

# ENC 3459 Writing in the Medical Sciences

## Spring 2025

(this class confers Composition (C) and WR 6,000 credit)

**SECTION: 11794**

**CLASS MEETING DAYS/TIMES: MWF, PERIOD 5**

**INSTRUCTOR: SCOTT C. THOMPSON**    **EMAIL: SC.THOMPSON@UFL.EDU**

**OFFICE HOURS: TBD**

### COURSE DESCRIPTION

Medical professionals have a special obligation to communicate without ambiguity, either in the written or spoken word; they depend on their communication skills to interact productively with other medical experts, their colleagues, clients and their families, and the public at large. This team-taught course will provide students with the opportunity to participate in a range of activities focusing on researching, processing, and sharing medical information with others. Given our current evidence-based medical culture, students will learn to do research using medical databases and other research tools, as well as discovering how best to organize and present their findings to other medical professionals. The healthcare professional must often act as intermediary between the specialized world of scientific research and the more pragmatic world of the general public; consequently, we will also investigate how best to present technical medical information to the layperson.

### OUTCOMES

#### Student Learning Outcomes

##### Content

- Identify features of research reports, reviews, and case reports
- Define the components of evidence-based medicine
- Describe how the three main genres of academic publication (research report, review, case study) contribute to evidence-based medicine practice

##### Critical Thinking

- Evaluate research for scientific validity and clinical utility
- Appraise practitioner-oriented health information for pedagogical purposes
- Analyze the academic literature for project-specific information

##### Communication

- Create effective health science messages for various audiences
- Write science prose to the standards expected of publication
- Present health sciences to a peer audience

Students must pass this course with a “C” or better to satisfy the CLAS requirement for Composition (C). The University Writing Requirement (WR) ensures students both maintain their fluency in writing and use writing as a tool to facilitate learning. Course grades now have two components. To receive University Writing Requirement (WR) credit (E6), a student must earn a course grade of C or higher and papers must meet

minimum word requirements totaling 6000 words.

## REQUIRED TEXT

There is no required text for this class. Required readings will be linked in e-learning.

Students will be expected to use the UF e-learning system for this class. Class will be conducted using e-learning pages and all the information needed for success in class is in e-learning.

## MAJOR ASSIGNMENTS

Medical Communication Project	This is a two part project in which you get to explore the process of evaluating different kinds of medical information. First, you will learn the foundations of evidence-based medical literacy in the Synthesis Series assignment. Second, you will produce a complementary pair of documents: a brief review paper targeted at medical professionals and a presentation suitable for educating patients/public.
Medical School Application	Before you can be chosen to interview, you must apply to medical school. To this end, you will get the opportunity to write (and rewrite!) the "personal statement," the essay which likely gets your foot in the door (along with your obviously stellar GPA and MCAT scores!). Also, you will plan a chronological-functional resume designed to aid you in filling out the 15 "job and/or experience" spaces available for this information on the AMCAS application. Finally, you'll get to record an answer to the "why do you want to do this?" question.
Team CME Project	All accredited professionals participate in continuing education to remain licensed. These education units are called CMEs (continuing medical education), CEs (continuing education), and sometimes CMUs (continuing medical units). CMEs cover a wide range of topics from disease to clinical practice. However, CMEs are planned to be topically important -- this means dealing with a medical issue that is current and relevant (as opposed to an issue that is rare). For your final project, you will work in teams to plan and deliver a CME unit to your peers.

## GRADING

Grading for this course will be rigorous. Do not rely on the instructor for copy-editing, even on drafts. To receive a passing grade, each paper must reach the minimum assigned word count.

## ASSIGNMENT VALUES

<b>Project 1</b>	Value
Synthesis Series <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Bullet Analyses -- 25 pts each (500 words each)</li> <li>Synthesis Paper -- 75 pts (500 words)</li> </ul>	150
Annotated Bibliography (1000 words)	100
Review Paper (1500 words)	200
Informative Presentation	50
<b>Project 2</b>	
Personal Statement (500 words)	50
Resume (150 words)	75
Audio Statement (script: 200 words)	25
<b>Project 3</b>	
Proposal (500 words)	50
CME Written Project (1000 words)	150
CME Presentation	150
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>1000</b>

## GRADING SCALE

The University Writing Program uses the UF recommended grading scale.

