

School Vision: Building upon a foundation of social justice and an ethic of care, we are a community of learners actively engaged in the development of critical, transformative knowledge for social work practice.

MSW Mission: The MSW program offers an accessible, advanced professional degree focused on social work practice in the fields of child and family welfare, health and social care, and international and social development, using a social justice lens. The purpose of this MSW program is to prepare our graduates to be competent social work professionals, equipped with state-of-the-art knowledge and skills, a critical analytic lens, and a social justice orientation.

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| Year/Term | 2018-2019 |
| Course Title | SOWK 525 -(001) - Advanced Social Work Practice: Mental Health (3 credits) |
| Course Schedule | Wednesdays, 9:00am -12:00pm, Term 2 |
| Course Location | Jack Bell Building, Room 124 |

| INSTRUCTOR | OFFICE LOCATION | OFFICE HOURS | OFFICE PHONE | E-MAIL ADDRESS |
|----------------------------|-----------------|---------------------------------------------|--------------|----------------------------------------------------------------|
| Ayesha Sackey, MSW, RSW | | By appointment, please email to schedule | | ayesha.sackey@ubc.ca |

COURSE DESCRIPTION:

This course builds on students' foundational social work knowledge and skills and seeks to develop advanced competencies in the provision of mental health services. Course content includes discussions on biomedical and recovery models; engagement and relationship-building; assessment and diagnosis; and treatment-related strategies. The emphasis of this course is the enhancement of students' perceptions, experiences, attitudes, knowledge and skills in clinical social work through extensive case discussions, exploration of some current best practices, and critical analysis of actual issues and concerns that the students face. As such, this course uses participatory, dialogic, and transformative processes to ensure the relevance of content and process to students' realities and replicates the philosophy and approaches to the provision of mental health services advanced by this course.

LEARNING OUTCOMES:

Upon completion of this course, students will be able to:

1. Critically explain their social location and matters relevant to mental health work and service delivery.
2. Articulate key elements of social work mental health practice.
3. Explain implications of biomedical vs recovery models of mental health for a) service system sufficiency and b) quality of life for individuals with mental illness.
4. Articulate the role of social workers in engagement, relationship-building, assessment, diagnosis, treatment and follow-up.
5. Explain some major diagnostic categories in DSM5 and critically explain issues attendant to this diagnostic tool and its use.
6. Critically discuss selected elements of evidence-based/best practices with individuals, couples, families, and groups.

UNIVERSITY POLICIES

"Regular attendance is expected of students in all their classes (including lectures, laboratories, tutorials, seminars, etc.). Students who neglect their academic work and assignments may be excluded from the final examinations. Students who are unavoidably absent because of illness or disability should report to their instructors on return to classes." (UBC Calendar)

Academic Dishonesty: Please review the UBC Calendar "Academic regulations" for the university policy on cheating, plagiarism, and other forms of academic dishonesty. Also visit www.arts.ubc.ca and go to the students' section for useful information on avoiding plagiarism and on correct documentation.

Retaining Assignments: Students should retain a copy of all submitted assignments (in case of loss) and should also retain all their marked assignments in case they wish to apply for a Review of Assigned Standing. Students have the right to view their marked examinations with their instructor, providing they apply to do so within a month of receiving their final grades. This review is for pedagogic purposes. The examination remains the property of the university.

COURSE POLICIES:

Attendance

The attendance policy is in the student handbook on page 11:

https://schoolofsocialwork.sites.olt.ubc.ca/files/2018/06/2017-08-30_Handbook_2017-18.pdf

The School considers class attendance to be an essential component of integrated learning in professional social work education. Therefore, regular attendance is *required* in all social work courses. Instructors may count repeated late arrivals or early departures as an absence, and a meeting should be setup to discuss this with the student. The University accommodates students with disabilities who have registered with Access and Diversity. Students, who will require accommodation for attendance due to disability, are encouraged to inform the instructor, and if necessary, to contact Access and Diversity preferably not later than the first week of class. The School will also accommodate religious observance, according to University Policy 65, and students are expected to inform the instructor. Students who wish to be accommodated for unavoidable absences due to varsity athletics, family obligations, or other similar commitments, must notify their instructors in writing at least two weeks in advance, and preferably earlier. This reflects expectations for professional social workers in their place of employment. If students miss three or more classes, they may be considered to have not met the requirements of the course. If students have valid reasons, they could be withdrawn from the course with the approval of the instructor – otherwise, they would fail the course.

