

San José State University

College of Social Sciences · Department of Psychology

PSYC 100W — Writing Workshop

Section 11 · Fall 2026 · 3 Units · In Person · 20 August to 8 December 2026

Writing in the Disciplines (GE Area Z)

1. Course and Contact Information

Item	Detail
Instructor	Dr. Eva Feredoes
Email	eva.feredoes@sjsu.edu
Office	DMH 232
Student advising hours	Wednesdays 9:15 – 10:15 in person and by appointment (Zoom or in person)
Class days and time	Tuesday and Thursday, 9 to 10:15
Classroom	DMH 208
Final exam slot	TBC
GE category	Area Z, Writing in the Disciplines
Library liaison	Christa Bailey, christa.bailey@sjsu.edu

Prerequisites

- PSYC 1 and STAT 95, or senior standing.
- A3 or an equivalent second-semester composition course, with a grade of C– or better.
- Completion of core GE and upper-division standing (60 units).
- Psychology majors, psychology minors, and behavioral science majors only.

Important note about the course grade. You must pass this course with a C or better. This is a CSU graduation requirement, and it satisfies the Graduation Writing Assessment Requirement.

2. Course Description

In this course you practice and improve the writing skills that the field of psychology needs. These skills cover essays, reports, and scholarly communication.

The goal of PSYC 100W is advanced proficiency in college-level writing. You also learn contemporary research strategies, and you write for both specialist and general audiences. This course builds on Written Communication IA and IB. It then deepens those skills to include the forms of discourse that psychology uses.

The course has one major paper: an APA-style literature review on a psychology topic of your choice. You build this paper across the semester in small steps. Each step gets feedback before the next step starts.

A note on topic choice. You can write about any area of psychology. My own research is in cognition and cognitive neuroscience, so I can give you the most detailed feedback in those areas. This is a suggestion and not a restriction.

3. Course Format and Canvas

This course meets in person twice each week for 75 minutes. Each meeting mixes short instruction, writing practice, and workshop time. You write in almost every class.

You submit all assignments through Canvas. You need regular access to a computer and to the internet. If you need a laptop, read the student technology resources in Section 11.

4. Learning Outcomes

Writing in the Disciplines Learning Outcomes (mandated by General Education)

Upon successful completion of a Writing in the Disciplines course, students should be able to:

- LO 1. explain, analyze, develop, and critique ideas effectively, including ideas encountered in multiple readings and expressed in different forms of discourse;
- LO 2. organize and develop complete discipline-specific texts and other documents for both professional and general audiences, using appropriate editorial and citation standards;
- LO 3. locate, organize, and synthesize information effectively to accomplish a specific purpose, and to communicate that purpose in writing; and
- LO 4. produce discipline-specific written work that demonstrates upper-division proficiency in language use, grammar, and clarity of expression.

This wording comes from the Fall 2022 GE Guidelines and appears unchanged.

Course Learning Outcomes (CLOs)

After you complete this course, you can:

CLO	Outcome	Maps to
CLO 1	Use psychology databases such as PsycINFO to find empirical articles and review articles.	LO 3
CLO 2	Apply APA 7th edition style to citations, references, format, grammar, and syntax.	LO 2, LO 4
CLO 3	Summarize and evaluate empirical research articles in psychology.	LO 1, LO 3
CLO 4	Distinguish the conventions of different genres of academic writing, and identify strong and weak practice in published work.	LO 1, LO 2
CLO 5	Write about psychological research for a general audience.	LO 1, LO 2
CLO 6	Organize, develop, and revise a literature review in an area of psychology.	LO 1, LO 2, LO 3, LO 4
CLO 7	Synthesize different research findings into one framework, and compare competing theories.	LO 1, LO 3

CLO	Outcome	Maps to
CLO 8	Present your work orally to an audience of peers.	LO 1, LO 2

Program Learning Outcomes (PLOs)

After you complete the SJSU Psychology major, you can:

- PLO 1. Knowledge base. Identify, describe, and communicate the major concepts, theories, findings, and historical trends in psychology.
- PLO 2. Research methods. Design, do, and communicate basic research methods, which include research design, data analysis, and interpretation.
- PLO 3. Critical thinking. Use critical and creative thinking, skeptical inquiry, and a scientific approach.
- PLO 4. Application. Apply psychological principles to individual, interpersonal, group, and societal issues.
- PLO 5. Values. Value empirical evidence, tolerate ambiguity, act ethically, and recognize your role as a member of society.

