WILD 4100/6100 Scientific Communication for Natural Resource Professionals

Spring 2021 Syllabus
W/F 1:30–2:45 Web Broadcast

Instructor
Kendall Becker
Science Writing Center Assistant Director
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(206) 552-5340
Office hours: Please email Kendall to ask questions or set up video chat meetings at any time.

Fees
There are no course fees.

Course Description
Effective communication is a critical skill for natural resource professionals, who frequently interface with scientists, policymakers, and the public. The purpose of this course is to enhance your scientific literacy skills by teaching: 1) how to efficiently read scientific articles, 2) how to reverse outline different genres of scientific communication to learn how to construct them, 3) how to synthesize research and new ideas, and 4) how to present that information effectively in written and oral form to different audiences (e.g., scientists, managers, the public).

Course activities center around two types of scientific discourse, a literature synthesis and a project proposal. The literature synthesis and the project proposal will each be broken down into a series of assignments that target how to read and use primary literature and how to outline, draft, and revise. Each written project will also be presented in oral form. All written projects and oral presentations will involve multiple drafts with opportunities to incorporate instructor and peer feedback.

Course Objectives
Our three essential objectives are: (1) "Learning how to find, evaluate, and use resources to explore a topic in depth," (2) "Developing skills in expressing oneself orally or in writing," and (3) "Developing creative capacities." Please approach Kendall at any time during the semester to let her know if she is not 100% effective in achieving these outcomes for you so she can adjust her methods.

Attendance and Excused Absences Policy
You are responsible for emailing Kendall in advance of any absences and arranging appropriate makeup activities.

Class Schedule

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<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Class</th>
<th>Assignment</th>
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### Unit 1: Reading Scientific Literature

**8/31**  
Introduction to scientific literature; sign-ups for grammar presentations and introductory meeting with instructor  
Read "Writing in Science"; read introduction to Hudy et al. (2008); read Structure Handout

**9/2**  
Discuss readings; discuss components of scientific papers  
Complete tasks of reading Knapp et al. (2015); read “Science as Story

**9/9**  
Discuss reading; discuss the message of Knapp et al. (2015)  
Read Duke Scientific Writing Resource

### Unit 2: Scientific Writing Principles

**9/14**  
Grammar presentation: (dependent & independent clauses)  
Discuss Duke Scientific Writing Resource ideas; apply ideas to Knapp et al. (2015)  
Write article summary

**9/16**  
Peer review of summary: develop eye for Duke Scientific Writing Resource ideas; discuss strategies for creating an annotated bibliography at least 5 peer-reviewed sources  
Revise summary of Knapp et al. (2015) and conduct peer evaluations; Literature Review Tips; decide on a topic for the literature synthesis

**9/21**  
Discuss evaluation feedback; introduction to scientific literature reviews; discuss reverse outlining  
Work on annotated bibliography; read Poff et al. intro and reverse outline; read Tilman intro and reverse outline

**9/23**  
Discuss reverse outlines and compare structures  
Finish annotated bibliography; complete Studying an Example; read P: Voice focus article

Discuss paragraphs and topic sentences discussion and activity
Unit 3: Research Synthesis

9/28
Grammar presentation: (run-on sentences)
Passive voice discussion and activity; how do we outline? Do we?
Generate outline; two, 10-minute free writes to draft literature synthesis

9/30
Grammar presentation: (hyphen, en dash, em dash)
Peer discussions of literature synthesis
Work on literature synthesis

10/5
Grammar presentation: option
Peer discussions of literature synthesis
Complete literature synthesis

10/7
Grammar presentation: (colons and semicolons)
Students reverse outline each other’s first drafts and discuss
Revise literature synthesis

10/12
No class: Individual meetings with instructor about revision process
Complete revised draft (WILD 6100: must have 10 or more peer-review sources)

10/14
No class: Individual meetings with instructor to discuss instructor’s feedback
Revise literature synthesis based on comments from instructor
10/19  No class: Individual meetings with instructor to discuss instructor’s feedback
        Revise literature synthesis based on comments from instructor

Unit 4: Oral Presentation

10/21  Grammar presentation: (comma splices)
        Discussion of oral presentations in science
        Create a 10-minute presentation that communicates the key ideas from literature synthesis

10/26  Peer review of presentations
        Submit a video of a practice version of the talk with your observations of yourself

10/28  Presentations in class
        Write a 1-paragraph idea for a writing project/research proposal; compile annotated bibliography for two sources

Unit 5: Research Proposal

11/2   Presentations in class
        Read “Making a Story Sticky,” the Proposal Story Structure Handout, a Proposal Example 1; complete an annotated bibliography for two sources

11/4   Discuss readings
        Read Proposal Examples 2 and 3; complete an annotated bibliography for two sources

