



Syllabus

Writing in Psychology
 PSYC 3303, section 201
 Spring 2026

Good Writing is Rewriting...And We Shall Rewrite!

Contact Information

Professor: Michael A. Vandehey, Ph.D.	Office: O'donohoe 112
Office Hours: MW 9:30-11:30, TR 11:11:30 or by appointment	
Class Meets TR 9:30-10:50	Location: OD 126
Phone: 940-397-4026	Class Email Office Email

Note: When emailing me, please put Writing in Psychology as the subject.

Goals

1. Become experts at APA 7th Edition writing style.
 - a. Please go to APA Style (<http://www.apastyle.org>) for a variety of helpful suggestions on APA 7th Ed.
2. Develop library skills including the stacks, online retrieval, and interlibrary loan.
3. Possess excellent organizational skills for starting, writing, and editing a paper.
 - a. Initial outline
 - b. Organizing sources
 - c. Integrating sources
 - d. Writing introductions and discussions
4. Become aware of common writing errors and how to edit them out of one's paper.

Texts

Stapler: All papers must be stapled or they will not be accepted.

Red Pen: For editing

Kail, R. V. (2019). *Scientific writing for psychology: Lessons in clarity and style* (2nd ed.). Los Angeles, CA: Sage.

Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association (7th Ed.). (2020).
Washington D. C.: American Psychological Association.

Course Requirements

Initial paper (20 points): Students will write a three-page, APA style paper with three sources, a title page, and a reference section. This is due by the third week of class.

Outline via headings (10 points): Students will generate: (a) a title page with a running head, (b) an outline with appropriate APA levels of headings, and (c) a reference page (APA style). Under each heading, source identifiers will be written in. This will organize the paper for the writer and reader.

- a. Read the results and discussion of a minimum of 10 sources.
 - i. Read the literature review to become more informed of your topic and identify additional sources you may want. DO NOT cite the literature review.
- b. Identify each source by a number and each "finding" by a letter.
- c. Place the number, letter, and page number under the appropriate heading.

Library sources (10 points): Each person is responsible for turning in the following **5(or 6)** sources:

- (a) Interlibrary loan article-peer reviewed
- (b) Internet retrieved article-peer reviewed
- (c) one book from the stacks-peer reviewed
- (d) one source from the "reference section" -peer reviewed
- (e) 1 non-peer reviewed source from a suitable website (e.i., .org, .edu, or .gov). Wikipedia does not count as a source in this class.
 1. Bonus 2 points. Find a "BAD" website source (e.g., "ma&paBBQribs&psychologicaltruths").

Editing for common errors (20 points for individual and group editing): First, students will use editing symbols to identify problems in each other's work. Students will turn in an edited paper and the editor will receive a grade. Editors must use a red pen. I will use a green pen. (the person writing the paper also gets a grade at this time). Second, students will bring thumb drive with paper on it. We will edit the paper in class. Attendance sheets will be signed and credit given for group participation.

Psychology Writing Lab: Throughout the semester we will work on peer edits in the writing lab. After the first final paper turn in, students will use both class periods to work on their papers, receive peer feedback, and have access to the instructor regarding edits.

Writing Notebook (10 points): Students will turn in their writing notebook (I prefer a **very** small 3 ring binder) one week before the paper is due. Writing notebooks contain handouts from class and journal entries about one's own personal writing. Journal topics include: forbidden word list, self-writing evaluations (e.g., too many

passive sentences, writing in wrong tense, punctuation), and editing observations (e.g., work on 1-2-3, need to focus on APA headings).

Editing midterm (40 points): A finished paper will be handed out. Students must mark the paper for: (a) APA style, and (b) readability. Students should be able to evaluate the title page, headings, citations in the text, and the reference page. Poorly written sentences should be identified for correction.

Final paper (110 points): Students will turn in the paper two times for a grade. The corrected rough draft will be turned in after editing has been completed. This will allow for a pre-read by me. Editing symbols will be used and the student must identify the exact problem and correct it. Multiple "genuine" rewrites are possible. The paper shall have a title page, abstract, body (10 typed pages), and reference pages (minimum 10 references-no more than 2 from the internet; no text books). Do not use a paper in part or full from another course-this constitutes *self-plagiarism* (APA 7th ed., p. 21).

The final product will be turned in the last day before finals week and graded on: (a) APA style, (b) readability, and (c) quality of information.

220 points are possible and grade ranges are as follows:

A = 198-220

B = 176-197

C = 154-175

D = 132-153

F = 131 or lower

*All papers must be turned in electronically to TurnItIn.com through D2L. Go to Assessments: (a) choose Assignments, and (b) choose TurnItIn. You will upload your paper and can view a similarity rating. If green (under 25% or so), no worries. If yellow, possible rewrite. Check to see if your sources are artificially raising your percent (if yes, no worries). If orange, definitely rewrite!

By enrolling in this course, the student expressly grants MSU a "limited right" in all intellectual property created by the student for the purpose of this course. The "limited right" shall include but shall not be limited to the right to reproduce the student's work product in order to verify originality and authenticity, and educational purposes.

