

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

WINTER 2019

SECTION: 650

PROFESSOR: Dr. Aaron Schneider

EMAIL: aschnei4@uwo.ca or OWL mail

OFFICE: UC 2431

OFFICE HOURS: Monday 9:30-11:30 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:

Thaiss, Christopher. *Writing Science in the Twenty-First Century*. Broadview Press: Peterborough, 2019.

Messenger, William E., Jande Bruyn, Judy Brown, and Ramona Montagnes. *The Canadian Writer's Handbook*. Second Essentials Edition. Oxford University Press: Don Mills, 2017.

Writing 2131G Course Pack

ASSIGNMENTS:

Rhetorical Analysis (Diagnostic Assignment)	500 words	0%
Writing for Non-Scientists	750 words	20%
Proposal and Annotated Bibliography	See assignment	10%
Poster	See assignment	15%
2 Quizzes (7.5% x 2)	NA	15%
Research Paper	2000 words	40%

Note: Assignment due dates are listed on the class schedule.

Note: Complete assignments will be posted on OWL.

ATTENDANCE:

This is an online course, and there is, therefore, no scheduled class, and no penalties for missing class. However, it is your responsibility to stay engaged with the course. A regular class requires you to attend class at least once and often twice a week. You should be logging on to our class' OWL site a bare minimum of this number of times a week, and, ideally, several more.

SUBMITTING ASSIGNMENTS:

All assignments should be submitted through the Assignments drop boxes on OWL by 5:30 pm on the Friday of the week the assignment is due.

Note: All assignments must be submitted as Microsoft Word files. As a Western student, you have access to this program through your Outlook site (the site you use for your Western email). The one exception to this is the Poster which must be submitted as a PowerPoint slide. Assignments that do not conform to these file types will receive a grade of 0%.

LATE ASSIGNMENTS:

Late assignments will be penalized 5% a day.

Do not

- fax assignments
- e-mail assignments

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

EMAIL POLICY:

I respond to email in two working days. You can email me at aschnei4@uwo.ca or through OWL email. I do not respond to email on the weekend.

Please note that UWO Instructors can respond only to UWO e-mail addresses. Grades can be communicated only through the Mail aspect of Sakai (OWL), not through UWO e-mail.

Medical Accommodation Policy:

Western has a comprehensive policy covering requests for accommodation by students who are not registered with Student Accessibility Services. All students should review this policy here, under the heading ‘Accommodation for Illness – Undergraduate Students’, noting the procedures, restrictions, and notice requirements:

http://www.westerncalendar.uwo.ca/PolicyPages.cfm?Command=showCategory&PolicyCategoryID=1&SelectedCalendar=Live&ArchiveID=#Page_12

In Writing courses, students covered by this policy who are seeking academic consideration must proceed as follows.

Writing Studies’ Basic Policy: students seeking academic consideration **on medical or any other grounds** for any missed tests/exams, class attendance/participation components, or late or missed assignments must either initiate a Self-Reported Absence (**for a grade component worth up to 30% of their final grade, but excluding final exams scheduled during the exam period**) or apply in person to the Academic Counselling or Undergraduate office of their home Faculty and provide a Student Medical Certificate (SMC) or other supporting documentation as required in accordance with official Western policy (linked above).

Students seeking academic consideration **must communicate with their instructors no later than 24 hours** after the end of the period covered by either:

- i. A Self-Reported Absence, or
- ii. Academic consideration supported by the Academic Counselling Office.

Exception: in Writing Studies courses, a student seeking academic accommodation **on non-medical grounds** for any missed in-class tests/exams, class attendance/participation components, or late or missed assignments **worth less than 10% of a final grade** *may* first consult directly with her or his instructor, who will – in his or her discretion – elect either to make a decision on the request directly or instruct the student to follow the procedures set out in **Writing Studies’ Basic Policy**.

Please note that individual instructors will **not under any circumstances** accept or read medical documentation directly offered by a student, whether in support of an application for accommodation on medical grounds or for related 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 or Undergraduate office of a student’s home Faculty.

Students who are or who feel they should be covered under Student Accessibility Services should review Western policy here:

http://www.westerncalendar.uwo.ca/PolicyPages.cfm?Command=showCategory&PolicyCategoryID=1&SelectedCalendar=Live&ArchiveID=#Page_10

Students who are in emotional/mental distress should refer to MentalHealth@Western: (<https://www.uwo.ca/health/>) 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 Studies Course” for more detailed information. Briefly, remember that instructors do 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.

Plagiarism:

The University Senate requires that the following statement on plagiarism be included on all course syllabi:

“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 analyses 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 offense (see Scholastic Offence Policy in the Western Academic Calendar).

