

Biofeedback, Meditation and Self-Regulation

Spring, 2000

PY 405-24

Instructor: Edward Taub

Office: 157 Campbell Hall
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Office Hours: Mon. & Wed. 10:00 – 12:00
(or call for alternate time)

Course Requirements

There will be two examinations. Both exams will be primarily multiple choice questions that will cover material presented in the lectures. While Exam II will be given during Finals Week, both exams will be of equal weight. In addition, class participation is a very important aspect of this course.

<u>Grading Summary:</u>	Examination 1	45%
	Examination 2	45%
	Class participation	<u>10%</u>
		100%
	Term paper (Optional)	

The required readings for the course can be bought at Snoozy's (1137 11th Ave. South – Telephone No.: 328-2665).

A term paper is optional. If it is done, then it will count as one-third of the term grade and the two exams will be reduced in weight, each counting for one-third the term grade (rather than one-half). The term paper is due on the last day of class. Lateness will be penalized by a reduction in the grade. The term paper can have one of two formats. For those who have been exposed previously to the Method of Strong Inference, a Strong Inference analysis will be the preferred term project. You will, of course, find the instructions on how to carry out this exercise in your previous class material. The following are the important considerations for those who undertake this format.

1. Find the two articles to be reported on in the library by the method described in your previous course material.
 - a. Each person must work alone; i.e., not in a team.
 - b. First choose a topic in any area of particular interest to you within the subject matter of the course. Discuss this with the instructor.
Topic discussion with instructor – Due May 2. (or before).

- c. Go to Lister Hill or Sterne libraries (or both) and find the two papers according to the instructions in your previous course material.
2. Underline the passage(s) in the second paper that refer to the first paper and that indicate that the first paper was an important element in stimulating conduct of the second.
3. Show the two papers to Dr. Taub. Do not start working on them until you do. The appropriateness of the articles for your term paper cannot be evaluated unless you underline the relevant passages. Without underlining the articles cannot be evaluated.
4. As, noted, your completed exercise is due on the last day of class. You will not have a scheduled conference with the instructor on your project. If you run into trouble, however, make an appointment to see him.
5. Hand in copies of the two articles you have worked on along with your exercise/term paper. It will not be possible to grade your term paper unless you hand in the two articles; therefore, be sure to do this.

The second option for the term paper will be to hand in a more traditional piece of work. Instructions for this are attached to this syllabus. Your topic must be discussed with Dr. Taub by May 9.

Attendance: While attendance will not be taken during class, all of the material in the exams will be presented in the class lectures. If you must miss class, please arrange to borrow notes from a fellow class member; you will not be able to borrow my lecture notes. If you choose not to attend class, you will probably find that your performance on the exams will be poor. There is no textbook other than the snoozy's readings. To do well on exams, take very careful lecture notes and study them well. Missing lectures will be reflected in the class participation component of your grade.

Lecture Format: Many lectures will end with a relaxation exercise. The class will then discuss the experience of the exercise and its relation with other exercises that have been carried out in class.

COURSE SCHEDULE

<u>Date(s)</u>	<u>Topic</u>
3/21, 3/23 3/28, 3/30 4/4, 4/6 4/11, 4/13 4/18, 4/20	Meditation
4/25	<u>Exam I (Tuesday)</u>
4/27	Progressive Muscle Relaxation
5/2	Term paper topic discussed with Dr. Taub or <u>Strong Inference exercise topic discussed with him</u>
5/2, 5/4 5/9, 5/11 5/16, 5/18	Biofeedback
5/23	<u>Term Paper Due</u> (last day of class)
5/30	<u>Exam II 2 p.m. – 5 p.m. (Tuesday)</u>

Term Paper
(after Dr. Edwin Cook and Katharine Stewart)

The term paper must be based on research articles. One or two of your source articles can be review-type papers or book chapters but the rest must be research papers. Alternate approaches are possible, but they will not be acceptable unless Dr. Taub gives explicit permission for changes in approach.

The topic of the paper is to be chosen by you and should relate to the general subject matter of the course. You may wish to cover a stress-related disorder, mechanisms of stress, an aspect of meditation, a biofeedback technique, any relaxation method, or any other relevant topic. The paper should be based on your reading of appropriate materials from the library and all assertions of fact should be backed up with references to research articles or books. Format for the paper, including style for citing references, should be that given in the American Psychological Association (APA Publications Manual; Sterne Library Reference: BF 76.7/P83/1984). Persons who have taken courses with me before will find this in their course reading material.