Note

Students with disability must be registered with Disability Support Services before accommodations can be provided. Individuals requiring special accommodation should contact me and must provide documentation by Disability Support Services. The Director of Disability Support Services serves as the ADA Coordinator and may be contacted at (940) 397-4140, TDD (940) 397-4515, or 3410 Taft Blvd., Clark Student Center 168.

Americans with Disabilities Act

Midwestern State University does not discriminate on the basis of an individual's disability and complies with Section 504 and Public Law 101-336 (Americans with Disabilities Act) in its admissions, accessibility, treatment and employment of individuals in its programs and activities.

A copy of the ADA Compliance Document is available online at [disability faq](#). It is the responsibility of the student to inform the instructor of any disabling condition that will require modifications. Students who require special accommodations must register with Disability Support Services before these accommodations can be provided. An Accommodation Request Form can be obtained at [Accommodation Request](#).

Computer Requirements

Taking a modern class requires you to have access to a computer (with Internet access) to complete and upload your assignments. It is your responsibility to have (or have access to) a working computer in this class. **Assignments and tests are due by the due date, and personal computer technical difficulties will not be considered reason for the instructor to allow students extra time to submit assignments, tests, or discussion postings.** Computers are available on campus in various areas of the buildings as well as the Academic Success Center. **Your computer being down is not an excuse for missing a deadline!!** There are many places to access your class! Our online classes can be accessed from any computer in the world which is connected to the internet. Contact your instructor immediately upon having computer trouble. If you have technical difficulties in the course, there is also a student helpdesk available to you. The college cannot work directly on student computers due to both liability and resource limitations; however, they are able to help you get connected to our online services. For help, log into [D2L](#).

Desire-to-Learn (D2L)

Extensive use of the MSU D2L program is a part of this course. Each student is expected to be familiar with this program as it provides a primary source of communication regarding assignments, examination materials, and general course information. You can log into [D2L](#) through the MSU Homepage. If you experience difficulties, please contact the technicians listed for the program or contact your instructor.

- a. Brightspace (maker of D2L) has tutorials available on YouTube. Please go to [Brightspace YouTube](#) for additional help.

Informed Consent: This information is to inform the student of the limits of confidentiality while enrolled at MSU Texas or any other state school. Due to federal and state law, faculty and staff working for a university are required to report any information that falls under Title IX. Any student who indicates experiencing sexual

abuse/misconduct, physical/emotional abuse, domestic violence, stalking, suicidal/homicidal ideation, or related experiences will have an incident report sent to either the MSU Texas Title IX and/or the Dean of Student's office. Student disclosure may occur via a face-to-face meeting, in-class self-disclosure, email, statement made in a written assignment, etc. If a student asks a faculty or staff person not to share the information, please note that by law, we have to report and I will report. Please note that as students, you may be aware of classmates/dormmates struggling and can make an incident report at: [Student Referrals and Incident Reporting Forms](#)

Report forms are:

Bias Incident Reporting Form	General Student Complaint Form
Campus Incident Report Form	Sexual Misconduct Report Form
Concerning Student Behavior Form	Student Alert Form

College Policies and Procedures

Can be found at the bottom of the MSU home page or at [Human Resources Policy](#)

Academic Misconduct Policy & Procedures

Academic Dishonesty: Cheating, collusion, and plagiarism (the act of using source material of other persons, either published or unpublished, without following the accepted techniques of crediting, or the submission for credit of work not the individuals to whom credit is given). Additional guidelines on procedures in these matters may be found in the Office of Student Conduct. Any evidence of cheating will result in a grade of "F" and being reported to the [Dean of Students](#).

Wikipedia

At no time will a student be allowed to use Wikipedia as a source for any project or paper in this class. If it is determined that Wikipedia was used as a source for a project or paper, the student will be given a grade of zero automatically.

Artificial Intelligence (AI)

Written assignments will be run through a plagiarism and AI checker called Turn It In. If at any point Turn It In identifies that a student used AI to complete an assignment (such as ChatGPT), an automatic grade of zero will be given to the assignment.

College Policies

Campus Carry Rules/Policies

Refer to: [Campus Carry Rules and Policies](#)

Smoking/Tobacco Policy

College policy strictly prohibits the use of tobacco products in any building owned or operated by MSU TEXAS. Adult students may smoke only in the outside designated-smoking areas at each location.

Alcohol and Drug Policy

To comply with the Drug Free Schools and Communities Act of 1989 and subsequent amendments, students and employees of Midwestern State are informed that strictly enforced policies are in place which prohibits the unlawful possession, use or distribution of any illicit drugs, including alcohol, on university property or as part of any university-sponsored activity. Students and employees are also subject to all applicable legal sanctions under local, state and federal law for any offenses involving illicit drugs on University property or at University-sponsored activities.

