

**Writing 2131G:
No Bones About It: Writing in the Science
Winter 2023**

Section:650

Instructor: Dr. Aaron Schneider

Email: aschnei4@uwo.ca or OWL email

Office: UC 2431

Office Hours: Thursday 1-3pm

Note 1: office hours will be in-person, but I am happy to meet with you via Zoom.
Contact me to arrange a meeting.

Note 2: if you cannot make the above time, I am happy to meet with you at a different time. Contact me to arrange a meeting.

TA:

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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 About Biology: How Rhetorical Choices Can Influence the Impact of a Scientific Paper," by Randy Moore (posted on OWL)
- "The Delphic Oracle: A Multidisciplinary Defense of the Gaseous Vent Theory," by Henry A. Spiller, John R. Hale, and Jelle Z. De Boer (posted on OWL)

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's 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 with the exception of Assignment 5, which is due by 5:30pm on Monday April 10.

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 one working day. 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.

Scholastic Offences, Including Plagiarism:

"Scholastic Offences are taken seriously and students are directed to read the appropriate policy, specifically, the definition of what constitutes a Scholastic Offence, which can be found here: http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/scholastic_discipline_undergrad.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. Information for Writing Studies Instructors Fall/Winter 2022-2023

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 Western and Turnitin.com <http://www.turnitin.com>."

(Please note that the above required statement does not rule out additional cautions by the instructor—including, perhaps, reminding students that plagiarism includes double submission of an assignment to two courses without the permission of both instructors. Above all, every instance of egregious plagiarism "with intent to deceive" must be reported to the Director of Writing Studies, in order to determine the penalty and to check for previous offences. A second offence will result in more serious penalties at the Dean's level.)

****Remember: All students in all 1000/2000 level Writing courses must submit all written assignments to turnitin.com through their section's OWL site. This requirement is built into course outline templates, where applicable.***

Academic Accommodation:

"Accommodation by Instructor for work worth less than 10% of the overall grade in a course: Instructors are encouraged, in the first instance, to arrange participation requirements and multiple small assignments in such a way as to allow students some flexibility. A student seeking academic accommodation for any work worth less than 10% must contact the instructor or follow the appropriate Department or course specific instructions provided on the course outline.

In arranging accommodation, instructors will use good judgment and ensure fair treatment for all students. Instructors must indicate on the course outline how they will be dealing with work worth less than 10% of the total course grade. In particular, instructors must indicate whether medical documentation will be required for absences, late assignments or essays, missed tests, laboratory experiments or tutorials, etc. Where medical documentation is required, such documentation must be submitted by the student directly to the appropriate Faculty Academic Counselling/Dean's office, who will make the determination whether accommodation is warranted. Given the University's Official Student Record Information Privacy Policy

(https://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/general/privacy.pdf), **instructors may not collect medical documentation.**”

Medical Accommodation Policy:

“The University recognizes that a student’s ability to meet their academic responsibilities may, on occasion, be impaired by medical illness. Illness may be acute (short term), or it may be chronic (long term), or chronic with acute episodes. The University further recognizes that medical situations are deeply personal and respects the need for privacy and confidentiality in these matters. However, in order to ensure fairness and consistency for all students, academic accommodation for work representing 10% or more of the student’s overall grade in the course shall be granted only in those cases where there is documentation indicating that the student was seriously affected by illness and could not reasonably be expected to meet their academic responsibilities.

Documentation shall be submitted, as soon as possible, to the appropriate Dean’s office (the Office of the Dean of the student’s Faculty of registration/home Faculty) together with a request for relief specifying the nature of the accommodation being requested. These documents will be retained in the student’s file and will be held in confidence in accordance with the University’s Official Student Record Information Privacy Policy. Once the petition and supporting documents have been received and assessed, appropriate academic accommodation shall be determined by the Dean’s Office in consultation with the student’s instructor(s). Academic accommodation may include extension of deadlines, waiver of attendance requirements for classes/labs/tutorials, arranging Special Exams or Incompletes, re-weighting course requirements, or granting late withdrawals without academic penalty. Academic accommodation shall be granted only where the documentation indicates that the onset, duration, and severity of the illness are such that the student could not reasonably be expected to complete their academic responsibilities. (Note – it will not be sufficient to provide documentation indicating simply that the student “was seen for a medical reason” or “was ill.”)

Whenever possible, students who require academic accommodation should provide notification and documentation in advance of due dates, examinations, etc. Students must follow up with their professors and their Academic Counselling office in a timely manner.”

Documentation from Family Physicians/Nurse Practitioners and Walk-In Clinics

A Western Student Medical Certificate (SMC) is required where a student is seeking academic accommodation. This documentation should be obtained at the time of the initial consultation with the physician/nurse practitioner or walk-in clinic. An SMC can be downloaded at http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/medicalform.pdf.

Documentation from Student Health Services

At the time of illness, students should make an appointment with a physician/nurse practitioner at Student Health Services. During this appointment, request a Student Medical Certificate from the Physician/Nurse Practitioner.

Documentation from Hospital Urgent Care Centres or Emergency Departments

Students should request that an SMC be filled out. Students may bring this form with them, or request alternative Emergency Department documentation. Documentation should be secured at the time of the initial visit to the Emergency Department. Where it is not possible for a student to have an SMC completed by the attending physician, the student must request documentation sufficient to demonstrate that their ability to meet their academic responsibilities was seriously affected.”

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 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:
https://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/Academic%20Accommodation_disabilities.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. Immediate help in the event of a crisis can be had by phoning 519-661-3030 (during class hours) or 519-433-2023 after class hours and on weekends.

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](#).

Other Student Support Services

Registrarial Services <http://www.registrar.uwo.ca>

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

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

Academic Support and Engagement <http://www.sdc.uwo.ca/>

Intellectual Property and Copyright:

All instructor-written materials (e.g. PowerPoints, lecture notes, oral lectures) for this course are created solely for students’ personal use within the course, and remain the instructor’s intellectual property. Further reproduction, fixation, distribution, transmission, dissemination, communication, or any other uses, without securing the consent of the copyright owner (the

course instructor) may be an infringement of copyright. You may not distribute, email, or otherwise communicate these materials to any other person. These limitations extend to recording, photographing, or sharing lectures (online or in-person) and lecture material without permission. Posting the instructor's content from this course to online course sharing sites like OneClass or Course Hero without permission is both an infringement of intellectual property law and a violation of academic integrity guidelines. The instructor will pass these cases on to the Western University Ombudsperson or their Department Chair as appropriate.

Course Schedule:

Week 1 (January 9-13):

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 16-20):

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, January 20

Week 3 (January 23-27):

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 30-February 3):

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 6-10):

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, February 10

Week 6 (February 13-17):

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

****Winter Reading Break****

Week 7 (February 27-March 3):

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, March 3

Week 8 (March 6-10):

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 13-17):

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 20-24):

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 10 Lecture: Plagiarism

Assignment: Assignment #4: Poster due by 5:30 on Friday, March 24

Week 11 (March 27-31):

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 (April 3-6):

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 13 (April 10):

Assignment: Assignment #5: Research Paper due by 5:30 on Monday, April 10 by 5:30pm