

Teaching of Psychology

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Psychology courses are among the most popular classes on college campuses and a rapidly growing addition to high school curriculums. *Teaching of Psychology* (ToP) is devoted to improving the teaching and learning processes in psychology at all educational levels, from high school through undergraduate- and graduate-level. ToP is indispensable as a source book for teaching methods and as a forum for new ideas. Dedicated to improving the learning and teaching process at all educational levels, this journal has established itself as a leading source of information and inspiration for all who teach psychology. Coverage includes empirical research on teaching and learning; studies of teacher or student characteristics; subject matter or content reviews for class use; investigations of student, course, or teacher assessment; professional problems of teachers; essays on teaching; innovative course descriptions and evaluations; curriculum designs; bibliographic material; demonstrations and laboratory projects; and news items.

Article types

Teaching of Psychology is devoted to improvement of the teaching and learning processes at all educational levels from secondary school through college and graduate school to continuing education. The journal includes empirical research on teaching and learning of psychological concepts and theories; studies of teacher or student characteristics subject matter or content reviews for the psychology class; investigations of psychology student, course, or teacher assessment; professional problems of psychology teachers; innovative psychology course descriptions and evaluation; curriculum designs; and demonstrations and laboratory projects. For most submissions, authors should ideally include empirical assessment of the contribution. The empirical assessment should primarily and directly measure the impact of the technique on the student learning rather than focus predominantly on student self-report of learning. All submissions should explicitly demonstrate how the research is relevant to psychology educators and/or students.

The journal includes four major types of articles: (1) pilot and small-scale studies, (2) conceptual and methodological empirical replications, (3) full-length empirical studies and integrative pieces, and (4) evidence-based strategies for teaching of psychology.

If a paper is not suitable for publication in *Teaching of Psychology*, we will inform the authors as soon as possible (usually within about 1 week after their submission). If the paper is generally suitable for *Teaching of Psychology*, we aim to provide an editor's

report based on at least two sets of reviewers' comments within 12 weeks after their submission. *Teaching of Psychology* is published four times per year, and authors should not expect their paper to appear in the forthcoming issue subsequent to their submission being received.

Here are specific details on each of the four major types of articles the journal will consider. For guidance about which section your paper best fits, please contact the editor Aaron S. Richmond at top@teachpsych.org.

Power Analysis. For all data-driven manuscripts, we prefer a priori power analysis but will accept post-hoc power analysis. Please include these in your manuscript, either as a footnote or in the main body of the manuscript. Sample sizes that are below the minimal standard for inferential statistics (e.g., 20 per cell; [see Simmons et al., 2011](#)) must justify their sample using power analysis based on effect sizes from previous research.

Reference:

Simmons, J. P., Nelson, L. D., & Simonsohn, U. (2011). False-positive psychology: Undisclosed flexibility in data collection and analysis allows presenting anything as significant. *Psychological Science*, 22(11), 1359-1366. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0956797611417632>

Proof of Concept Corner: This section will house promising pilot studies or small-scale studies. Submissions to this Corner should be shorter articles that provide quantitative evidence for teaching and learning related interventions, establish associations between variables related to the teaching of psychology, and/or present descriptive data to propose problems to solve. It is highly encouraged that they contain OSF Materials, Data, and/or Preregistration. They must be:

1. The manuscript should be no more than 4,500 words. This includes the title page, abstract, main body of the manuscript, references, tables, figures, and appendices.
2. Data-driven.
3. Novel.

Previously published *ToP* examples:

Rogers, S. L., Hollett, R., Li, Y. R., & Spielman, C. P. (2022). An evaluation of virtual reality role-play experiences for helping-profession courses. *Teaching of Psychology*, 49(1), 78-84. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0098628321995431>

Ober, T. M. (2021). The use of a digital pedagogical tool to support writing instruction in the social sciences. *Teaching of Psychology*, 48(4), 300-307. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0098628320979900>

The Replication Corner:As there is a growing concern for replication of studies in psychology, and *ToP* is committed to improving our science in this regard. Therefore, *ToP* encourages the publication of replication studies. In this section, we encourage authors to not only replicate findings from previously published studies, but also to include some novel aspect to their study (e.g., different type of institution, psychology subject matter, class size, additional measures, etc.). Submissions in this section must:

1. Be data driven.
2. Be small- or large-scale studies.
3. Be no more than a total of 4,500 words or commensurate with the original article. This includes the title page, abstract, main body of the manuscript, references, tables, figures, and appendices.
4. Attempt to replicate previously published work on any subject, population, or outlet (e.g., PLAT, SOTLP, TEPP, SoTL journal).
5. Have implications for practical teaching, curricular, programmatic, or advising responsibilities.

