central Academic Building, Suite 208. Appointments can also be made through JagWire under the services tab.

**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 contact the Dean of Students (DOS@tamusa.edu) for support. Furthermore, please notify the professor if you are comfortable in doing so. This will enable them to provide any resources they may possess.

**Military Affairs:** Veterans and active-duty military personnel are welcomed and encouraged to communicate, in advance if possible, and special circumstances (e.g., upcoming deployment, drill requirements, disability accommodations). You are also encouraged to visit the Patriots' Casa in-person room 202, or to contact the Office of Military Affairs with any questions at military@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 tradition. Under the policy, students are provided an opportunity to make up any examination, study, or work 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.

**Respect for Diversity:** We understand that our students represent diverse backgrounds and perspectives. When we are equity-minded, we are aware of differences and inequalities and are willing to discuss them so we can act to resolve them. The University is committed to building cultural competencies, or the attitudes, skills, and knowledge that enable individuals and organizations to acknowledge cultural differences and incorporate these differences in working with people from diverse cultures. Respecting and accepting people different than you is vital to your success in the class, on campus, and as a future professional in the global community. While working together to build this community we ask all members to:

- Share their unique experiences, values, and beliefs.
- Be open to the views of others.
- Honor the uniqueness of their colleagues.
- Value each other's opinions and communicate respectfully.
- Keep confidential discussions that the community has of a personal (or professional) nature.
- Use this opportunity together to discuss ways in which we can create an inclusive environment in this course and across the A&M-San Antonio community.

**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 careers. 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, equality of opportunity and human dignity. To fulfill its multiple missions as an institution of higher learning, A&M-San Antonio encourages a climate that values and nurtures collegiality, diversity, pluralism 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, or gender expression. 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 for 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. 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 A&M-San Antonio employees (other than those designated as confidential resources such as counselors and trained victims 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 or sexual violence, or other related misconduct, the faculty member must share that information with the university's Title IX Coordinator ([titleix@tamusa.edu](mailto:titleix@tamusa.edu), 210-784-2061, CAB 439K). If you wish to speak to a confidential employee who does not have this reporting responsibility, you can contact the Student Counseling Center at (210) 784-1331, Modular C.

**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 is 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, 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 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, University Catalog and to comply with them, as well as 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 an environment for learning.
5. A student has the responsibility to check their university email for any updates or official university notification.

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. Behaviors that infringe 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](#).

### **Use of A.I. Policy:**

#### **No Use of Generative A.I. Permitted**

PSYC 2385 – Writing in Psychology assumes that all work submitted by students will be generated by the students themselves, working individually or in groups. Students should not have another person/entity do the writing of any portion of an assignment for them, which includes hiring a person or a company to write assignments and/or using artificial intelligence (AI) tools like ChatGPT. Use of any AI-generated content in this course qualifies as academic dishonesty and violates Texas A&M-San Antonio's standards of academic integrity.

**Specific Learning Objectives (from APA Guidelines for Psychology Majors):**

<b>This course will assess your ability to:</b>	<b>Specific Outcomes</b>
<b>2.2 Demonstrate psychology information literacy</b>	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
<b>2.4 Interpret, design, and conduct basic psychological research</b>	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
<b>4.1 Demonstrate effective writing for different purposes</b>	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



## Course Schedule:

Although I will do my best to abide by this schedule, it 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 (i.e., the last minute of the day) on the corresponding week.**

Wk	Start of Week	Topic	Assessment Type	Points
1	Jan 15	Syllabus, Why APA? & Different Types of Academic Writing	<i>Weekly 1 (APA Style and Reverse Outlining)</i> <i>Knowledge Assessment (Quiz Blackboard)</i>	20
2	Jan 22	Library & Literature Search Strategies	<i>Weekly 2 (Lit Search Strategies)</i>	20
3	Jan 29	How to Cite In-text, References, Citation Managers (Ch. 8, 9, & 10)	<i>Weekly 3 (Citation/References)</i>	20
4	Feb 5	Reading and Interpreting Peer-Reviewed Literature Summarizing and Critiquing Peer-Reviewed Literature	<b>Writing Assignment 1 (APA template with template sections for future assignments, and completed Annotated References Section with three references)</b>	100
5	Feb 12	Plagiarism, Quoting, and Paraphrasing	<i>Weekly 4 (Plagiarism/Paraphrasing)</i>	20
6	Feb 19	Establishing Topics  Practice Peer Review	<b>Review Assignment 1 (Peer Review of Writing Assignment 1)</b>  <i>Weekly 5 (Talking points and Appointment Prep)</i>	40  20
7	Feb 26	Revisiting the Process: Writing Center, Read Out Loud, Office Hour Appointments	<b>Individual Appointments with Professor</b>	40
8	Mar 4	Organization & Building Arguments	<b>Writing Assignment 2 (APA template with template sections for future assignments, and completed Introduction Outline with citations, Expanded Annotated References Section with 6 references)</b>	100
9	Mar 11	<b>SPRING BREAK</b> <b>(MARCH 11<sup>TH</sup> – 17<sup>TH</sup>)</b>		

10	Mar 18	Grammar (Ch. 4) & Mechanics (Ch. 6)	<i>Weekly 6 (Grammar &amp; Mechanics)</i>	20
11	Mar 25	Style: Tone, Clarity, Smoothness (Ch. 4)	<b>Review Assignment 2 (Peer Review of Writing Assignment 2)</b> <i>Weekly 7 (Writing Skills Reflection)</i>	40 20
12	Apr 1	Reducing Bias	<b>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)</b>	100
13	Apr 8	Reading Week and Individual Appointments	<b>Individual Appointments with Professor</b> <i>Weekly 8 (Appointment Reflection)</i>	40 20
14	Apr 15	The Publication Process (Ch. 12)	<b>Review Assignment 3 (Critical Self Review of Writing Assignment 3)</b> <i>Weekly 9 (Term Paper Planning)</i>	40 20
15	Apr 22	Writing for Different Audiences: Academic Conferences and General Public, Wrap Up	<i>Weekly 10 (Different Audiences)</i>	20
		Working on Term Paper & Revisions	<b>Term Paper due Date TBD</b>	200
<b>Final</b>	May 1 – 7th	Final (see academic calendar for date and time)	<b>APA Mastery Test</b> (Due Date TBD Based on Academic Calendar / Exam Will BE Administered Through Blackboard)	100