In May 2013, the UBC School of Social Work Council approved an Equity Action plan aimed at an equitable learning and working environment and creation of accountability measures for monitoring implementation of this plan. A key element in attaining this goal is ensuring that instructors and students are committed to maintaining a classroom environment free of any form of discrimination and racism and that welcomes and respects different worldviews, ways of knowing and social locations.

Attendance and Assignments: Students are expected to attend every class session. Absences should be used for rare and unusual circumstances. Students who are unavoidably absent because of illness or disability should report to the instructors upon return to class. Attendance will be taken during each class session. Students are asked to conduct themselves with professional integrity when completing the attendance sheet.

The University accommodates students whose religious obligations conflict with attendance, submitting assignments, or completing scheduled tests and examinations. Please let your instructors know in advance, preferably in the first week of class, if you require any accommodation on these grounds. Students who plan to be absent for varsity athletics, family obligations, or other similar commitments, cannot assume they will be accommodated, and should discuss their commitments with the instructor before the drop date. Subject to the accommodations above, **there will be no extensions for assignments. Late assignments will not be accepted.**

It is recommended that students retain a copy of all submitted assignments (in case of loss) and should also retain all their marked assignments in case they wish to apply for a Review of Assigned Standing. Students have the right to

view their marked examinations with their instructor, providing they apply to do so within a month of receiving their final grades. This review is for pedagogic purposes. The examination remains the property of the university.

Academic Honesty and Integrity: All work submitted in this course must be our own and it must be produced specifically for this course. (If you wish to incorporate some of your prior work into a course assignment, you must have *prior* approval of the instructors). All sources used in your work (ideas, quotes, paraphrases, etc.) must be properly acknowledged and documented.

It is plagiarism to lift words, sentences, and paragraphs from websites, books and journals or to summarize another person's ideas and present them as yours without proper citations. It is plagiarism to use another student's work (current or past) as your own.

Violations of academic honesty will be taken seriously. Please review the UBC Calendar "Academic regulations" for the university policy on cheating, plagiarism, and other forms of academic dishonesty. Also visit www.arts.ubc.ca and go to the students' section for useful information on avoiding plagiarism and on correct documentation. Consequences may include failure in the course and suspension from your academic program.

SUBMITTING ASSIGNMENTS:

Assignments are due as noted in this course outline, unless otherwise informed by the instructor.

RETURN OF MARKED STUDENT ASSIGNMENTS:

All assignments are to be submitted via the UBC Canvas course site. Assignments will be marked with track changes and comments provided in the same manner.

LATE ASSIGNMENTS:

Generally, late assignments will not be accepted. In emergency situations, students must discuss any potential lateness with their instructor and be prepared to have a medical certificate available. Assignments submitted after the deadline with no documentation will be penalized by one percentage point per day.

FORMAT OF THE COURSE:

This course will include a combination of lecture, guest speakers, seminar, skill-building activities, case discussions group activities and presentations. Class members are expected to attend every class, to complete required readings prior to class, and to arrive in class prepared to participate. Student participation in class discussions will be evaluated in part on the alacrity with which comments and reflections are offered. Evaluative tools are described below

Details on course assignments and evaluation are described in detail below.

COURSE READING:

There is no required text for the course. Required readings may be found online or through the UBC library website. Guest speakers may recommend readings for their topics. Needed resources will be made available.

NAMES AND GENDER PRONOUNS

Class rosters are generally provided to the instructor with students' legal names; however, I am happy to honour your request to address you by the name and/or gender pronoun(s) you use for yourself. Please advise me of this as soon as possible so I can ensure use of your correct name and pronouns in this space.

If you need general support around this issue, please also be aware that *Trans and Gender Diversity at UBC* can

provide advocacy in ensuring that all of your instructors are using the name/pronouns you use. (<https://students.ubc.ca/campus-life/diversity-campus/trans-gender-diversity>)

A special word about ELECTRONIC DEVICES IN THE CLASSROOM:

Laptop computers and tablets may be used to support learning activities in the classroom. These learning activities include: taking notes and accessing course readings under discussion. However, non-academic use of laptops and other devices are distracting and seriously disrupt the learning process for everyone. Neither computers nor other electronic devices are to be used in the classroom for non-academic reasons. This includes e-mailing, texting, social networking, and use of the Internet. If a student is found to be using their electronic device inappropriately, they forfeit the opportunity to use the device for the remainder of the term. The use of cell phones during class time is prohibited. Please turn off cell phones and refrain from taking calls unless you are "on call" and have cleared this with the instructor prior to class.

