Student Paper Requirements, PSY150A1-001

Due Dates (see D2L for exact date)
- Draft due sometime from Feb 17 and Mar 9 (lottery) for 25 points
- Final Version due 5 weeks after your draft due date (Mar 23 to Apr 13) for up to 50 points

Helpful Hints
- Read this document in its entirety before writing your paper.
- Attend one of the writing workshops. (See the Class Calendar to find workshops or any preceptor office hour)
- Read the helpful hints below.
- Be sure to look over the grading criteria before you write your paper.
- Follow the format provided in the grading criteria below. We use these criteria in grading the papers.
- Be sure to choose one of these propositions for your paper.
- Meet with a TA or preceptor to review a rough draft of your paper.

Late Papers
If a paper is submitted to the dropbox after the deadline, it will lose 5 points if it is submitted within the next 24 hours, and lose another 5 points if it is submitted after 24 hours late and up to 48 hours late. You will be unable to submit it any later than 48 hours late, and will thus receive no credit if you cannot submit it by 48 hours after the deadline.

Overview
The goal of this writing assignment is to find scientific psychological research articles that you will then cite as you argue for or against a proposition that you will choose from the list below. You should choose one of the proposition topics that interests you. Each proposition is one with which you may agree or disagree. You should choose one of the propositions and, after an objective overview of the topic using empirical research citations, you should then agree or disagree with the proposition.

The paper must be between 4 and 5 pages in length (double-spaced, 12 point font, 1-inch margins; no hand-written papers), plus a reference list. Papers less than 4 pages will not receive full credit. The paper must include at least 3 scientific empirical research citations (see below). Although an objective review of the topic should comprise the bulk of the paper, you should then state your own opinion as well and back it up with citations.

Paper Format and Grading Criteria
*The paper must follow the format below to receive the maximum of 50 points.*
- Title Page with title of the paper, your name, id number, date, and course number
- Paper begins with a clear statement of the proposition that will be argued. <1 paragraph>
- Paper then provides an empirically-supported overview of the topic <2-4 pages>
- After the overview, your opinion is clearly stated and backed up with citations.<1-2 pages>
- Reference list at the end in APA Style (see sample or tutorial)
- Do not exceed 6 written pages for the body of the paper (i.e., not including cover page or reference list). We will stop reading after 6 pages.
- The body of the paper should not be shorter than 4 written pages (i.e., if you removed the title page and the reference list, you would still have 4 full pages).

The paper will be graded according to the following criteria:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Criterion</th>
<th>Point</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Title page contains the title of the paper, your name, id number, date,</td>
<td>5 points</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>and course number</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Paper begins with a clear statement of the proposition that will</td>
<td>5 points</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>be argued. You must indicate verbatim (i.e. word-for-word) which</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>proposition you will argue for or against. A good paper usually</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>provides a few introductory sentences and concludes the first</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>paragraph with a statement such as &quot;I will therefore argue against</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>[in favor of] the proposition that …&quot;</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>• Paper then provides an empirically-supported overview of the topic</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>(e.g., what are intelligence tests and what do they measure and what</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>behaviors do they predict) that is objective, balanced, and informative</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>including at least three empirical research citations (see below)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&lt;2-4 pages&gt;, as indicated by:</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>o Includes at least 3 empirical research citations, summarized in the</td>
<td>10 points</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>article, and listed in a reference list at the end of the paper in APA</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>style. Problems with appropriate referencing would include listing</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>reference in body of paper but not in the reference list, or</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>providing a direct quote without listing page numbers.</td>
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<tr>
<td>o Research from citations appropriately summarized showing student</td>
<td>5 points</td>
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<tr>
<td>understood the article (e.g. not just quoted, not taken out of</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>context)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>o Citations clearly apply to topic, and provide some balance</td>
<td>5 points</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(not all just in support of the author's position)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• After the overview, the author's opinion is clearly stated and</td>
<td>10 points</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>backed up with citations.&lt;1-2 pages&gt;</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Exposition: grammar, spelling, punctuation, clarity</td>
<td>10 points</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

More detail about how each of the criteria will be graded is available on this grading criteria form. Look at it carefully to know exactly how we'll grade your paper.
Empirical Research Citations

One objective of this writing assignment is to help students gain experience in evaluating psychological research evidence with respect to a topic of importance. Although some non-empirical sources (e.g. textbooks, magazines) can give you a good idea of the general issues relevant to your paper, they are no substitute for reading the original research yourself. In this paper, you must cite 3 empirical scientific research articles. An empirical research article involves a study using one of the methods we discussed early in the semester (e.g., survey, experimental manipulation, direct observation, etc.). The easiest way to find research papers relevant to psychological topics is to use PsycINFO via the University of Arizona library webpage (www.library.arizona.edu under "Articles and Databases" then "P" for PsycInfo) or PubMed for more medically-relevant information (http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/). If you access PsychINFO from the UA Library, next to the PsychINFO link is a link to a tutorial to help you find articles with this tool.

