

**Psychology 392: Junior Writing**  
Section 3: Topics in Cognitive Psychology  
Tuesday & Thursday: 9:30 – 10:45am – Machmer W-25

**Course instructor**

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Office hours: Tuesday and Thursday  
11:00 – Noon

**Course structure**

Most of your contact will be with your Section Instructor. However, Dr. Jakob supervises all sections of this course, will visit your section, and is happy to meet with you. Dr. Jakob also manages the web sites. Her office is in Middlesex House, one of the small dorm-like buildings between Tobin and Southwest, closest to the lacrosse field and to the Whitmore parking lot. The door to the first floor hallway is kept locked, so it is best that she knows that you are coming. Please use the north door (closest to Tobin) so as not to disturb her neighbors—she can't hear you if you knock at the south door.

**WEB SITES:** I will be periodically updating the course web site with announcements, the syllabus, writing assignments, and other supporting materials. Documents can be downloaded as a PDF or MS Word (which retains formatting) or will open as a web page (which can have disrupted formatting).

Go to the following entry page.

[People.umass.edu/mjstroud](http://People.umass.edu/mjstroud)

**DUCK QUIZZES:** As explained below, you are also responsible for on-line quizzes on the mechanics of writing. We use a program called Duck. Instructions for accessing the quizzes are on the course website.

**Goals of the course**

Junior writing courses are offered within the major so that you can expand your writing skills in an appropriate context. Thus, each section of the course has two main goals:

1. **WRITING GOALS:**
  - To learn how to provide effective peer critiques.
  - To learn how to edit your own work.
  - To improve your writing via plenty of practice.
2. **CONTENT GOALS:** To understand and apply some of the ideas surrounding topics in cognitive psychology.

## Reading

There will be reading assignments from several sources:

### Required:

- Strunk and White, *The Elements of Style*. This is available at the Textbook Annex. It will be on reserve at the Du Bois Library. The full text is also available on line at

<http://www.bartleby.com/141/>

Be aware, however, that page numbers of the on-line edition do not match up to the assignments.

- Hacker, *A Writer's Reference*, also available at the Textbook Annex. It will be on reserve at the Du Bois Library (under the course number and the name of the coordinator, E. Jakob).
- Readings available on from the course website

### Recommended:

- Truss, Lynne, *Eats, Shoots and Leaves*. Available at any bookstore (Barnes and Noble, Amazon.com).
- *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association, Fifth Edition*. (Important if you are interested in graduate work in psychology).

## What will you do in class?

The class periods will vary in structure. They will include lecture and discussion revolving around the section topic, in-class writing (both alone and in groups, graded and ungraded), peer review of assignments, and discussions of grammar, word usage, and tone.

## What are Duck quizzes?

Duck is a program written by Steve Brewer of the UMass Biology Computing Resource Center. For every assignment, a series of on-line quizzes will be required. The quizzes will cover a writing issue of the week. The idea behind the quizzes is to give you a chance to test your own knowledge of a particular area *before* you begin writing. By doing these quizzes before class, you'll have a chance to discuss any problems with your instructors. Many of these quiz questions are straight from the Hacker CD included with your style manual, but others are designed especially for the course.

You must register on the Duck website in order to get credit for quizzes. Follow the links from the course site to register. You will get credit for completing a quiz, but not a grade. There are four sets of Duck quizzes to coincide with the due dates of the four major writing assignments. Quizzes will only be available during the week they are due, and will then disappear forever, so don't forget them.

## At-home writing assignments

You will write four papers, varying in length from 1-5 pages long. You will never have more than one assignment due in a week. This will allow you to invest plenty of time in each assignment. You will work on one assignment until it is finished.

This is not a scientific writing course, so we will *not* cover topics such as the structure of a scientific paper. Assignments will focus on using powerful words in descriptive writing, writing for a particular audience, and argument. All assignments save the last will focus on some aspect of the topic at hand. The last assignment will focus on job or graduate school applications.

In each assignment, you also will be asked to focus on a particular technical aspect of writing. For example, we may ask you to use a colon in several different contexts, as described in your texts. The purpose of these admittedly artificial aspects of the assignments is to uncover problems or confusion that you may not know you have, and to give you practice using grammatical constructions that you may not normally select.

*What you need to bring for each assignment:*

You will do peer review of all assignments (for one draft of assignments 1, 2 and 4, and two drafts of assignment 3). On peer review days, you must bring 5 copies of the paper to hand out. If you do not bring 5 copies to class, you will be given a late penalty of 3 points per day.

You will then revise the paper based on your peer review. The final draft requires additional material. With your final revision, please (1) include a summary of the corrections and suggestions made by your peers (2) make at least two **additional substantive improvements** to the paper above and beyond what your peers suggested, and (3) provide a **cover letter** to include with your paper that explains which changes you have made in response to your peers' comments. All these components must be included with your paper. Late final drafts receive a penalty of 3 points per day.

You will be evaluated on your participation in peer review. If you do not attend peer review, you cannot make up the points, so please plan accordingly.

### **Additional expectations**

- **Internet access and an email account are required.** We will communicate with you via email, and we expect that you will check it routinely, at least every day or two. To save resources, course assignments and other material will be posted on the Internet rather than distributed in class. There are public computer terminals available in the libraries.
- **Attendance is required.** There will be in-class assignments, unannounced, that cannot be made up. There will also be a daily sign-up sheet and if you have a borderline grade, poor attendance will bring you down.
- **You must bring your style manual and Strunk and White to peer review sessions.** You will need these to edit each other's papers, as well as your own.
- **We do NOT expect you to have any *a priori* knowledge of the subject material.** We expect that we'll be covering new ground for most of you. Don't understand something? Ask! Our job is to clarify the material.
- **We will NOT give exams on the subject material.** We'll be able to tell from your writing if you understand it. Seek clarification of the subject material, if necessary, before you hand in your written work; don't wait until the night before the paper is due to come to the realization that you are at sea.

- **The first draft of your paper that you hand in is not the first draft that you write.** It should be something to which you have given real effort. You will not get credit for incomplete drafts or drafts that were obviously lacking in effort.
- **Do not be unduly troubled by many comments on your work.** We work from the philosophy that virtually all writing can be improved. Critique and rewriting is a part of every writing task, whether in school, the business world, or other settings. Remember that you are not your writing!
- **Peer review is important.** The success of this course rests in large part on your attention to peer review. This is an incredibly valuable skill to learn, as most contexts in which you will write after you finish your degree incorporate peer review at some level.
- **Class participation is expected.** We strive for an informal, interactive class environment in which questions and discussion are routine, and hope to have enjoyable and provocative discussions. The flip side of this is that you need to take responsibility for participation. We expect you to be ready to discuss, ask questions, and to look alert (bring caffeine if necessary!) If you persist in reading newspapers or otherwise fail to be more than physically present, we reserve the right to ask you to leave. We understand that speaking up in class is more difficult for some people than others, so we'll make sure to have a variety of discussion formats ranging from the whole group to very small groups.
- **Discussion Responses.** Compose 3 questions or comments that pertain to the reading for the specified day. The discussion responses must be submitted to me via email by 6pm on the date listed. These responses should be in paragraph form with complete sentences responding to what you thought was interesting about the reading or something that wasn't so clear. Responses should be about a page in length double spaced. It is fine to simply write your responses in the body of the email.
- **Please bring extra paper** to each class for in-class assignments.

<b>The bottom line</b>	
Assignment 1	25
Assignment 2	35
Assignment 3	50
Assignment 4	35
Peer review: 10 pts for assignments 1, 2 and 4; 20 for assignment 3	50
In-class assignments and attendance	45
Discussion Responses 5 points each x 8	40
Duck quizzes	<u>20</u>
<b>Total</b>	<b>300</b>

282-300	A
270-281	A-
261-269	B+
249-260	B
240-248	B-
231-239	C+
219-230	C
210-218	C-
201-209	D+
180-200	D
179 and below	F

### **Plagiarism**

Plagiarism is representing someone else's work as your own. This includes copying someone else's paper, buying a paper, or letting someone copy your work. In this course, there will be no opportunities for collaboration on written assignments. You are expected to talk to your classmates about the course material but NEVER to share in the writing of papers, nor are you to use papers written by previous students in this course. Plagiarism will result in a grade of F and a report will be filed with the Academic Honesty Board. This penalty will be enacted both for the person who copies and anyone who allows copying to occur.

The Department policy states all students are expected to adhere scrupulously to the University policy concerning academic honesty, which is found in "Undergraduate Rights and Responsibilities" at the following web site:

[http://www.umass.edu/dean\\_students/rights/acad\\_honest.htm](http://www.umass.edu/dean_students/rights/acad_honest.htm)

### **Extra credit**

No extra credit is available in this course, including participation in Human Subjects studies. Attendance and turning assignments in on time is thus particularly important. It is imperative that if you have a long illness or another problem you contact your section instructor as soon as possible; please do not wait until the end of the semester, as many options are then closed. Communication is key!

## Course Calendar

Week	Tuesday	Thursday	Discussion Response
1	Jan. 31	Feb. 2	
2	Feb. 7 <i>Due:</i> Duck quizzes, Set 1 In Strunk & White, read Introduction and Chapters I, 11 and IV In Hacker, read pp. 139-160	Feb. 9 <i>Due:</i> 5 copies of Paper 1 for peer review Bring Hacker and Strunk and White	DR #1 Due by Friday @ 5 pm
3	Feb. 14	Feb. 16	
4	Feb. 21: No class, "UMass Monday"	Feb. 23 <i>Due:</i> Final Paper 1	DR #2 Due by Friday @ 5pm
5	Feb. 28 <i>Due:</i> Duck quizzes, Set 2 Sections III and IV in Strunk and White (this should mean you've completed the book), and Section S in Hacker	Mar. 2 <i>Due:</i> Bring in article chosen for Paper 2	
6	Mar. 7	Mar. 9 <i>Due:</i> 5 copies of Paper 2 for peer review Bring Hacker and Strunk and White	DR #3 Due by Friday @ 5pm
7	Mar. 14	Mar. 16	DR #4 Due by Friday @ 5pm
Mar. 21 and Mar. 23: SPRING BREAK			
8	Mar. 28 <i>Due:</i> Final paper 2	Mar. 30 <i>Due:</i> Duck quizzes, Set 3 Read Hacker, Section C5, for advice in constructing an argument	DR # 5 Due by Friday @ 5 pm
9	Apr. 4	Apr. 6 <i>Due:</i> 5 copies of Paper 3 for 1st peer review Bring Hacker and Strunk and White	
10	Apr. 11	Apr. 13 <i>Due:</i> 5 copies of Paper 3 for 2nd peer review Bring Hacker and Strunk and White	DR # 6 Due by Friday @ 5 pm
11	Apr. 18	Apr. 20	
12	Apr. 25 <i>Due:</i> Final paper 3	Apr. 27	DR # 7 Due by Friday @ 5 pm
13	May 2 <i>Due:</i> Duck quizzes, Set 4	May 4 <i>Due:</i> 5 copies of Paper 4 for peer review Bring Hacker and Strunk and White	
14	May 9	May 11	DR # 8 Due by Wednesday @ 5 pm
15	May 16 <i>Due:</i> Final Paper 4		

## Assignments

	<b>Description</b>
<p><i>Assignment 1: Getting Started.</i>  <b>THE WEB VS. THE BOOKS</b>            Length: 2 pages            Writing goals: Focus on accurate word choice, minimizing wordiness, correct grammar, and effective sentence structure.</p>	<p>Go to a search engine (e.g., Yahoo, Google) and type in “cognition” or “cognitive psychology” Describe three of the sites in detail and compare the definitions with those found in psychology books.</p>
<p><i>Assignment 2: Writing to teach.</i>  <b>WHAT HAPPENED?</b>            Length: 4 pages            Writing goals: Focus on understanding how your audience affects your writing style.</p>	<p>Prepare a demonstration of a phenomenon (optical illusion, digit span memory, stroop effect) and write a detailed explanation of the effect to be presented to a small group.</p>
<p><i>Assignment 3: Research Proposal</i>  <b>GETTING FUNDED</b>            Length: 5 pages            Writing goals: The focus here is on larger-scale organization: how should you construct an argument?</p>	<p>Select one of the topics discussed in class (e.g., memory, language, thinking) and design a study that will answer a question you have about this topic. Write a research proposal using the guidelines provided.</p>
<p><i>Assignment 4: Application essays/cover letters/résumés</i>  <b>TAKING THE NEXT STEP</b>            Length: 2-3 pages            Writing goals: Learning to effectively present yourself to admissions committees and potential employers.</p>	<p>Write and get feedback on your application essay/cover letter/résumé for the next step in your career.</p>

## Reading Assignments

### At the Textbook Annex at UMass:

Strunk and White, *The Elements of Style: 4<sup>th</sup> Edition*. Boston: Longman, 2000.

### Available for Download on the Course Website

- Neisser, U. (1982) Memory: What are the Important Questions? *In: Neisser, U. Memory Observed: Remembering in Natural Contexts*: San Francisco: W.H. Freeman & CO. 3 – 19.
- Pinker, S. (2000). Chatterboxes. *In: The Language Instinct: How the Mind Creates Language*. New York: Harper Collins. 12 – 43.
- Holland, R. W., Hendriks, M., Aarts, H. (2005). Smells Like Clean Spirit: Nonconscious Effects of Scent on Cognition and Behavior. *Psychological Science*, 16(9), 689-693.
- Gasper, K. and Clore, G. L. (2002). Attending to the big picture: Mood and global versus local processing of visual information. *Psychological Science*, 13(1), 34-40.
- Clancy, S. A., McNally, R. J., Schacter, D. L. and Lenzenweger, M. F. (2002). Memory distortion in people reporting abduction by aliens. *Journal of Abnormal Psychology*, 111(3), 455 – 461.
- Nickerson, R. S. and Adams, M. J. (1982). Long-Term memory for a common object. *In: Neisser, U. Memory Observed: Remembering in Natural Contexts*. San Francisco: W. H. Freeman & CO, 163-175.
- Loftus, E. (1997). Memory for a past that never was. *Current Directions in Psychological Science*, 6(3), 60 – 65.
- Truss, L. (2003). The Seventh Sense. *In: Eats, Shoots and Leaves: The Zero Tolerance Approach to Punctuation*. New York: Gotham Books, 2003, 1 – 34.