ACCESS AND DISABILITY ACCOMMODATION:

UBC School of Social Work and the instructor/teaching assistants for this course are committed to providing accommodations for students with disabilities. Accommodations are collaborative efforts between students, faculty, and the Access and Disability Office. Students with accommodations approved through the Access and Disability Office are responsible for contacting the course instructors prior to or during the first week of the term to discuss accommodations. Students who believe they are eligible for accommodations but who have not yet registered with the Access and Disability Office should do so immediately (<http://you.ubc.ca/ubc-life/campus-community/students-disabilities/>).

PROTECTING CONFIDENTIALITY:

The student must respect all guidelines of confidentiality as outlined in the Canadian Association of Social Workers (CASW) Code of Ethics (<https://casw-acts.ca/en/Code-of-Ethics>). No information that could potentially identify a client of any service system will be used in class discussions or assignments. If case material or client information are incorporated into papers, assignments, and/or the classroom, it is necessary to comply with agency policies about confidentiality and to always disguise case material.

For all assignments, your work is respected as private. However, if the instructors/teaching assistant have reason to believe your professional and/or academic development are of concern, or if client safety is a concern, a copy of your work (including work that is spoken) may be retained and/or shared with other faculty, program administrators, or any other person who may need to be involved as part of the process of resolution.

COURSE SCHEDULE

| Class | Date | Subject | |
|-------|---------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1 | Jan 2 nd | <p>Topics: Group agreement, Group mapping Course Orientation, Student realities, issues, concerns</p> <p>Required Readings Please review the following for class discussion:</p> <p>Health Canada: Mental Health http://www.hc-sc.gc.ca/hl-vs/mental/index-eng.php Anthony, W. (1993). Toward a vision of recovery for mental health and psychiatric rehabilitation services.</p> | <p>Reflection Paper on Trauma-Informed Clinical Social Work Practice: A Reflexivity Exercise Reflect on your own experiences that you consider traumatic/distressing.</p> <p>What maladaptive cognitive, emotional, behavioural systems</p> |

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| | | <p>Anthony, W. (1993). https://cpr.bu.edu/wp-content/uploads/2011/11/Preview-Toward-a-Vision-of-Recovery-2nd-edition.pdf (a ground-breaking article in the recovery literature)</p> <p>Guide to the Mental Health Act: http://www.health.gov.bc.ca/library/publications/year/2005/MentalHealthGuide.pdf (this publication is about 10 years old but the law has not changed in this time).</p> <p>Mental health law in Canada. From: Davis, S. (2014). Community Mental Health in Canada: Theory, Policy & Practice. Vancouver: UBC Press.</p> <p>Self reflection exercise</p> <p>Reflection essay due 11Jan 2019</p> | <p>have resulted from this that prevail today?</p> <p>What barriers do these presents in your ability to provide clinical social work services, particularly to service-users who themselves have experienced traumatic distress?</p> <p>What strategies/interventions may be useful in addressing these barriers in the context of self-care?</p> <p>Due: Friday, January 11th 2019, at 12 midnight Value: 10%</p> |
| 2 | Jan 9 th | <p>Topics: Forms of Mental Health A Recovery Orientation Legislation: Mental Health Act Ethnicity and Mental Illness Engagement, Assessment, Provision of Services and statutory duties under Engagement and Relationship-Building, Issues, Concerns and Strategies</p> <p>Recommended Readings: https://www2.gov.bc.ca/assets/gov/health/about-bc-s-health-care-system/health-care-partners/colleges-board-and-commissions/mental-health-review-board/mha_plain.pdf</p> <p>Other readings available on Canvas</p> | <p>Reflexivity Exercise; Discussions;</p> |
| 3 | Jan 16 th | <p>Topic: Assessment</p> <p>A. The Mini-Mental State Exam (MMSE) B. Suicide Risk Assessment C. The PTSD Checklist for DSM V D. Mental Health Assessment: Examples of Individual and Family</p> | <p>Discussion of Assessment Instruments; Case Presentations</p> |
| 4 | Jan 23 rd | <p>Topics: Social Work in Mental Health Practice (2): Reflexivity Exercise</p> | |
| 5 | Jan 30 th | <p>Topics: The DSM V</p> <p>A. Matters for Consideration B. Discussion of Various Diagnoses C. Case Discussions</p> | <p>Discussion of DSM & Case Presentations, Case Discussions</p> |
| 6 | Feb 6 th Due at 10:00am | <p>Topics: Drugs and Substance Misuse</p> | |