Campus Carry

Effective August 1, 2016, the Campus Carry law (Senate Bill 11) allows those licensed individuals to carry a concealed handgun in buildings on public university campuses, except in locations the University establishes has prohibited. The Constitutional Carry law does not change this process. Concealed carry still requires a License to Carry permit, and openly carrying handguns is not allowed on college campuses. For more information, visit [Campus Carry](#).

Active Shooter

The safety and security of our campus is the responsibility of everyone in our community. Each of us has an obligation to be prepared to appropriately respond to threats to our campus, such as an active aggressor. Please review the information provided by MSU Police Department regarding the options and strategies we can all use to stay safe during difficult situations. For more information, visit [MSUREady – Active Shooter](#). Students are encouraged to watch the FBI video entitled “Run. Hide. Fight.” which may be electronically accessed via the University police department’s webpage: ["Run. Hide. Fight."](#)

Grade Appeal Process

Update as needed. Students who wish to appeal a grade should consult the Midwestern State University [MSU Catalog](#)

Student Code of Conduct

MWSU's official policy in the University's Code of Student Conduct on page 52, states:

Instructor Drop: An instructor may drop a student any time during the semester for excessive absences, for consistently failing to meet class assignments, for an indifferent attitude, or for disruptive conduct. The instructor must give the student a verbal or written warning prior to dropping the student from the class. An instructor's drop of a student takes precedence over the student-initiated course drop of a later date. The instructor will assign a grade of either WF or F through the first 9 weeks of a long semester, the first 6 weeks of a 10-week summer term, or the 12th class day of a 4- or 5-week summer term consisting of 20 days. After these periods, the grade will be an F. The date the instructor drop form is received in the Office of the Registrar as the official drop date. A student dropped from a class by a faculty member for disruptive behavior has the right of appeal to the Student Conduct Committee through the Student Conduct office.

Midwestern State University Student Honor Creed

"As an MSU Student, I pledge not to lie, cheat, steal, or help anyone else do so."
 As students at MSU, we recognize that any great society must be composed of empowered, responsible citizens. We also recognize universities play an important role in helping mold these responsible citizens. We believe students themselves play an important part in developing responsible citizenship by maintaining a community where integrity and honorable character are the norm, not the exception.
 Thus, We, the Students of Midwestern State University, resolve to uphold the honor of the University by affirming our commitment to complete academic honesty. We resolve not only to be honest but also to hold our peers accountable for complete honesty in all university matters.

We consider it dishonest to ask for, give, or receive help in examinations or quizzes, to use any unauthorized material in examinations, or to present, as one's own, work or ideas which are not entirely one's own. We recognize that any instructor has the right to expect that all student work is honest, original work. We accept and acknowledge that responsibility for lying, cheating, stealing, plagiarism, and other forms of academic dishonesty fundamentally rests within each individual student. We expect of ourselves academic integrity, personal professionalism, and ethical character. We appreciate steps taken by University officials to protect the honor of the University against any who would disgrace the MSU student body by violating the spirit of this creed.

Written and adopted by the 2002-2003 MSU Student Senate.

By enrolling in this course, the student expressly grants MSU a 'limited right' in all intellectual property created by the student for the purpose of this course. The 'limited right' shall include but shall not be limited to the right to reproduce the student's work product in order to verify originality and authenticity, and educational purposes.

Travel Plans: Please do not make travel plans that would hinder your access to a computer or the internet. You are responsible for maintaining electronic(s) equipment and internet access every day during this semester.

Tentative Reading and Exam Schedule

Notice: Changes in the course syllabus, procedure, assignments, and schedule may be made at the discretion of the instructor.

<u>Weeks</u>	<u>Reading Assignment</u>
1/20-1/29	Semester Overview/Course Requirements Rankin's Rules-lectures from Writing Across the Curriculum training by the Dept. of English, MSU Texas.

Lesson 1: Writing Clearly
 Lesson 2: Adding Emphasis

2/3 & 2/5

Topic: Library days to learn how to retrieve peer-reviewed articles and tour of the library-Meet at the Library

Tuesday 2/5

Due: Three-page APA paper with title page and sources

2/10-2/24

Lesson 3: Writing Concisely, With Some Spice
 Topic: Do's and Don'ts of writing-Lecture out of APA 7th edition manual
 Writing Lab

February 16th

Last day to file for May graduates to file

Thursday 2/12

Due: Interlibrary Loan Article, Internet retrieved Article, book chapter, reference source, & online non-peer review website.

Thursday 2/19

Due: Outline with headings APA style and reference list. Hand written code for sources.

Tuesday 3/19

Midterm: Editing a paper.

2/26-3/17

Lesson 4: The Art of Fine Paragraphs
 Lesson 5: Framing an Introduction
 Topics: Becoming an APA expert, making tables, appendixes
 Writing Lab

March 9-15th

Spring Break

2/24-3/31

Due: Editing a classmate's work in class; group editing

Friday 3/31

Due: First Final Paper

April 2-4th

Holiday Break-no classes

Tuesday 4/21

Due: Writing Notebook

April 29th

Last day for "W"

Friday 5/8

Second Final Paper due

May 9-14th

Finals Week