Papers must be submitted on time in order to receive full credit. Papers must be typed. Although firm page and reference requirements are not set, I expect that you will need at least 12-15 double-spaced typed pages of text (excluding references) and six or more journal articles or books to adequately cover your topic.

1. **Organization**

- a. Organization is an important point that is often missed. Organize each level of the paper, each section, and each paragraph. Make your organization clear to the reader. Regardless of how well you write, your paper's organization will generally be improved if you take the time to do an outline before you write the paper. It is often useful to describe the overall organization of your paper (along with the topic) in the first paragraph.
- b. Use headings for subsections. You will probably cover a considerable amount of information (e.g., symptoms, etiology, and treatment types) in your headings. Write clear transitions between subsections to avoid confusing your reader and to lend some structure to your paper.
- c. Have good introductory sentences to your paragraphs to keep your reader on track in terms of where you are in making your points.

Transitions when you are changing topics or making a different point help your reader to avoid confusion.

- d. Write a strong conclusion! You may have covered a great deal of interesting research, but be sure to summarize your findings, emphasizing the important points. Your conclusion is your last chance to really make a good impression!

2. Writing style

- a. Avoid slang and colloquialisms. If you must use slang to convey your meaning, put slang terms in quotes.
- b. Watch your tense changes. In general, since your paper is a literature review, everything has already been done. Past tense is most appropriate for describing prior research, even though the research articles themselves may be written in present tense. Conclusions and generalizations can be in present tense, where appropriate.
- c. Make sure your writing style is not too casual for a formal literature review. The writing styles of the journal articles you are reading can serve as models for this. The main goal is clarity.

3. Format

- a. Double space throughout (except footnotes). Do this even in cases where you cannot type your paper and must hand-write it.
- b. Number your pages, preferably in the upper right of every page.
- c. Begin your paper with a title page, that includes: the name of the paper, your name, the name of the course, and the quarter and year.
- d. Avoid contractions. They may be acceptable for creative writing classes, but they are inappropriate in scholarly writing, unless they are quoted from someone else.
- e. Check your spelling. If you use a word processor or a typewriter with a built-in spelling checker, use it.
- f. Write in complete sentences. Beginning with a capital letter and ending with a period is a start, but it is not enough. You also need

a subject (noun phrase) and a predicate (verb phrase). Avoid overuse of comas.

- g. Proofread your own paper for the above points. Then have someone who writes well read your paper before you turn it in. Try to get honest feedback.

Note: UAB offers free help with writing to all currently enrolled students. These services are provided at the Writing Skills Center, 224 Humanities.

4. References and Citations

- a. Use APA style for citations to the literature in your text (author, year of publication). For format see last section in readings from former courses with Dr. Taub. You can never really oversight. The best rule of thumb is that any information you obtain from a book or article should be cited so that due credit is given. Periods go after the citation at the end of a sentence, not before.
- b. Be SURE that if you are copying material word-for-word from an article that you use quotes around that material.
- c. Do not just reiterate someone else's review of an area or include many references to the work of the same person. A term paper may rely to some degree on reviews, but should primarily be based on research articles (i.e., data papers). Therefore, if you find a review that is helpful, read the articles it cites and refer to them in your paper. If the research article is not available (e.g., in a foreign language), place it in the reference section, followed by "Cited in..." and the reference for the work that cited it.
- d. Remember to do your References Section in APA style. Alphabetize references. In choosing references, consider the following:

The best sources are journal articles, especially empirical papers (those with Methods and Results sections). Case studies and reviews may also be used, but not overused. Recall that case studies have limited generalizability.

Books are certainly acceptable references, although they can be overused. The general point is not to rely too heavily on one book. There are a few exceptions to this. For example, if the author of a book makes a number of points

that you want to evaluate, you might cite the book multiple times. However, this should be balanced by material that you find that bears on the points made by the book's author.

Popular magazines should generally be cited only to support a point about popular culture (e.g., citing an article on dieting in the magazine Seventeen to illustrate cultural emphasis on thinness in a paper on anorexia nervosa).

Encyclopedias are only slightly better than popular magazines. Because they are intended to cover an extremely broad range of topics, they tend to be out-of-date and somewhat superficial. In general, you should avoid them.

- e. When you describe a research finding, state its relevance to the questions that your own paper is addressing. Isolated descriptions of research are not very helpful.
- f. Do not plagiarize. If you use phrases or sentences from a paper you are summarizing, put it in quotes, and include the page number. For example:

In the words of one investigator, "The placebo effect seems difficult to demonstrate using this experimental method" (Jones, 1988, p. 245).

Generally, only a very small part of a paper should consist of quotations.