



Introduction to Theory Based Research and Writing  
PSYC/SOCI 175  
MWF 10:10-11:05a, Dorsey 106

Zack Bowersox

zbowersox@cougars.ccis.edu

zackbowersox.org

Office Hours: T-Th 11:30a-1:00p & by appointment

Skype: ZackBowersox

**Course Description:** The students participating in this class should expect to learn the practices familiar to contemporary research writing/critiquing in the behavioral and social sciences. Students will learn both the mechanics and logic of these practices with special emphasis on the American Psychological Association's publication style.

**Course Objectives:** At the completion of this course, students will be expected to demonstrate their ability to read and critique scholarly research. They themselves will be likewise expected to compose scholarly materials (their critiques, essays, and simple literature reviews) in a similar fashion.

**Prerequisite(s):** PSYC 101 -or- SOCI 111.

**Text(s):**

- *American Psychological Association Manual*, 6th edition. **ISBN-13** 978-0205989065
- *The Research Imagination* (2007) **Author(s):** Gray, Williamson, Karp, & Dalphin.; **ISBN-13:** 978-0521705554
- Additional resources may be found at: <https://library.ccis.edu/psycsoci175>.

**Grade Distribution:**

Assignment	Points
Participation	100
Article Critiques	100
Research Discovery	200
Data Analyses	150
Proof Assignments	150
Research Question	100
Literature Review	200
Total	1000

## **Letter Grade Distribution:**

$\geq 900$	A
800 - 899	B
700 - 799	C
600 - 699	D
$\leq 599$	F

## **Course Policies:**

- Attendance & Participation**

- Attendance is mandatory, as in you must come to class. Make-up tests and quizzes will only be allowed in the event of a **documented** medical or family emergency, or College sanctioned event. In the case of the latter, student athletes, or members of any other College organization, it is in your and my best interest that I be informed of any of these events as soon as possible so that we may schedule a make-up.
- **No makeup quizzes or exams will be given without the proper documentation.**

- Academic Honesty**

- **Don't cheat.** The honor code is in effect throughout the semester. By taking this course, you affirm that it is a violation of the code to cheat on exams, to plagiarize, to deviate from the teacher's instructions about collaboration on work that is submitted for grades, to give false information to a faculty member, and to undertake any other form of academic misconduct. You agree that the teacher is entitled to move you to another seat during examinations, without explanation. You also affirm that if you witness others violating the code you have a duty to report them to the honor council.
- Do familiarize yourself with the practices and policies in the Columbia College Student Handbook.

- Classroom Conduct**

- The students in this class will be respectful of others. I welcome diverse opinions and invite you all to do the same. I invite you to review the Columbia College Standards of Conduct and to familiarize yourself with those expectations I and the College have, not only for your conduct, but also for that which you should expect in the classroom. If you have questions or concerns about your learning environment you are encouraged to contact the professor or the Office of Student Conduct:
  - \* studentconduct@ccis.edu; (573) 875-7877
- I invite you to review the College's Notice of Non-Discrimination and Equal Opportunity:
  - \* Notice of Non-Discrimination and Equal Opportunity: <http://www.ccis.edu/policies/notice-of-non-discrimination-and-equal-opportunity.aspx>
- If for any reason you are made to feel uncomfortable, have been the victim of, or feel you may at risk of, sexual misconduct, harassment and/or discriminatory behavior, you are encouraged to contact the professor or the Title IX officer directly.
  - \* Title IX Office: titleixcoordinator@ccis.edu

- **Disability Services**

- Columbia College is committed under the Americans with Disabilities Act and its Amendments and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act to providing appropriate accommodations to individuals with documented disabilities. If you have a disability-related need for reasonable academic adjustments in this course, provide the instructor(s) with an accommodation notification letter from Student Accessibility Resources office. Students are expected to give two weeks- notice of the need for accommodations. If you need immediate accommodations or physical access, please arrange to meet with instructor(s) as soon as your accommodations have been finalized.
- If you have any questions about your eligibility for accommodations please contact the Student Accessibility Resources office:
  - \* sar@ccis.edu
  - \* (573)875-7626

**Assignments:**

- **Participation**

- Students are expected to participate in class. This means join in during discussions, ask questions, and practice engaged learning.
- Students will be regularly asked to complete work in a group or demonstrate their work in front of the class. Part of mastering scholarly research is being able to communicate in the language of said research. To be counted as participating students should come to class ready to discuss course materials, but also any questions they may have.

