

## **PNB 2XD3 – Integrated Psychology, Neuroscience & Behaviour – Winter 2016**

### **Course Objectives**

1. Improve Writing
2. Introduce students to PNB faculty/areas of research

The primary goal in this course is to improve your writing; a secondary goal is to enhance your understanding of PNB. As such, it is the clarity of writing that is being evaluated. In order to do this effectively, the writing assignments are highly constrained with very specific requirements. While some of the requirements may seem trivial, each is equally important (word count, page formatting, sentence structure).

**Instructor:** Dr. Sukhvinder Obhi,

**TAs:** Jenna Traynor-Vass, Robert Collins, Stefania Cesarino, Rita Abdel-Baki, Mike Galang, Ben Townsend, Alva Tang

**Guest lecturers:** Various PNB faculty, TBA

### **Primary Contact:**

**Class place & time:** Tuesday, Wednesday & Friday @ 12:30 in ABB 102 **Tutorial place & time:** Thursday @ 3:30 in BSB/ B142, B140, 139, 138, B155, B154.

**Dr. Obhi's Office hours:** By appointment

**TA office hours:** By appointment

### **Required Texts:**

Strunk, W. & White, E.B. (2009). *The Elements of Style*. Boston: Allyn & Bacon.

Zinsser, W. (2001). *On Writing Well*. New York: Harper Collins.

Greene, A. (2013) *Writing Science in Plain English*, University of Chicago Press

## Evaluation Criteria (Tentative)

Item	What its worth	Notes
Précis (best 3)  (100 words + separate summary sentence, see below for details)	20%	Cover page with rubric and word count indicated, see below for details
Essay bundle (best 1)  (750 word Essay on PNB topic of your choice, mind-map*, outline*, 200 word description of approach)	30%	Main essay in APA format  Word count indicated, see below for details
Newspaper/Magazine piece  (400 words, 200 word description of approach)	10%	+ 200 word description of target outlet and approach taken, word count indicated
Reflections  (500 word reflection on your journey through the course, challenges faced, how you overcame them, referring to other contents of your package)	15%	A reflection on your personal journey through the course
Attendance at Tutorials	5%	9 tutorials needed for full attendance mark
Editing during Tutorials	10%	Best nine edits
Quizzes during Tutorials	10%	Best nine quizzes
Total	100%	

\*mind-map and outline for essay are not part of the 750-word essay.

### The Final Package

In the final week of the course, to receive a final grade, each student MUST submit a final package (soft copy via Avenue and Hardcopy via physical drop box) consisting of

specific assignments and supporting material as indicated in the following table:

<b>Package Item</b>	<b>Word count (strict)</b>
First précis on bat paper	100 words max
Précis – best 3	100 words max
Raw Rant/Rave	500-1000 words max
Newspaper/Magazine piece	400 words max
Best PNB Essay Bundle	750 words max
500 word reflections	500 words max

Note that your final package should have a cover page with contents listed and the following information indicated: Your name and student number; course name, professor name, and TA name; the title, and date of submission. **You must keep your graded copies of each assignment for submission in the final package. An announcement will be made about the format of the final submission (i.e., hard copy or electronic). Monitor classes and Avenue during the course for this announcement.**

### **Weekly Tutorial Activities and Hand in Requirements**

Each week you will be involved in various writing activities and will be required to hand in a piece of work. To help with your planning, the table below provides a breakdown of weekly tutorial activities and weekly hand in requirements over the whole course. Every tutorial will start with a brief quiz on the guest lecture for that week. **Monitor classes and avenue for potential changes to this tentative schedule.** If this tentative information changes, a revised outline will be posted on Avenue. Revised outlines, if posted will be clearly marked and will always take precedence over the original outline.

### **Hand in Arrangement:**

Electronic submission (to a drop box on Avenue), and hard copy (a physical drop box in the Psychology Building) submissions are required. Details of physical drop box location(s) will be posted on Avenue and will be announced in class during the second week of class.

**Tentative weekly tutorial activities and work to be handed in:**

<b>Week</b>	<b>What you BRING TO TUTORIAL for editing practice on Thursday</b>	<b>What you HAND IN on the FRIDAY by 5pm</b>
Week 1 (Jan 4-8)	Bat précis	Bat précis
Week 2 (Jan 11-15)	Feinberg précis	Outline for feedback (optional)
Week 3 (Jan 18-22)	Milliken précis	Milliken précis
Week 4 (Jan 25-29)	Watter précis	Rant/Rave
Week 5 (Feb 1-5)	Brown précis	Brown précis
Week 6 (Feb 8-12)	News/Magazine piece	News/Magazine piece
Week 7 (Feb 22-26)	Shore précis	Essay 1 (+ mindmap + outline + 200 word description of your approach)
Week 8 (Feb 29-Mar 4)	Goldreich précis	Goldreich précis
Week 9 (Mar 7-11)	Civile précis	Nothing!
Week 10 (Mar 14-18)	Cirelli précis	Cirelli précis
Week 11 (Mar 21-25)	Faure précis	Essay 2 (mindmap + outline + 200 word description of your approach)
Week 12 (28-Apr 1)	Khan précis	Khan précis
Week 13 (Apr 4- Apr 8)	Final Package Prep	Final package

**Grading Policy:** The instructors reserve the right to adjust final marks up or down, on an individual basis, in the light of special circumstances and/or the individual's total performance in the course. Final grades may also be adjusted up or down on a class-wide basis depending on overall performance. Details of the course requirements may be subject to change. If requirements are altered, a revised course outline will be posted on the webpage and the details will be announced in class. Attention is drawn to Statement on Academic Ethics and the Senate Resolutions on Academic Dishonesty as found in the Senate Policy Statements distributed at registration and available in the Senate Office.