Previously published *ToP* examples:

Friedrich, J., Childress, J., & Cheng, D. (2018). Replicating a national survey on statistical training in undergraduate psychology programs: Are there “new statistics” in the new millennium? *Teaching of Psychology*, 45, 312–323. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0098628318796414>

Reich, C. M., LaCaille, L. J., Axford, K. E., & Slaughter, N. R. (2022). Empathic communication skills across applied undergraduate psychology courses: A replication study. *Teaching of Psychology*, 49(1), 49-56. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0098628321995431>

The Science of Teaching and Learning Corner:Submissions to this corner should be full-length articles that are data- or theory-driven, meta-analytic investigations, or conceptual position articles. Submissions to this section are meant to illuminate teaching of psychology topics with broad implications or importance to SoTL researchers. They may be:

1. The manuscript should be no more than a total of 8,500 words. This includes the title page, abstract, main body of the manuscript, references, tables, figures, and appendices.
2. Integrative literature reviews.
3. Full studies (i.e., not short pilot studies), multiple experiment manuscripts, large meta-analytic reviews, etc.
4. Op-ed articles. For example, pros and cons of moving a psych major from BA to BS, changing the experimental sequence, how to get students more interested in research, career advice, etc.

Previously published *ToP* examples:

Nusbaum, A. T., Swindell, S., & Plemons, A. (2021). Kindness at first sight: The role of syllabi in impression formation. *Teaching of Psychology*, 48(2), 130-143. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0098628320959953>

Wei, Y., Spencer-Rodgers, J., Anderson, E., & Peng, K. (2021). The effects of a cross-cultural psychology course on perceived intercultural competence. *Teaching of Psychology*, 48(3), 221-227 <https://doi.org/10.1177/0098628320977273>

The Scholarly Teacher Corner: This corner is meant to provide a forum for shorter articles that provide practical reviews, activities, small-scale studies and/or resources for teachers of psychology to directly use in their classroom or teaching responsibilities. They can be small-scale studies, reflective essays, practical activities, nondata driven emerging ideas, subject specific (e.g., abnormal, developmental, etc.) papers, ideas on how to incorporate a book into your course, research reviews that illuminate findings for teachers of psychology, translations of new research, major issues to consider, etc. Articles in this corner should:

1. Provide practical hands on advice for teachers.
2. Be based on past research or evidence.
3. The manuscript should be no more than 4,000 words. This includes the title page, abstract, main body of the manuscript, references, tables, figures, and appendices.
4. Include instructional materials on Open Science Framework (OSF) Materials or Figshare. Possible Appendices (for online materials or OSF) that provide the actual activities or course materials. SAGE is a partner of Figshare, the industry leading open repository of research data. This helps us improve the discoverability of supplementary data we publish, as well as support the visualization of this data online. There's no limit to each article's accompanying supplementary data, and it's free to access on SAGE Journals as well as on the Figshare platform. Here are some related links: <https://www.sagepub.com/press/sage-publishing-partners-with-figshare-to-support-wider-access-to-article-supplemental> or <https://sage.figshare.com/>

Previously published *ToP* examples:

Garlington, T., Ryan, V. M., Nolty, C., Ilagan, H., & Kunicki, Z. J. (2021). Bringing social justice into the statistics classroom. *Teaching of Psychology*, 48(3), 269-274. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0098628320979879>

Koch, M. K., & Mendle, J. (2021). Real-world skills in a virtual world: An innovative activity for teaching developmental Psychopathology. *Teaching of Psychology*. <https://doi.org/10.1177/00986283211042309>

Preregistration, Transparency, and Open Science

Teaching of Psychology is committed to promoting transparent, open, rigorous research. The following procedures are part of the submission process:

Disclosures. As part of the submission procedures, authors will be asked to confirm the following (even though not all apply to all types of research designs):

You included a clear statement of how the sample size was determined

You included a statement of a priori statistical power based on reasonable effect size (quantitative studies) or how you ensured saturation of depth and breadth of themes (qualitative studies)

You included a description of all data exclusions (e.g., outliers), how the decisions about exclusions were made, and have conducted all analyses with and without the exclusions

You included a description of all data transformations, how the decisions about transformations were made, and have conducted all analyses with both the transformed and raw data

