

WESTERN UNIVERSITY

**3222G: Advanced Healthcare Communication:  
Writing the Pandemic**

Winter 2021

Section: 001 Location: N/A

Class hours: Asynchronous

Instructor: Dr. Michael Arntfield

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Office hours: By appointment via

Zoom

**Course Objectives**

This course prepares students for careers traversing a variety of healthcare delivery models by engaging writing and rhetorical strategies for clinical, forensic, and corporate environments. Topics include everything from narrative medicine and medical blogging to executive hospital communication and the influence of the popular media on patient expectations. In this latest offering, particular attention is paid to communication strategies, public messaging, and storytelling practices surrounding the 2020 pandemic.

**Required Text**

Arntfield, Michael & James Johnston (2016) *Healthcare Writing: A Practical Guide to Professional Success*. Broadview Press.

**Course Requirements**

In class performance (fulfilling peer review duties this year)	10%
Assignment #1: Patient Brochure (500 words max)	20%
Assignment #2: Response Essay (1500 words max)	30%
Assignment #3: Pandemic Blog/Vlog (No limit)	40%

**Assignment Format**

Written assignments are to be typed and have your name, course name, and instructor's name on the first page. When citing sources in a paper, you will be expected to follow APA standards for documentation.

**Submitting Assignments**

Assignments are due via OWL by 4:30 p.m. on the specified due date reflected on the course site.

Assignments must be submitted in either .doc, .docx, or .pdf format only—.pdf is always preferred. Late assignments will be penalized at the rate of 5% per day unless I have granted you an extension in writing. Assignments submitted after 4:30 p.m. are graded as though they are received the day after they are uploaded.

If hard copies of assignments are deemed necessary, please submit assignments in class or via the Writing Department Drop Box outside Lawson Hall 3270, making sure you include your instructor's name and your section number. However, do not:

- fax assignments
- e-mail assignments

Also, be aware that **you are responsible for keeping copies of all assignments submitted.**

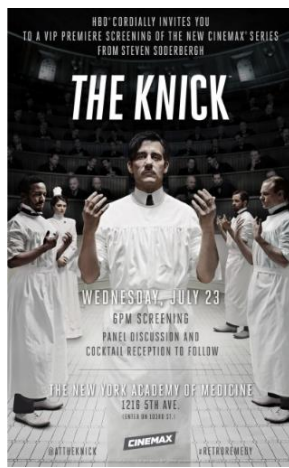
**N.B.: NO ASSIGNMENTS WILL BE ACCEPTED AFTER THE TERM ENDS AT 4:30 P.M. ON MONDAY, APRIL 12, 2021.**

## Attendance policies

Attendance at class is required to improve as a writer. A ledger is circulated in each class requiring that students confirm their attendance in writing for tracking attendance and punctuality. Regular attendance is expected and simply signing the register in each class will not ensure a strong class work grade on its own. Regular and impassioned participation in class discussions and workshops is the best method for excelling in this area of the grading rubric. 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**' to follow.



N.B.: The third hour of each lecture is reserved for an in class screening/tutorial featuring the critically acclaimed HBO/Cinemax series *The Knick*. The third assignment in this course (Response Essay) will require a critical evaluation of one of four questions related to this series as a didactic narrative, including its place in the social and literary history of Western medicine. Please note that the series contains some disturbing images, offensive language, and other adult content, much like one will find in the real world of healthcare delivery environments.

**Note:** Absences from classes reserved for peer review workshops will not only affect your final attendance/participation grade but will have the incur the additional penalty of an immediate 10% deduction from any grade received on the final version of that same assignment. The peer review process is foundational to improving as a writer and is a core function of this course and the associated learning objectives and pedagogy. Failure to attend class on these dates not only undermines the ability for your assignment to receive feedback and proofreading services from your colleagues but also disrupts this process for the entire class.

~~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.~~

### **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>).”

*Note: In this course you will be required to submit an electronic copy of the final version of each of your essays to turnitin.com through your section’s OWL home page.*

### **Prerequisites**

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

“Students are responsible for ensuring that their selection of courses for ensuring that their selection of courses is appropriate and accurately recorded and that all course prerequisites have been successfully completed, and that they are aware of any antirequisite course(s) that they have taken. If the student does not have the requisites for a course, the University reserves the right to remove the student from the course and to delete it from the student’s record. This decision may not be appealed. A student will receive no adjustment to his or her fees in the event that he or she is 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]

### **Accommodation Policy**

**Note: the official Western Accommodation Policy appears below. This is in effect, but may be modified temporarily by the university during the academic year as conditions change.**

Students with disabilities work with Accessible Education (formerly SSD) which provides recommendations for accommodation based on medical documentation or psychological and cognitive

testing. The accommodation policy can be found here: [Academic Accommodation for Students with Disabilities](#).