- **Article Critiques (x2)**

- Students will be assigned two readings (both scholarly, journal articles that will be available via D2L) that they will be expected to critique.
- Students will need summarize the articles, being able to identify both theory and expectations, but also demonstrate their ability to critically address any short-comings they might find in the article.

- **Research Discovery (x2)**

- Students will twice be asked to find a scholarly, journal article of their own choosing and perform a critique similar to that above.
- Beyond the expectations described above, students will also be asked to discuss these pieces with the class and reconcile the articles to their semester literature review (described below).

- **Data Analyses (x2)**

- Students will be asked to describe the data employed in assigned readings.
- While they will not be asked to discuss or recognize statistical methods, students will need be able to describe and discuss types of data, how employed, and critically evaluate their use.

- **Proof Assignments (x3)**

- Students will have three opportunities to practice their proof reading skills.
- While reading the indicated chapters of the APA Manual in full is not necessary, students should rely on the Manual to help them correctly complete these assignments.

- **Research Question**

- At approximately the half-way point in the semester students will be asked to submit a research question and brief abstract describing a line of research that interests them.
- Students are encouraged to pursue their scholarly interests in this endeavor and think as broadly and outside the box as they choose.

- **Literature Review**

- Based on their above research question, students will need produce a brief literature review.
- Students will be asked to demonstrate their ability to find and synthesize research in support of their own research agenda.
- Students will be assigned a class period in Week 15 in which they will present their work to the class.

**Tentative Course Outline:**

The weekly coverage might change as the the progress of the class demands. However, you must keep up with the textbook (abbreviated GWKD) and other reading assignments.

- **Week 1: January 6, 8, & 10**

- **Description:** Class Introduction; Review of the syllabus and a discussion about the “art” of research; Where do we even start!?!.
- Readings: GWKD Chapter 1

- **Week 2: January 13, 15, & 17**

- **Description:** The theoretically driven research design.
- Readings: GWKD Chapter 2 & 3
  - \* Homework: Article Critique 1: Thinking About Research, **due January, 17.**

- **Week 3: January 22 & 24**

- **NO CLASS** January 20 - MLK Day

- **Description:** Getting Familiar with APA Formatting
- Readings: APA Chapter 2
  - \* Homework: Proof Assignment 1, **due January, 24.**

- **Week 4: January 27, 29, & 31**

- **Description:** Capturing in data and words that which we intend to study.

- Readings: GWKD Chapter 4
- **Week 5: February 3, 5, & 7**
  - **Description:** Populations, Samples, and Proper Sampling Techniques
  - Readings: GWKD Chapter 6.
    - \* Homework: Article Critique 2: Sampling Techniques, **due February 7.**
- **Week 6: February 10, 12 & 14**
  - **Description:** The Good, The Bad, and the Ugly: Surveys in the Social Sciences
  - Readings: GWKD Chapter 7
    - \* Homework: Data Analysis 1, **due February 14.**
- **Week 7: February 17, 19, & 21**
  - **Description:** Observational and Field Research; APA Citation Format
  - Readings: GWKD Chapter 9; APA Chapters 6 & 7
    - \* Homework: Proof Assignment 2, **due February 21.**
- **Week 8: February 24, 26, & 28**
  - **Description:** Feminist Methodology (and other ways in which we question the *status quo*).
  - Readings: GWKD Chapter 10
    - \* Homework: Research Question, **due February 24.**
- **Week 9: March 2, 4, & 6**
  - **Description:** Historical Analysis & Mixed Methodologies
  - Readings: GWKD Chapter 11
- **Week 10: March, 9, 11, & 13**
  - **Description:** Experimental Research Designs
  - Readings: GWKD Chapter 12
    - \* Homework: Research Discovery 1, **due March 9.**
- **Week 11: March 16, 18, & 20**
  - **Description:** Content Analysis: Text-based research strategies.
  - Readings: GWKD Chapter 13
    - \* Homework: Proof Assignment 3 **due March 30.**
- **Week 12: March 23, 25, & 27**
  - **NO CLASS** - Spring Break
- **Week 13: March 30, April 1 & 3**

- **Description:** Comparative Methodology
- Readings: GWKD Chapter 15
  - \* Homework: Research Discovery 2 **due April 3.**
- **Week 14: April 6, 8, & 10**
  - **Description:** Statistics and the Cult of Significance
- **Week 15: April 13, 15, & 17**
  - **Description:** Literature Review Presentation Week
    - \* Homework: Data Analysis 2 **due April 17.**
- **Week 16: April 20, 22, & 24**
  - Homework: Final Literature Review **due April 24.**