

**Writing in the Sciences, BIOL 877
Online Course (3 credit hours)
Fall 2018**

Instructor Information

Dr. Saili Moghe

Email: moghes1@unk.edu

Canvas Inbox: you can also use the Canvas inbox to contact me

Canvas discussion board: general comments/questions/concerns can be posted on the "Course Questions" discussion board.

Please use email or Canvas Inbox when you have questions that are specific to you.

I will respond to all emails/Canvas inbox/discussion board posts, within 48 hours.

Course Materials and Requirements:

Required Textbooks:

1. Hofmann, Angelika. 2016. Writing in the Biological Sciences: A Comprehensive Resource for Scientific Communication, 2nd ed. Oxford University Press. New York, NY. ISBN-13: 978-0190245603
2. Lamott, Anne. 1994. Bird by Bird, Instructions of Writing and Life. Anchor Books, Random House. New York, NY.

Recommended Textbooks:

It is recommended that students have a style book. Two suggested options are:

1. Elements of Style by William Strunk Jr. and EB White
2. The Bedford Handbook by Diana Hacker

Any edition of these style guides will be acceptable

Technical Requirements:

Full access to a computer and the Internet, a word processing software (e.g. MS Word) with the ability to save documents as PDF are necessary for the course.

Course Description:

Academic writing in the sciences can be a daunting solitary endeavor. It is the hope of this course to take away the fear of the blank page and help to engage the class with a sense of community that is inherently beneficial to the writing process. This course is particularly geared towards students who have been away from academic writing for many years, or perhaps decades. This will be an introduction into this type of writing, complete with an overview of the materials available to you as a distance student. The primary purpose of this course is to improve your written communications skills. We will focus on your ability to prepare and write technical papers in a professional scientific format. A crucial part of learning to write technical papers is reading them and practicing

writing them yourself. Plan to spend at least several hours each week on reading, writing, and practicing the skills we cover in this course.

Course Objectives:

1. Identify and obtain scientific research articles from the primary scientific literature.
2. Explore multiple methods of scientific communication.
3. Use the steps of writing a scientific literature review for a specific topic.
4. Critically evaluate scientific writing and improve overall written skills in scientific communication.

Course Structure

Weekly materials will be posted on Canvas on Mondays by noon (CT), and an announcement will always go up at this same time letting you know that all materials are up, as well as any information or details you need to know for that particular week.

Materials and activities will vary from week to week, and will include one or more of the following:

- Video lectures
- Lectures notes
- Writing practice activities
- Discussion board activities
- Writing assignments
- Reading assignments

Assessments

Your progress in class will be assessed based on your completion of various writing-based assignments

Course Points

Personal Statement	10pts
Library Exercise	10pts
Potential Topics	10pts
Final Topic & Annotated Bibliography	30pts
References (10 required)	20pts
Title Page & Outline	20pts
1 st Submission of Review Article	50pts
Peer Review of Review Article	35pts
2 nd Submission of Review Article	100pts
Close of Course Personal Statement	10pts
Journal Writing (5pts each)	55pts
TOTAL POINTS	350 pts

Grading:

Grades will be assigned using the standard grading scale for the Department of Biology, as follows:

A+ = 97-100%	B+ = 88-89%	C+ = 78-79%	D+ = 68-69%	F = Below 60%
A = 93-96%	B = 83-87%	C = 73-77%	D = 63-67%	
A- = 90-92%	B- = 80-82%	C- = 70-72%	D- = 60-62%	

***NOTE: if any of the assignments listed in the Course Points section are not submitted, this will result in an automatic F grade in the course.**

Expectations from students:

As students enrolled in this class, it is your responsibility to

- Log on to Canvas every week and keep up with all weekly course materials. Make sure that you keep up with the Announcements and stay informed about what is happening and going to happen in class.
- Complete all activities and assignments by the given deadlines
- Seek help or clarification when you need it, do not wait till the last minute
- Be courteous and respectful to all members within the course
- Maintain academic integrity. Assignments will be scanned using a plagiarism detecting software. (Refer to Policy on Plagiarism)

Course Policies:

- **Policy on plagiarism:** Anyone caught plagiarizing any exercise will receive a 0 for that exercise; subsequent violations will result in referral to the Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs for dismissal from the university. **Students that plagiarize on any part of the final paper (review article) will fail the course.**
- **Policy on incomplete:** All students are expected to progress through the requirements for this course in a timely fashion. Incompletes will only be considered if circumstances are extenuating and beyond your control, and will require documentation.
- **Extensions or rescheduling** of Exams, quizzes, assignments will NOT be possible unless circumstances are exceptional and beyond your control – a legitimate excuse (based on my discretion) with provided documentation will be required for such considerations
- **Assignments will receive zero (0) points if they are not completed by the given due date and time**

Copyright Statement

All materials from this course are protected by copyright. Material from this course cannot be disseminated, adapted, copied, or published without instructor permission; any violation of this is a violation of copyright law.