When you give a speech, be prepared to give sources if questions are asked at the end of a speech. Using credible and cited sources is an important aspect of *ethos* in public speaking.

Prerequisites:

Unless you have either the prerequisites 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.

Owl (Sakai)

Assignments, when they are assigned, will be posted on our Sakai course site. Modifications to the schedule may occur from time to time, but students will be notified by e-mail if this occurs.

Class Schedule

Week 1 (January 6-10):

Topic: Introduction to the Course: Reading Rhetorically

Readings:

- *Writing Science*: Chapter 1: Writing to Reach Readers
- Course Pack: “Writing About Biology: How Rhetorical Choices Can Influence the Impact of a Scientific Paper”
- Week 1 Lecture: Welcome to the Course
- Week 1 Lecture: Writing About Biology

Week 2 (January 13-17):

Topic: Writing for General Audiences, and Grammar Basics

Readings:

- *Writing Science*: Chapter 8: STEM Journalism
- *Writing Science*: Chapter 9: Science Blogs
- *Grammar Handbook*: Chapters 3 and 6, 7a, 8a-d, 10-13
- Week 2 Lecture: Getting Started with Grammar
- Week 2 Lecture: General Audiences

Assignment: Assignment #1: Rhetorical Analysis due by 5:30 on Friday

Week 3 (January 20-24):

Topic: Writing with Power and Clarity, and Paragraphs

Readings:

- *Writing Science*: Chapter 2: Building Experience and Confidence in Writing Science
- *Grammar Handbook*: Chapter 1 and Chapter 2
- Week 3 Lecture: Paragraphs
- Week 3 Lecture: Writing with Power and Clarity in the Sciences

Week 4 (January 27-31):

Topic: Illustrations, Tables and Charts (for general audiences), and Verbs and the Active-Voice

Readings:

- *Writing Science*: Chapter 3: “Writing” Redefined Multimodally
- *Grammar Handbook*: Chapter 8 and 9
- Week 4 Lecture: Design for General Audiences
- Week 4 Lecture: Verbs and the Active-Voice

Week 5 (February 3-7):

Topic: Illustrations, Tables and Charts (for scientific audiences), and Commas

Readings:

- Revisit *Writing Science*: Chapter 3
- *Grammar Handbook*: Chapter 15
- Week 5 Lecture: Design for Scientific Audiences
- Week 5 Lecture: The Comma

Assignment: Assignment #2: Writing for Non-Scientists due by 5:30 on Friday

Week 6 (February 10-14):

Topic: Research Proposals, and Creating an Annotated Bibliography, and Semicolons and Colons

Readings:

- *Grammar Handbook*: Chapters 16 and 17
- Week 6 Lecture: Proposals and Annotated Bibliographies
- Week 6 Lecture: Semicolons and Colons

Assignments: Quiz #1

*****Reading Break*****

Week 7 (February 24-28):

Topic: Research, and Common Sentence Problems

Readings:

- *Grammar Handbook*: Chapters 33 and 5
- Week 7 Lecture: Common Sentence Problems
- Week 7 Lecture: Research

Assignment: Assignment #3: Proposal and Annotated Bibliography due by 5:30 on Friday

Week 8 (March 2-6):

Topic: Posters

Readings:

- *Writing Science*: Chapter 10: Creating Posters and Infographics
- Week 8 Lecture: Posters
- Week 8 Lecture: Grammar Review

Assignment: Quiz #2

Week 9 (March 9-13):

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

Readings:

- *Grammar Handbook*: Chapters 14 and 35
- Week 9 Lecture: Persuasive Papers
- Week 9 Lecture: Documentation Styles

Week 10 (March 16-20):

Topic: Writing a Review and Dealing with Sources Continued

Readings:

- *Writing Science*: Chapter 7: Writing the Research Review
- *Grammar Handbook*: Chapter 36
- Week 10 Lecture: Writing a Review
- Week 11 Lecture: Plagiarism

Assignment: Assignment #4: Poster due by 5:30 on Friday

Week 11 (March 23-27):

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

Readings:

- *Writing Science*: Chapter 11: Creating Oral-Visual Presentations
- Review course readings up to this point with a particular emphasis on those that are relevant to the Research Paper
- Week 11 Lecture: Presentations
- Week 11 Lecture: The Total Quality Management Approach to Writing

Week 12 (March 30-April 3):

Topic: Revising Strategies, and Sundry Grammatical Issues

Readings:

- *Writing Science*: Chapter 12: Writing Science with Style and Styles
- *Writing Science*: Chapter 13: Editing Sentences
- *Grammar Handbook*: Chapter 25
- Week 12 Lecture: Writing with Style and Review

Assignment: Assignment #5: Research Paper due by 5:30 on Friday