

PY490 Undergraduate Internship Handbook

**DEPARTMENT OF PSYCHOLOGY, ART
THERAPY, REHABILITATION, AND
MENTAL HEALTH COUNSELING**



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Course Syllabus

Internship Description

The Department of Psychology, Art Therapy, Rehabilitation, and Mental Health Counseling requires all Senior psychology majors to complete an internship. This capstone experience offers Seniors (i.e., students who have completed 90 credit hours) a selection of two types of internship: a field internship or a research internship. The internship will produce academic projects that will be the basis for the course grade. The faculty are creating this capstone experience to simulate the expectations of a job or graduate school once the student graduates. These expectations include rigorous evaluation of academic work, clear and concise writing, and strict adherence to due dates.

The field internship is a 90-hour applied learning experience at a work site ranging from mental health and correctional facilities to business and industry with supervision arranged through the organization. The field internship culminates with a review of the research literature called an integrative summary, the completion of a learning contract developed by the intern and the faculty member, and a self-assessment of changes to the intern. Internship opportunities are listed in the *Catalog of Internship Placements*.

The research internship requires completion of an original research project defined collaboratively by the intern and the intern's faculty mentor. The research project culminates with a research report written in APA format and including introduction, method, results, discussion, references, and appropriate appendices, tables, and/or figures. In addition, there is a self-assessment of changes to the intern.

Supervision of interns is divided in two categories: supervision onsite and supervision of the academic projects. The field interns are supervised onsite by an employee of the site. Supervision of the academic projects is done by a designated faculty member, who will also grade the projects. Research interns are supervised by a faculty member who has agreed to mentor their research.

Course Objectives

1. To apply psychological knowledge in a work or research setting.
2. To understand the roles of psychological knowledge and scientific thinking in a work or research setting.
3. To identify additional psychological knowledge needed in the work or research setting.
4. To detect personal changes in competence, knowledge, attitude, motivation, and other areas as a result of the internship.
5. To increase competitiveness for employment or graduate school.

Student Outcomes

1. The intern will identify a topic and write a review of the research literature.

2. The field intern will demonstrate how his/her psychological knowledge and thinking has been used in the internship setting by completing a learning contract containing one to three projects.

The research intern will submit an application to the Institutional Review Board, collect and analyze data, and write a complete research report using APA format.

3. All interns will prepare a written reflection based on a weekly log of reflections/intellectual appraisals of herself/himself and all aspects of the placement or research with special attention to changes in competence, knowledge, attitude, motivation, status of psychology, thoughts, opinions, ideas, likes/dislikes, interests, and other cognitive phenomena. The self-assessment is NOT a record of activities. Instead, it is the intern's evaluation of her/his cognitive changes across the span of the internship.

Internship Requirements

Field Internship

1. Write an integrative summary of theories and application, in APA format, in an area related to your placement and agreed upon by you and the faculty mentor.
2. Maintain a weekly log of your reflections/intellectual appraisals and all aspects of the placement with special attention to changes in competence, knowledge, attitude, status of psychology, motivation, thoughts, opinions, ideas, likes/dislikes, interests, and other cognitive phenomena. The self-assessment will be a five-page paper written in APA format and based on the weekly reflections
3. Complete a learning contract of one to three projects relevant to the internship
4. Maintain a weekly log of hours and duties.
5. Present integrative summary as poster session.

Research Internship

1. Write a research proposal in APA format in an area agreed upon by you and your faculty mentor.
2. Maintain a weekly log of your reflections/intellectual appraisals and all aspects of the research with special attention to changes in competence, knowledge, attitude, status of psychology, motivation, thoughts, opinions, ideas, likes/dislikes, interests, and other cognitive phenomena. The self-assessment will be a five-page paper written in APA format and based on the weekly reflections
3. Complete a research report written in APA format.
4. Maintain a weekly log of hours and duties.
5. Present research report as poster session.

Course Evaluation for PY490

For PY490A, the grade for the course is the same as the grade for PY490B and is based on:

1. Completion of PY490B

2. Completion of the pre-internship orientation
3. Completion of the three program assessments—content knowledge examination, self-assessment of changes to you as a major in the department, your assessment of the department’s effectiveness in your professional development

For PY490B, the grade for the course is based on:

1. 35% Integrative summary (field internship) or research proposal (research internship)
2. 35% Completed learning contract (field internship) or completed research report written in APA style (research internship)
3. 20% Self-assessment during the internship
4. 10% Poster presentation of the integrative summary
5. Two satisfactory appraisals from on-site supervisor (field internship) or faculty mentor (research internship)

Due Dates

For fall semester, the integrative summary, learning contract, and self-assessment are due in the office the third Monday of November by 5:00 pm. For the spring semester, the integrative summary, learning contract, and self-assessment are due in the office the third Monday of April by 5:00 pm. For the summer, the integrative summary, learning contract, and self-assessment are due in the office July 15 by 5:00. If July 15 is a Saturday or Sunday, then the due date is the next Monday.

