

**WRITING 2131G:
No Bones About It: Writing in the Sciences
WINTER 2018**

SECTION: 001

TIME: Monday 9:30-11:30 and Wednesday 9:30-10:30

ROOM/LOCATION: SH-3305

PROFESSOR: Dr. Aaron Schneider

EMAIL: aschnei4@uwo.ca or OWL mail

OFFICE: IGAB IN05

OFFICE HOURS: Wednesday 10:30-11:30 and Thursday 8:30-9:30 or by appointment

COURSE DESCRIPTION AND OBJECTIVES

Writing in the Sciences introduces students to the basic principles and genres of writing required for science students in their under-graduate careers. Writing in the sciences requires students to observe clearly, record their observations systematically, follow and write clear procedures, summarize the work of others clearly, report the work of other researchers accurately, and communicate their own actions in detailed reports. This kind of discourse often takes the form of reports, research essays, poster presentations, and oral presentations, and as such will constitute the major assignments for this course.

In this course you will learn how to

- analyse scientific journal articles
- write for non-scientific audiences
- document your activities in a lab setting
- write research reports on scientific topics
- document your sources correctly
- write in a style appropriate to scientific discourse
- edit and revise your work to conform to Standard Edited English

REQUIRED TEXTS:

Messenger, William E., Jan de Bruyn, Judy Brown, and Ramona Montagnes. *The Canadian Writer's Handbook*. Essentials Edition. Oxford University Press: Don Mills, 2012.

Penrose, Ann M., and Steven B. Katz. *Writing in the Sciences: Exploring Conventions of Scientific Discourse*. Pearson Longman: Toronto, 2009.

Writing 2131G Course Pack

Assignments/Assignment Format

| | | | |
|---|----------------|-----|-------------------|
| Rhetorical Analysis (Diagnostic Assignment) | 500 words | 0% | Jan 31 |
| Writing for Non-Scientists | 750 words | 20% | Feb 14 |
| Revised Lab Report and IMRAD Analysis | See assignment | 25% | Mar 21 |
| 2 Quizzes (7.5% x 2) | NA | 15% | Feb 28 and Mar 19 |
| Research Paper | 2000 words | 40% | April 11 |

In addition to submitting final drafts on the due date for each assignment, you are required to bring a draft of each assignment to class for each of the scheduled peer-review sessions. Failure to attend a scheduled peer-review session with a draft sufficiently complete (in your instructor's opinion) to permit meaningful review, or to participate actively in the peer-review session, **will** result in the earned mark for that assignment being reduced by 10%. In other words, an assignment that would have earned a 78, for example, will receive instead a recorded grade of 68. This penalty will be applied in addition to any other penalties incurred (e.g., for late submission).

Note: Assignment due dates, and peer-review session dates are listed on the class schedule.

Note: Complete assignments will be posted on OWL.

Submitting Assignments/Due dates/late submission penalties etc.

In this course you will be required to submit the final version of each of your assignments electronically, through Sakai to turnitin.com and provide your instructor with a hard copy in class the day the assignment is due.

Late assignments will receive a penalty of 5% per day. To qualify for an extension, you must have a valid reason and contact your instructor prior to the deadline. Please see the medical accommodation policy below.

If necessary, please submit essays to the Writing Department Drop Box outside Lawson Hall Room 3270, making sure you include your instructor's name and your section number. However, do not

- fax assignments
- e-mail assignments

Keep copies (electronic, paper, or both) of all assignments submitted.

EMAIL POLICY

I respond to email within two working days. You can email me via Western mail or OWL. I do not respond to email on the weekend.

Attendance policies

Attendance at class is required to improve as a writer. Here is the Writing Studies attendance policy in this class:

- You may miss up to three hours (the equivalent of one week of class) of class meetings during the term without explanation. That means that the first three class hours you miss will be recorded as absences but *excused provided you don't miss any more*.

- However, if you miss a total of four to nine class hours (the equivalent of up to three full weeks of class), your final grade will be reduced by 10% (e.g. an earned final grade of 80% will be reported as a final grade of 72).
- If you miss a total of more than nine hours of class meetings (the equivalent of more than three weeks of class meetings) your final grade will be reduced by 15% (e.g. an earned final grade of 80% will be reported as a final grade of 68).

This policy will be waived only for medical or compassionate reasons. If you have good reasons for waiving an absence of one class meeting (e.g. if you've missed three hours, and need or want to miss another class meeting) discuss these reasons with your instructor within one week of that absence. If your absence is extended and prolonged (over one week of continuous non-attendance), then you should discuss it with your academic advisor in your home faculty, who may require documentation. That advisor may then contact all of your instructors. See also: '**Medical Accommodation Policy**' below.

Attendance also extends to tardiness. If you are more than 20 minutes late, you will be penalized an hour of attendance. Please make every effort to be on time as late entry can disrupt the flow of discussion in our class. Early departures from class, which have not been previously arranged with the instructor, will also be counted as an absence. If you leave during the break, you will be docked an hour of attendance.

Note: a class meeting missed in order to write a test, exam, or other form of 'make-up class' in another course will count as non-attendance, and will attract penalties as defined above if applicable. Instructors at the University of Western Ontario shall not require a student to write a make-up test or similar at times which conflict with that student's other scheduled class times. If you are asked or 'required' to do this, you should immediately contact an academic counsellor in your Dean's office. If you elect to miss a class in order to write such a test, that is your choice; your absence will not be excused.

Scholastic Offences, including Plagiarism

The University Senate requires the following statements, and Web site references, to appear on course outlines:

"Scholastic offences are taken seriously and students are directed to read the appropriate policy, specifically, the definition of what constitutes a Scholastic Offence, at the following Web site:
<http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/handbook/appeals/scholoff.pdf>.

Students must write their essays and assignments in their own words. Whenever students take an idea, or a passage of text from another author, they must acknowledge their debt both by using quotation marks where appropriate and by proper referencing such as footnotes or citations. Plagiarism is a major academic offence (see Scholastic Offence Policy as above).

All required papers may be subject to submission for textual similarity review to the commercial plagiarism detection software under license to the University for the detection of plagiarism. All papers submitted for such checking will be included as source documents in the reference database for the purpose of detecting plagiarism of papers subsequently submitted to the system. Use of the service is subject to the licensing agreement currently between The University of Western Ontario and Turnitin.com (<http://www.turnitin.com>)."

Prerequisites

The University Senate requires the following statement to appear on course outlines:

"Unless you have either the requisites for this course or written special permission from your Dean to enroll in it, you may be removed from this course and it will be deleted from your record. This decision

may not be appealed. You will receive no adjustment to your fees in the event that you are dropped from a course for failing to have the necessary prerequisites.”

Medical Accommodation Policy

For UWO Policy on Accommodation For Medical Illness, see:

<http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/handbook/appeals/medical.pdf>

(downloadable Student Medical Certificate (SMC): <https://studentservices.uwo.ca> under the Medical Documentation heading)

Students seeking academic accommodation **on medical or other grounds** for any missed tests, exams, participation components and/or assignments **worth 10% or more of their final grade** must apply to the Academic Counselling office of their home Faculty and provide documentation. Academic accommodation on medical grounds cannot be granted by the instructor or Writing Studies, and Writing Studies requires students in these circumstances to follow the same procedure when seeking academic accommodation on non-medical (i.e. non-medical compassionate or other) grounds.

Students seeking academic accommodation **on medical grounds** for any missed tests, exams, participation components and/or assignments **worth less than 10% of their final grade** must also apply to the Academic Counselling office of their home Faculty and provide documentation. Where in these circumstances the accommodation is being sought on **non-medical grounds**, students should consult in the first instance with their instructor, who may elect to make a decision on the request directly, or refer the student to the Academic Counselling office of their home Faculty.

Students should also note that individual instructors are not permitted to receive medical documentation directly from a student, whether in support of an application for accommodation on medical grounds, or for other reasons (e.g. to explain an absence from class which may result in a grade penalty under an ‘Attendance’ policy in the course). **All** medical documentation **must** be submitted to the Academic Counselling office of a student’s home Faculty.

“Students who are in emotional/mental distress should refer to MentalHealth@Western: <http://www.uwo.ca/uwocom/mentalhealth/> for a complete list of options about how to obtain help.”

Special Requests: Special Examinations, Incomplete Standing, Aegrotat Standing

Please refer to the “Information for All Students in a Writing Course” for more detailed information.

Briefly, remember that your instructor does not have the discretion to initiate, consider, or grant (or not) such requests; you must go directly to the Dean’s office of your home faculty.

Class Meeting Schedule

Note: You should do all of the readings for a week for the first class (the Monday class) of that week

Week 1 (Jan 8 and 10):

Topic: Introduction to the Course, and The Communication Process: Audience, Credibility and Purpose

Readings:

- *Course Pack*: “Writing About Biology: How Rhetorical Choices Can Influence the Impact of a Scientific Paper”
- *Grammar Handbook*: Chapters 3 and 6 (all), 7a, 8a-d, 10-13

Week 2 (Jan 15 and 17):

Topic: The Writing Process, and Paragraphs

Readings:

- *Writing in the Sciences*: “Chapter 1: Science as a Social Enterprise” and “Chapter 3: Ethics in Scientific Communication”
- *Grammar Handbook*: Chapter 1, and Chapter 2

Week 3 (Jan 22 and 24):

Topic: Writing with Power: Verbs, Active-Voice, Parallel Structure and Cohesion

Readings:

- *Writing in the Sciences*: “Communicating with Public Audiences”
- *Grammar Handbook*: Chapter 8 and 9

Draft of Rhetorical Analysis due Jan 24

Peer-review workshop Jan 24

Week 4 (Jan 29 and 31):

Topic: Writing to Inform, and Illustrations, Tables and Charts, and the Comma

Readings:

- *Course Pack*: “Explanatory Writing”
- *Grammar Handbook*: Chapter 15

Rhetorical Analysis due Jan 31

Week 5 (Feb 5 and 7):

Topic: Writing to Inform and Illustrations, Tables and Charts Continues, and Colons and Semicolons

Readings: Grammar Handbook: Chapters 16 and 17

Draft of Writing for Non-Scientists due Feb 7

Peer-review workshop Feb 7

Week 6 (Feb 12 and 14):

Topic: Research Proposals, and Creating an Annotated Bibliography, and Grammar Review

Readings:

- review all of the previous material from the *Grammar Handbook*

Optional Readings:

- *Course Pack*: “Writing Research Proposals”
- *Writing in the Sciences*: “Chapter 7: Writing Research Proposals”

Writing for Non-Scientists due Feb 14

****Reading Break****

Week 7 (Feb 26 and 28):

Topic: Research, and Common Sentence Problems

Readings:

- *Course Pack*: “Locating Useful Sources,” “General Advice on Reading and Note-Taking”
- *Grammar Handbook*: Chapters 33 and 5

Quiz #1 Wednesday February 28, 2018

Week 8 (March 5 and 7):

Topic: Lab Reports

Readings:

- *Course Pack*: “Writing Lab Reports and Research Papers,” Lab-Write Resources (on-line)
- *Writing in the Sciences*: “Chapter 4: Reading and Writing Research Reports”

Research Proposal and Preliminary Bibliography due March 7

Week 9 (March 12 and 14):

Topic: Writing to Persuade, Writing the Research Project, and Dealing with Sources

Readings:

- *Grammar Handbook*: Chapters 14 and 35
- *Writing in the Sciences*: “Chapter 4: Reading and Writing Research Reports” redux, “Chapter 5: Reviewing Prior Knowledge”
- *Course Pack*: “Writing Essays and Review Papers,” and “Review Articles”

Draft of Revised Lab Report and IMRAD Analysis due March 14

Peer-review of Revised Lab Report and IMRAD Analysis March 14

Week 10 (March 19 and 21):

Topic: Dealing with Sources Continued

Readings:

- *Course Pack*: “References and Plagiarism,” “Total Quality Management for Your Draft”
- *Grammar Handbook*: Chapter 36

Quiz #2 Monday, March 19, 2018

Revised Lab Report and IMRAD Analysis due March 21

Week 11 (March 26 and 28):

Topic: Catch Up, Bringing it All Together, and Presentation Tips

Readings:

- Review course readings up to this point with a particular emphasis on those that are relevant to the Research Paper

Week 12 (April 2 and 4):

Topic: Revising Strategies, and Sundry Grammatical Issues

Readings:

- *Course Pack*: “Revising the Manuscript”
- *Grammar Handbook*: Chapter 25

Draft for Research Paper due April 4

Week 13 (April 9 and 11)

Draft for Research Paper due April 9

Research Paper due April 11

****Note 1: Brief lectures on issues of grammar and composition may be added to this schedule when necessary. In preparation for these lectures, you may be asked to review material from the textbook or read additional material.****

****Note 2: You may be asked to read additional material in preparation for class discussions. These additional readings and related discussions will be specifically geared towards preparing you for your assignments.****