This course contributes most to PLO 2, PLO 3, and PLO 5.

5. Readings and Resources

Required (for reference, not for purchase)

- American Psychological Association. (2019). Publication manual of the American Psychological Association (7th ed.). ISBN 978-1-4338-3217-8.

The library keeps a copy of the APA manual on reserve.

Recommended

- APA Style Tutorial: <https://extras.apa.org/apastyle/basics-7e/>
- Purdue OWL APA guide: <https://owl.purdue.edu/>
- SJSU Library psychology guide: <https://libguides.sjsu.edu/psychology>

6. Course Requirements and Assignments

The assignments build the writing and research skills that scholarly psychology papers need. Each assignment feeds the next one. Canvas holds detailed instructions and a rubric for every item.

6.1 Participation and in-class writing (10%)

Most class meetings include a short writing task or a discussion task. These tasks are low-stakes, and I grade them on effort and completion.

- About 15 tasks across the semester, each 150 to 250 words.
- You submit each task in class or on Canvas by the Friday of the same week.
- I drop your two lowest scores.
- You must attend class to get credit, because these tasks use the class discussion.

The participation grade also includes the Week 6 portfolio check-in. See Section 6.2. I grade the check-in as credit or no credit.

6.2 Writing portfolio and reflection essay (10%)

You build a portfolio of published academic writing across the semester. You do not write these pieces. You collect them, and you study them as a writer studies a model.

The purpose is genre knowledge. Psychology uses several forms of writing, and each form has its own structure, its own use of evidence, and its own voice. It will also help you to identify good writing practice from that which is less good.

The portfolio itself

The portfolio is yours. I do not grade it, and I do not collect it. Keep it in whatever form suits you: a folder of PDFs, a reference manager, or a notebook.

By the end of the semester your portfolio must hold at least six pieces. The set must include:

- at least one empirical report;
- at least one review article;
- at least one book chapter or one general-audience piece; and
- at least one weak example, which shows practice that fails.

I supply candidate sources for the weak example. Use one of those, or find your own.

Make a short note on each piece as you collect it. You need those notes for the reflection essay, and the notes take a few minutes each. Students who leave the portfolio until November write a weak essay.

Portfolio check-in

In Week 6 you submit a list of the pieces that you hold so far, with one line on each. This check-in counts toward the participation grade in Section 6.1. I grade it as credit or no credit. The purpose is to keep the portfolio moving.

Reflection essay (10%)

You write 800 words at the end of the semester. The essay does two things.

- It compares two pieces from your portfolio. Show how their structure and their purpose differ.
- It explains what the portfolio changed in your own writing. Use specific examples from your own drafts.

A general statement of growth gets a low score. Due in Week 14, after you submit Draft 2.

6.3 Skill assignments (15%)

These short assignments each practice one skill.

Assignment	What you do	Length
APA style exercise	Correct in-text citations, a reference list, and paper format.	200 words
Annotated references	Annotate 10 sources that you can use in your literature review.	500 words
General-audience paper	Explain your research question to a non-specialist reader.	800 to 1,000 words
Peer reviews (2)	Give structured written feedback on a classmate's draft, in class.	250 words each

The general-audience paper satisfies the GE requirement for writing to a general audience.

6.4 Scaffolded literature review assignments (25%)

You build the major paper in stages. Each stage gets feedback from me, from a classmate, or from both.

Stage	Requirement	Weight
Topic proposal	One research question and three subtopics.	3%
Outline	Main points, with the source that supports each point.	5%
Draft 1	700 words, 4 scholarly sources.	7%
Draft 2	1,500 words, 8 scholarly sources.	10%

Draft 2 includes the revised text of Draft 1. You do not start again each time.

You meet with me twice about your drafts. These meetings replace class time in Week 11 and Week 13. Meetings with a tutor at the SJSU Writing Center are optional, and I recommend them.

6.5 Final literature review (30%)

The literature review is the major piece of assessed work in this course. It is an APA-style paper that answers a research question, and it describes and synthesizes the relevant theory and findings.

- At least 2,000 words, which include the title page and the reference list.
- At least 10 scholarly, peer-reviewed sources.
- Correct APA 7th edition format throughout.
- Due at the end of Week 17. See the schedule in Section 12.

6.6 Oral presentation (10%)

The presentation is the culminating experience for this course. You speak for 5 to 7 minutes about your literature review topic.

