

San José State University
College of Social Sciences/Department of Psychology
PSYC 100W, Writing Workshop, Section 5, Spring 2026

Course and Contact Information

Instructor:	Thomas A. Shirley
Office Location:	Business Tower (BT) 656
Teaching Assistant:	Jade Tran
Email:	Canvas Email (Preferred) Please check the email you entered into your MySJSU account, because it is the one loaded into Canvas.
Office Hours:	Wednesdays, 12:00 PM to 2:00 PM or when convenient for student and professor
Class Days/Time:	Wednesdays, 3:00 PM to 5:45 PM
Classroom:	Sweeney Hall (SH) 348
Prerequisites:	
GE/SJSU Studies Category:	Area Z

Important Note about Course Grade:

This course must be passed with a C or better as an SJSU graduation requirement.

Course Description

In this class, you will practice and improve writing skills appropriate to the broad field of psychology, including essays, reports, and scholarly communication. The goals of 100W are that students will develop advanced proficiency in college-level writing and appropriate contemporary research strategies and methodologies to communicate effectively to both specialized and general audiences. This class reinforces and advances skills developed in Written Communication IA and IB, and then broadens and deepens these to include mastery of the discourse specific to the discipline in which the course is taught.

GE Learning Outcomes (GELO)

Learning Outcomes (LOs) are specific, measurable goals and objectives that students have demonstrated upon successful completion of the course. 100W is designed to address three levels of Learning Outcomes:

1. **GE/SJSU Learning Outcomes (SLOs):** These are outcomes mandated by General Education.
2. **Course Learning Outcomes (CLOs):** These are outcomes for this specific course. For Psychology 100W, Course Learning Outcomes (CLOs) are the discipline-specific ways in which the general GE/SJSU learning outcomes (LOs) for 100W (Area Z) will be fulfilled. The specific CLOs for this course contribute to the overall experience, learning opportunities, and Program Learning Outcomes (PLOs) students are exposed to when completing the SJSU Psychology Major.
3. **Program Learning Outcomes (PLOs):** These outcomes refer to the broad goals of the SJSU Psychology Major program. The SJSU Psychology Major is designed to address 5 broad PLOs. These PLOs are outcomes students should be able to demonstrate after having successfully completed the Psychology Major.

GE/SJSU Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs)

Students shall write complete essays that demonstrate college-level proficiency. Students shall be able to:

- SLO 1. Produce discipline-specific written work that demonstrates upper-division proficiency in:
 - a. language use
 - b. grammar
 - c. clarity of expression
- SLO 2. Explain, analyze, develop, and criticize ideas effectively, including ideas encountered in multiple readings and expressed in different forms of discourse.
- SLO 3. Organize and develop essays and documents for both professional and general audiences.
- SLO 4. Organize and develop essays and documents according to appropriate editorial and citation standards.
- SLO 5. Locate, organize, and synthesize information effectively to accomplish a specific purpose, and to communicate that purpose in writing.

Course Learning Outcomes (CLOs)

For Psychology 100W, the general GE student learning outcomes (SLOs) for 100W (Area Z) will be fulfilled in the following discipline-specific Course Learning Outcomes (CLOs) [matched GE SLOs indicated in brackets]. Upon successful completion of this course, students will:

- CLO 1. have developed proficiency in using databases (e.g., PsycINFO and MEDLINE) to locate empirical research and research review articles in an area of psychology [SLO 5]
- CLO 2. have demonstrated competency in American Psychological Association (APA) writing style, including grammar, spelling, and syntax [SLO 1, 4]
- CLO 3. have summarized and evaluated empirical research articles in an area of psychology [SLO 1, 2, 3, 4]
- CLO 4. have written for a general audience [SLO 1, 2, 3]
- CLO 5. have organized and developed a literature review, or other appropriate major paper (e.g., research report) in an area of psychology [SLO 1, 2, 3, 4, 5]
- CLO 6. have begun to develop critical thinking skills in psychology including the ability to [SLO 1, 2, 3, 4, 5]: a. synthesize disparate research findings into a coherent framework that addresses a question or topic relevant to the discipline of psychology, and/or b. compare and contrast differing theories and research findings

Program Learning Outcomes (PLOs)

Upon successful completion of the psychology major requirements...