### **Academic Consideration for Student Absence**

Students will have up to two (2) opportunities during the regular academic year to use an on-line portal to self-report an absence during the term, provided the following conditions are met: the absence is no more than 48 hours in duration, and the assessment for which consideration is being sought is worth 30% or less of the student's final grade. Students are expected to contact their instructors by email within 24 hours of the end of the period of the self-reported absence. Students are not able to use the self-reporting option in the following circumstances:

- for exams scheduled by the Office of the Registrar (e.g., December and April exams)
- absence of a duration greater than 48 hours,
- assessments worth more than 30% of the student's final grade,
- if a student has already used the self-reporting portal twice during the academic year

If the conditions for a Self-Reported Absence are *not* met, students will need to provide a Student Medical Certificate if the absence is medical, or provide appropriate documentation if there are compassionate grounds for the absence in question. Students are encouraged to contact their Faculty academic counselling office to obtain more information about the relevant documentation.

Students should also note that individual instructors are not permitted to receive documentation directly from a student, whether in support of an application for consideration on medical grounds, or for other reasons. **All documentation required for absences that are not covered by the Self-Reported Absence Policy must be submitted to the Academic Counselling office of a student's Home Faculty.**

For Western University policy on Consideration for Student Absence, see [Policy on Academic Consideration for Student Absences - Undergraduate Students in First Entry Programs](#)

and for the Student Medical Certificate (SMC), see:

[http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic\\_policies/appeals/medicalform.pdf](http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/medicalform.pdf).

**Students who are in emotional/mental distress should refer to MentalHealth@Western: (<https://www.uwo.ca/health/psych/index.html>) for a complete list of options about how to obtain help.**

### **Religious Accommodation**

Students should consult the University's list of recognized religious holidays, and should give reasonable notice in writing (email), prior to the holiday, to the Instructor and an Academic Counsellor if their course requirements will be affected by a religious observance. Additional information is given in the [Western Multicultural Calendar](#).

### **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.

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.

## Additional Resources:

Registrarial Services <https://student.uwo.ca/psp/heprdweb/?cmd=login>

Student Support Services <https://student.uwo.ca/psp/heprdweb/?cmd=login>

Services provided by the USC <http://westernusc.ca/services/>

Student Development Centre <http://www.sdc.uwo.ca/>

## Policy on Equity, Diversity & Inclusion

**Note that the use of racist, discriminatory, or any language that works against the values of Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion will not be tolerated in any course or university communication, whether oral or written.**



## ~~Dr. Mike's Policy on Social Media & Wireless Devices:~~

~~Lastly, please note that while the responsible use of smartphones, notebook computers, tablets, and other devices as learning tools in this course is certainly encouraged, and while I understand that smartphones in particular are increasingly integral to students' social experience at Western, it is expected that these technologies will be used appropriately in the context of the classroom. Please respect your professor (me) and peers (your friends and classmates) by refraining from SMS texting, BBMing, iMessaging, or using social media such as Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, *et al.* other than during the designated break times. Students who are found to be distracted by and/or routinely engaged in social media, or found using wireless devices for personal business during lectures, peer review workshops, guest speaker sessions, in-class screenings, etc. will be deemed to be *mentally absent* and will have their attendance and participation marks affected to the same degree as someone who has failed to attend entirely. Please don't make this an issue. Please use discretion and common sense.~~

### **Class Meeting Schedule (subject to minor modifications as needed)**

<b>Date</b>	<b>Lecture Focus</b>	<b>Readings</b>
<u>Week 1</u> - <b>CANCELLED</b>	-Introduction to the course/syllabus -Introduction to the medical humanities -Screening: <i>The Knick</i> , S.1 Ep. 1	Textbook pages ix-x & 1-8
<u>Week 2</u>	-Patient Charting & SOAP notes -Rhetorical modes & communication registers -Screening: <i>The Knick</i> , S.1 Ep. 2	Textbook pages ix-x & 1-27
<u>Week 3</u>	-Interpersonal healthcare writing -Applying for healthcare jobs -In class writing workshop -Screening: <i>The Knick</i> , S.1 Ep. 3	Textbook pages 29-36
<u>Week 4</u>	-Guest lecture: Corporate healthcare communication -Peer review/beta reader session -Screening: <i>The Knick</i> , S.1 Ep. 4	Review previous readings as required
<u>Week 5</u>	<b>Assignment #1 due</b> -Introduction to parallel charting, portfolio, & narrative medicine -Screening: <i>The Knick</i> , S.1 Ep. 5	Textbook pages 45-71
<u>Week 6</u>	READING WEEK	Review previous readings as necessary
<u>Week 7</u>	-Pathography narratives & cybermedicine -Screening: <i>The Knick</i> , S.1 Ep. 6	Textbooks pages 73-97
<u>Week 8</u>	-Healthcare promotion & medical blogging -Screening: <i>The Knick</i> , S.1 Ep. 8	Textbook pages 99-109
<u>Week 9</u>	-Healthcare wikis & social media -Screening: <i>The Knick</i> , S.1 Ep. 9 <b>Assignment #2 due</b>	Textbook pages 147-172
<u>Week 10</u>	-Medical blog presentations – N/A in 2021 -Screening: <i>The Knick</i> , S.1 Ep. 10	Textbook pages 173-192
<u>Week 11</u>	-Medical blog presentations cont'd - N/A in 2021 -Peer review/beta reader session	No readings
<u>Week 12</u>	No class – work on final assignment as needed	No readings
<u>Week 13</u>	<b>Assignment #3 due</b> -No lecture	No readings