- You can present live, or you can submit a video, a podcast, or a documentary.
- You must attend the presentation classes, because you answer questions from your classmates.
- Presentations run in Week 16, Week 17, and the final exam slot.

6.7 Word count

GE Area Z requires a minimum of 8,000 assigned words across the semester. This course assigns about 9,000 words. Your portfolio notes are additional, and they do not appear in this table, because I do not collect them.

Component	Count	Words
Participation and in-class writing	15 × 200	3,000
Portfolio check-in (counts under participation)	1 × 300	300
Reflection essay	1 × 800	800
APA style exercise	1 × 200	200
Annotated references	1 × 500	500
General-audience paper	1 × 900	900
Outline	1 × 500	500
Peer reviews	2 × 250	500
Literature review (new words across both drafts and the final paper)	—	2,000
Presentation script and notes	1 × 300	300
Total		9,000

7. Grading

Component	Percent of course grade
Participation and in-class writing	10%

Component	Percent of course grade
Reflection essay	10%
Skill assignments	15%
Scaffolded literature review assignments	25%
Final literature review	30%
Oral presentation	10%
Total	100%

Grade scale

Grade	Percentage	Grade	Percentage
A	93 to 100%	C plus	76 to 79%
A minus	90 to 92%	C	73 to 75%
B plus	86 to 89%	C minus	70 to 72%
B	83 to 85%	D plus	66 to 69%
B minus	80 to 82%	D	63 to 65%
		D minus	60 to 62%

You must pass this course with a C or better. This is a CSU graduation requirement.

8. Course Policies

1. Attendance and participation

This is a workshop course. Much of the work happens in the room, and your classmates depend on your feedback. University Policy F15-12 makes attendance your responsibility. I use participation as a grading criterion, and Section 6.1 states how.

2. Deadlines and late work

Assignments are due at 11:59 pm on the date in the schedule. I accept late work for three days, with a penalty of 10% of the assignment score per day. After three days the score is zero.

Draft deadlines are firm, because your classmates need your draft for peer review. A late draft loses its peer review.

3. Extensions

I grant extensions for illness, emergencies, and similar disruptive events. Contact me as early as you can. You do not need to give me medical details.

4. Formatting requirements

Submit all work in APA 7th edition format. Use double spacing, 1-inch margins, and an accessible font. Examples of accessible fonts are 12-point Times New Roman, 11-point Calibri, and 11-point Arial.

Submit files as .docx or .pdf. Examine your work for grammar and spelling errors before you submit it.

5. Use of generative AI

Generative AI tools make new text, images, code, audio, and video. Well-known examples are ChatGPT and Claude. This policy covers all such tools, which includes tools that appear during our semester.

- You can use generative AI to brainstorm ideas, to build an outline, and to revise your own drafts.
- You must not use generative AI to write your assignments for you.
- If you use generative AI, you must document it. Cite the tool in APA format as software. Add a note of 25 to 100 words that describes how you used it.
- Put this note at the end of your text, before the reference list. The note does not count toward the word count.

Two cautions. First, these tools train on limited data, and they can give you inaccurate, out-of-date, or copyrighted content. Second, you stay responsible for everything that you submit. Undocumented or improper use falls under the SJSU Academic Integrity Policy.

6. Academic integrity

University Policy F15-7 requires honesty in all your coursework. Plagiarism and cheating get a zero on the assignment, and I report the case to the Office of Student Conduct and Ethical Development. If you are unsure whether something counts as plagiarism, ask me before you submit.

7. Feedback and revision

I return feedback on drafts within one week. The purpose of feedback is the next draft, so read it before you write again. Bring your feedback to our meetings.

8. Communication

Email me or use the Canvas inbox. Put the course number and your section in the subject line. I reply within two business days. I do not reply at night or at the weekend.

9. Classroom environment

We share drafts in this class, which needs trust. Your language and conduct must show respect for everyone. Disagreement is welcome, and discourtesy is not.

10. Recording

You must get my permission before you record audio or video in class. A recording is for your private study only. You must not share it or distribute it.

11. Accommodations

The Accessible Education Center (AEC) tells me about documented accommodations. Meet with me in the first two weeks to plan how your accommodations apply here. Tell me early if any part of this course prevents you from learning.

12. Grade changes

I change a final grade only for a clerical error. Raise any question about a grade while the course is still in session.

