

**UNIVERSIDAD INTERAMERICANA DE PUERTO RICO
RECINTO METROPOLITANO
DEPARTAMENTO DE EDUCACIÓN Y PROFESIONES DE LA CONDUCTA
PROGRAMA DE PSICOLOGÍA
PROF. NOÉ GARCÍA
PSYCH 4971**

Instructions for the Final Text & Oral Presentation/Discussion

I. Instruction for the Final Text/Proyect

A. Logic and objective of this exercise

The Final Text for this class consists of a comprehensive analysis, in the form of an essay, that offers a review of the existing scientific/academic literature in aid of establishing the state of the art and science of a specific problem in the field of Psychology. We will call this text a “comprehensive and analytical review”. The problem to be reviewed has already been selected by the student (and handed in the assignment #1) and it consist of a subject matter and a application (or “instance”) of said subject matter. The purpose is to review a application of a theory, model, therapy, assessment or intervention, and analyze the evidence and/or empirical studies that validate its actual use.

For this, the students are required to accumulate a certain quantity (from ten to twelve articles/texts from academic and scientific primary or secondary sources) and type (Meta-Analysis, Systemic Reviews, empirical and theoretical studies, etc.) of texts. In other words, it requires a comprehensive “Literature Review” (the details of said reviews appear in the instructions for assignments #2, #3 & #4). In many ways, students will be doing a sort of “Meta-Analysis”, different from the classical and quantitative Meta-Analysis (as seen in discussion in Unit I), in the almost literal sense that they will “analyze what has been analyzed and beyond it”. To call this text a “Meta-Analysis” might prove to be confusing (and a misnomer in terms of the standard definition in Evidence Based Practice) so for that reason we could just simply call it a “comprehensive and analytic review”. Although, truth be told, we can’t really call this type of review “comprehensive” but for the aims and purposes of this class, its a good enough start at learning how to do a comprehensive and analytic review.

B. General format and due date

This comprehensive and analytic review will follow the typical rules of any essay, and it will try to apply the minimum standards required for an academic or scientific article. For more details on certain standards regarding in what regards the transparency and clarity of exposition, students should re-read the report (assigned discussed in Unit I) by APA Publications & Communications Board (2008). In terms of the format and divisions there are a few specifications (and even idiosyncrasies) that should be taken into consideration.

The text should be handed in, printed and stapled, following a Microsoft Word format, a letter size twelve (12) and a spacing of one and a half (1.5) between sentences (or line spacing in the paragraph options). The extension of the work should **not be less than eight (8) pages or greater than fifteen (15) pages of content** (not title page or cover of any kind is required). The text has a value of 25 points, and it is part of the 25%, alongside the Oral Report/Discussion (whose instructions we have exposed below), of the Final Text grade. The text is due on **May/28/2019**

C. Details on the divisions and content

What we have here is a simple guideline regarding the divisions and content (this is not the space for a specialized manual). This will be discussed in class and any questions regarding it should be discussed either in class or, if need be, though e-mail (do not wait for the week when said text is due). The essay

should have the following “divisions”, which have to be labeled and continuous (do not use a whole page for just one section, just number them, as you would do in an essay or article and once you finish with one, you label and fill the next one):

1) An Introduction

In here, like in any introduction the student should present the problem, the purpose and relevance of said problem in the field and present the main argument in the first paragraph (maximum two paragraphs).

2) Research Problem

The student enters into more details defining the problem, its relevant variables and key terms (in a clear and operational matter). Also summarize, in a brief matter (because you will not yet elaborate a comprehensive review of literature, which will be done in another section):

- a. How your research problem has been generally defined.
- b. How it has been researched or what are the main venues in which it has been approached.
- c. The strengths and limitations regarding how it has been researched.

3) Criteria and selection of texts

As is expected of any type of Meta-Analysis, Systemic Review or even comprehensive theoretical review of literature, one should always try to define, as precise and clear as possible, the criteria for the selection of the texts used (and list them in the form of prose, avoid numbering them in a vertical style since it takes up too much space).

4) Concepts and coding

In this section you should enter into details regarding the relevant concepts, terminology or theoretical aspects associated with your subject matter/ research problem. This should help to better understand the selection of texts or at least the terms under study. In the case of Meta-Analysis, be explicit on the relevant terms that have been coded or used by the author/studies reviewed (its very relevant to be precise in this, since one variable, concept, population or even therapy can be defined in multiple ways).

5) Review of Literature

Here we have the “meat” of the text, since most of the text should consist of a cogent, organized and well written synthesis and critical interpretation of the literature reviewed. This should not be just a simple copy and paste of the assignments since it should have a coherent continuity and order that correspond with the rest of the text (and each paragraph should flow from one to the next, and be well organized).