You included a rationale for including covariates and tested all models with and without covariates included

All measures and questions relevant to the research question contained in the project were included in the manuscript

You included a clear statement of the amount, type, and method of handling missing data

You included effect sizes for all statistical tests

All research questions and hypotheses are clearly and accurately labeled as either exploratory or confirmatory

You included rationale for any deviations from standard scoring procedures of measures

You included, as an appendix or supplement, a detailed description of the interview questions asked

You included a detailed description of your qualitative coding/analysis process

You included an assessment of coding trustworthiness, either quantitative or qualitative

These items are presented as a checklist in the submission portal, with authors actively confirming adherence to each practice. A separate statement for disclosures is not required but authors can choose to include one in the manuscript if they wish (e.g., the 21-word solution; Simmons, Nelson, & Simonsohn, 2012).

Transparency and Open Science Statement. As part of the submission process, authors must include a Transparency and Open Science Statement. This statement will be included as part of the peer-review process and will ultimately appear in the Author Note section of accepted manuscripts. The Transparency and Openness Statement must indicate the following:

Are the raw data contained in this manuscript openly available for download?

If yes, did you include a DOI or other persistent identifier in the manuscript?

For quantitative analyses, is the analysis code/syntax used for the analyses openly available for download?

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For qualitative analyses, are the list of questions and coding manuals openly available for download?

If yes, did you include a DOI or other persistent identifier in the manuscript?

Are all materials used in the study openly available for download?

If yes, did you include a DOI or other persistent identifier in the manuscript?

Did this study include a pre-registration plan for data collection and/or analysis?

If yes, did you include a link to the pre-registration plan in the manuscript?

If yes, were deviations from the pre-registration plan clearly indicated in the manuscript?

The statement should appear on a separate page, and all links should direct to active and anonymized websites. All of the aforementioned questions must be addressed in the statement (1, 2 and/or 3, 4, and 5), whether the answers are yes or no. Additional information may also be provided to explain specific conditions or circumstances. Example statements are as follows:

The analysis code (doi.xxxx) and materials (doi.xxxx) used in this manuscript are openly available. The raw data contained in this manuscript are not openly available due to privacy restrictions set forth by the institutional ethics board but can be

obtained from the corresponding author following the completion of a privacy and fair use agreement. No aspects of the study were pre-registered.

The raw data, analysis code, and materials used in this study are not openly available but are available upon request to the corresponding author. The data collection and analysis were pre-registered (link to URL of pre-registration plan), and all deviations from the pre-registration plan were clearly indicated in the manuscript.

These are just examples, and authors are free to tailor the statements to their particular situation so long as they addressed criteria 1-5 listed above.

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Open Data– The raw data used in the manuscript are freely available via a DOI or other persistent identifier.

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Authors will complete an Open Practices Disclosure Form upon acceptance of their manuscript for publication. Eligible badges will then be affixed to the final type-set version of the article.

Teaching of Psychology welcomes Special Issues. Special Issues in *ToP* should be concentrated on one topic or issue. For example, in 2018, we published a special issue devoted to professional development in undergraduate psychology majors (see volume 45, Issue 1). For each Special Issue, there will be at least one guest editor who

is in charge of soliciting manuscripts, editing manuscripts, and submitting the Special Issue to the *ToP* Editor. Once the issue has been formed, each article will go under the double-blind peer review process. The Editor and Associate Editors will provide guidance to the guest editor during the process. Guest editor(s) must select and advertise solicitation of manuscripts publicly and in an open manner (e.g., soliciting manuscripts via the Society of Teaching of Psychology's list serv).

To submit a proposal (no more than two pages) for a special issue, guest editors must:

- Provide a description of the topic of the special issue, how it adds value to the teaching of psychology, including its importance to teachers.
- A description of how the guest editor(s) will solicit manuscripts. For example, how will the solicitation of manuscripts be publicized, and to whom?
- Timeline of the special issue. Ideally, we would want a targeted volume and issue number for the special issue. This includes when manuscripts will be solicited, reviewed, revised, edited, and submitted to *ToP*.
- A list of at least 10 potential peer reviewers.
- Submit the proposal to the Editor, Aaron S. Richmond at top@teachpsych.org

Clinical trial registration

The journal conforms to the [ICMJE requirement](#) that clinical trials are registered in a [WHO-approved public trials registry](#) at or before the time of first participant enrollment as a condition of consideration for publication. The trial registry name and URL, and registration number must be included at the end of the abstract.