No late papers are accepted because late work or unfinished projects are unacceptable on the job or in graduate school. Thus, the intern will receive an F in PY490B and will re-enroll in the course the next semester to complete the academic work; if the intern has two satisfactory evaluations from her/his supervisor, the intern will not have to do another 90 hour internship.

A grade of A means excellent, so work of A quality should be rated excellent as defined by the rubrics developed to grade the assignments.

A	=	92–100	C+	=	78–79
A–	=	90–91	C	=	70–77
B+	=	88–89	D	=	60–69
B	=	82–87	F	=	0–59
B–	=	80–81			

Interns receiving a grade of D can revise and resubmit written work to bring their grade up to a C. Revised work for the fall and spring semesters must be resubmitted to the Intern Advisor by 5:00 pm Friday of the undergraduate final examination week. For summer, the Intern Advisor will set the date.

Per department policy, only a grade of C or above will enable the course to fulfill graduate requirements.

Internship Course Structure

The four credit hour course is divided into a one-credit hour Internship Orientation and Program Assessment (PY490A) piece and the three credit internship (PY490B). The Internship Orientation piece is taken prior to becoming a Senior and involves a four hour session. The Program Assessment piece occurs in the last month of the last semester before the student graduates.

The following topics are covered for the PY490A one credit hour:

Part A Internship Preparation

1. Review the objectives, outcomes, and structure of the internship
2. Review the internship site catalog
3. Elaborate the department's writing standards, learning guide, and rubric
4. Review the grading of the course
5. The rhythm of the internship, fall/spring or summer: when you declare your internship, number of hours per week, deadline for assessments, poster presentation
6. Explain all academic assessments and rubrics: integrative summary (field internship), research report (research internship); learning contract (field internship); integrative summary poster presentation (field internship); research report poster presentation (research internship); self-assessment
7. Explain all program assessments: content knowledge exam, reflection on personal professional development as a major in the department, assessment of the department
8. Explain field assessment of intern
9. Deciding between a field and research internship: Post-baccalaureate goals; career goals
10. Interviewing and on the job etiquette: language, dress, cleanliness, professional appearance, professional demeanor, collegiality/friendliness, attentive to/respectful of the culture of the internship site, "do no harm," ask questions, be respectful and polite, do your best. Take advantage of career services. If in doubt, ask your onsite supervisor or faculty advisor. If in doubt, respond conservatively. If in doubt, do not assume. Your success on the internship paves the way for fellow interns coming after you by ensuring that the site is pleased with ESU Psychology majors. Put your best foot forward. You represent the department, the college, and the university. We are proud of you; we want the internship site to be proud of you.

11. The importance of doing well: recommendation letter, job offer, presentations/publications

12. Confidentiality, liability, FERPA, HIPAA

Part B Final Program Assessment involves the following three program assessments completed in the last month of the semester prior to graduating

1. Comprehensive examination over core courses (i.e., PY210, PY300, PY301, PY322, PY343, PY401, PY427, PY440) in the curriculum

2. Self-assessment of your professional development while in the program, including supportive evidence.

3. Assessment of the undergraduate psychology program's effectiveness in your professional development.

Academic Dishonesty Policy

At Emporia State University, academic dishonesty is a basis for disciplinary action. Academic dishonesty includes but is not limited to activities such as cheating and plagiarism (presenting as one's own the intellectual or creative accomplishments of another without giving credit to the source or sources).

The faculty member in whose course or under whose tutelage an act of academic dishonesty occurs has the option of failing the student for the academic hours in question and may refer the case to other academic personnel for further action. Emporia State University may impose penalties for academic dishonesty up to and including expulsion from the university.

ESU's Disability Accommodation Policy

Emporia State University will make reasonable accommodations for persons with documented disabilities. Students need to contact the Director of Disability Services and the professor as early in the semester as possible to ensure that classroom and academic accommodations are implemented in a timely fashion. All communication between students, the Office of Disability Services, and the professor will be strictly confidential.

Rubrics

Integrative Summary Format and Rubric

Task: Write an integrative summary of theories and application, in APA format, in an area related to your placement and agreed upon by you and your faculty mentor. This involves you describing a problem or issue as relevant to the setting, a description and discussion of relevant theorists and theory, a description and discussion of relevant studies, and application of those results to the presented problem or issue. You must use and cite at least 10 articles from research journals.

Components (use this structure for your written summary)

Introduction

- What are the most relevant characteristics of the setting in which you are placed?
 - Population served?
 - Age, gender and/or other key descriptors, presented when necessary as operational definitions?
 - Characteristics of the professionals/providers in the setting?
 - Licenses, credentials, training, and/or other key descriptors?
 - Goal/purpose of the setting?
 - Explicit purpose or mission statement, or implicit.
 - When stated, is this detailed enough to reference as a dependent variable, if relevant to the issue presented?
 - What are the means used by the setting to assess whether they are making progress toward this goal?
 - Are there any other elements needed to provide context to the situation or problem?
- What is the problem or issue as relates to the setting you just described?
 - Is it compelling, that is, does it pass the “so what?” test?
 - Is it a significant problem or issue?
 - Is the problem described in enough detail with regard to context, population and other variables involved to allow the most relevant practical or theoretical knowledge from the literature to be brought to bear?
- What important terminology specific to the field placement, problem or issue need to be defined?

Review/Synthesis of the Theoretical Literature

- What are at least two key theorists/theories that are relevant to the situation described in the introduction?
 - Are the most relevant aspects of these theories/theorists described in the detail needed (at least 750 words each) to give the reader enough background to understand their basic elements?
 - Are mostly primary sources used in describing these theories/theorists?
- Is there a connection established between this theoretical literature section and the preceding introduction section?
 - Does it review the problem or issue described in the field placement, and the important elements of the setting, in light of the theories/theorists?

- Does it answer the question of “since I know about these theories and theorists, how do I think about this problem or issue differently than somebody who does not?”
- Do you provide new information generated from your own insights, discussing the way in which this theoretical literature connects to the introduction?

Review/Synthesis of Applications

- What are some key empirical/experimental studies relevant to the content provided in the introduction section?
 - Does the literature cited consist mostly of primary sources?
- Were important details about context of the applications compared and contrasted in a manner which makes clear their relevance to the context of the field placement?
 - Do the details cited allow the reader to see a logical connection (generalizability) between these applications and the problem and/or setting described in the introduction?
 - Participants
 - Design
 - Tasks
 - Instrumentation
 - Procedures
- Do the details of these cited studies allow the reader to see potential application of the theory/theorists described in the review section?
 - Are the empirical/experimental studies cited connected to the theories/theorists in the preceding section?
 - Does it review the problem or issue described in the field placement, and the important elements of the setting, in light of the applications?
 - Does it answer the question of “since I know about these studies, how do I think about this problem or issue differently than somebody who does not?”
 - Do you generalize from this literature, offering one or more solutions which are relevant and applicable to the problem or situation described in your introduction?
 - Does you offer a summary of this literature in a way which offers new information generated from your insights?

Application/Synthesis of Outcomes

- Do you cite each of the key studies from the preceding review/synthesis of applications, and review the results?
 - When approaches or changes were implemented based upon certain theories, what happened?
 - What variables changed?
 - How was change measured?
 - What unanticipated outcomes existed, if any?
 - Do you compare and contrast the application outcomes from each study cited?
 - Were the studies consistent in outcome, or did results vary? Are inconsistencies explained?

- Does this comparison and contrast connect to the information presented in the introduction?
- Is it explained in a way which makes it pertain to the situation, issue, or problem cited in the introduction?
- Is it explained in a way which makes it pertain to the context of the introduction, including goals/mission, population, etc...?

Proposed Future Applications

- Do you propose new or different approach to handling problems/issues as presented in the introduction?
- Does this section anchor to all previous sections?
 - Does it articulate the relevant theories and theorists?
 - Does it articulate the variables relevant to the anticipated results?
 - Population?
 - Goals?
 - Resources?
 - Context?
 - Is connection between future applications and prior content logically made, articulating the theory or theories upon which they are based?

Writing

- Does the entire paper adheres to department's [writing standards](#) with no errors
 - Consistent use of active voice?
 - Citations usually end rather than begin sentences?
 - Sentence structure varies to sustain reader's interest?
 - Headings support reader's comprehension?
 - Topics are arranged to maximize flow within each section?
 - Writing is clear and concise with felicity of expression?

Grading

Scoring for the first five sections is worth 18 points maximum and the Writing section is worth 10 points for a total of 100 points:

- 18 = Clear and consistent evidence that section comprehensively addresses the questions
- 14 = Clear evidence that section answers questions; some inconsistencies or elements not entirely supported
- 10 = Some questions answered, but frequent inconsistencies or gaps in material presented; key theorists/theories/literature overlooked; connections not well made
- 6 = Most questions not answered; typically has inconsistencies or elements which are not cogent
- 0 = Inconsistent or absent evidence that section meets standards

Rubric for the Research Report

General Formatting

- _____ APA format
- _____ All 12 point Times New Roman font
- _____ All double spaced
- _____ All margins 1"
- _____ Appropriate page numbers in top right header
- _____ Sections begin at appropriate place throughout paper
- _____ Use of correct person and active voice throughout paper
- _____ Spelling, Grammar (including correct verb tense throughout the paper)

Title Page

- _____ Header exact 1st 2-3 words of title
- _____ Running head correct format (flush left, 1st line of text, not more than 50 characters, colon, spacing, and letters all appropriate case)
- _____ Running Head logical abbreviated form of title
- _____ Title clear (IV, DV, participants) & 10-12 words, all letters appropriate case, left-right centered
- _____ Author(s) name(s) in correct format (centered, full first name, middle initial, full last name, no titles)
- _____ Affiliation (centered, all letters appropriate case)

