

Writing in the Biological Sciences

Entomology 7008 - Fall 2016 Syllabus

INSTRUCTORS

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MEETING LOCATION

The class will be meeting in 5th floor media classroom in the Life Sciences Annex (Room A561)

Lecture: Mondays 10:30 am to 11:30 am

COURSE DESCRIPTION

Students in this course will learn the basics of scientific writing and communication, including fundamentals, style, and writing for your target audience. In the introductory lectures, we will focus on grammar and structure as it relates to scientific writing. We will then move into the basic components in scientific writing, including citations, figures and tables, and peer reviewed publication sections. For the remainder of the semester, we will learn to communicate science through different formats, including popular press, posters, presentations, and grant writing. We will also include topics on writing your CV and cover letter, and preparing for answering essay questions.

COURSE OBJECTIVES

1. To understand the fundamentals of scientific writing
2. To know how to write for your target audience
3. To learn how to write for different scientific writing formats

TEXTBOOKS

We will be using the following textbook in the course: **Writing in the Biological Sciences, 2nd edition, Angelika H. Hofmann, 2016, Oxford University Press.** The text is required for this course, as it will provide the foundation for what you will be learning in class. It can be purchased new or used (relatively inexpensively) at Amazon.com

SUGGESTED TEXTS/REFERENCES

In addition to our textbook, you will find many free online resources through the LSU library. Below are a few e-books that can be found through our library system

Cargill, M., and P. O'Connor. 2013. Writing Scientific Research Articles : Strategy and Steps, vol. Second edition, Wiley-Blackwell, Chichester, West Sussex, UK.

Nair, P. K. R., and V. D. Nair. 2014. Scientific writing and communication in agriculture and natural resources, Cham : Springer, 2014.

Peat, J. 2002. Scientific Writing : Easy When You Know How, John Wiley and Sons, Inc, London.

Rogers, S. M. 2014. Mastering scientific and medical writing : a self-help guide, Berlin : Springer, 2014.

OBLIGATORY STATEMENT ABOUT CHEATING

LSU's Code of Student Conduct may be found by accessing this site: <http://saa.lsu.edu/code-student-conduct>. Familiarize yourself with what constitutes cheating, especially plagiarism. If you cheat, you will be penalized a letter grade and be given an opportunity to meet the Dean of Students.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS AND GRADES

Students are required to attend all lectures. There are no exams in this course. However, student's performance will be assessed through weekly participation in class, along with weekly assignments. There are 13 assignments due throughout the semester. I will average the top 10 assignments, which will account for 80% of the student grade. The remaining 20% will be based on participation (see rubric below).

	Date	Topic	Associated Chapter(s) – read prior to class	Homework – assigned after class period, and due the following week
1	August 22 nd	Introduction, the Audience, Grammar	Chapters 1 and 2	Due: What is plagiarism? Assigned: Research the editor of a journal
2	August 30 th	Paragraph structure	Chapter 3	Due: Journal editor information Assigned: Re-write assignment handout
3	Sept 5th	Labor Day Holiday, No Class	n/a	n/a
4	Sept 12 th	Guest Lecturer – Jeff Davis - Answering Essay Questions	Chapter 12	n/a
5	Sept 19 th	Citations	Chapter 4	Due: Re-write assignment handout Assigned: Endnote bibliography
6	Sept 26 th	Data and figures	Chapters 5 and 6	Due: Endnote bibliography Assigned: Find example of figure and table
7	Oct 3 rd	Peer-reviewed (Introduction and Methods)	Chapter 7	Due: Figure and table examples Assigned: Write a paragraph for I&M
8	Oct 10 th	Peer-reviewed (Results, Discussion, and Abstract)	Chapter 7	Due: I&M paragraphs Assigned: Mini paper (add R,D&A to I&M)
9	Oct 17 th	Being a good editor	Chapters 8 and 10	Due: Mini paper Assigned: Exchange mini papers and edit
10	Oct 24 th	Popular press	Chapter	Due: Edited mini papers Assigned: Revise mini paper into pop press
11	Oct 31 st	Thesis/dissertations, reviews, and proposals	Chapter 11 & LSU Grad school webpage	Due: Popular press article Assigned: Create an outline of your thesis
12	Nov 7 th	Grant writing	Chapter 15	Due: Thesis outlines Assigned: Locate a grant (grants.gov website)
13	Nov 14 th	CV and cover letter	Chapter 16	Due: Grant Assigned: Update your CV
14	Nov 21 st	Posters	Chapter 14	Due: Updated CV Assigned: Create a mini poster
15	Nov 28 th	Presentations	Chapter 13	Due: Mini poster

GRADING SCALE FOR PARTICIPATION

In this course, 20% of grade will be based on class participation

100-90%	<p>Excellent Level of preparation and participation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrates excellent preparation. Discusses weekly reading, providing a deeper input beyond simple questions. • Provides discussion and input, without having to be specifically called on. • Offers analyses, synthesis, and evaluation of materials • Provides a deeper and more thoughtful input on the subject matter • Is actively involved throughout the class, group work, and presents materials discussed during exercises
89-80%	<p>High Level of preparation and participation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrates good preparation. Has read the materials, can answer basic questions, especially when called on. • Provides simple answers back regarding readings. • Contributes to discussions, by providing answers without prompting • Contributes during group and individual exercises • Asks questions as needed
79-70%	<p>Satisfactory Level of preparation and participation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrates adequate preparation. Has done the readings, but does not offer much discussion or interpretation • Offers straightforward information when asked • Rarely contributes to class discussion, unless called on. • Does group and individual exercises, but only offers limited discussion • Rarely talks or asks questions in class
69-60%	<p>Low level of preparation and participation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is present in class and not disruptive. Likely skims reading, and does not offer discussion or interpretation • Is rarely prepared for class, and is not willing to answer questions • Does not actively participate during group exercises, or participates at a very minimum level • Is inconsistent, and infrequently participates in discussion
60-0%	<p>Inadequate level of preparation and participation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unable and unwilling to participate in class • Is unprepared and not engaged in class • Is disruptive (texts during class, chats during lecture, etc)

ASSIGNMENT 1, DUE FIRST DAY OF CLASS

Assignment 1: Due prior to coming to class on August 22nd

(1) Read chapters 1 and 2, and be prepared to discuss the following:

- a. Thought Question 1: In what ways does scientific writing differ from other writing styles?
- b. Thought Question 2: Provide some examples of words/phrases that should be avoided in scientific writing?

(2) Locate definitions for plagiarism and self-plagiarism



Plagiarism definition:

Cite the source of definition:



Self-plagiarism definition:

Cite the source of the definition: