ENC 3254: WRITING IN ENVIRONMENTAL SCIENCE

Fall 2023

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Class # and Section: 03H9 #12358

Class Meetings: MWF3
Class Location: MAT 113
Office Hours: TBA

Credits: 3
Prereq: ENC 1101 or 1102
General Education: Composition, Satisfies 6000 Words of the Writing Requirement

COURSE DESCRIPTION

Environmental scientists have the incredibly difficult – yet rewarding – opportunity to communicate with a vast array of people working in multiple sectors. To truly make a positive impact in the world, an environmental scientist should be well-versed in writing to fellow scientists, policymakers, and the general public. This class will help you master three genres of writing (the review paper, the policy brief, and the Op-Ed) that target those three audiences; additionally, you'll write applicational material and give an oral conference presentation to help prepare you for the professional world you'll enter post-graduation.

Knowing how to communicate to multiple audiences will make you a more flexible thinker, researcher, and writer for when you have to write in even more genres (in your career, you're also likely to compose – take a deep breath – annual reports, briefing papers, brochures, comprehensive conservation plans, environmental assessments, grant proposals, newsletters, press releases, species reports, technical reports, white papers, podcasts, YouTube videos, and more!)

Each of our four Units ("Writing for Scientists," "Writing for Policymakers," "Writing for the Public," and "Professionalization") has multiple activities that we'll work on during class sessions. Strong participation is a must. This course is predicated on the idea that the ability to write and speak clearly are learned skills, not innate talents, which means that better communication can be learned by practice. You will experiment with a range of communication strategies in class: lectures, written activities, oral groupwork, and other forms that allow you to put theory and strategies into practice.

LEARNING OUTCOMES, GOALS, AND OBJECTIVES:

In our course, you will learn to

- plan, draft, revise, and edit major assignments
- adapt writing to different audiences, purposes, and contexts, in particular to scientists within your field, policymakers, and the engaged public
- synthesize and report on professional literature within your field of environmental science
- write and present in a clear, coherent, and direct style appropriate for peers in your field of environmental science
- understand and employ the various forms of writing, including analysis and synthesis of literature, a review paper, a policy brief, an Op-Ed article, and application material to either graduate school or an internship/job
- master public-speaking skills – presenting, listening, responding – in a professional conference setting
- avoid plagiarism

UNITS

Unit 1: Writing for Scientists (Weeks 1-6)

Students become familiar with a series of reading and researching skills that familiarize them with IMRD research reports and reviews. They choose a topic with an appropriate scope for a review while learning how to efficiently locate research through the library system that relates to their topic. They submit an annotated bibliography with 10 scholarly sources en route to writing a 1,250-1,750-word review that effectively synthesizes sources and cohesively demonstrates mastery over their topic to peers in their scientific field.

Unit 2: Writing for Policymakers (Weeks 6-10)

Students analyze a series of policy documents while grasping key rhetorical differences from science articles (e.g. broader scope, more action-oriented goals, more accessible prose style). They select a topic on a contemporary problem that can realistically be aided through policy changes and compose an image-friendly policy brief that includes four researched sections: an executive summary, scope of problem, policy options, and policy recommendations (1,000-1,500 words).

Unit 3: Writing for the Public (Weeks 10-12)

Students analyze the prose styles, tonal registers, and creative liberties inherent in environmental journalism (e.g. use of first-person, humor, metaphor), particularly those with environmental justice and environmental racism themes. They select a contemporary problem that interests them and compose a 1,000-1,500 word Op-Ed that explains the history and depth of the problem and solutions to the issue while keeping their readers engaged and passionate.

Unit 4: Professionalization (Weeks 13-16)

Students present their research from one of the previous units in a 5-minute oral presentation with a visual accompaniment. Presenters in the weeklong "Mock Conference" will sit on panels and engage with the student audience in active Q&A sessions. (Students are also required to ask questions during the conference.) Secondly, they will analyze the specific genres of statements of purpose and resumes for grad school applications before creating their own application material.

REQUIRED READINGS

All required readings are available on Canvas. Students will also be reading extensively in the literature related to their review paper, policy brief, and Op-Ed.