Abstract

- _____ On its own page
- _____ Abstract as level 1 heading
- _____ Text begins flush left
- _____ Not more than 120 words
- _____ 1st sentence tells in general what the study was about & grabs the reader's attention
- _____ 2nd sentence tells how many & who the participants were
- _____ 3rd sentence tells what you did (i.e., methods)
- _____ 4th sentence tells what you found
- _____ 5th sentence relates your study back to the population, or tells how this could be useful information
- _____ Overall quality of the abstract

Introduction

- _____ Header is the exact same title as on the title page
- _____ Minimum of 3 pages, and maximum of 10 pages.
- _____ All citations in references
- _____ All references cited
- _____ Correct APA format for citations
- _____ NOT more than 2 quotes and correct format for quotes
- _____ Research question in last paragraph (correct verb tense)
- _____ Section ends with your hypothesis (correct verb tense)
- _____ Overall quality of the introduction

Method

_____ Has included enough important detail so it can be replicated and evaluated

Participants

_____ Who the participants were, and how many participants there were

_____ Any special arrangements (e.g., might they be earning extra credit or receiving payment)

_____ How you got your participants (research bulletin board on 3rd floor Visser Hall)

Materials, Apparatus, or Testing Instruments

_____ Used a heading term that best describes what you used

_____ Described the Questionnaire and included (see Appendix A)

_____ Briefly described the equipment and its function

_____ If commercial, give name of manufacturer & model number

_____ If custom made, give a description & the dimensions in metric units

_____ If complex & unusual, include a diagram in the appendix

Design and Procedure

_____ Summarizes how you conducted the study

_____ Events in the order in which they happened

_____ The design of your experiment

_____ Included how you assigned participants to conditions (treatments, groups)

_____ Randomization, balancing, constancy, counterbalancing

_____ Indicates that you have ESU IRB/Animal Care and Use approval for this study (refers reader to Appendix)

_____ In the beginning "give and read informed consent" and at the end "give and read debriefing"

_____ Summarize instructions you used, however, if complex, included original instructions in appendix

_____ Overall quality of the method section

Results

_____ Tell what your IV and DV were

_____ Descriptive tests and results (M , SD , n are reported for each group)

_____ Refer reader to figure or table

_____ Inferential tests and results (all t , F , or X^2 along with correct p values are reported)

_____ Summarize your findings in words

_____ Overall quality of the results section

Discussion

_____ Reminds the reader what the present experiment was suppose to be about. For example, "I designed my experiment to assess the affects of XXXXXX on YYYYYYYY."

_____ What you found in non-statistical words

_____ Compare your findings with those of others (use at least 6 different citations)

_____ Describe why you think this was worthy (important) project

- _____ Explain what makes this research different from what has already been done (use citations)
- _____ Describe the population generalizations you hope to make, if any and/or explains what kind of restrictions you might have in terms of generalizations
- _____ Describe what sort of problems you ran into when you did the experiment and whether they are confounds
- _____ Describe how your findings add to the scientific body of knowledge, and/or what theories your results support (use citations)
- _____ Included what seems like the next logical steps in line with a programmatic approach to research
- _____ Overall quality of the discussion section

References

- _____ A minimum of 10 primary source research references
- _____ Correct APA format for all references

Appendixes

- _____ Each appendix item has its own Appendix page with appropriate headings in APA format
- _____ Each Appendix item is complete
- _____ Each Appendix item is referred to in the text in APA format
- _____ Copy of IRB approval letter in Appendix
- _____ Informed Consent
- _____ Debriefing Statement

Figure Captions' Page and Figure or Table

- _____ Heading in APA format
- _____ Figure caption page precedes all figures
- _____ Figure 1. Caption is 1-3 sentences that verbally describe the figure and what readers are looking at in the figure
- _____ Includes what information about error bars, and all ns
- _____ If there is a Figure 2....x, captions are on same page
- _____ Style of figure appropriately displays summarized data
- _____ DV on Y axis, IV on X axis
- _____ No Figure Title, and is printed correctly
- _____ Different patterns & different colors were used to differentiate the columns or lines & symbols (it will be printed in black and white)
- _____ Standard deviations are depicted as error bars if means are displayed (tell what the error bars mean in the figure caption)

PY490 Field Internship Learning Contract

Intern:
Internship field supervisor:

Internship site:
Phone number:

The purpose of the learning contract is to design/develop/implement one to three projects relevant to the internship site and psychological in nature.

Project 1

Grade weighting:

Grade:

Project 2

Grade weighting:

Grade:

Project 3

Grade weighting:

Grade:

Final Grade for the Learning Contract:

Intern Signature:

Date:

Faculty Advisor Signature:

Date:

Rubric for the Self-Assessment

1. The style of the self-assessment (30%). Excellent means that the self-assessment is based on your reflections of your work and appraisals of your cognitive phenomena rather than on particular events or people.