11/9   Discuss readings
        Generate outline; two, 10-minute free writes to start writing project draft

11/11  Peer discussion of writing projects
        Continue working on writing project draft

11/16  Peer discussion of writing projects
        Complete and revise writing project based on comments from peer
11/18  No class: Individual meetings with instructor  Create a 12-minute presentation that communicates the key ideas from writing project

11/23  Peer review of presentations  Continue working on a 12-minute presentation that communicates the ideas from your writing project; revise writing project based on comments from instructors

11/25  No class: Individual meetings with instructor  (Give practice talk to instructor. Discuss.)  Watch the video of the talk you gave in class previously and submit observations of yourself; submit revised final writing project

11/30  Student presentations  Revise writing project based on written comments from instructor

12/2  Student presentations  Prepare your final writing project for peer evaluation; conduct peer evaluation

12/7  Discuss peer evaluations of writing projects  IDEA Survey + Instructor survey about the class

12/9  Reflect on course content

Library Services

All USU students attending classes in Logan, at our Regional Campuses, or online can access all databases, e-journals, and e-books regardless of location. Additionally, the library will mail printed books to students, at no charge to them. Students can also borrow books from any Utah academic library. Take advantage of all library services and learn more at libguides.usu.edu/rc. ([http://libguides.usu.edu/rc](http://libguides.usu.edu/rc))

Requirements & Grading Scheme

Grading:

**Written communication**  50%
- Homework assignments  10%
- Project 1: Scientific Literature Synthesis  20%
- Project 2: Final Writing Project  20%

**Oral communication**  30%
- Short oral presentation  5%
- Oral presentation videos  10%
- Oral presentations  15%

**Participation**  20%
- Involvement in class  10%
- Meetings with instructor  10%

**Grade**  % Range
Classroom Civility

Utah State University supports the principle of freedom of expression for both faculty and students. The University respects the rights of faculty to teach and students to learn. Maintenance of these rights requires classroom conditions that do not impede the learning process. Disruptive classroom behavior will not be tolerated. An individual engaging in such behavior may be subject to disciplinary action. Read Student Code Article V Section V-3 (https://studentconduct.usu.edu/studentcode/article5) for more information.

University Policies & Procedures

COVID-19 Classroom Protocols

In order to continue to provide a high standard of instruction at USU, and to limit the spread of COVID-19 during the pandemic, students are asked to follow certain classroom protocols. These protocols are in place not only for your safety but also the safety of the rest of the campus community. You will be asked to clean your desk area at the start of each class, sit in designated seats, wear face coverings, and follow dismission instructions. There may be individual medical circumstances that prevent some students from using face coverings. These circumstances will be rare, but if they do exist, we ask that everyone be respectful. It is imperative that we each do our part so that on-campus instruction can continue.

Academic Freedom and Professional Responsibilities

Academic freedom is the right to teach, study, discuss, investigate, discover, create, and publish freely. Academic freedom protects the rights of faculty members in teaching and of students in learning. Freedom in research is fundamental to the advancement of truth. Faculty members are entitled to full freedom in teaching, research, and creative activities, subject to the limitations imposed by professional responsibility. Faculty Code Policy #403 (http://www.usu.edu/hr/files/uploads/Policies/403.pdf) further defines academic freedom and professional responsibilities.

Academic Integrity – "The Honor System"

Each student has the right and duty to pursue his or her academic experience free of dishonesty. To enhance the learning environment at Utah State University and to develop student academic integrity, each student agrees to the following Honor Pledge:

"I pledge, on my honor, to conduct myself with the foremost level of academic integrity."

A student who lives by the Honor Pledge is a student who does more than not cheat, falsify, or plagiarize. A student who lives by the Honor Pledge:

- Espouses academic integrity as an underlying and essential principle of the Utah State University community;
- Understands that each act of academic dishonesty devalues every degree that is awarded by this institution; and
- Is a welcomed and valued member of Utah State University.

Academic Dishonesty

The instructor of this course will take appropriate actions in response to Academic Dishonesty, as defined the University's Student Code. Acts of academic dishonesty include but are not limited to:

- **Cheating:** using, attempting to use, or providing others with any unauthorized assistance in taking quizzes, tests, examinations, or in any other academic exercise or activity. Unauthorized assistance includes:
  - Working in a group when the instructor has designated that the quiz, test, examination, or any other academic exercise or activity be done "individually;"
• Depending on the aid of sources beyond those authorized by the instructor in writing papers, preparing reports, solving problems, or carrying out other assignments;
• Substituting for another student, or permitting another student to substitute for oneself, in taking an examination or preparing academic work;
• Acquiring tests or other academic material belonging to a faculty member, staff member, or another student without express permission;
• Continuing to write after time has been called on a quiz, test, examination, or any other academic exercise or activity;
• Submitting substantially the same work for credit in more than one class, except with prior approval of the instructor; or engaging in any form of research fraud.