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| | | Assignment #2: Issues in Advanced Social Work Practice in Mental Health: Engagement, Assessment, and Diagnosis | |
| 7 | Feb 13 th | Topics: Psycho-Pharmacology Therapy Intervention – Guest Dr. Mohamed Ibrahim | |
| 8 | Feb 20 th | Reading Break | |
| 9 | Feb 27 th | Topics: Advanced Treatment Strategies/Interventions: Cognitive-Behavioural Therapy; General Approaches Practices: Individual, Couple, Family, and Group (1): Systemic and Family Therapy | |
| 10 | Mar 6 th | Topics: Some Current Evidenced-Based/Best Practices: Individual, Couple, Family, and Group (2): Seeking Safety Dialectical Behaviour Therapy | |
| 11 | Mar 13 th | Topics: Some Considerations for Treatment: Personality Disorders Case Discussions and Group Sharing Required Readings: Slade, M. (2009). 100 ways to support recovery. http://toronto.cmha.ca/files/2012/11/100-ways-to-support-recovery-Rethink.pdf | |
| 12 | Mar 20 th | Topics: Individual: Case Review Presentation | Case Presentations based on cases from DSM5 Casebook or cases chosen by the Student; Big Group Discussions |
| 13 | Mar 27 th | Topics: Couple: Case Review Presentation | Case Presentations based on cases from DSM5 Casebook or cases chosen by the Student; Big Group Discussions |
| 14 | April 3 rd | Topics: Family or Group: Case Review Presentation | Case Presentations based on cases from DSM5 Casebook or cases chosen by the Student; Big Group Discussions |

ASSESSMENT, EVALUATION:

There will be no formal examinations. Students will be awarded a grade based on the three major assignments.

This course emphasizes the process of learning, collectively and individually. While the instructor and students recognize the importance of grades as a formal measure of achievement in a course, students are encouraged to work to their fullest potential and measure their success individually and not in comparison to other learners.

It is anticipated that as learners in a terminal professional masters degree program, you are interested in attending and participating actively and that you will be prepared to do so upon arrival at each class session. As such, there **will not** be a grade assigned for attendance and participation. The instructor will not make judgments about the reason for absences but does appreciate receiving communication ahead of your absence. A significant amount of learning takes place during class;

you are responsible for understanding the material covered during your absence and obtaining any in-class handouts.

Late papers/assignments **are not accepted in this course**. (With rare exception and prior approval by the instructor, assignments can be submitted one week late for extraordinary circumstances only.)

**ASSIGNMENT 1: Reflection Paper on Trauma-Informed Clinical Social Work Practice:
A Reflexivity Exercise**

Due: Friday, January 11th 2019, at 12 midnight

Value: 10%

Description:

Please write a 4-page reflection paper in response to the following:

1. Reflect on your own social location and experiences that you consider traumatic/distressing.
2. What maladaptive cognitive, emotional, behavioural systems have resulted from this that prevail today?
3. What barriers do these present in your ability to provide clinical social work services, particularly to service-users who themselves have experienced traumatic distress?
4. What strategies/interventions may be useful in addressing these barriers in the context of self-care?

**ASSIGNMENT 2: Issues in Advanced Social Work Practice in Mental Health:
Engagement, Assessment, and Diagnosis**

Due: Wednesday, February 6th 2019, at 10am

Value: 25%

Description:

Please select an issue relevant to advanced social practice in mental health with respect to engagement, assessment and/or diagnosis. Please describe the scope of this issue; i.e. who does it affect and how does it affect them? How is the issue defined by service providers, family members and by people with mental illnesses themselves?

Please discuss the differences as well as the common ground between these different views.

In your paper, please critically examine:

How is the issue being addressed currently?

What are the legislative, policy and service design dimensions of the response? Are the responses effective and if not how can the issue be addressed more effectively?

What are the potential implications for social work practice?

The paper will be 8 pages in length (no more, no less), with at least two (one academic) references, typed and double-spaced, and is worth 20% of your final grade. Paper to be submitted on Connect.

Assignment 1 Grading Criteria:

Evaluation criteria for this assignment include the depth, your ability to link to social work practice, and your critical thinking and writing skills.

50% Knowledge of Topic: This is reflected in the content of your paper and is demonstrated by the extent of your research/understanding, your ability to articulate the impact on and perspectives of different stakeholders, the commonalities between these different perspectives, various responses to the Issue and their impact/outcomes, and your examination of the potential implications for social work practice.