- PLO1 – *Knowledge Base of Psychology* – Students will be able to identify, describe, and communicate the major concepts, theoretical perspectives, empirical findings, and historical trends in psychology.
- PLO2 – *Research Methods in Psychology* – Students will be able to design, implement, and communicate basic research methods in psychology, including research design, data analysis, and interpretations.
- PLO3 – *Critical Thinking Skills in Psychology* – Students will be able to use critical and creative thinking, skeptical inquiry, and a scientific approach to address issues related to behavior and mental processes.
- PLO4 – *Application of Psychology* – Students will be able to apply psychological principles to individual, interpersonal, group, and societal issues.
- PLO5 – *Values in Psychology* – Students will value empirical evidence, tolerate ambiguity, act ethically, and recognize their role and responsibility as a member of society.

GE requirements for 100W stipulate that students shall write a minimum of 8000 words over the course of the semester and that they shall be provided with frequent practice and feedback for improving their communication skills.

Required Textbook

- No textbook required

Recommended Readings and Resources

- [APA Style Manual](#)
- [APA Style website](#)

- [APA Style Tutorial](#)
- [Purdue Owl APA Style Resource](#)
- [SJSU Library: Psychology-specific tutorials, resources](#)

Other Readings

All other readings will be posted on Canvas.

Other Technology Requirements/Equipment/Material

- Regular access to a computer and internet connection.

Library Liaison

Christa Bailey is the **Reference Librarian** assigned to assist Psychology students in using databases, helping with keyword searches, etc. She will be available throughout the semester to meet with individual students.

Contact information:

- (408) 808-2422
- christa.bailey@sjsu.edu

Course Canvas Site

The course Canvas site is your online resource for this course. This site includes:

- Course announcements
- Links to web pages that will be of use to you throughout the course
- Lecture slides, handouts, and articles
- Assignment submission inboxes
- Rubrics and feedback for major assignments
- Your grades

To access the Canvas site: go to sjsu.instructure.com and log in:

- **Username** = *SJSU 9-digit ID*
- **Password** = *your current SJSUOne password*

Then click the Canvas tile. For additional information or help with logging in: **Canvas Student Tutorial:**

<https://www.sjsu.edu/cfeti/software/canvas/student-resources/index.php>

Course Requirements and Assignments

The assignments in Psychology 100W are designed to **gradually build the writing and research skills necessary to write scholarly papers** appropriate for the discipline of psychology.

Details for each assignment are provided in assignment descriptions on Canvas. Assignment descriptions (as well as other useful resources) can be found on the course Canvas site. The major skills and associated assignments include (but are not limited to):

- **Basic skills review** (e.g., plagiarism tutorials, research skills tutorials, APA formatting)
- **Evaluating information sources**

- **APA style**
- **Article summaries and evaluations**
- **Literature review on a topic of your choice, including the following components:**
 - Multiple incremental assignments to complete parts of the final Literature Review
 - Instructor meetings to review progress and clarify questions
 - Peer Reviews at incremental stages
 - Final Literature Review

**You will be able to revise and resubmit your work in response to feedback from the instructor, Writing Tutor, and peer reviewer (and peer) feedback and resubmit.*

Incremental Literature Review Assignments

To prepare you for the major paper for this course (a literature review - see description below), you will write various drafts that will help you to learn how to read, understand, and accurately report psychological research findings, develop synthesis skills by describing how studies build upon one another, and apply APA style to your writing.

Peer Reviews

The best way to become a better writer is to review other people's writing - I know this from experience. 😊 So a regular part of our class will involve reviewing each other's work and giving constructive feedback. You'll be amazed at how helpful this is!

Major Paper for this Course

The major paper you will be writing for this course is an **APA-style literature review** (at least 2000 words including title page and references, with 10 or more scholarly, peer-reviewed references). The goal of a literature review is to *answer a research question* by describing and *synthesizing* relevant theory and research findings relevant to the question. You will be developing your final literature review in several assignments, including (but not limited to):

- **Literature Review Proposal** in which you develop, with help from the instructor or Writing Tutor, a research question appropriate to the discipline of psychology and to the requirements of the course.
- **Microsummaries Assignment** in which you summarize and compare two scholarly, peer-reviewed sources relevant to your literature review topic using databases and other resources appropriate to psychological research.
- **In-class 1:1 Required Meetings with Instructor or Writing Tutor** in which you brainstorm and organize the main points of your literature review, i.e. the aspects of your topic that you will focus on.
- **Literature Review Preliminary Drafts** in which you receive **Instructor or Writing Tutor** feedback and revise your paper as needed:
 - Draft 1: 600 words, synthesizing 3-4 scholarly resources
 - Draft 2: 1200 words (including your revised Draft 1), synthesizing 6-7 scholarly resources total
 - Draft 3: 1800 words (including your revised Drafts 1 & 2), synthesizing 9-10 scholarly resources total
- **Peer Reviews** in which you receive feedback from your in-classmate partner and revise your paper as needed.