2. The breadth of the self-assessment (30%). Excellent means that the self-assessment elaborates five or more changes in your competence, knowledge, attitude, motivation, status of psychology, thoughts, opinions, ideas, likes/dislikes, interests, and other cognitive phenomena.

3. The depth of the self-assessment (30%). Excellent means that the intern has described clearly enough for the reader to understand how the internship has specifically changed the intern.

4. The writing (10%). Excellent means that the writing adheres to the department's writing standards with no errors.

Rubric for the Integrative Summary Poster Presentation

	very inadequate 1	2	acceptable 3	4	very well done 5	
						SCORE
Introduction ----->						_____
Introduction to general area Statement of purpose						
Review ----->						_____
Review of supporting literature Review of opposing literature						
Synthesis ----->						_____
Overall depth of summary Ability to tie literature to general premise						
Summary ----->						_____
Conclusion/relevance Ideas for future work						
Presentation ----->						_____
Artistic quality Ability to answer questions Professionalism Readability from 3 ft Information density						
Total ----->						_____

Rubric for the Research Report Poster Presentation

	very inadequate 1	2	acceptable 3	4	very well done 5	
						SCORE
Background ----->						_____
Literature review						
Research question/hypothesis						
Originality/significance						
Methodology ----->						_____
Fits hypothesis						
Overall design						
Subjects						
Materials/test items						
Procedures						
Results ----->						_____
Statistics						
Description of results						
Understandable						
Discussion ----->						_____
Relationship to hypothesis/question						
Ties to other literature/theory						
Relevance/implications						
Presentation ----->						_____
Artistic quality						
Ability to answer questions						
Professionalism						
Readability from 3 ft						
Information density						
Total ----->						_____

Scientific Writing Standards and Rubric
Department of Psychology, Art Therapy, Rehabilitation,
and Mental Health Counseling



The Standards

1. The student will write clearly.
2. The student will write concisely.
3. The student will write with felicity of expression.
4. The student will write primarily in active rather than passive voice.
5. The student will use the correct person.
6. The student will correctly match all pronouns with their antecedents.
7. The student will present parallel ideas in parallel form.
8. The student will correctly punctuate.
9. The student will correctly spell.
10. All writing will otherwise adhere to APA format.

Introduction

One of the most valuable skills psychology majors learn is to write well scientifically. Learning to write well improves the clarity of your thinking and, subsequently, the clear expression of that thinking, enabling you to communicate effectively so that readers understand your meaning. Writing is a mirror reflecting meaningfulness from the writer's mind to the reader's mind.

The faculty have placed such a high value on quality scientific writing that Standard 3 of the BS/BA Psychology curriculum is "Our majors will demonstrate the skills to be clear writers and articulate presenters." In support of this standard are a variety of short and long writing assignments in required and elective courses in the major, culminating in the literature review and research paper for the Senior-level Internship.

Note that the faculty differentiate in Standard 3 between writing and presenting. Writing is not talking with words. Although writing a paper and writing a presentation are similar, writing to be read requires different punctuation, different expressions, and different approaches than writing to be heard. The writing standards presented in this document apply to papers to be read.

To write well means correct punctuation, grammar, and syntax. It also means putting words together so that the reading flows smoothly and the meaning is easy to grasp. The writer is responsible for making the meaning readily accessible to the reader, and the goal of the department's writing standards is to support the student in meeting this responsibility. "Correct grammar and thoughtful construction of sentences ease the reader's task and facilitate unambiguous communication" (*Publication Manual*, p. 41).

Faculty are not editors of your writing but evaluators of your content and your thinking to sculpt the content into your paper. These writing standards are designed to guide students and faculty in the teaching and learning of quality writing. Assistance with your writing is also available in the Campus Writing Center located at 345 SE Morse (x5380), although staff do not know APA format. Also, proof your papers before you submitting them.

APA format. The American Psychological Association publishes the *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association* (5th edition). The department has two copies in the Davis Lab and one copy in the Conference Room of the department office for students to use. In addition, a variety of websites contain APA format tips and style pointers. As a complement to the *Publication Manual*, we recommend the APA Research Style Crib Sheet available at <http://www.docstyles.com/apacrib.htm> for its accuracy, brevity, readability, and accessibility.

ALL written assignments in your psychology courses will adhere to APA format. All writing will be double spaced, punctuation and capitalization will adhere to the rules of grammar, citations will be cited correctly in both the text and the reference section. Some of your written assignments (e.g., literature reviews, research papers) will use *full format*, that is, a title page, abstract, and references will be included with the body of the text. Other written assignments will require the *brief format*, which will include just the body of text and possibly the references. Professors will indicate for each writing assignment whether the full or brief format is to be used.

Grading. In grading written assignments, faculty often allocate 10% or more of a paper's final grade to the quality of the writing as defined by the adherence to these standards and APA format. The faculty expect all students to be good writers.

