

Intensive Course in Research Writing

Texas A&M University, 27 June–15 July 2016
Monday through Friday, 9:00 a.m. to 12:00 noon
Room 331 Veterinary Medicine Administration Building

Classroom Instruction: approximately 40 hours (about 3 hours per day)

Outside Work: approximately 120 hours

Course Staff:

Instructor: Barbara Gastel, MD, MPH, Professor, Texas A&M University

(Room 47G Veterinary Teaching Hospital; email bgastel@cvm.tamu.edu; phone 979-845-6887)

Instructional Associate: Roberto Tuda Rivas, PhD, Investigador, Facultad de Contaduría y

Administración, Unidad Torreón, Universidad Autónoma de Coahuila

(email: hbpe55@gmail.com)

Editorial Associate: Colin Young, PhD, Adjunct Professor, Texas A&M University

(email: cyoung@cvm.tamu.edu)

Editorial Assistants: Gina Wadas, MS; Bryan Demapan, MS

This 3-week intensive course is designed mainly to increase your ability to write papers publishable in English-language international journals. Other goals of the course include increasing your knowledge of the academic publication process, enhancing your skill at other forms of professional communication (such as oral presentations and grant proposals), increasing your ability to edit or peer review others' work, and helping you to refine or maintain your English-language skills. We hope that you will find this course helpful and that you will share information from it with colleagues and students.

The goals of this course will be pursued mainly through interactive presentations, small-group discussions ("workshops"), reading assignments, and meetings with the editorial associate. The reading will come mainly from the book *How to Write and Publish a Scientific Paper*, 8th edition, by Barbara Gastel and Robert A. Day (Greenwood Press, 2016). The main writing assignments will entail preparing or revising the parts of a scientific or other scholarly paper about research that you have done. We expect that you will spend several hours per day on homework. You will be able to use the library facilities of Texas A&M University. We hope that by the end of the course, you will have a manuscript nearly ready to submit to a journal.

Please double-space all writing assignments and use an unjustified right margin. Also, please use margins of at least 1 inch. The preferred font for this course is 12-point Times New Roman. Please remember to write your name and the date on all writing submitted. You should email all completed assignments both to Barbara Gastel at bgastel@cvm.tamu.edu and to Colin Young at cyoung@cvm.tamu.edu. Feel free also to email questions to these addresses. When you email an assignment, you should use the subject line indicated in the instructions for the assignment. When you send other email to us, please write IC2016 at the beginning of the subject line to aid in identification.

The deadline for each assignment is 8:00 a.m. on the day for which it is listed. If possible, please submit assignments the previous afternoon or evening. If asked, also bring the requested number of copies to class. If you cannot submit or print out an assignment on time, come to class as scheduled anyway. Do not be late to class in order to email or print out an assignment.

On some days, the course will include a "no-lose quiz." This quiz may contain material on reading due that day or previously, on the lecture material, or both. There is no penalty for doing poorly on the quizzes. However, if for the course as a whole you answer at least 75% of the questions correctly, you will receive a small souvenir.

The success of a course such as this one depends on the class members as well as the instructors. Suggestions for making the course more useful and enjoyable are welcome at any time.

Tentative Schedule

Week 1

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| Monday,
June 27 | <p>Introductions: The Participants and the Course
 Presentation/Discussion: Deciding When and Where to Submit a Paper
 Exercise: Defining the Focus and Contribution of Your Paper
 Presentation/Demonstration: Journals' Instructions to Authors
 Overview: The Structure of Papers
 Introduction: Drafting an Abstract
 Brief Tour of Building (Optional)</p> |
| Tuesday,
June 28 | <p>Workshop and Discussion: Instructions to Authors
 Presentation/Discussion: Approaching a Writing Project
 Presentation/Discussion: Writing in English as a Foreign Language
 Presentation/Discussion: Writing the Methods Section
 Presentation/Discussion: Providing Feedback on Drafts
 Workshop: Class Members' Drafts of Informal Abstracts
 Reading Due (note: all listed reading is in textbook unless stated otherwise)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Preface • A Word to International Readers • Chapter 6: Where to Submit Your Manuscript • Chapter 9: How to Prepare the Abstract • Chapter 3: Approaching a Writing Project • Chapter 34: How to Write Science in English as a Foreign Language • Chapter 11: How to Write the Materials and Methods Section <p>Writing Due (Subject Line: IC2016-01):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • draft of an informal abstract on the research about which you will write a paper
 <i>Instructions: Please draft an informal abstract of the research about which you will write a paper. The abstract should run about 250 words (1 double-spaced page). If appropriate, use the following headings: Background, Methods, Results, and Conclusions.</i> <p>Other Item Due</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • instructions to authors from 2 or 3 journals in your field
 <i>Instructions: Please bring instructions to authors from 2 or 3 journals in your field. At least 1 set of instructions should be from a journal to which you might want to submit a paper about your research. You may bring hard copies, electronic copies, or links.</i> |
| Wednesday,
June 29 | <p>Presentation/Discussion: Giving Oral Presentations
 Presentation/Discussion: Citing References—Some Basics
 Workshop: Drafts of Methods Sections
 Guest Segment: An Example of a Short Talk
 Sharla Birch, MS, DVM, DACVP
 PhD Candidate and Postdoctoral Fellow
 Texas A&M University</p> <p>Reading Due:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chapter 27: How to Present a Paper Orally |