9. University Policies

University Policy S16-9 puts the policies that apply to all courses on one page. That page covers student responsibilities, academic integrity, accommodations, dropping and adding, consent to recording, and available student services.

Read the Syllabus Information web page: <https://www.sjsu.edu/curriculum/courses/syllabus-info.php>

10. Credit Hour Expectation

University Policy S12-3 expects a minimum of 45 hours of work for each unit of credit. For this 3-unit course that is about 9 hours each week. This total includes class time, preparation, reading, and writing.

11. Student Resources

- SJSU Writing Center. Free workshops and one-to-one tutoring for writers in all disciplines. MLK Library, 2nd floor, and online. <https://www.sjsu.edu/writingcenter/>
- Peer Connections. Free mentoring and tutoring, which includes undergraduate writing. <https://peerconnections.sjsu.edu/>
- ACCESS in the Social Sciences. GE advising, academic planning, and graduation planning. <https://www.sjsu.edu/access/>
- Counseling and Psychological Services. Confidential support for mental health and academic stress. Student Wellness Center, Room 300B. Telephone 408-924-5910.
- SJSU Cares. Help with food, housing, and other basic needs. <https://www.sjsu.edu/sjsucares/>
- Accessible Education Center. <https://www.sjsu.edu/aec/>

- Student technology resources. Laptops, hotspots, and help with Canvas and Zoom.
<https://www.sjsu.edu/learnanywhere/>

Use these services early. They work best before a problem becomes urgent.

12. Course Schedule

This schedule can change. I announce every change in class and on Canvas.

Wk	Date	Topic	Due at 11:59 pm	CLO
1	Thu 20 Aug	In-class writing task, then course rationale and structure	Module 0 orientation task	—
2	Tue 25 Aug	Scholarly sources compared to popular sources		1, 4
	Thu 27 Aug	Database search: PsycINFO, PubMed, Google Scholar		1
3	Tue 1 Sep	Library session with Christa Bailey		1
	Thu 3 Sep	How to read an empirical article. APA citations and the reference list		2, 3, 4
4	Tue 8 Sep	Genres of academic writing: report, review, chapter		4
	Thu 10 Sep	Inside a review article: theme, not list	APA style exercise	2, 4, 7
5	Tue 15 Sep	Developing a research question	Topic proposal	6
	Thu 17 Sep	Paraphrase, summary, and plagiarism		3, 4
6	Tue 22 Sep	Weak writing: what fails and why		4
	Thu 24 Sep	Writing a microsummary	Portfolio check-in	3, 4
7	Tue 29 Sep	Annotated references workshop		1, 3
	Thu 1 Oct	Writing for a general audience	Annotated references	5
8	Tue 6 Oct	General-audience paper workshop		5
	Thu 8 Oct	Organizing a literature review: the 3-point method	General-audience paper	5, 6
9	Tue 13 Oct	Building your outline		6
	Thu 15 Oct	From outline to first draft	Outline	6
10	Tue 20 Oct	Writing workshop: Draft 1	Draft 1 (700 words, 4 sources)	6
	Thu 22 Oct	Peer review of Draft 1, in class	Peer review 1	3, 6
11	Tue 27 Oct	Sentence clinic: objectivity, verb tense, and clarity		2
	Thu 29 Oct	No class. Individual meetings with me		6
12	Tue 3 Nov	Synthesis: how studies speak to each other		7
	Thu 5 Nov	Signal sentences and transitions	Draft 2 (1,500 words, 8 sources)	2, 6, 7

Wk	Date	Topic	Due at 11:59 pm	CLO
13	Tue 10 Nov	Peer review of Draft 2, in class	Peer review 2	6, 7
	Thu 12 Nov	No class. Individual meetings with me		6
14	Tue 17 Nov	From draft to final paper: revision strategies		6
	Thu 19 Nov	Professional writing session	Reflection essay	2, 4, 5
15	Tue 24 Nov	Conclusions, titles, and the reference-list audit		2, 6
	Thu 26 Nov	No class. Thanksgiving		—
16	Tue 1 Dec	Presentation skills, then presentations start	Presentation file before class	8
	Thu 3 Dec	Presentations		8
17	Tue 8 Dec	Presentations and course wrap-up	Final literature review (2,000+ words, 10+ sources)	6, 7, 8
Final	[Date and time]	Make-up presentations and culminating experience		8

Note. Week 11 and Week 13 replace one class meeting with individual meetings. Sign-up sheets appear on Canvas one week in advance.