Standard 1 The student will write clearly (*Publication Manual*, pp. 36-40).

The goal of all good scientific writing is to communicate with clarity. Clarity means that the writing communicates exactly the meaningfulness that the writer intended. Thus, when you write the sentence:

I have always been interested in psychology.

you are saying that you have been interested in psychology since your first recollection of childhood. This is neither true nor accurate, and thus poor writing. A better sentence because of its clarity is:

My interest in psychology began with my high school psychology course.

Writers do not want their writing to be like a Rorschach inkblot, where different readers create different meanings from the same text. Clear writing is read literally, thus using words precisely is essential and using poetic expressions, rhyming, clichés, symbols, or figurative language like metaphors and similes are avoided (*Publication Manual*, p. 61). Does the following sentence:

I am ready to get back in the swing of things.

mean that the person is looking for a swing or wanting to swing. No. “Getting back in the swing of things” is a figurative expression. The sentence is unclear what the person is ready to do and assumes the reader is familiar with the expression.

A reciprocal relationship exists between writing and thinking. To write clearly requires clear thinking about the topic being written about, and the more clearly the writer understands the topic, the clearer will be the writing.

The antithesis of clear writing is ambiguity, which refers to the reader’s uncertainty about the meaning of the writer’s words. When you write:

I work many hours a week.

do you mean 15 hours or 60 hours and what is the nature of the work—is the work sedentary or physically demanding, boring or mentally demanding? You need to be specific in your writing. A clearer restating of this sentence is:

I work 20 hours a week teaching two sections of PY100 Introductory Psychology.

When you use “this,” “that,” “these,” or “those” as pronouns, what these terms refer to may be unclear to the reader and may require the reader to reread previous sentences to maintain the writing’s meaningfulness. Instead, use these terms as adjectives.

Verbs like change, affect, differ, and influence are not as specific and thus not as clear as verbs that specify direction like improve, increase, deteriorate, decrease. The sentence:

The treatment influenced the rats’ weights.

becomes more specific when restated:

The treatment increased the rats’ weights.

Standard 2 The student will write concisely (Publication Manual, pp. 34-35).

Conciseness means that the writer writes only what needs to be communicated, creating different combinations of words and then deciding on the one optimal combination that most clearly states meaningfulness with the fewest possible words. Wordiness produces embellishment and flowery writing, which are inappropriate in scientific style, reveal a person with limited skill using

language, and increase the reader's cognitive burden to understand the writing. Be frugal with words. Other than articles (a, an, the), do not repeat a word in the same sentence.

How can the following sentence be more concise:

I will be taking some courses over again to get a better grade.

“Repeat” means “taking over again.” Changing to active voice (see Standard 4) eliminates the word “be.” “To get a better grade” means improving. Thus, the more concise statement with 9 words instead of 13 words and written in active voice is:

I will repeat some courses to improve my grades.

Redundancy means saying the same thing twice. Do you see the redundancy in the following sentence:

Doing an internship is absolutely essential for getting into graduate school.

Embedded in the meaning of essential is the quality of absoluteness. Thus, absolutely essential means essential. The better sentence is:

Doing an internship is essential for getting into graduate school.

Other examples: write “small” instead of “small in size,” “68 participants” instead of “a total of 68 participants,” “four groups” instead of “four different groups,” a “summary” instead of a “brief summary”

Avoid using “there is,” “there are,” “there was,” “there were,” and “there will be.” Instead of writing:

There were several Psi Chi members who attended the APA convention.

write:

Several Psi Chi members attended the APA convention.

Avoid using all forms of “be able to.” Instead of writing:

The participants were able to type their responses into a computer.

write:

The participants typed their responses into a computer.

Avoid using “it has been suggested, noted, found, etc. that,” “it is possible that,” “it appears that,” and “it is important that” as these expressions are unnecessary. Consider the sentence:

It has been suggested that self-esteem changes in adolescence.

A better sentence is

Self-esteem may change in adolescence.

or

Leftwich (2005) proposed that self-esteem changes in adolescence.

Similarly, the expressions “previous research has found” or “a study by Holmes found” lack conciseness. The better expression of the sentence:

Previous research has found that classically conditioning fear is difficult in food-deprived rats.

is:

Classically conditioning fear is difficult in food-deprived rats.

The better expression of the sentence:

A study by Holmes found that GRE scores are not good predictors of doctoral completion rates.
is:

Holmes (1996) found that GRE scores are not good predictors of doctoral completion rates.

or even better for reading flow (see Standard 4):

GRE scores are not good predictors of doctoral completion rates (Holmes, 1996)

Standard 3 The student will write with felicity of expression (Publication Manual, pp. 32-34).

Felicity means an appropriate and pleasing manner or style (from dictionary.com). Good writing has a beauty of flow as the words are processed in the reader’s mind. The way words are arranged into sentences, sentences into paragraphs, and paragraphs into sections heighten the writing’s interest, making the reader more involved with the text and motivated to glean all of the meaningfulness of the text.