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Abstract

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At Teaching of Psychology, we ask authors to create a structured abstract when submitting to the journal. Structured abstracts benefit our readers in several ways. For instance, structured abstracts will standardize the way abstracts are written for *ToP* and will provide a guide for *ToP* authors in how to summarize the content of their manuscripts in a clear and concise manner. They will also be easier to read and access by others. Structured abstracts will enhance and streamline the search process for researchers to cite *ToP* articles.

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Data Driven Article Structured Abstract

For these types of article submissions, please include (in this order) a section on the background, objective(s), method, results, conclusion, and teaching implications.

Abstract

Background: A rationale for conducting the study. Possibly include the problem to be solved or the need to conduct the study. Recent research suggests that designing a syllabus using learner-centered principles may increase students' perceptions of their instructor on the characteristics of rapport, caring, helpfulness, willingness to seek help from the instructor, and student motivation.

Objective: The purpose, research question, hypothesis or the main goal of the study.] The purpose of this study was to establish the extent to which peer-reviewed publish syllabi were designed using learner-centered principles.

Method: A brief but detailed description of the procedures of the study. Include sample, measure, and how the study was executed. Two raters coded 109 syllabi from Project Syllabus on the learner-center factors of community, power and control, and evaluation and assessment and measured the length of the syllabus in words and pages, year published, and number of images.

Results: A brief description of what was found in the study. Possibly include whether the research question and/or hypotheses were confirmed or disconfirmed. The syllabi were disproportionately learner-centered on most of the factors assessed. There were moderate to strong associations among learner-centered factors, syllabus length, and use of images in syllabi. Finally, syllabi have become increasingly more learner-centered over a 19-year period.

Conclusion: [Accounts for results, suggests explanations, points out things that may have been overlooked, and suggests areas for further research. As demonstrated in this study, well designed and peer reviewed syllabi tend to be learner-centered, contain more detail, and use images.

Teaching Implications: A suggestion on how to use the results of this study in any facet of teaching of psychology. May include practical applications or general suggestions. To improve the rapport with students, teachers should consider revising their syllabi to incorporate more learner-centered principles, be more detailed, and use images where appropriate.

Abstract

Background: Social networking sites like Twitter enable people to be in constant contact and communication but their value in meeting educational objectives is less clear.

Objective: The purpose of this study was to investigate whether using social media such as Twitter to deliver course content improved student's test scores.

Method: In a randomized between-subject design 63 students received an informative tweet containing course content or a humorous tweet about once per day. Students were then measured on their content knowledge using a cued-recall and recognition task at four separate times during the semester.

Results: On the cued-recall task, there were no differences between the two conditions. However, when comparing the recognition task (e.g., multiple choice test questions), students in the psychology content condition significantly outperformed students in the humor tweet condition.

Conclusion: The Twitter intervention appears to be an effective way to increase memory for important class concepts regardless of whether humor is used.

Teaching Implications: With the seeming ubiquity of social networking site usage among college students, integrating a means of learning within that information

stream may be effective and beneficial method of delivering small amounts of content.

Position Article Structured Abstract

For these types of article submissions, please include (in this order) a section on the introduction, statement of the problem, literature review, teaching implications, and conclusion.

An Annotated Example of a Structured Abstract for Position Papers

Dunn, D. S. (2008). Another view: In defense of vigor over rigor in classroom demonstrations. *Teaching of Psychology*, 35, 349-352. [doi:10.1080/00986280802374039](https://doi.org/10.1080/00986280802374039)

Abstract

Introduction: [Provides insights into one or more themes in the state of the field of the scholarship of teaching and learning.] As the scholarship of teaching and learning (SoTL) continues to gain respect as a formal type of research, more emphasis is understandably placed on empirical validation of our work, including classroom demonstrations.

Statement of the Problem: [Provides a specific issue that has arisen as the field has developed.] I worry that SoTL researchers will overlook activities and demonstrations that engages students and promotes a positive learning atmosphere, such as increased willingness to participate in classroom discussions.

Literature Review: [Contains an integrative review of the literature pertinent to the problem identified.] I review a number of published articles containing demonstrations without empirical validation of student learning outcomes, but that I have used in my own classes.

Teaching Implications: [Details how teachers can use the literature review to improve desirable student outcomes or otherwise improve their teaching and mentoring.] I point out and discuss reasons why some activities and demonstrations do not receive empirical validation. Furthermore, I consider the arguments against my suggestion for “vigor over rigor.”