GRADING

Grading for this course will be rigorous. Successful assignments will demonstrate understanding and practice of professional writing. Students are expected to follow the conventions of the discipline as specified in the appropriate manuscript form and illustrated in the major scholarly and professional publications in the field. To receive a passing grade in the course, each paper must reach the minimum assigned word count. **Note: It is not UWP policy to round-up a grade; e.g., an 89.9% is a B+.**

Grading Scale

A	4.0	94-100	940-1000		C	2.0	74-76	740-769
A-	3.67	90-93	900-939		C-	1.67	70-73	700-739
B+	3.33	87-89	870-899		D+	1.33	67-69	670-699
B	3.0	84-86	840-869		D	1.0	64-66	640-669
B-	2.67	80-83	800-839		D-	0.67	60-63	600-639
C+	2.33	77-79	770-799		E	0.00	0-59	0-599

Note: A grade of C- is not a qualifying grade for major, minor, Gen Ed, or College Basic distribution credit. For further information on UF's Grading Policy, see:
https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/regulations/info/grades.aspx#hgrades
http://www.isis.ufl.edu/minusgrades.html

	Min. Length	Points	Due Date
Unit 1: Writing for Scientists			
Annotated Bibliography	1,750 words	60	Week 4
Review Paper	1,250 words	200	Week 7
Unit 2: Writing for Policymakers			
Policy Brief	1,000 words	175	Week 11
Unit 3: Writing for the Public			
Op-Ed Article	1,000 words	100	Week 13
Unit 4: Professionalization			
Conference Presentation	400 words	30	Weeks 12-14
Application Material	600 words	75	Week 16
Semester-Long			
Peer Reviews / Conferences		60	
In-class activities (*subject to change)		300	
	Total: 6,000 wds	**Total:** 1,000 pts	

CREDIT POLICIES

Course grades now have two components: To receive writing credit, a grade of "C" or higher and a satisfactory completion of the writing component of the course to satisfy the CLAS requirement for Composition (C) and to receive the 6,000-word University Writing Requirement credit (E6). You must turn in all papers totaling 6,000 words to receive credit for writing 6,000 words. The writing requirement ensures students both maintain their fluency in writing and use writing as a tool to facilitate learning.

PLEASE NOTE: a grade of "C-" will not confer credit for the University Writing Requirement or the CLAS Composition (C) requirement. The instructor will evaluate and provide feedback on the student's written assignments with respect to content, organization and coherence, argument and support, style, clarity, grammar, punctuation, and mechanics. Conferring credit for the University Writing Requirement, this course requires that papers conform to the following assessment rubric. More specific rubrics and guidelines applicable to individual assignments may be delivered during the course of the semester.

<u>General Education Writing Assessment Rubric</u>

SATISFACTORY (Y) / UNSATISFACTORY (N)

CONTENT:

Papers exhibit evidence of ideas that respond to the topic with complexity, critically evaluating and synthesizing sources, and provide an adequate discussion with basic understanding of sources.

Papers either include a central idea(s) that is unclear or off- topic or provide only minimal or inadequate discussion of ideas. Papers may also lack sufficient or appropriate sources.

ORGANIZATION AND COHERENCE:

Documents and paragraphs exhibit identifiable structure for topics, including a clear thesis statement and topic sentences.

Documents and paragraphs lack clearly identifiable organization, may lack any coherent sense of logic in associating and organizing ideas, and may also lack transitions and coherence to guide the reader.

ARGUMENT AND SUPPORT:

Documents use persuasive and confident presentation of ideas, strongly supported with evidence. At the weak end of the satisfactory range, documents may provide only generalized discussion of ideas or may provide adequate discussion but rely on weak support for arguments.

Documents make only weak generalizations, providing little or no support, as in summaries or narratives that fail to provide critical analysis.

STYLE:

Documents use a writing style with word choice appropriate to the context, genre, and discipline. Sentences should display complexity and logical structure.

Documents rely on word usage that is inappropriate for the context, genre, or discipline. Sentences may be overly long or short with awkward construction. Documents may also use words incorrectly.

MECHANICS:

Papers will feature correct or error-free presentation of ideas. At the

weak end of the satisfactory range, papers may contain a few spelling, punctuation, or grammatical errors that remain unobtrusive and do not obscure the paper's argument or points.