- Chapter 15: How to Cite the References

Browsing Due:

- papers in the journal for which you are writing a paper
Instructions: Look at some papers in the journal for which you are writing a paper. Choose a paper that you think would be a good model for yours. Notice how the methods section of the paper is written. Be ready to share your observations. Also, please email Dr. Gastel and Dr. Young (1) the paper that you are using as a model (2) the instructions to authors from your target journal (or a link to these instructions).

Writing Due:

- draft of methods section (Subject Line: IC2016-02)
Instructions: Please draft the methods section of your paper.

(Note: Dr. Tuda, who has considerable experience with the reference management program EndNote, is available outside class hours to give class members guidance in using this program.)

Thursday,
June 30

Guest Presentation: Giving a 15-Minute Talk
Weston Porter, PhD
Associate Professor
Department of Veterinary Integrative Biosciences

Presentation/Discussion: Writing the Results Section

Presentation/Discussion: Tables and Figures

Workshop: Examples of Tables and Figures

Reading Due:

- Chapter 12: How to Write the Results
- Chapter 16: How to Design Effective Tables
- Chapter 17: How to Prepare Effective Graphs
- Chapter 18: How to Prepare Effective Photographs
- Chapter 19: Rights and Permissions

Writing Due:

- revised version of informal abstract (Subject Line: IC2013-03)
Instructions: Using feedback received, revise the draft of your informal abstract.

Other Items Due:

- copies of some tables, figures, or both from papers reporting research similar to yours
Instructions: Print or download some copies of tables, figures, or both from papers reporting research similar to yours. Bring the copies to class.

Friday,
July 1

Presentation/Discussion: Preparing Poster Presentations

Presentation/Discussion: Titles and Authors

Presentation/Discussion: Writing the Discussion

Small-Group Exercise: Plans for/Progress on the Results and Discussion Sections

Workshop: Revised Drafts of Methods Sections

Reading Due:

- Chapter 28: How to Prepare a Poster
- Chapter 7: How to Prepare the Title
- Chapter 8: How to List the Authors and Addresses
- Chapter 14: How to State the Acknowledgments
- Chapter 13: How to Write the Discussion

Writing Due:

- revised draft of methods section (Subject Line: IC2016-04)
Instructions: Using feedback received, revise the draft of your methods section.

Optional Item:

- a copy of a poster presentation
Instructions: Feel free to email Dr. Gastel an example of poster presenting research. The poster can be one that you or others have prepared. The design of the poster might then be discussed in class today or next week.

Week 2

Monday, July 4	The university is closed July 4 for the US Independence Day holiday. This day can be a good time to catch up on work for the course, to get ahead on work for the course, or to catch up on rest. Interested class members are invited to attend local Independence Day events. Further information will be provided in class.
Tuesday, July 5	<p>Presentation/Discussion: Writing the Introduction Presentation/Discussion: Publishing a Paper Workshop: Drafts of Results Section</p> <p>Reading Due:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chapter 10: How to Write the Introduction • Chapter 20: How to Submit the Manuscript • Chapter 21: The Review Process (How to Deal with Editors) • Chapter 22: The Publishing Process (How to Deal with Proofs)—and After Publication • annotated journal article (posted at http://www.authoraid.info/uploads/resources/annotated-journal-article-1.pdf) <p>Optional Reading:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chapter 1: What Is Scientific Writing? • Chapter 2: Historical Perspectives • Chapter 4: What Is a Scientific Paper? <p>Writing Due:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • draft of results section (Subject Line: IC 2016-05) <i>Instructions: Please draft your results section.</i>
Wednesday, July 6	<p>Presentations by Some Class Members about Their Work Presentation/Discussion: Some Ethical and Other Issues Presentation/Discussion: Some Aspects of Writing Style Exercises: Some Aspects of Writing Style Workshop: Writing Due Today</p> <p>Reading Due:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chapter 5: Ethics in Scientific Publishing • Chapter 30: Use and Misuse of English • Chapter 31: Avoiding Jargon • Chapter 32: How and When to Use Abbreviations • Chapter 33: Writing Clearly Across Cultures and Media • Appendix 2: Words and Expressions to Avoid <p>Writing Due:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • set of at least 10 annotations (Subject Line: IC2016-06)

Instructions: Using as a model the annotated journal article looked at, prepare at least 10 annotations of the journal article that you are using as a model in this course. In the annotations, you should note items that the journal article does appropriately. The 10 or more annotations should include annotations in each major part of the paper and may include annotations in other parts.