Conclusion: [Explicates how the literature review and teaching implications advance the state of the scholarship of teaching and learning.] SoTL outlets can publish particularly novel and seemingly engaging activities and demonstrations without student learning outcomes. I discuss how vigor can be incorporated into the increasing “rigor” of SoTL work without blemishing the respect SoTL has been earning in recent years.

An Example of a Structured Abstract for a Position Paper

Bartsch, R. A., Bittner, W. M. E., & Moreno, J. E., Jr. (2008). A design to improve internal validity of assessments of teaching demonstrations. *Teaching of Psychology, 35*, 357-359. [doi:10.1080/00986280802373809](https://doi.org/10.1080/00986280802373809)

Abstract

Introduction: Throughout higher education, there is an increasing need to assess student learning outcomes. Furthermore, there is an increasing need to conduct such assessments in a scientifically rigorous manner.

Statement of the Problem: It is often difficult to carry out internally valid assessments of student learning for a variety of reasons, such as difficulty obtaining an appropriate control group and using random assignment in a classroom setting.

Literature Review: Much published research assessing the effects of demonstrations on student learning has suffered from testing and measurement confounds. We introduce a potential design to ameliorate these problems: a one-group pretest-posttest design with alternative forms.

Teaching Implications: Using a one-group pretest-posttest design with alternative forms allows teachers to increase the internal validity of their assessments of learning demonstration, within the constraint of having a single class section.

Conclusion: Using the basic 2x2 between-subjects analysis-of-variance, teachers can assess the effectiveness of their classroom demonstrations and show external constituencies that their classroom demonstrations promote learning.

For clinical trials, the trial registry name and URL, and registration number must be included at the end of the abstract.

Keywords

Please include a minimum of 3 to 5 keywords, listed after the abstract. Keywords should be as specific as possible to the research topic.

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- Contact information for the corresponding author: name, institutional address, phone, email
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- Ethical approval and informed consent statements
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- Any other identifying information related to the authors and/or their institutions, funders, approval committees, etc, that might compromise anonymity.

Acknowledgments

If you are including an Acknowledgements section, this will be published at the end of your article. The Acknowledgments section should include all contributors who do not meet the criteria for authorship. Per [ICMJE recommendations](#), it is best practice to

obtain consent from non-author contributors who you are acknowledging in your manuscript.

Writing assistance and third party submissions: if you have received any writing or editing assistance from a third-party, for example a specialist communications company, this must be clearly stated in the Acknowledgements section and in the covering letter. Please see the [Sage Author Gateway](#) for what information to include in your Acknowledgements section. If your submission is being made on your behalf by someone who is not listed as an author, for example the third-party who provided writing/editing assistance, you must state this in the Acknowledgements and also in your covering letter. **Please note that the journal editor reserves the right to not consider submissions made by a third party rather than by the author/s themselves.**

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To ensure proper anonymization, please include a section with the heading 'Statements and Declarations' on your title page, after the Acknowledgements section [and Author Contributions section if applicable] including each of the sub-headings listed below. If a declaration is not applicable to your submission, you must still include the heading and state 'Not applicable' underneath. Please note that you may be asked to justify why a declaration was not applicable to your submission by the Editorial Office. This information will be added to the end of your published paper.

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Please include your ethics approval statements under this heading, even if you have already included ethics approval information in your methods section. If ethical approval was not required, you need to explicitly state this. You can find information on what to say in your ethical statements as well as example statements on our [Publication ethics and research integrity policies page](#).

All papers reporting studies involving human participants, human data or human tissue must state that the relevant Ethics Committee or Institutional Review Board approved the study, or waived the requirement for approval, providing the full name and institution of the review committee in addition to the approval number. If applicable, please also include this information in the Methods section of your manuscript.

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Submissions containing any data from an individual person (including individual details, images or videos) must include a statement confirming that informed consent for publication was provided by the participant(s) or a legally authorized representative. Non-essential identifying details should be omitted. Please do not submit the participant's actual written informed consent with your article, as this in itself breaches the patient's confidentiality. The Journal requests that you confirm to us, in writing, that you have obtained written informed consent to publish but the written consent itself should be held by the authors/investigators themselves, for example in a patient's hospital record. The confirmatory letter may be uploaded with your submission as a separate file in addition to the statement confirming that consent to publish was obtained within the manuscript text. If this is not applicable to your manuscript, please state 'Not applicable' in this section.

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Funding statement

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- Cite this data in your research

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