- **Literature Review Final Draft:** Must be at least 2000 words (including title page and references list) with at least 10 scholarly, peer-reviewed sources

Success in this Course

Success in this course is based on the expectation that students will spend, for each unit of credit, a minimum of 45 hours over the length of the course (normally three hours per unit per week) for instruction, preparation/studying, or course-related activities, including but not limited to internships, labs, and clinical practica. Other course structures will have equivalent workload expectations as described in the syllabus.

Note: This means, for our 3 unit course, students will be expected to spend a total of **135 hours** over the length of the course (normally **9 hours per week**)

Course Assignment Summary and Point Values

Literature Review writing assignments: 200 points total (66.67%)

1. Paper proposal = 10 points
2. Instructor/tutor meeting 1 = 10 points
3. Microsummaries = 15 points
4. Your peer review of your partner's Draft 1 = 15 points
5. Your Draft 1 (use your peer review partner's feedback to fix any issues before submitting) = 20 points
6. Instructor/tutor meeting 2 = 10 points
7. Your peer review of your partner's Draft 2 = 15 points
8. Your Draft 2 (use your peer review partner's feedback to fix any issues before submitting) = 20 points
9. Your peer review of your partner's Draft 3 = 15 points
10. Your Draft 3 (use your peer review partner's feedback to fix any issues before submitting) = 20 points
11. Your Final Draft - 50 points

> Quizzes (varying number of assignments) = 8.34%

> In-class Activities (varying number of assignments; 2 lowest grades are dropped) = 8.34%

> Final Presentation = 50 points (16.67%)

> **Total Points Possible = 300**

Final Presentation

This is the oral presentation of the student's literature review. Due to time constraints, these presentations are scheduled over several class periods at the end of the semester. There are several submission options that you can choose from for the final presentation. **Regardless of the option you choose, you will need to be present in class for presentations to answer questions from your classmates.** Your presentation can be any of the following: A) Live presentation, B) Video recording of your presentation, C) Podcast, D) Documentary, E) Poem/Song/Rap, or F) Art Piece

Final Letter Grade Scale

Grade	Percentage
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A plus	97 to 100%
A	93 to 96%
A minus	90 to 92%
B plus	87 to 89 %
B	83 to 86%
B minus	80 to 82%
C plus	77 to 79%
C	73 to 76%
C minus	70 to 72%
D plus	66 to 69%
D	63 to 66%
D minus	60 to 62%
F	59.9% and below.

According to SJSU GE policy, this course must be passed with a C or better as a CSU graduation requirement.

- **Formatting requirements for all assignments:** All submissions must adhere to APA format (7th edition), including the following: Be double-spaced, use 1-inch margins, use an 11- or 12-point font that is accessible to all users (examples: 11-point Arial, Calibri, or Georgia; 12-point Times New Roman).
- **IMPORTANT:** Use [Grammarly](#) or another grammar/spelling checker to double-check for grammar and spelling errors before turning in your assignments.
- **Extra credit:** Some extra credit opportunities will become available during the semester. These opportunities will be announced on Canvas as they become available.
- **Extensions:** No extensions will be given except in cases of reasonable and documented academic reasons, emergencies, serious illness, or similar seriously disruptive events. *If such a circumstance should arise, please contact me as early as possible and be ready to provide documentation.*

IMPORTANT: If you have an ongoing issue that affects your ability to keep up with our class, please let me know as soon as possible and stay in touch with me. ***Don't wait!!!***

Late Assignments Policy: Assignments must be submitted on Canvas by the day/time specified on Canvas and in the course schedule. An assignment is considered “late” if it is not submitted by the time and date specified on Canvas.

- Assignments can be submitted up to 4 days late (weekend days are included in this 4-day period). The assignment grade will be reduced by 25% for each late day.
- Example: If you score all 10 points on a 10-point assignment, but you submit it one day late, you'll be deducted 2.5 point for a final score of 7.5.
- Assignments over 4 days late will receive 0 points.
- If due dates are changed, I'll announce the new due date via Canvas promptly.

Grade changes: Final grades will only be changed if there was a clerical error.

Academic integrity: Plagiarism, cheating, and any other forms of academic dishonesty will not be tolerated. The [University Academic Integrity Policy F15-7 \[pdf\]](#) requires you to be honest in all your academic coursework. If evidence of academic misconduct is found, you will receive a zero on the assignment(s) in question and I will file a report with the Office of Student Conduct and Ethical Development. Visit the [Student Conduct and Ethical Development](#) website for more information.

AI Technology Tools:

The whole point of creating a presentation or writing a paper for a class is to learn and practice how to develop presentation content or write better. If you do not learn these skills while in school, how will you know if the results of AI is accurate. So, if a student is using AI to do any significant part of that presentation or paper, it defeats this purpose.

