Assignment Instructions

**Contents of the Document.** Submit this work as a single document: it must be a PDF file. This document will consist of:

A). 1 APA style title page

b) 2 “parts” or sections of writing formatted using correct APA style (each section should begin with a correctly formatted heading at the top of a new page)

Part 1 (2-2.5 pages) – describing and applying a course concept

Part 2 (2-2.5 pages) – describing and applying a different course concept

c) 1 APA style reference section (you’re allowed unlimited pages, but it would be unusual for your references section to exceed 1-2 pages in length)

*\*Your full submission should therefore not be less than 6 pages in length (and generally no more than 8-9), including (a) your title page, (b) writing for Parts 1 & 2, and (c) the references section.*

***Format & Length.*** All formatting, including citations, references, title page, margins, spacing, etc. in your assignment should be in APA style (7th Edition). There will be significant deductions if the work that you submit does not adequately follow APA formatting guidelines.

Your entire submission should be double-spaced (everywhere—even between paragraphs), 12- point Times New Roman or Calibri font, and with margins of 2.54 cm (1 inch). Do not stray from this formatting. Each of your 2 parts should start at the top of a new page and should include a brief but descriptive heading that is boldface and left-aligned. (e.g., **Part 1: Applying Conformity to My Life**).

**Style*.*** Your writing should be clear, coherently structured, and represent concepts, ideas, and events thoroughly and accurately. In other words, from your writing, it should be easy for any reader to understand and receive correct information. Remove all superfluous writing that doesn’t help you achieve your goals (e.g., “I really enjoyed this topic and learned a lot.”). Students sometimes ask if they can write in first person (e.g., I, me, we, etc). **The answer is “yes!”** Write the way that most clearly conveys the information you want to deliver to your reader.

**Your Sources.** Use the applicable course readings as your starting place for sources. You must use **APA format** to cite and reference sources. Here’s something that’s important to know: if you are citing information from the textbook where the textbook authors get info from and cite another source, you should either (a) read, cite, and reference the original source, or (b) cite it like this: (Smith & Donaldson, 1983; cited in Scollon, 2022). If you cite like this, you must still *reference* both sources (i.e., the textbook that you’re drawing from (secondary source), *and* the primary source that that the textbook cites). For more info on this and other nuances of citation, see beginner’s guide to citation I provided earlier in the course.

**I generally only accept the use of quality academic sources for this assignment** (e.g., academic book chapters & peer-reviewed journal articles), so please inquire with me if you’re not sure about a source you want to use. **Do not use** any general online websites about psychology for this assignment. This includes sites like *Verywell Mind*, *Simply Psychology, or Wikipedia* (i.e., **do not** take information from these kinds of sources to use for your paper—I shouldn’t see them cited or referenced at all). There will be deductions for use of these and similar sources unless otherwise approved by me via direct communication prior to submission.

**Quotations and Paraphrasing.** While you will be required to use the course text and other course materials, you are not allowed to quote the course readings or any other outside sources (you must paraphrase only).The only time I should see a quotation is if you *need* to quote part of speech, like when it’s part of an example that you couldn’t do without including— that’s very different from quoting sources on the concepts and research.

TOPIC REQUIREMENT

The two parts of your assignment submission are independent of each other and must be on different topics. Select any 2 of the following topics to write about. Part 1 will be about your first chosen topic (e.g., conformity). Part 2 will be focused on an entirely different topic from the below list (e.g., confirmation bias). Pick topics you’ve enjoyed and/or want to spend more time understanding—you need to use the course readings carefully and completely to develop your thinking and support your writing). Here are your possible topics:

**• Confirmation bias**

**• Bias blind spot** – this one’s tough for some students to fully grasp, but if you’re confident in your understanding, I’ve seen some outstanding papers on this topic in the past.

**• Delayed decision-making** – this is a strategy to surmount mental shortcomings, so it’s okay and may be useful to also integrate a mental shortcoming into your paper (e.g., processes related to type 1 thinking, naïve realism, confirmation bias, desirability bias, etc).

**• Consider the opposite or consider an alternative** – this is a strategy to surmount mental shortcomings, so it’s okay and may be useful to also integrate a mental shortcoming into your paper (e.g., processes related to type 1 thinking, naïve realism, confirmation bias,desirability bias, etc).

**• Conformity** – for this topic, you must effectively use both normative and information social influence in your writing.

**• Social facilitation vs. social interference** – if you select this concept, you need to consider the complexities of how these concepts relate to boosting vs. inhibiting performance.

**• Foot in the door (persuading using “commitment and consistency”) OR Door in the face** – persuasion unit (it’s probably better to select one or the other rather than writing about both foot in the door and door in the face to write about, but that decision is up to you).

**• The five-factor model of personality** – generally, the best approach for this one is to effectively describe the idea of the full 5-factor model, but then to narrow things to spend most of you time with a more specific focus on one factor and possibly some of its facets.

CONTENT REQUIREMENTS: SKILL DEVELOPMENT AND COURSE CONTENT

**In each of the 2 parts of your submission, you must do the following:**

**• Correctly use APA formatting to format your work and to cite and reference the information included.** It’s your responsibility to do the work needed to understand how to use APA correctly (see http://seneca.libguides.com/apa).

**• Demonstrate a clear, complete, and accurate understanding of the selected course concept and other course content you decide to integrate.** To do so, it helps for your paper to have a sensible flow, beginning with a brief but clear description of what your paper is about. You may then define and develop the central concept(s) using the course readings as your only source or your starting place.

Think about how the text conveys the meaning of the concept or topic and try to do so in a similar way. For example, are there **any definitions, terms, or ideas** used in the reading to explain your chosen topic? Seek to do something similar. Similarly, is there a **research study or example** noted in the text (or that you discovered yourself) that could help you to clarify or flesh out the concept for your reader? Make maximum use of the course content and other resources—never base your paper largely on your own ideas without building those ideas upon the course content! **No quotations**.

To demonstrate good understanding, **papers should be clearly written, with coherently structured sentences, strong grammar, and word choice that conveys your intended meaning.** If your writing is unclear, it will be difficult for me to see that you “get it” and it would be hard for a novice reader to learn from your work. Imagine writing for your best friend or your uncle, supposing of course that the chosen person has no experience with the psychology—what would you need to say so that they understand all concepts?

3. **Demonstrate your ability to use the selected course material by applying it to the real world with one appropriate and thorough application.** Specifically, your paper must apply the selected concept to either (a) a context or event from your life history or (b) an example anecdote from the news, pop culture, or social media. (e.g., are there events from your life history that capture the essence of *confirmation bias*). To do this well, select only **one application** to develop fully. **Do not** briefly touch on several examples.

*\*Note that there are different ways to integrate requirements 2 and 3 into your work; however, the simplest and most straightforward way to approach it is to use the first half of the piece (give or take) to describe the concept and the second half (give or take) to develop the application. Students who are comfortable with a more advanced approach might instead weave the concepts and a running example throughout the the writing. You can be creative but work within your limits as a writer.*