How will you as the writer choreograph the understanding of the content in the mind of your reader? The flow from idea to idea, sentence to sentence, and paragraph to paragraph increases readers’ understanding and their likelihood of staying connected with the meaning conveyed by the writing.

Imagine the reading analogy of listening to a monotone speaker or driving through a barren landscape. How can you improve the “topography” of your writing to sustain the reader’s

interest? Mixing the complexity of your sentences and putting reference citations at the end of sentences contribute to keeping the reading interesting.

Standard 4 The student will write primarily in active rather than passive voice (Publication Manual, pp. 41-42).

Writing in active voice makes the sentences more interesting, less wordy, more focused, clearer, and less ambiguous about the meaning. In the sentence,

The survey was conducted in a controlled setting.

it is ambiguous who conducted the survey. A better sentence is:

We conducted the survey in a controlled setting.

How could you better write the following sentence to reduce the number of words:

The experiment was designed by Grover (2005).

The answer is convert to active voice:

Grover (2005) designed the experiment.

Standard 5 The student will use the correct person (Publication Manual, p. 39).

When you write about theories, results, methods, ideas, you are writing in the third person. When you switch to second person, you have included “you” in your sentence, which is not permitted. You can write in first person (I or we) in only one situation—when you are referring to yourself or your lab group in the procedure:

I administered the survey to the participants.

or

We changed the protocol after every trial.

Watch out for anthropomorphism (Publication Manual, p. 38). Anthropomorphism means attribution of human motivation, characteristics, or behavior to inanimate objects, animals, or natural phenomena. Thus, an experiment cannot attempt to demonstrate or a method cannot control unwarranted variables. Instead, use “I” or “we.” Thus, the following sentence:

The experiment collected data from participants at both sites.

should be rewritten to read:

I collected data from participants at both sites.

Standard 6 The student will correctly match all pronouns with their antecedents (Publication Manual, pp. 47-48).

Each pronoun must refer clearly to its antecedent and agree with the antecedent in number and gender. What is incorrect about the following sentence:

Interviewing the participant means that they answer 10 questions.

The pronoun “they” is plural but refers to “participant” which is singular. Correcting this error means making participant plural:

Interviewing the participants means that they answer 10 questions.

Do not use the pronoun combinations of he/she, (s)he, he or she, him or her in your writing. Change the antecedent to plural and then use “they” as the pronoun. Instead of writing:

The participant moved to the second testing room when he/she heard the tone.

write:

The participants moved to the second testing room when they heard the tone.

Standard 7 The student will present parallel ideas in parallel form (Publication Manual, pp. 57-60).

Using between/and, both/and, neither/nor, either/or, and not only/but also is rarely necessary as the sentence can be made more concise without these conjunctions. If you do use these terms, make certain that all elements of the parallelism are present before and after the coordinating conjunction. For example, the sentence:

The rats were both difficult to feed and weigh.

needs to change to read:

The rats were difficult both to feed and to weigh.

but the best (i.e., most concise) version is:

The rats were difficult to feed and weigh.

Here is another example:

The participants signed not only the consent form but they also requested a debriefing session.

needs to change to read:

The participants not only signed the consent form but also requested a debriefing session.

but the best (i.e., most concise) version is:

The participants signed the consent form and requested a debriefing session.

Elements in a series (Publication Manual, pp. 115-117). Elements in a series must be parallel in structure. The sentence:

The participants were told to be comfortable, read the instructions, and that they should ask about anything they did not understand.

presents a series of three elements where two elements are infinitives (to make themselves comfortable and to read the instructions) and the third element is a dependent clause. All three elements need to have the same structure, thus:

The participants were told to be comfortable, read the instructions, and ask about anything they did not understand.

Also, elements in a series are identified with lowercase letters in parentheses to prevent misreading or to clarify the sequence or relationship between elements. For example,

The course's three requirements are (a) writing and presenting article summaries, (b) participating in class discussions, and (c) working on a group project.

Using numbers to identify elements in a series is used only for separate paragraphs in a series, such as itemized conclusions or steps in a procedure. The number is followed by a period but not enclosed in or followed by parentheses.

Standard 8 The student will correctly punctuate (Publication Manual, pp. 78-88) and capitalize (pp. 94-100).

APA format requires correct punctuation and capitalization. Most punctuation errors involve overusing the comma, usually when it is placed where the speaker would be pausing in orally presenting the text. The rules that govern the use of punctuation are based on grammar, not on how the text sounds as one is speaking it. The comma in the following sentence:

The rats buried the device making the noise, and then ran to the opposite side of the cage.

should be deleted so the sentence reads:

The rats buried the device making the noise and then ran to the opposite side of the cage.

and more concisely read:

The rats buried the noise-making device and then ran to the opposite side of the cage.