- 40% **Critical Analysis/Reflexivity:** Your ability to identify the strengths and limitations of the various responses, the role of a social work professionals and the fit with our social work value system, and your critical reflection on your own values and the various potential responses to the mental health issue you have decided to explore.
- 10% **Writing Style:** Your ability to write a concise paper using proper style, grammar, spelling, punctuation, referencing, etc.

ASSIGNMENT 2: Issues in Advanced Social Work Practice in Mental Health: Treatment and Related Systems Issues

Due: Wednesday, February 27th 2019, at 10am
Value: 25%

Description:

Please select an issue relevant to advanced social work practice in mental health. Please describe the scope of this issue, e.g.: How is the issue defined by service providers, family members and by people with mental illnesses themselves? Who is most affected? In what ways? In your paper, please critically examine: How is the issue being addressed currently? What are the legislative, policy and service design dimensions of the response? What are the potential implications for social work practice? If you wish to use the paper to explore the benefits of a particular type of treatment for particular mental health issues, you may do this. The paper will be 8 pages in length, typed and double-spaced, APA formatting. Please contact the instructor to discuss ideas for topics and resources. Topics may include, but are not limited to:

- Whether there is an over-reliance on pharmaceutical treatments in mental health programs;
- How stigma may be (re)created within the health-care system, and possible solutions;
- The question of service eligibility and whether some kinds of mental health and/or addictions problems are less likely to get a response from the treatment system;
 - Culturally-safe MH services;
 - The relatives of mentally-ill persons and tensions/opportunities regarding the practitioner-family relationship;
 - Peer-led services: challenges, risks & benefits;
 - Housing/homelessness issues in mental health & addiction services;
 - The recovery orientation and how it is received by different stakeholder groups;
 - The challenge in making evidence-based interventions more widely available;
 - The metrics used to determine benefit/cost/failure in mental health services;
 - Police interactions/interventions with the mentally ill;
 - Alternative approaches such as the Hearing Voices Network.

Please discuss the differences as well as the common ground between varying views on these issues.

In your paper, please critically examine:

How is the issue being addressed currently?

What are the legislative, policy and service design dimensions of the response? Are the responses effective and if not how can the issue be addressed more effectively?

What are the potential implications for social work practice?

The paper will be 8 pages in length (no more, no less), with at least two (one academic) references, typed and double-spaced, and is worth 20% of your final grade. Paper to be submitted on Connect.

Assignment 2 Grading Criteria:

Evaluation criteria for this assignment include the depth, your ability to link to social work practice, and your critical thinking and writing skills.

- 50% Knowledge of Topic: This is reflected in the content of your paper and is demonstrated by the extent of your research/understanding, your ability to articulate the impact on and perspectives of different stakeholders, the commonalities between these different perspectives, various responses to the Issue and their impact/outcomes, and your examination of the potential implications for social work practice.
- 40% Critical Analysis/Reflexivity: Your ability to identify the strengths and limitations of the various responses, the role of a social work professionals and the fit with our social work value system, and your critical reflection on your own values and the various potential responses to the mental health issue you have decided to explore.
- 10% Writing Style: Your ability to write a concise paper using proper style, grammar, spelling, punctuation, referencing, etc.

ASSIGNMENT 3: Individual, Couple, Family or Group Case Review Presentations in Groups of 2

Due: Thursdays, March 20, 27, & April 3, 2019
Value: 40%

Description: In groups of 2, students will prepare a creative case presentation on an individual, couple, family or group case.

Students may be provided with individual case reviews or choose their own individual, couple, family, or group case. Please choose one and prepare a 20-minute presentation in response to at the following questions:

- What is/are the person's/persons' primary mental health issue(s)?
- What is/are your DSM5 diagnosis(es)? What are your differential diagnosis(es)/rule outs?
- How did you arrive at this conclusion? Consider the DSM criteria, symptoms and also the trajectory of the condition.
- What other information may be needed to make an accurate diagnosis?
- Speculate on the likely emotional, cognitive, behavioural, and relationship experiences of the person described in the case.
- Speculate on the likely systemic and structural contexts, issues, and interventions of/with the person(s) in this case.
- What are various treatment options? Which would you recommend?

and at least 4 of the following:

- What are the person's/persons' strengths that you would look for as part of your assessment?
- What would be the various responses to the person's(s') issues by the individual members of the mental health team?
- What elements of the response can best be provided by the social worker?
- What specific skills and knowledge are required of the social worker to intervene effectively in this case?
- What other persons or services should be involved to support your interventions and those of the team?
- Are there any legal/ethical considerations?
- How does culture/diversity play a role in interventions/services?
- What would the process of recovery look like for this person in the context of the Recovery model?