IMPORTANT: If your presentation or paper sounds like Harvard Ph.D. created it, and you don't sound like that during presentations, meetings, or everyday interactions, you will quickly lose credibility.

- Students are encouraged to use AI tools to support their learning, such as brainstorming ideas, conducting research, or drafting assignments. Final submissions must reflect the student's own understanding and adhere to the academic integrity standards of this course and the university. Therefore, the great majority of submitted assignments should be created by students, not AI tools. You may not submit any work generated by an AI program as your own.
- Also, students are permitted to use AI tools to paraphrase, reword, reorder/restructure, and/or rephrase sentences, since these are just revisions of your ‘original’ work. ***The AI detection tools your professor uses can determine the difference between completely AI-generated content versus just ‘revisions’ of original work.***
- Students must disclose their use of AI tools in all submitted work. This includes detailing how and why the tools were used, either as a brief note or as part of the assignment.
- All uses of AI tools must be properly cited. Students must include the name of the tool and a description of the prompts or inputs used in their work.

- You should note that the material generated by these programs may be inaccurate, incomplete, or otherwise problematic. Beware that use may also stifle your own independent thinking and creativity.

Per section 1.2 of the SJSU's Academic Integrity Policy

(<https://www.sjsu.edu/studentconduct/docs/SJSU-Academic-Integrity-Policy-F15-7.pdf>), San José State University defines plagiarism as the act of representing the work of another as one's own without giving appropriate credit, regardless of how that work was obtained, and submitting it to fulfill academic requirements. This policy highlights a couple of important things:

- Doing academic work requires that the work you turn in is your own. A paper, even partially, that is written by AI is not considered your own original work.
- It doesn't matter which AI program/software you use. Using any of these to write your papers is considered a form of plagiarism.

Examples of AI technology tools that may be used inappropriately include, but are not limited to:

ChatGPT or similar tool

Grammarly (beyond just grammar corrections)

QuillBot

Scribbr

Paraphrasing Tool

Language Tool

EditPad

Google Gemini and Translate

And per section 4.4 of the SJSU's Academic Integrity Policy, ***Faculty members are required to report all infractions to the Office of Student Conduct and Ethical Development.***

Any plagiarism or other forms of cheating will be dealt with severely under relevant university policies.

Classroom Protocol

To create and maintain an environment conducive to learning, I require the following etiquette when engaging in online discussions and all course-related communication:

- Be professional – in other words, be polite and respectful to the other people in the class.
- Do not use biased language or profanity in posts.

Respect for the rights and opinions of others is required. The free and open exchange of ideas is the cornerstone of higher education, but we must always remain respectful of others, even if we disagree strongly with them. Disagreement is acceptable, but discourteousness is not. Behavior that creates a threatening or harassing environment will not be tolerated. Severe and pervasive disruptions of course activities are a violation of the Student Code of Conduct and will be reported to the Office of Student Conduct and Ethical Development: <http://www.sjsu.edu/studentconduct/docs/Student%20Conduct%20Code%202013.pdf>

Thank you in advance for maintaining a positive and professional classroom climate.

Because the course is taught experientially, participation is obligatory. Therefore, Laptops, Cell Phones, iPods, and other electronic devices are not permitted (except when needed for class exercise, team meetings, and break time). If you would like me to consider an exception to this policy, please see me individually to discuss.

Your participation in class discussion is an essential factor in determining the success of this class. Your instructor will be in class on-time, prepared, and involved; the same is expected from you. Students are expected to arrive on time (both at the beginning of class and after break). ***Students who arrive more than 8 minutes past the start time of class or return from break will not be allowed to enter the room nor participate in in-class exercises. If the professor observes a pattern of students who arrive after the class start time or return from break, but just before 8 minutes past the start time of class or return from break, these students will not be allowed to enter the room nor participate in in-class exercises.*** Since class lecture and related discussion is essential to understand and contribute to the class exercises, students cannot participate in and get credit for class exercises without actually attending and participating in class lecture and related discussion. If students participate in and attempt to get credit for class exercises without actually attending and participating in the related class lecture and discussion, this will be considered cheating.

Most importantly, you should take an active role in the discussion by asking good questions, raising interesting points, and contributing positively to in-class assignments; this includes during pair and small-group in-class activities. Quality of class participation, of course, will be emphasized over quantity. By implication, poor quality class participation will be penalized.

