

Groupwork (expanded details)

I am using the term "wiki" for the document students on this course will be creating (in groups); and have created in past years. It may be slightly inappropriate, but comes from using Moodle's "wiki" feature which lets students create or post a document which other students may read but not edit.

Your coursework will be posted into a wiki in Moodle. However, although there is an editor in Moodle for creating the content, it today seems better to use GoogleDocs which is a simpler editor yet supports embedded pictures etc. well, *and* is set up for sharing authorship within your group. If you don't like that technology, I nevertheless recommend creating the document outside Moodle, and posting it as a PDF file (many fewer problems than posting WORD .doc files). You can thus share the document privately with others in your group, and then post it into Moodle as soon and as often as you like.

You need to create a (free) Google account. This takes 2 minutes. The sooner the better really. On the course web page are various bits of help on getting a GoogleDocs account, using it, and posting the document into Moodle as required.

Course and coursework (assessed) structure and rationale

Course work will be done in groups. Each group will produce a wiki web page on their allocated topic. The aims of this approach to a course include: giving students experience (for their CV) of producing something for this new medium; having practice in a different form of writing than psychology essays (see next paragraph); producing something useful for fellow students and conversely experiencing how useful other students' work can be for you. Students in this department don't really realise how good they are, that they are doing useful work. If I were starting a new topic, or had to look it up from scratch, I'd certainly start from a CR from a student if one were available. I'd hope eventually to go beyond it, but it would be a real time-saving boost to starting up: listing much of the relevant literature, alerting me to some of the critical questions. The wikis will also serve in this way.

Coursework (assessed): requirements

The objective for each group's wiki is to be as helpful as possible to other students in the class in getting started on that topic in positive psychology. The overall criterion is: being helpful to other students not in your group. If you can get a few students from other groups to comment on your wiki page, orally or by email, that would be excellent: what's the best thing about it, the worst, what they would find useful if it were added. Above all, this kind of writing is NOT a standard essay which (egocentrically and unrealistically) assumes that all readers will read from beginning to end. This is not how you yourself read even a journal paper, and certainly not a web page.

My starting suggestion for format (but feel free to improve on this, and look at last year's wikis and think about what does and doesn't seem useful to you) would be:

- Title (reconsider whether the allocated name is best)
- If you were only going to read one paper: what would it be, and why.
Preference: a key experimental result: best single starter reference that has an experiment in.
- A very short critique of whether there is a gap between the announced theory, and the empirical result
- An example of wild uncritical claims in this area
- One or more practical exercises an individual could carry out. (Many experiments contain these; others are only in books. Possibly some topics do not have any.)
- An old cultural connection. E.g. for gratitude, thanksgiving prayers in church; for exercise, ancient Greek olympics showing non-functional physical exercise being admired.
- If you were only going to read, say, 3 things: which would they be.

- History of the topic. And what area of (non-positive) psychology it derives from; what area would claim to cover it.
- Clinical applications: if there are any? are health measures relevant?
- A longer reference list of other possibly relevant papers, annotated by how good you think each is, and what it is about.

Outline timetable for the coursework

Here I use the classes as landmarks, but the important work is in between classes, to be completed by the next class.

1. Session 1, 14 Jan.

Solo critique of past topics.

2. Session 2, 21 Jan.

Organise your group's division of labour. Get cracking on reading and writing.

3. Session 3, 28 Jan.

Get a full draft of your wiki up.

4. Session 4, 4 Feb.

Critique other groups' wikis, give them the feedback receive feedback from others on your own wiki. I'll organise this. But you must have your own wiki complete for this to work.

5. Session 5, 11 Feb.

Final editing, using the critiques you receive.

6. <Freeze wikis>, tell yourself: 19 Feb midnight

Division of labour within your group

You need to agree in your group how to divide the labour. There are different possibilities, some of which are:

1. Allocate different sections of the final wiki document to different people. This saves a lot of communication BUT can lead to some incoherence if there is not person or state that reads over the whole document.
2. Allocate different roles e.g. Literature collector, author of sections, reviewer of the overall document, expert in editing the wiki itself (especially if you add pictures, side pages, ...)
3. Everyone does everything AND then discusses each bit. The very top quality work may be done like this (e.g. the King James Bible was), but it is very expensive in time and effort. Usually too expensive.
4. Divide the reading (more than the writing); pool citations and brief opinions on the wiki; then collectively agree what to recommend to your readers,
5. Etc.

More on coursework and sharing credit

As well as the wiki page (editable only by the group, readable by the whole class), on Moodle there is also a forum (where students will see only their own group's postings) where you can debate with each other the changes you make, why, how to improve. Even if your group only uses the forum for this, by the deadline, I also require each group to post one or more messages to the forum that states what the different contributions of each group member were.

At the deadline (midnight, end of Friday 19 Feb, imposed) the Moodle contents will be frozen and marks given on that basis only: utility for other students of the wiki text; and evidence in the forum of your full participation in the joint editorial and authorial process. The wikis keep a history of who posted or edited what, but probably more important are the forums which can show who suggested, changed, reviewed what. If you have done significant work in face to face meetings, your group should post brief minutes / summaries of these meetings in the forum so that I see written evidence of them.

You may not be able to "see" the freezing: a copy of the whole thing will be invisibly made, and the marking will be on the basis of that copy. Meanwhile, the wikis will remain open for you until the exams: you could read and continue to update them as you wish. I will be asking you to remove any PDFs you have posted (e.g. in the forums) at that point since, even though only course members can get access, there can be complaints about copyright violations; and I'll be discussing with you whether you would be happy making the wikis publicly available outside this course.

Marks are not necessarily split evenly within a group.

Since it is not possible for all groups in most classes to be of equal size, the amount of work should be adjusted to the number of (active members) in a group. Remember that typical group size in previous years of this course was 6 a few years ago, while now it is typically 3 (and a few with 4 or 2 members).