- What issues in advanced social work practice in mental health does this case bring forward?
- What are appropriate responses to these?

As part of your presentation, please discuss any consultations you undertook with working professionals or colleagues and any advice you used and/or rejected.

In addition to the above, consider the relevance of the following questions:

- Apart from DSM5 criteria, do you consider the case to represent a 'serious psychiatric condition,' or perhaps something else? For example, could it be considered within the 'normal' range of human experience? You may use your own value and ethical perspectives to inform this answer.
- Would there be any merit in not pursuing further assessment and/or psychiatric treatment in this case? In considering this point bear in mind that interventions should be:
 - 1) Effective
 - 2) Not create other and greater harm than it seeks to prevent
 - 3) Least intrusive
 - 4) Non-discriminatory
 - 5) If at all possible, thought reasonable by the person upon whom it is undertaken with

To help you in this assignment, students are encouraged to consult with other professionals & colleagues. Another resource, concerning decision trees and the DSM diagnosis, is the DSM-5 Handbook of Differential Diagnoses (2014) by Michael First. This book, and the DSM itself, are available online at the UBC library website.

- 40% Knowledge of Topic: This is reflected in the content of your presentation and is demonstrated by the extent of your research/understanding/and discussion, your ability to adequately respond to the questions provided, and meet the required elements of your presentation.
- 40% Critical Analysis/Reflexivity: Your ability to identify critically present your case including diagnosis, differentials, issues (engagement, diagnosis, treatment), treatment trajectory, attendant systemic and structural issues, and some of the other matters enumerated above.
- 10% Presentation Style: Your ability to present and discuss your case, be clear and concise, and use creative methods of presenting.

All written assignments should adhere to the APA Writing Guide, 6th Edition. This includes but is not limited to APA formatting, font, text size, spacing, page numbering and reference citation. It is expected that students have a title page with running head, per APA. An abstract however is not required for any assignment.

Assignments in this course are graded on both content (thoroughness, clarity, completeness, depth, substantiation) and style and organization (grammar, spelling, editing, cohesion, clarity, creativity, APA style). Specifically, assignments should be:

- Relevant and understandable with logical flow and organizational structure
- Smooth and clear with transitions between/among ideas
- Clear and cohesive
- Interesting, independent and creative
- Salient and appropriately use the literature in support of your arguments
- Expressions of your thoughts and beliefs, using your voice

Students are welcome to visit with the instructor in advance of submission deadline (details provided in class). For assistance with writing, please consider the following resources:

- Writing assistance at UBC
<http://learningcommons.ubc.ca/improve-your-writing/>
- Online Writing Lab (OWL) at Purdue
<http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl>

The best resource is the American Psychological Association *Publication Manual* (6th edition). It is not available online. You can find a copy at the UBC library or you may wish to purchase a copy for yourself.

GRADING CRITERIA:

| Letter Grade | Percent Range | Mid-Point | |
|--------------|---------------|-----------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| A+ | 90-100 | 95 | Represents work of exceptional quality. Content, organization and style are all at a high level. Student demonstrates excellent research and reference to literature where appropriate. Also, student uses sound critical thinking, has innovative ideas on the subject and shows personal engagement with the topic. |
| A | 85-89 | 87 | |
| A- | 80-84 | 82 | |
| B+ | 76-79 | 77.5 | Represents work of good quality with no major weaknesses. Writing is clear and explicit and topic coverage and comprehension is more than adequate. Shows some degree of critical thinking and personal involvement in the work. Good use of existing knowledge on the subject. |
| B | 72-75 | 83.5 | |
| B- | 68-71 | 69.5 | |
| C+ | 64-67 | 65.5 | Adequate and average work. Shows fair comprehension of the subject, but has some weaknesses in content, style and/or organization of the paper. Minimal critical awareness or personal involvement in the work. Adequate use of literature. |
| C | 60-63 | 62.5 | |
| C- | 55-59 | 57 | |
| D | 50-54 | 52 | Minimally adequate work, barely at a passing level. Serious flaws in content, organization and/or style. Poor comprehension of the subject, and minimal involvement in the paper. Poor use of research and existing literature. |
| F | 0-49 | | Failing work. Inadequate for successful completion of the course or submitted beyond final date of acceptance for paper. |

Statement on Required Readings; As there are not a high number of required readings, it is highly encouraged to seek out literature, information, resources etc. about the topics discussed each week.