

# Syllabus

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*Augustana Faculty, University of Alberta*  
*AUPSY 207: Psychology Studies and Information Literacy*  
*Fall 2008, Wednesdays and Fridays, 12:50-2:05*  
*C114 (Library Classroom)*

## *Instructor*

Sarah Polkinghorne  
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To meet with me outside class time, you have three options: My office hours: Wednesdays, 2:30-3:30; by appointment; or by drop-in when I'm on the reference schedule.

## *About this Course*

This course offers you an introduction to working with information resources. The broad topics are listed in the Course Schedule on page 2 of this syllabus.

By the end of this course, you will be able to:

1. Distinguish among data, statistics, information, and knowledge
2. Develop an interest or topic into a research question
3. Apply a variety of searching strategies to find relevant, suitable information to address your research question
4. Appreciate the various ways in which new information is created within your discipline
5. Identify the characteristics of various formats through which information is conveyed (e.g., books, periodicals, and born-digital Web-based formats)
6. Identify the parts of a research article and apply strategies to reading research articles efficiently and effectively
7. Navigate and use the World Wide Web, reference sources, the online NEOS library catalogue, and at least one periodical database to gain access to information
8. Critically assess the information resources you find, and discern whether resources are appropriate to use in the context of your research
9. Discuss some of the ethical and legal questions surrounding information
10. Format a list of information sources into an APA-style references list

My expectation is that you will play an active role in this course. There will be some lectures, but there will also be a variety of activities and discussions. This is a class where students will learn from each other as well as from the instructor, so participation is crucial. Please feel free to discuss your progress in the course with me at any time.

## *Pre-requisite*

Second year standing in Psychology.

## *Advised Co-requisite*

A 200-or-higher-level PSY class for which you have an assignment requiring substantial library research.

## Readings

There is no required textbook for this class. There will be occasional assigned readings; these are listed in the course schedule, below, along with an indication of where you can find them.

## Evaluation

**Assignments** ..... 50%

1. Information Log: 5%
2. Developing Your Research Question: 10%
3. Journal Article Read & Respond: 15%
4. Catalogue & Database Searching: 20%

**Participation** (includes attendance, as well as arriving prepared, engaging with and contributing to class activities) ..... 10%

**Assignment reflective components** ..... 10%

**Final exam** (in class, one hour) ..... 30%

For each assignment, I will give you a percentage mark. At the end of the course, I will assign you a letter grade using the University of Alberta's 4-point scale.

## Course Schedule

<i>Class Topics</i>	<i>Please Arrive Having Read:</i>	<i>Deadlines</i>
<b>Wednesday, September 10: Class One</b>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Welcome &amp; introductions</li> <li>• Pre-course questionnaire</li> <li>• Data, information, knowledge...wisdom?</li> </ul>	Not applicable (n/a)	You will receive today: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Assignment 1: Information Log</li> </ul>
<b>Friday, September 12: Class Two</b>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The origins of information</li> <li>• Developing research questions</li> </ul>	n/a	You will receive today: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Assignment 2: Developing Your Research Question</li> </ul>
<i>*Tuesday, September 16 = add/delete deadline for 6-week courses*</i>		
<b>Wednesday, September 17: Class Three</b>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Web searching</li> <li>• Google &amp; Wikipedia</li> <li>• Thinking critically about information</li> </ul>	Ruscio, J. (2006). <i>Critical thinking in psychology</i> . Belmont, CA: Thomson. Available on reserve: BF 441 R87 2006. Please read & consider pp. 6-10: "Ten characteristics of pseudoscience."	To hand in today: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Completed Assignment 1</li> <li>• A copy of your co-req's syllabus</li> </ul>
<b>Friday, September 19: Class Four</b>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Information formats: how information appears in the world</li> <li>• Engaging with research: focus on research articles in peer-reviewed journals</li> </ul>	APA Manual, 5 <sup>th</sup> ed. Available on reserve: BF 76.7 P83 2001. Please read & consider pp. 6-26, sections 1.03 through 1.11.  Alaranta, A., Alaranta, H., Holmila, J., Palmu, P., Pietlä, K., & Helenius, I. (2006). Self-reported attitudes of elite athletes towards doping: Differences between type of sport. <i>International Journal of Sports Medicine</i> 27, 842-846. Available on reserve, and electronically via the library.	n/a

