

**PSY 510 Short Paper 1: The Scientific Skeptic
Guidelines and Rubric**

Overview

This short paper assignment will require you to apply the scientific method to a psychological claim that you are skeptical about.

Prompt

In everyday life, we are regularly exposed to various claims about human psychology and human behavior. Whereas some of these claims may be scientifically valid, many of them are not.

Choose a psychological claim about which you are skeptical. If you are having trouble thinking of one, think about common areas of pseudoscience that you may have heard about: astrology, ESP, hypnosis, etc. to maybe get an idea.

In your paper, develop a research question that you have about the claim. Discuss how the scientific method could be used to test your research question as compared to one of the other methods mentioned in the module (method of tenacity, method of authority, a priori method).

Your paper should include all of the following elements:

- Your chosen **psychological claim** about which you are skeptical
- Your **research question** about your chosen claim
- An explanation of **how the scientific method can be applied** to test your hypothesis
- A comparison how the application of the scientific method to the hypothesis **compares to one of the other methods** mentioned in this module

Guidelines for Submission: Your paper must be submitted as a Microsoft Word document with double spacing, standard font (12-point Times New Roman or 11-point Calibri) and one-inch margins. This paper should be a minimum of three pages (not including cover page and references).

Rubric

| Critical Elements | Proficient (100%) | Needs Improvement (80%) | Not Evident (0%) | Value |
|--|--|---|---|--------------|
| Psychological Claim Chosen | States chosen psychological claim | States claim that is not closely related to psychology. | Does not state a chosen psychological claim | 10 |
| Research Question | Creates a testable research question about chosen claim | Creates a research question about chosen claim but it is not testable | Does not state a research question about chosen claim | 10 |
| Application of Scientific Method to Research Question | Illustrates how the scientific method can be applied to test the research question about chosen claim | Provides incomplete explanation of how the scientific method can be applied to test the research question | Does not illustrate how the scientific method can be applied to test the research question about the chosen claim | 30 |
| Comparison to Other Method | Explains how the application of the scientific method compares to one of the other methods mentioned in the module and makes connections to the readings | Provides an incomplete explanation of how the scientific method compares to one of the other methods mentioned in the module | Does not compare the application of the scientific method to one of the other methods mentioned in the module | 30 |
| Articulation of Response | Submission has no major errors related to citations, grammar, spelling, syntax, or organization | Submission has some errors related to citations, grammar, spelling, syntax, or organization that negatively impact readability and articulation of main ideas | Submission has critical errors related to citations, grammar, spelling, syntax, or organization that prevent understanding of ideas | 20 |
| Earned Total | | | | 100% |