Papers contain so many mechanical or grammatical errors that they impede the reader's understanding or severely undermine the writer's credibility.

COURSE POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

Attendance and Participation

Regular promptness, attendance, and class participation is expected. A typical class session involves activities totaling 5-10 points, so it is in the student's best interest to maintain consistent promptness and active attendance. In-class assignments cannot be made up outside of class, unless the student provides documentation that makes their absence "excused": university-sponsored events, such as athletics and band; religious holidays; illness or serious family emergencies (with written documentation).

University Writing Program Policy states that after 6 unexcused absences, a student will automatically fail the course. The UWP exempts from this policy only those absences due to university-sponsored events, such as athletics and band, religious holidays, illness, or serious family emergencies (with written documentation).

Late Work

Late unexcused submissions of major assignments will be deducted 10% of possible points every 24 hours after the due-date: after five-plus days, the highest grade a student can receive on a late assignment is 50% of the total, but it will not be deducted further for lateness.

Academic Honesty

Student conduct at the University of Florida is governed by the UF Student Honor Code, (https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/advising/info/student-honor-code.aspx). The Honor Code requires Florida students to neither give nor receive unauthorized aid in completing all assignments. Violations include cheating, plagiarism, bribery, and misrepresentation, all defined in detail at the above site.

Plagiarism

Plagiarism is a serious violation of the Student Honor Code. The Honor Code prohibits and defines plagiarism as follows:

A Student must not represent as the student's own work all or any portion of the work of another. Plagiarism includes but is not limited to:

1. Stealing, misquoting, insufficiently paraphrasing, or patch-writing.

2. Self-plagiarism, which is the reuse of the Student's own submitted work, or the simultaneous

3. Submission of the Student's own work, without the full and clear acknowledgment and permission of the Faculty to whom it is submitted.

4. Submitting materials from any source without proper attribution

5. Submitting a document, assignment, or material that, in whole or in part, is identical or substantially identical to a document or assignment the Student did not author.

Part of the submission requirements for each assignment is to upload the assignment, ensure that it opens properly and is completely viewable, and also to check the Turn It In score; this score should be as low as possible.

University of Florida students are responsible for reading, understanding, and abiding by the entire [Student Honor Code](#). The University Writing Program takes plagiarism very seriously, and treats instances of plagiarism as dishonesty and as a failure to comply with the scholarly requirements of this course. Students commit plagiarism when they present the ideas or words of someone else as their own.

Using an assignment or part of an assignment from any other class or another student is considered plagiarism (your assignments will be run through anti-plagiarism sites).

Important tip: Never copy and paste something from the Internet without providing the exact location and citation information for the source.

If a student plagiarizes all or any part of any assignment, he or she may receive a failing grade on the assignment. Additionally, instructors may impose a course grade penalty and report any incident of academic dishonesty to the Office of the Dean of Students. Each student's work may be tested for its originality against a wide variety of databases by anti-plagiarism sites to which the University subscribes, and negative reports from such sites may constitute proof of plagiarism. Other forms of academic dishonesty will also result in a failing grade on the assignment as a minimum penalty. Examples include cheating on a quiz or citing phony sources or quotations.

ACCOMMODATIONS

Students with disabilities who experience learning barriers and would like to request academic accommodations should connect with the Disability Resource Center (352-392-8565, www.dso.ufl.edu/drc/). It is important for students to share their accommodation letter with their instructor and discuss their access needs as early as possible in the semester.

WRITING STUDIO

Students can receive tutoring assistance in all phases of the writing process by making an appointment with the University Writing Program's Writing Studio: https://writing.ufl.edu/writing-studio/

ONLINE COURSE EVALUATIONS

Students are expected to provide professional and respectful feedback on the quality of instruction in this course by completing course evaluations online via GatorEvals. Guidance on how to give feedback in a professional and respectful manner is available at http://gatorevals.aa.ufl.edu/students/. Students will be notified when the evaluation period opens and can complete evaluations through the email they receive from GatorEvals, or via http://ufl.bluera.com/ufl/. Summaries of course evaluation results are available to students at https://gatorevals.aa.ufl.edu/public-results/.
Learn more about GatorEvals.