	Peng, W., Liu, M., & Mou, Y. (2008). Do aggressive people play violent computer games in a more aggressive way? Individual difference and idiosyncratic game-playing experience. <i>CyberPsychology &amp; Behavior</i> 11(2), 157-161. Available on reserve, and electronically via the library.	
<b>Wednesday, September 24: Class Five</b>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Information organization (focus on the Library of Congress system of subject headings and call numbers)</li> <li>Searching strategies (this includes Boolean, truncation, and other strategies)</li> <li>The NEOS catalogue (aka the library catalogue)</li> </ul>	n/a	To hand in today: Completed Assignment 2 You will receive today: Assignment 3: Journal Article Read & Respond Assignment 4: Catalogue & Database Searching
<b>Friday, September 26: Class Six (*required for PED; recommended for PSY*)</b>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Databases: Academic Search Complete and <b>SPORTDiscus</b></li> <li>Citation introduced</li> </ul>	n/a	n/a
<b>Wednesday, October 1: Class Seven (*required for PSY; recommended for PED*)</b>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Databases: Academic Search Complete and <b>PsycINFO</b></li> <li>Citation introduced</li> </ul>	n/a	n/a
<b>Friday, October 3 (*last day to withdraw with a grade of W*)</b>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Information Ethics (this includes copyright, intellectual property, intellectual freedom, plagiarism, and other issues)</li> </ul>	n/a	To hand in today: Completed Assignment 3
<b>Wednesday, October 8: Class Eight</b>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Faculty research talks (to be confirmed)</li> <li>Other topics to be confirmed</li> </ul>	n/a	To hand in today: Completed Assignment 4
<b>Friday, October 10: Happy Thanksgiving!</b>		
<b>CLASS CANCELLED TODAY</b>		
<b>Wednesday, October 15: Class Nine</b>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Review for final exam</li> <li>Course evaluation</li> <li>Post-course questionnaire</li> </ul>	n/a	n/a
<b>Wednesday, October 17: Class Ten</b>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Final exam (in-class, one (1) hour)</li> </ul>		

## ***Policies and Expectations***

### *Academic Integrity & The Code of Student Behaviour*

The University of Alberta is committed to the highest standards of academic integrity and honesty. Students are expected to be familiar with these standards regarding academic honesty and to uphold the policies of the University in this respect. Students are particularly urged to familiarize themselves with the provisions of the Code of Student Behaviour (online at [www.uofaweb.ualberta.ca/secretariat/studentappeals.cfm](http://www.uofaweb.ualberta.ca/secretariat/studentappeals.cfm)) and avoid any behaviour which could potentially result in suspicions of cheating, plagiarism, misrepresentation of facts and/or participation in

an offence. Academic dishonesty is a serious offence and can result in suspension or expulsion from the University.

I can assure you that I take issues of plagiarism and cheating very seriously. If at any point you require clarification about these issues, please speak with me.

### *Assignment Submission*

This class lasts only a few weeks and there is very little time between assignments: for this reason, I will not be accepting late assignments. You will receive a mark of zero (0). If you find that personal, medical, family, or other circumstances are interfering with your ability to keep up with your work, please consult me as soon as possible (before an assignment is due, if possible).

Assignments are due at 12:50 pm (ie, the start of class) on the date due.

### *Attendance*

I will take attendance. Your attendance will be a factor in your participation mark. If you must miss a class, please let me know in advance if at all possible. (See the 2008-2009 University of Alberta Calendar, §23.3, §54.4)

### *Things That Might Make You Absent (Even If You're Here)*

This is a small class that meets in a small classroom. If you disrupt the class, I reserve the right to count you absent for the day. Ways to make this happen include (but are not limited to):

- Letting your phone ring in class (unless you are expecting a very important call)
- Packing up your papers & bag before class is actually over

### *Independent Work*

Regardless of the collaboration that takes place during class discussions and activities, all assignments you submit for marks in PSY 207 must be your own independent work. This means creating your own searching strategies, forming and reporting your own responses, and generally relying on your own reason, hard work, and creativity. Submitting someone else's work as your own is plagiarism, and failing to acknowledge that you collaborated with others on an assignment is a form of cheating under the Code of Student Behaviour (§30.3.2(2) c).

### *From Specialized Support and Disability Services:*

Students who require accommodations in this course due to a disability affecting mobility, vision, hearing, learning, or mental or physical health are advised to discuss their needs with Specialized Support and Disability Services, F214, Faith and Life Centre, 679-1649, or [ssds.augustana@ualberta.ca](mailto:ssds.augustana@ualberta.ca).

Students registered with Specialized Support and Disability Services (SSDS) who will be using accommodations in the classroom, or who will be writing exams through SSDS, are required to provide a "Letter of Introduction" to the course instructor by September 15. Those students who need accommodated exams must provide the instructor with an "Exam Instructions & Authorizations Form" (yellow) one week before each exam.