6) Discussion

In this section you should center on a discussion that takes into consideration: the methodologies and statistical analyses reviewed in the articles, synthesize the most relevant aspects regarding the methods and analysis used in the Meta-Analysis, empirical studies or theoretical texts. This section should also discuss any methodological problems observed in the reviewed articles, and interpret what they suggest in terms of “the evidence”. In other words, not just what “the evidence” says but how it was interpreted, and what possible outcomes does this have in the analysis. For examples, where the Meta-Analysis clear and consistent in their codings and analysis? Did you notice any form of bias in the analysis? Did you notice that something was left unanswered or just ignored? Among other things. This part needn't be long but it is one of the most important ones, it is the one that requires must the use of critical applications and thinking.

7) Conclusions

Provide a synthesis of the main arguments. A conclusion shouldn't be too long, it should follow, more or less, a similar logic to an introduction (length-wise). A good set of questions to ask ourselves in this scenario, a form of simplified guide-line, are: What can we see in terms of the state of the art and science of the subject matter? What does the evidence suggest? What are the possible limitations of the

studies and of this (your) revision? What possibilities do you (the student) envision regarding the state and future of the problem you've reviewed?

8) The References.

The references have to appear in the end. But said references should also appear rightfully quoted, directly and indirectly (when it applies) and references throughout the text. The style required should follow the APA standards of quoting and use of references. The minimum of articles/texts used should be from nine (if its only one individual) to twelve (if its a group)[9-12].

II. Instructions on the Oral Presentation/Discussion

A. General instructions and logic of this exercise

The "Oral Presentation" is in reality more a critical oral discussion of the results and contents of the Final Text (the comprehensive and analytic review) than a simple presentation or report (we have called it an "Oral Presentation" for the sake of familiarity). The logic of this activity is that each so called "Oral Presentation" will become a sort of hybrid between a conference and a group discussion. In this sense one could say that during the "Oral Presentation" the individual or assigned group will impart their knowledge and thoughtful interpretations on the subject matter, and once they finish, their discussion will be complemented with the professor's and class's feedback, questions and comments. The group giving out the "Oral Presentation" should also bear in mind that their discussion has to reflect the prior discussions in class. In this sense, many of the things discussed in prior Units can serve to interpret and frame the discussion on the selected topic.

The group's attendance, solidarity and thoughtful participation (which does not mean that anyone should refrain from criticism as long as it is prudent and pertinent) is necessary for this process (odious as it is to remind this, bear in mind that participation and assistance constitutes a significant percentage of the class's grade).

B. Format and due dates

These "Oral Presentations/Discussions" will happen as we reach the end of the trimester (either the last two weeks or week). The order of the presentations is random, although volunteers are always preferred (obviously to start and continue discussion and not to choose the last day of presentations). Each oral discussion will fluctuate between a **minimum of 15 minutes to a maximum of 45 minutes** (depending on the subject matter and quantity of individuals in each group). Once the discussion has ended, the students will participate providing commentaries, questions or even insightful critiques on what was discussed. The professor will also provide feedback but most of all he will make a series of questions to corroborate the groups general knowledge on the selected topic, their presentations and to incite a critical and reflexive discussion in the group.

The Oral Presentation does not require a "visual presentation". In other words, it is enough that the group stands up front (or if its a small group we make a circle) and starts their presentation and discussion, displaying their knowledge on the matter. This presentation has a total value of 15 points and said presentation and it is part of 25% of the Last Text grade.

C. Criteria for evaluation

The criteria for evaluation this activity are:

1) Knowledge on the topic and use of references

Each individual or group's members must show that they have sufficient knowledge on the topic and in that sense they have become, more or less, familiar with the core concepts, terminology and relevant debates/discussions of said topic. Obviously the group's exposure to said topic has been limited and in

this sense what matters here is that the group shows the intention and sufficient effort to critically assess their subject matter and integrate what has been discussed in class..

Students can use some visual aids (for instance index cards) that facilitates remember some keys terms or information. That being said, the whole presentation cannot be reduced to reading information. Bear in mind that it is an oral discussion (more so than a "presentation") that should reflect your efforts at analyzing, interpreting and thinking the selected topic (and in that sense it is not a mere reproduction of what appears in a text nor your immediate opinion).

2) Clarity, fluidity and precision

Students should express themselves in a cogent, clear, fluid and precise matter when discussing their subject matter. They should speak in an intelligible way, both in terms of tone and speed.

Students should also be precise in the use of the terminology and concepts related to their subject matter.

3) Coordination and organization

The exposition should have an internal logic that reflects a continuity between the subject matters discussed. In this sense bear in mind that all expositions are like a good essay, they should have an introduction, an elaboration/development and a closing statement. Between the members of the group there should be coherent flow that does not distract or interrupt the presentation.

4) Analysis and critical assessment

This Oral Presentation should not be reduced to a mere reproduction or summary of the selected texts for discussion. A certain degree of summarizing is obviously needed to present the main arguments and debate the contents of certain theories, experiments and situations BUT a real discussion requires to critically analyze and interpret what appears in the texts.