• Falsification: altering or fabricating any information or citation in an academic exercise or activity.
• Plagiarism: representing, by paraphrase or direct quotation, the published or unpublished work of another person as one's own in any academic exercise or activity without full and clear acknowledgment. It also includes using materials prepared by another person or by an agency engaged in the sale of term papers or other academic materials.

For additional information go to: ARTICLE VI. University Regulations Regarding Academic Integrity (https://studentconduct.usu.edu/studentcode/article6)

Sexual Harassment/Title IX

Utah State University is committed to creating and maintaining an environment free from acts of sexual misconduct and discrimination and to fostering respect and dignity for all members of the USU community. Title IX and USU Policy 339 (http://www.usu.edu/policies/339) address sexual harassment in the workplace and academic setting.

The university responds promptly upon learning of any form of possible discrimination or sexual misconduct. Any individual may contact USU's Office of Equity (https://equity.usu.edu/) for available options and resources or clarification. The university has established a complaint procedure to handle all types of discrimination complaints, including sexual harassment (USU Policy 305 (http://www.usu.edu/policies/305/)), and has designated the Office of Equity Director/Title IX Coordinator as the official responsible for receiving and investigating complaints of sexual harassment.

Withdrawal Policy and "I" Grade Policy

Students are required to complete all courses for which they are registered by the end of the semester. In some cases, a student may be unable to complete all of the coursework because of extenuating circumstances, but not due to poor performance or to retain financial aid. The term ‘extenuating’ circumstances includes: (1) incapacitating illness which prevents a student from attending classes for a minimum period of two weeks, (2) a death in the immediate family, (3) financial responsibilities requiring a student to alter a work schedule to secure employment, (4) change in work schedule as required by an employer, or (5) other emergencies deemed appropriate by the instructor.

Students with Disabilities

USU welcomes students with disabilities. If you have, or suspect you may have, a physical, mental health, or learning disability that may require accommodations in this course, please contact the Disability Resource Center (DRC) (http://www.usu.edu/drc/) as early in the semester as possible (University Inn # 101, (435) 797-2444, drc@usu.edu (mailto:drc@usu.edu)). All disability related accommodations must be approved by the DRC. Once approved, the DRC will coordinate with faculty to provide accommodations.

Students who are at a higher risk for complications from COVID-19 or who contract COVID-19 may also be eligible for accommodations.

Diversity Statement

Regardless of intent, careless or ill-informed remarks can be offensive and hurtful to others and detract from the learning climate. If you feel uncomfortable in a classroom due to offensive language or actions by an instructor or student(s) regarding ethnicity, gender, or sexual orientation, contact:

• Division of Student Affairs: https://studentaffairs.usu.edu (https://studentaffairs.usu.edu/), (435) 797-1712, studentservices@usu.edu (mailto:studentservices@usu.edu), TSC 220
• Student Legal Services: https://ususa.usu.edu/student-association/student-advocacy/legal-services (https://ususa.usu.edu/student-association/student-advocacy/legal-services), (435) 797-2912, TSC 326,
• Access and Diversity: http://accesscenter.usu.edu (http://accesscenter.usu.edu/), (435) 797-1728, access@usu.edu (mailto:access@usu.edu); TSC 315
• Multicultural Programs: http://accesscenter.usu.edu/multiculture (http://accesscenter.usu.edu/multiculture), (435) 797-1728, TSC 315
• LGBTQA Programs: http://accesscenter.usu.edu/lgbtqa (http://accesscenter.usu.edu/lgbtqa/), (435) 797-1728, TSC 3145
• Provost's Office Diversity Resources: https://www.usu.edu/provost/diversity (https://www.usu.edu/provost/diversity/), (435) 797-8176

You can learn about your student rights by visiting:
The Code of Policies and Procedures for Students at Utah State University: https://studentconduct.usu.edu/studentcode (https://studentconduct.usu.edu/studentcode/)

Grievance Process

Students who feel they have been unfairly treated may file a grievance through the channels and procedures described in the Student Code: Article VII (https://studentconduct.usu.edu/studentcode/article7).

Full details for USU Academic Policies and Procedures can be found at:
Nonattendance Policy

Students May Be Dropped For Nonattendance

If a student does not attend a class during the first week of the term or by the second class meeting, whichever comes first, the instructor may submit a request to have the student dropped from the course. (This does not remove responsibility from the student to drop courses which he or she does not plan to attend.) This option is typically used for classes that are full and the instructor is trying to make a seat available for another student, but may be considered for other courses. Requests must be made during the first 20 percent of the course and will be considered on an individual student basis. Students who are dropped from courses will be notified by the Registrar's Office through their preferred e-mail account (see 2018-2019 General Catalog).