Students with Disabilities or Students Who are Pregnant

It is the policy of the University of Nebraska at Kearney to provide flexible, individualized, **and** reasonable accommodations to students with documented disabilities or students who are pregnant. To receive accommodation services for a disability, students must be registered with UNK Disabilities Services. Contact David Brandt, in the Academic Success Office, 163 Memorial Student Affairs Building, 308-865-8214 or by email brandtdl@unk.edu to register. For students needing accommodation due to pregnancy, you need to contact Student Health. (The following link provides information for students and faculty regarding pregnancy rights. <http://www.nwlc.org/resource/pregnant-and-parenting-students-rights-faqs-college-and-graduate-students>). Students with disabilities or students who are pregnant need to provide the proper documentation from Disability Services or Student Health to their faculty members in order to receive academic accommodations. Anyone who feels they were not afforded these rights, should contact the campus Title IX/ADA Officer at 308-865-8655. Attached is the link to the above statement for your convenience. <http://www.unk.edu/offices/disabilityservices.aspx?id=13673>

Reporting Student Sexual Harassment, Sexual Violence or Sexual Assault

Reporting allegations of rape, domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, sexual harassment, and stalking enables the University to promptly provide support to the impacted student(s), and to take appropriate action to prevent a recurrence of such sexual misconduct and protect the campus community. Confidentiality will be respected to the greatest degree possible. Any student who believes she or he may be the victim of sexual misconduct is encouraged to report to one or more of the following resources:
Local Domestic Violence, Sexual Assault Advocacy Agency 308-237-2599
Campus Police (or Security) 308-627-4811
Title IX Coordinator 308-865-8655

Veterans Services

UNK works diligently to support UNK's military community by providing military and veteran students and families with resources and services to help them succeed. Veterans Services assists with the GI Bill process and acts as a liaison between the student and the Veterans Administration. If you need assistance or would like more information, please contact Lori Weed Skarka at 308-865-8520 or unkveterans@unk.edu.

TENTATIVE COURSE SCHEDULE:

TOPIC	Journal Writing	Assignment	Week
Online Tools: Accessing the UNK Library	Journal Entry 1	-Class Introductions -Personal Statement re: Scientific Writing	1 (Aug 20)
Plagiarism & Proper Paraphrase	Journal Entry 2	-Library Assignment	2 (Aug 27)
Brainstorming	Journal Entry 3	-Potential Topics	3 (Sept 3) 3 Sept – labor day
Types of Scientific Writing	Journal Entry 4	No assignment	4 (Sept 10)
Sections of a Scientific Paper	Journal Entry 5	No assignment	5 (Sept 17)
Outlining & Organizing	Journal Entry 6	-Final Topic and annotated bibliography	6 (Sept 24)
Paragraph Structure	Journal Entry 7	-Title page and outline	7 (Oct 1)
Language & Punctuation	Journal Entry 8	No assignment	8 (Oct 8)
Language & Punctuation	Journal Entry 9	No assignment	9 (Oct 15) Oct 15-16 Fall Break
Documenting Sources	Journal Entry 10	-1 st submission of review article	10 (Oct 22)
Critical Eye	Journal Entry 11	-Peer review of review articles	11 (Oct 29)
Revising & Editing			12 (Nov 5)
		-2 nd submission of review article -End of semester personal statement	13 (Nov 12)
			14 (Nov 19) Nov 21-24 Thanksgivin g Break
		Final assignments are due Nov 27 at noon (CT)	15 (Nov 26)
			16 (Dec 3)
			17 (Dec 10- 13)

All lecture material for each week will be posted on **Mondays by noon (CT)**

Journal Entries will be due on **Tuesdays at noon (CT)** of every week (i.e. you will have up to 8 days to complete each weekly journal entry)

Due dates for all assignments will be posted on Canvas

TENRATIVE READING ASSIGNMENTS

WEEK	READINGS: <i>Writing in the Biological Sciences: A Comprehensive Resource for Scientific Communication (2nd Edition)</i>	READINGS: <i>Bird by Bird: Some Instructions on Writing and Life</i>
1	Chapter 1: Science and Scientific Communication	Introduction, Getting Started, Short Assignments
2	Chapter 4: Literature Sources Chapter 10: Reading, Summarizing, and Critiquing a Scientific Research Article	Shitty First Drafts, Perfectionism, Polaroids
3	Chapter 2: Fundamentals of Scientific Writing, Part I - Style	Writing a Present, Finding Your Voice
4	Chapter 3: Fundamentals of Scientific Writing, Part II - Composition	Looking Around, The Moral Point of View
5	Chapter 7: Laboratory Reports and Research Papers	Broccoli, Radio Station KFKD
6	Chapter 11: Term Papers and Review Articles	Jealousy
7		Index Cards
8	Chapter 6: Data, Figures, and Tables	Calling Around
9		Writing Groups
10	Chapter 8: Revising and Editing	Someone to Read your Drafts
11		Letters, Writers Block
12	Chapters 13, 14, & 15: Oral Presentations, Posters, Research Proposals	False Starts, How do you Know When you are done?
13		Giving, The Last Class

Note there may be additional Readings assigned, outside of the required texts. Additional readings will be provided on Canvas