Any student who infringes on these resolutions will be treated according to the published policy.

**Missed Work Policy:** If you are absent from the university for a temporary medical issue (i.e., the flu), lasting fewer than 5 days, you may report your absence using the McMaster Student Absence Form. Absences for a longer duration or for other reasons must be reported to your Faculty/Program office, with documentation. When using the MSAF, report your absence to Dr. Obhi by e-mail (see above). You must speak to the instructor in person before or after class within 5 business days. Grades will be adjusted accordingly. Misuse of the MSAF form to gain an unfair advantage will be considered a breach of the Academic Integrity Policy.

**Communication policy:** E-mail communications must originate from your McMaster e-mail account. Should we need to communicate with you about individual matters, the e-mail will be sent to this account. You should monitor this account regularly. E-mail sent from third-party providers (yahoo, hotmail, cogeco, sympatico, gmail, etc.) will not be answered. We have this policy for three reasons: 1. reduce the amount of incoming spam to our accounts; 2. ensure that we know with whom we are communicating; 3. teach the professional use of e-mail. Please note that instructors and TAs cannot return long distance telephone calls. Every effort will be made to reply to emails within two business days.

In this course we will be using Avenue2Learn. Students should be aware that, when they access the electronic components of this course, private information such as first and last names, user names for the McMaster e-mail accounts, and program affiliation may become apparent to all other students in the same course. The available information is dependent on the technology used. Continuation in this course will be deemed consent to this disclosure. If you have any questions or concerns about such disclosure please discuss this with the course instructor. Please note that plagiarism detection is enabled in Avenue.

### **A note on all written assignments**

Always use 12 point Times New Roman, 1 inch margins and 1.5 or double spacing. References should be cited in APA format.

**Important Information on Essays:** You will submit two essays during the term. Each essay will capture and communicate an idea related to Psychology, Neuroscience & Behaviour. Beyond this stipulation, you have complete choice in what to write about. This is an expository essay focused on teaching and informing the audience. The essay must include 5-10 citations to the primary literature.

You are allowed 5 paragraphs: a lead paragraph with the hook as the first sentence and the thesis as the last; three body paragraphs representing the beginning, middle and end of the exposition of your thesis; and, a final paragraph with your conclusion as the first sentence. The thesis, the topic sentence of each body paragraph, and the conclusion sentence must be simple sentences without undue subordinate clauses or phrases. No more than 750 words.

For essay deadlines see table of Weekly activities and hand in requirements above.

Essay submission should include:

1. A cover page with your name and student number; course name, professor name, and TA name; the title, assignment type and number (e.g., Essay #2), and date of submission; and, word count.
2. A brainstorming mindmap, and a outline.
3. A description of your writing approach including major decisions (e.g., did you take a sequential or recursive approach, at what stage did you create your outline, and who did you ask for feedback, how many drafts, etc (max 200 words).
4. The essay itself, including proper APA citations (max 750 words).

IF POSSIBLE, EACH HARD COPY SUBMISSION SHOULD BE DUPLEX PRINTED TO SAVE TREES!

**Précis Writing:** A précis is an accurate summary of an assigned paper relating to a guest lecture. It should include all of the important ideas, and avoid all of the secondary ideas. The writing must be your own—your own words, phrases, and sentences. An excellent précis will capture the thesis, outline, and conclusion of the original work. You may cite work other than the original work, but it is not required. In this course, a maximum of 100 words may be used.

Précis submission should include:

1. A cover page with your name and student number; course name, professor name, and TA name (in bold); the title (including the APA citation), précis number, and date of submission; running head, page number, and word count. Also, include the précis rubric on the cover page.
2. A second page with a single sentence that summarizes the précis, the précis itself. The original text should be listed in the references, but does not need to be cited.

IF POSSIBLE, EACH HARD COPY SUBMISSION SHOULD BE DUPLEX PRINTED USING ONLY ONE SHEET OF PAPER. THIS MEANS THAT YOUR COVER PAGE IS PRINTED ON THE OTHER SIDE OF THE PAPER FROM YOUR MAIN PRECIS.

Guest lectures will take place on Wednesdays and sometimes on Tuesdays. The reading that supports the guest lecture forms the basis of your précis. **TO REPEAT**, you write your précis on the paper that supports the **GUEST LECTURE**, **NOT ON THE LECTURE ITSELF**. The paper should be posted at least one or two days prior to the guest lecture and hand in day is always Friday.

NOTE: Lecture slides from the guest lectures will NOT be available to students.

**Précis Rubric**

<b>Criterion</b>	<b>Score 0-4</b>
First sentence - hook?	
Word flow within sentence	
Sentence flow logical?	
Clutter	
Grammar	
Summary sentence	
Overall reading pleasure	
<b>Total</b>	

Finally, editing quality (in tutorial sessions) will be assessed by asking how much the editor improved each of the criteria used for précis grading:

**Rubric for editing in Tutorials**

<b>Criterion</b>	<b>Score 0-4</b>
Improvement in first sentence - hook?	
Improvement in word flow within sentences	
Improvement in logical flow of sentences	
Improvement in Clutter	
Improvement in Grammar	
Improvement in summary sentence	
Improvement in overall reading pleasure	
<b>Total</b>	