To find empirical scientific articles, you may wish to attend one of the citation finding workshops. (See the Class Calendar to find workshops or any preceptor office hour.) You may also find helpful information about finding citations at this link.

The point of using the research citations is to provide evidence upon which you base your own conclusion. Therefore, avoid quoting other people's opinions. In terms of citing, you should strive to use your own words to present the main points of the research, using direct quotes only when the exact phrasing is impossible to substitute. In other words, merely extracting large quoted sections will not suffice as a reference. To avoid plagiarism, you must provide citations for ideas you found in other works, and avoid quotations whenever possible. If you need to quote, however, make sure you cite exactly where the quote appeared (article and page number). You must link your citations listed at the end of the paper to the appropriate sections within the paper. If you do not provide the citations within the paper, the reader has no way to evaluate the quality of evidence. Worse yet, the reader may think the paper is plagiarized. If you have questions about citations, please see one of the teaching assistants before writing your paper.

When citing evidence within the paper, make sure that the reader knows which source you are citing. For example, instead of simply making the claim that intelligence tests predict school performance, you could claim that in a large sample of school children, the relationship between intelligence test performance and school performance was quite strong (Smith and Jones, 1996). Put the names of the authors and the year of publication in parentheses following the claim that derives from that reference (as in the example just given). Then, on the reference page, provide the full citation in the form of Authors, Year of Publication, Title, Journal, Volume, and pages. By example:


Internet citations may be used, but only in addition to, and not instead of, the three required empirical citations as indicated above. For Internet citations, indicate the title of the page, and the actual Internet address. By example:

Helpful Hints

- Read the instructions fully!!!!!
- Plan ahead. Writing takes time, and writing well takes more time.
- Consider your first draft a draft. Set it aside for at least a day, then return to it and read it from the perspective of a new reader. All good writers edit their own work critically.
- A corollary to the first hint -- don't procrastinate. Start planning now.
- Use a spell checker!
- Proof read your paper -- spell checkers sometimes give you the correct spelling of a wrong word! Spell checkers don't catch all mistakes.
- If you have trouble writing, consult a writing tutor, work with a preceptor, or see your TA.
- Make use of the office hours of the TAs and preceptors.
- Stick to the topic -- although you may find something very interesting that is somewhat related to the topic, you should stick to the proposition you have selected. Part of good writing is knowing both what to include and what to leave out.
- Do not cite things you did not actually read.
- Back up your claims and your arguments with the research you cite; do not simply quote other people's opinions, and do not simply rely on "logic."
- Try to paraphrase ideas (and give them credit) rather than quoting everything.
- Format your references as indicated in the example above.
- When writing, avoid conversational language (e.g. "I will try and convince you that ...", "If you do the crime you should do the time") and instead use language appropriate to written expression (e.g., "I will try to convince you that ...", "If one commits a crime one should be receive the appropriate sentence as punishment"). For more help on this topic, see this helpful tutorial.
- Meet with the Preceptor and Teaching Assistant who will be reviewing and grading your paper to discuss an outline or a draft of your paper.
- See the APA Style guidelines for citations

Other helpful links

- The Writing Skills Improvement Program!
- Paper Grading Criteria
- Links to help you find good sources for your paper
  - Tips on Finding Empirical Citations
  - UA Tutorial on Library Research for Psychology
  - The UA guide to distinguish between a scholarly source and a popular source
  - Popular and Scholarly Sources: The Game
- How to cite your material in your paper according to APA Style -- a nice tutorial
- How to avoid informal and colloquial writing
- Plagiarism clarifications and tutorials
  - The University of Arizona plagiarism tutorial
  - Tips on citing work and avoiding plagiarism -- there are four parts, all worth reading
Proposition Paper Topics
(Topics do not necessarily reflect the views of the instructor). Choose Only One:

1. Society has the right to involuntarily commit individuals to mental institutions.
2. Mirror neurons are the basis for empathy.
3. Euthanasia should be permitted for patients in a persistent vegetative state.
4. The drug Ritalin is over-prescribed, and does little to help children who supposedly have attention deficit disorder.
5. To reduce bystander apathy, innocent bystanders should be held legally responsible for not assisting in an emergency.
6. Because current policies aimed at limiting drug abuse do not work, we should legalize drugs and instead teach people to use to use them responsibly.
7. Intelligence tests should not be used to select people for admission to schools or for employment, since these tests are an unfair and sometimes biased assessment of a person's capacity for success.
8. Internet addiction should be a recognized mental disorder.
9. “Abstinence only” programs are the most effective approach to preventing teen-pregnancy and sexually-transmitted diseases.
10. Free will is an illusion.
11. The best intervention for eating disorders would be at the level of societal attitudes rather than individual patients.
12. The brains of men and women differ in important ways that account for sex differences in behavior.
13. Assisted suicide should be legal for those capable of making a rationale end of life decision.
14. Too many video games are bad for children’s development.