

**Writing 2131G:  
No Bones About It: Writing in the Sciences  
Winter 2025**

## **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.
  - Price: \$47.70
  - You must use this textbook and this edition for the course
- Messenger, William E., Jande Bruyn, Judy Brown, and Ramona Montagnes. *The Canadian Writer's Handbook*. Third Essentials Edition. Oxford University Press: Don Mills, 2023.
  - Price: \$42.85
  - You can use older editions of this textbook for the course, although the page/chapter numbers may vary from those on the syllabus
- "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	15%
Poster	See assignment	25%

Research Paper	2000 words	40%
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Note: Assignment due dates are listed on the class schedule.

Note: Complete assignments will be posted on OWL.

Students are responsible for checking the course OWL site (<https://westernu.brightspace.com/>) regularly for news and updates. This is the primary method by which information will be disseminated to all students in the class. If students need assistance with the course OWL site, they can seek support on the [OWL Brightspace Help](#) page. Alternatively, they can contact the Western Technology Services Helpdesk. They can be contacted by phone at 519-661-3800 or ext. 83800.

## **Assignment Format:**

All five assignments are written assignments submitted through OWL. All of the assignments with the exception of the poster must be submitted as Word files, and the poster must be submitted as a PowerPoint file.

## **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.

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.