- Thursday,
July 7
- Presentations by Some Class Members about Their Work
Presentation/Discussion: Preparing a Curriculum Vitae
Workshop: Drafts of Discussions
Reading Due:
- Chapter 36: How to Prepare a Curriculum Vitae
- Writing Due:**
- draft of discussion (Subject Line: IC2016-07)
Instructions: Please draft the discussion section of your paper.
- Friday,
July 8
- Presentations by Some Class Members about Their Work
Presentation/Discussion: Preparing Grant Proposals and Progress Reports (Part 1 of 2)
Reading Due:
- Chapter 37: How to Prepare Grant Proposals and Progress Reports
- Browsing Due:**
- annotated example of successful proposal, posted at <http://www.authoraid.info/en/resources/details/587/>
- Writing Due:**
- revised draft of results section (Subject Line: IC 2016-08)
Instructions: Using feedback received, revise the draft of your results section.
- Week 3
- Monday,
July 11
- Presentations by Some Class Members about Their Work
Presentation/Discussion: Preparing Grant Proposals and Progress Reports (Part 2 of 2)
Workshop: Drafts of Introductions
Writing Due:
- draft of introduction section (Subject Line: IC2016-09)
Instructions: Please draft the introduction of your paper.
- Tuesday,
July 12
- Presentations by Some Class Members about Their Work
Presentation/Discussion: Writing Review Papers (Review Articles)
Presentation/Discussion: Writing or Supervising a Thesis or Dissertation
Reading Due:
- Chapter 23: How to Write a Review Paper
 - Chapter 35: How to Write a Thesis
- Browsing Due**
- 3 review papers in your field
Instructions: Find and look at 3 review papers in your field. Download and bring them. Be ready to discuss what you notice about them.
- Writing Due:**
- revised draft of discussion (Subject Line: IC2016-10)
Instructions: Using feedback received, revise the draft of your discussion.

- Wednesday,
July 13
- Presentations by Some Class Members about Their Work
 Presentation/Discussion: Other Writing for Journals
 Presentation/Discussion: Providing Peer Review
 Review/Discussion: Writing an Abstract
 Workshop: Some Favorite Essays from Journals
Reading Due:
- Chapter 24: How to Write Opinion (Book Reviews, Editorials, and Letters to the Editor)
 - Chapter 40: How to Provide Peer Review
 - (Chapter 9: How to Prepare an Abstract)
- Writing Due:**
- revised draft of introduction (Subject Line: IC2016-11)
Instructions: Using feedback received, revise the draft of your introduction.
- Thursday,
July 14
- Presentation/Discussion: Writing Book Chapters and Books
 Presentation/Discussion: Presenting Science to the Public
 Panel Discussion: Advice from Journal Editors and Peer Reviewers
Reading Due:
- Chapter 25: How to Write a Book Chapter or a Book
 - Chapter 26: How to Write for the Public
 - Chapter 39: How to Work with the Media
 - if desired, other chapters not yet read
- Writing Due:**
- abstract of your paper (Subject Line: IC2016-12)
Instructions: Please prepare the abstract of your paper.
- Friday,
July 15
- Presentation/Discussion: Resources for Continuing to Develop Your Professional
 Communication Skill
 Presentation/Discussion: Editing Your Own Work
 Workshop: Looking Ahead—Completing and Submitting the Current Paper,
 Continuing to Develop Your Writing Skill and to Write,
 and Sharing Your Learning from This Course with Others
 Course Evaluation
 Presentation of Certificates
Reading Due:
- Chapter 41: How to Edit Your Own Work
 - Appendix 4: Some Helpful Websites
- Writing Due:**
- compilation of sections of your paper, plus “do list” (Subject Line: IC2016-13)
Instructions: Prepare a single document consisting of your abstract plus the revised versions of all parts of your paper, including the reference list. If time permits, do some revision of this compiled version. Accompany this version with a list of items that you still should do before submitting your paper to a journal.

Wishing you all the best!