**Psychology 101: General Psychology**

**Pseudoscience Paper**

**Spring 2019**

**Instructions and Details**

1. We will discuss the warning signs of pseudoscience (Schmaltz & Lilienfeld, 2014) in class, early in the semester, as well as couching this project in that discussion. I will lead with an example.
   1. To review the warning signs of pseudoscience with your students. Here’s a link to the article on the warning signs: <https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2014.00336>. (I will also link the PDF on Brightspace.)
2. Use whatever media necessary to find the best example of pseudoscience. Try to stick to psychological ideas (explanations for people’s behaviors and thoughts), but I will accept any claim from any domain if crafty and clever enough ;)
3. Use the document *10 Questions to Determine Fake Science from Real Science* on Brightspace to evaluate the media source of the pseudoscience claim. You will submit a copy of this with your paper. You may submit a hardcopy even if you submit your paper electronically.
4. Write a 3-page, double-spaced (with 12-pt readable font) paper describing your claim/example of pseudoscience and analyze the claim using the warning signs above. This paper will be due **Monday, March 18, 2019 by 10 AM** (submitting on Brightspace is preferred, but you may submit a hardcopy in class).
   1. Your paper should follow a similar path to this:
      1. Introduce your pseudoscience claim with a story, anecdote, or brief history.
      2. Define exactly what about the claim you plan to analyze through the “warning signs” lens.
      3. Follow with a paragraph for each individual warning sign you discuss. You should have a topic sentence indicating which one you plan to discuss. ONE PARAGRAPH PER IDEA. No solid blocks of text.
      4. NOTE: You don’t need to address all seven warning signs
      5. Finish with a concluding paragraph that links back to your intro paragraph.
5. We will do a rough draft peer swap in early March (Wednesday, March 6, 2019). **This swap is optional.** However, if you participate in this swap, you can earn 10% extra credit on your final paper score. **I strongly recommend participating**. At the very least, you should turn in a proofread copy at the final due date. If you do not peer-swap in class on March 6, any proofreading done by a friend/classmate from class will NOT count for the extra credit.
6. I will return feedback on your paper in approximately 1 week after the due date (digital or hardcopy return will be the same as submission).
   1. You will have one additional week from receiving feedback to receive an additional 10% back if your score was not favorable. This is only open to students who score a 19 or less (out of 25).

**Grading Rubric for Pseudoscience Paper (Spring 2019)**

Possible Points: 25 points

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|  | **(5)** | **(4)** | **(3)** | **(2)** |
| **Overall Content** | Exceptionally well-presented and argued; ideas are detailed, well-developed, supported with specific evidence & facts, as well as examples and specific details. | Well-presented and argued; ideas are detailed, developed and supported with evidence and details, mostly specific. | Content is sound and solid; ideas are present but not particularly developed or supported; some evidence, but usually of a generalized nature. | Content is not sound |
| **Characterization of Class Material** | Demonstrates a mastery of class psychological science principles. | Demonstrates a thorough understanding psychological science principles but may have one or two errors. | Demonstrates a weak understanding of psychological science principles, with consistent mischaracterizations. | No demonstration of grasp on psychological science principles. |
| **Assignment Specifics** | Fully dissects the pseudoscience claim utilizing the appropriate warning signs. | A good description of the pseudoscience claim, utilizing the appropriate warning signs, but missing some details. | An adequate description of the pseudoscience claim, utilizing the some of warning signs, but missing significant details. | A poor description of the pseudoscience claim, lack of discussion of the warning signs, and missing significant details. |
| **Essay Components** | Clearly presents a main idea and supports it throughout the paper AND the essay is well-planned and well-thought out. Includes title, introduction, statement of main idea, transitions and conclusion. | There is a main idea supported throughout most of the paper AND the essay has good overall organization, includes the main organizational tools. | Vague sense of a main idea, weakly supported throughout the paper AND the essay has a sense of organization, although some of the organizational tools are used weakly or missing. | No main idea AND no sense of organization. |
| **Grammar & Mechanics** | Excellent grammar, spelling, syntax, and punctuation. | A few errors in grammar, spelling, syntax, and punctuation, but not many. | Shows a pattern of errors in spelling, grammar, syntax, and/or punctuation. Could also be a sign of lack of proof-reading.  ----------------------------  MANDATORY LOSS OF POINTS: Going over 3 pages. | Continuous/consistent errors |

**Bonus points (2): Exceptionally creative claim OR scientific takedown. Two bonus points.**