

PNB 2XD3 – Integrated Psychology, Neuroscience & Behaviour – Winter 2017

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: Heather Gallant, Michael Barone, Arnav Bharadwaj, Nadia Wong, Maria Ershova, Hector Orozco Perez, Adrienne McLean

Guest lecturers: Various PNB faculty, TBA

Primary Contact:

Class place & time: Monday, Wednesday & Thursday @ 5:30 in ABB 102 **Tutorial place & time:** Thursday @ 12:30 in BSB, various rooms – see Avenue.

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)	25%	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)	25%	Main essay in APA format Word count indicated, see below for details
Newspaper/Magazine piece (400 words, 200 word description of approach)	20%	+ 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
Editing during Tutorials	5%	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:

Package Item	Word count (strict)
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First précis on Situationism & Agency	100 words max
Précis – best 3	100 words max
Raw Rant/Rave	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. The format of the final package should be PDF, submitted via Dropbox on Avenue. Monitor classes and Avenue during the course for more information.**

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. Attendance will be taken at each tutorial and every tutorial will start with a brief quiz on the guest lecture for that week. **The remainder of the tutorial will be spent editing a partner's work. Editing should be done in an appropriate software application that allows annotation of PDF documents (e.g., Preview on the mac, or Adobe Acrobat on Windows, etc).**

Hand in Arrangement:

All assignments are to be handed in electronically via a drop box on Avenue. Documents should be in PDF format and should conform to APA style guidelines.

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 Avenue 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.

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. The reference list is not included in the 750 word limit.

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 an 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).

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.

Most guest lectures will take place on Wednesdays. 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 the Wednesday following the guest lecture in question.

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

The précis rubric is provided below. The rubrics for the essays and the newspaper/magazine pieces will be provided during the course.

Précis Rubric

Criterion	Marks 0-4
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Lead and hook (first sentence)	
Within sentence flow	
Between sentence flow	
Clutter	
Grammar	
Summary sentence	
TOTAL	