Standard 9 The student will correctly spell (Publication Manual, pp. 89-94).

Correct spelling is essential for quality writing. Incorrect spelling detracts the reader from the text's meaningfulness, slows reading rate, disrupts the reader's continuity or flow, raises doubts about the writer's intellectual ability, and mars reading enjoyment. Most word processing programs have built-in spell checkers as part of their word-processing software (e.g., Microsoft Word, WordPerfect, etc.); however, this check will not catch situations where an incorrect word but correctly spelled is used—plane instead of plain. Also, contractions (e.g., don't, can't, won't, didn't, etc.) are not used in scientific writing.

Hyphenated words. APA has a set of five principles governing the use of hyphens:

1. Do not use a hyphen unless it serves a purpose, as delineated in the following principles.
2. Use a hyphen for a temporary compound used as an adjective if the term can be misread or if the term expresses a single thought. For example:

The adolescents resided in two parent homes.

is not the same sentence as:

The adolescents resided in two-parent homes

3. Hyphenating most compound adjectives occurs when the compound adjective precedes the term it modifies. Contrast:

She is forward thinking.

with

The forward-thinking woman anticipated the event.

4. Most words formed with prefixes (e.g., aftereffect, posttest, minisession, counterbalance, extracurricular) are not hyphenated (exceptions: words with self, words that could be misunderstood such as repair and re-pair, and words in which the prefix ends and the base word begins with the same vowel such as meta-analysis and co-occur).

5. When two or more compound adjectives have the same base, the base is used only with the last modifier, such as long- and short-term memory, or 2-, 3-, and 10-min trials, pre- and posttest.

Acronyms and abbreviations (Publication Manual, pp. 103-111). A term the writer plans to abbreviate must first appear written out completely, followed immediately by its abbreviation in parentheses. Thereafter, the abbreviation is used instead of the term. Thus,

The American Psychological Association (APA) developed ethical guidelines to inform clinical practice.

The next time in the paper the writer used American Psychological Association in a sentence:

APA's ethical guidelines are reviewed and revised periodically to reflect current standards of conduct.

Numbers and percentages (Publication Manual, pp. 122-130). Words express numbers up to nine, and figures usually express numbers 10 and above. Thus,

The experimenter tested 14 participants each day.

When presenting percents, the number is given with the % sign. Thus,

In open field studies, 30% of the test animals stay within 10 feet of the water.

Standard 10 All writing will otherwise adhere to APA format.

Is the page header correct? Does the Running head appear all in caps? Is the title page numbered page 1? Is the first line of the Abstract not indented? Are the proper levels of heading used properly? Do reference citations appear correctly in text? Does the order of citations in parentheses parallel the order of references in the reference list? Are direct quotes cited correctly? Are statistical symbols properly italicized? Is "et al." used correctly? Do tables and figures adhere exactly to APA format? Do the references appear in appropriate alphabetical and chronological order? Are the references formatted correctly?

The Rubric

The rubric is the basis for the faculty to evaluate student writing and for students to know before they write the criteria on which they will be assessed. The rubric covers all 10 standards. Each standard can be awarded up to 10 points for a total perfect score of 100 if all standards are met with an excellent evaluation on each.

1. The student will write clearly. Excellent means that the meaningfulness of the text is consistently apparent to the reader. Unacceptable means that the reader is not sure of the text's meaning or that the text's meaning is ambiguous, that is, the text has more than one meaning and reader is uncertain which meaning applies.
2. The student will write concisely. Excellent means that the writer is expressing ideas using the appropriate words without being wordy. Unacceptable means that the writing "rambles," that the writer is not making points directly and using unnecessary words or too many words to convey meaning.
3. The student will write with felicity of expression. Excellent means that the writing flows from topic to topic, that sentence structure is varied, and that vocabulary is used properly.

Unacceptable means that the flow of reading lacks coherence, sentences tend to have the same structure, and word use is restricted to simple words.

4. The student will write primarily in active rather than passive voice. Excellent means that the writer primarily uses active voice. Unacceptable means that the writer primarily uses passive voice.

5. The student will use the correct person. Excellent means that the writer primarily writes in third person and knows the few instances where first person is acceptable. Unacceptable means that the writer uses mostly first or second person, except when referring to himself/herself in the Methods section of a report.

6. The student will correctly match all pronouns with their antecedents. Excellent means that all pronouns correctly match their antecedents. Poor means that pronouns consistently do not match their antecedents.

7. The student will present in a series parallel ideas in parallel form. Excellent means that items in a series will be syntactically similar. Poor means that items in a series are syntactically different.

8. The student will correctly punctuate. Excellent means that the writer makes no errors in punctuation. Poor means consistent errors in punctuation.

9. The student will correctly spell. Excellent means that the writer spells all words correctly. Poor means pervasive spelling errors.

10. All writing will otherwise adhere to APA format. Excellent means that APA format is adhered to perfectly without errors. Poor means pervasive APA formatting errors.