Your participation performance will account for a significant part of your final grade. Class participation is not “filler points” – it will have a real and significant impact on your grade. You start the semester with **nothing** and **build** points by demonstrating consistent patterns of behavior. Being unprepared for a single class, for example, will not affect your participation grade but missing several classes or showing a consistent pattern of no or poor preparation, participation, or both will. In other words, if you never positively contribute to in-class discussions, your class participation will approach zero.

NOTE that University policy F69-24 at <http://www.sjsu.edu/senate/docs/F69-24.pdf> states that “Students should attend all meetings of their classes, not only because they are responsible for material discussed therein, but because active participation is frequently essential to insure maximum benefit for all members of the class. Attendance per se shall not be used as a criterion for grading.”

- All enrolled students are already registered for Canvas. Canvas will be used to post required coursework, additional resources and other announcements. All communications (outside of class) will also be done through Canvas, thus, it is your responsibility to regularly check Canvas for course announcements (especially during weekends). Please make sure that you have access and know how to navigate Canvas:
 - Log in page: <http://www.sjsu.edu/at/ec/canvas/>
 - Student resources: http://www.sjsu.edu/at/ec/canvas/student_resources_new/index.html
- For expectations about classroom behavior; see Academic Senate Policy S90-5
 - (<http://www.sjsu.edu/senate/s90-5.htm>) on Student Rights and Responsibilities

University Policies

Per University Policy S16-9 (<http://www.sjsu.edu/senate/docs/S16-9.pdf>), relevant university policy concerning all courses, such as student responsibilities, academic integrity, accommodations, dropping and adding,

consent for recording of class, etc., and available student services (e.g. learning assistance, counseling, and other resources) are listed on the [Syllabus Information web page](https://www.sjsu.edu/curriculum/courses/syllabus-info.php) (<https://www.sjsu.edu/curriculum/courses/syllabus-info.php>). Make sure to visit this page to review and be aware of these university policies and resources.

PSYC 100W / Writing Workshop, Fall 2023 Course Schedule

All assignments are due on Thursdays by 11:59 pm unless noted otherwise on Canvas.

The schedule is subject to change with fair notice. Changes will be announced via Canvas messaging.

Week	Date	Topics, Readings, Assignments, Deadlines
1	Jan. 28	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Course intro and welcome ● APA Style Sources ● Icebreaker ● Finding an interesting topic (brainstorming) ● Narrowing topics down with the “Funnel Method” ● Reading a research paper ● Plagiarism Tutorial ● Take and Submit PDF of SJSU Library Plagiarism Quiz Results ● Submit proposal: Main topic + 2-4 possible subtopics
2	Feb 4	<p>Librarian Lecture:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Credible vs. non-credible sources ● AI Research Tips ● Finding scholarly research articles ● Summarizing articles using microsummaries ● Writing your first microsummary ● Submit Microsummaries
3	Feb 11	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● First 1:1 meeting to discuss your literature review (in-class)
4	Feb 18	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● First 1:1 meeting to discuss your literature review (in-class)
5	Feb 25	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● How to Write a Literature Review ● Literature review examples and templates ● Starting your paper: Microsummaries and paraphrasing ● How to write Draft 1; what to include ● Give your Draft 1 to your Peer Review partner
6	Mar 4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Citing references in text ● Introducing the Perfect Paper Checklist ● Submit your Peer Review of your partner's Draft 1
7	Mar 11	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Reference lists ● Alphabetizing the reference list ● The 3-point method for organizing papers (Part 1 of 2) ● Submit your Draft 1 (600 words) - use your partner's feedback
8	Mar 18	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The 3-point method for organizing papers (Part 2 of 2) ● Latin abbreviations (et al., e.g.)

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Capitalization ● Professional emails ● Give your Draft 2 to your Peer Review Partner
9	Mar 25	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Tables-and-Figures ● Writing an Abstract ● Submit your Peer Review of your partner's Draft 2
10	Apr 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● No Class (Spring Break)
11	Apr 8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Second literature review 1:1 meetings (with Instructor in Class or with Tutor in Writing Center) ● Submit your Draft 2 (1200 words) - use your partner's feedback
12	Apr 15	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Second literature review 1:1 meetings (with Instructor in Class or with Tutor in Writing Center) ● Give your Draft 3 to your Peer Review partner
13	Apr 22	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Objectivity in scholarly writing ● Reducing language bias ● Sentence fragments ● Verb tense (why do we care?) ● Submit your Peer Review of your partner's Draft 3
14	Apr 29	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Final Presentations ● Clarification of any areas of writing difficulty ● Submit your Draft 3 (1800 words) - use your partner's feedback
15	May 6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Final Presentations
	Sunday, May 10, 11:59 PM	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Submit final literature review (2000 words minimum)