A	100 %	to 94.0%
A-	< 94.0 %	to 90.0%
B+	< 90.0 %	to 87.0%
B	< 87.0 %	to 84.0%
B-	< 84.0 %	to 80.0%
C+	< 80.0 %	to 77.0%
C	< 77.0 %	to 74.0%
C-	< 74.0 %	to 70.0%
D+	< 70.0 %	to 67.0%

D	< 67.0 %	to 64.0%
D-	< 64.0 %	to 60.0%
F	< 60.0 %	to 0.0%

**It is UWP Policy NOT to round grades up or down. An 89.9 is a B+.**

At the discretion of the instructor, minor assignments (homework and class activities) may be dropped from or added to the schedule. If assignments are dropped, the final grade will be calculated as a percentage of the remaining points.

#### GENERAL EDUCATION LEARNING OUTCOMES: (C) AND (WR)

Composition Credit: Students must pass this course with a “C” or better to satisfy the CLAS requirement for Composition (C). To earn general education Composition credit, students will

University Writing Requirement: The University Writing Requirement (WR) ensures students both maintain their fluency in writing and use writing as a tool to facilitate learning. Course grades have two components. To receive University Writing Requirement (WR) credit (E6), a student must earn a course grade of C or higher **and** assignments must meet minimum word requirements totaling at least 6000 words. Thus, to earn WR-E6 credit, **students must complete all the major writing assignments.**

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.

#### REVISION OF ASSIGNMENTS

During the course of the semester, you may rewrite assignments (your new grade will replace the previous one). In addition to the revised project, you must also write a one-page memo addressed to the instructor in which you detail what, how, and why you’ve revised. Revised work is due two weeks from the day the assignment is first returned to the class and students are responsible for knowing the deadline. Instructors may limit the assignments that can be revised.

#### CONFERENCES AND WRITING STUDIO

Students are encouraged to use the instructor’s office hours if there are questions about progress in the course, work underway, or any other course-related concerns. If there is a conflict with the posted office hours, please contact the instructor to schedule a better time. Having conferences on assignments is often the best way to improve the quality of final drafts. The [Writing Studio](#) also offers one-on-one assistance on writing projects and is available to students of all levels.

## GENERAL ASSESSMENT RUBRIC

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 will be delivered during the course of the semester.

	<b>SATISFACTORY (Y)</b>	<b>UNSATISFACTORY (N)</b>
<b>CONTENT</b>	Papers exhibit at least some evidence of ideas that respond to the topic with complexity, critically evaluating and synthesizing sources, and provide at least 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.
<b>ORGANIZATION AND COHERENCE</b>	Documents and paragraphs exhibit at least some identifiable structure for topics, including a clear thesis statement but may require readers to work to follow progression of ideas.	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.
<b>ARGUMENT AND SUPPORT</b>	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.
<b>STYLE</b>	Documents use a writing style with word choice appropriate to the context, genre, and discipline. Sentences should display complexity and logical sentence structure. At a minimum, documents will display a less precise use of vocabulary and an uneven use of sentence structure or a writing style that occasionally veers away from word choice or tone appropriate to the context, genre, and discipline.	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.
<b>MECHANICS</b>	Papers will feature correct or error-free presentation of ideas. At the weak end of the Satisfactory range, papers may contain some spelling, punctuation, or grammatical errors	Papers contain so many mechanical or grammatical errors that they impede the reader's understanding or severely undermine the writer's credibility.

	that remain unobtrusive so they do not muddy the paper's argument or points.	
--	--	--

## COURSE POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

### Attendance

Attendance is required. The policy of the University Writing Program is that if students miss more than **six periods** during the term, they will fail the entire course. Double periods count as two absences.

The UWP exempts from this policy **only** those absences due to university-sponsored events, such as athletics and band, religious holidays, quarantine, illness, or serious family emergencies. Absences related to university-sponsored events must be discussed with the instructor **prior** to the date that will be missed. For absences due to quarantine or illness, your instructor may require a signed doctor's note.

Requirements for class attendance, make-up exams, assignments, and other work in this class are consistent with university policies that can be found at <https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/regulations/info/attendance.aspx>

Please note: If students are absent, it is their responsibility to make themselves aware of all due dates. If absent due to a scheduled event, students are still responsible for turning assignments in on time.

**Tardiness:** If students enter class after roll has been taken, they are late, which disrupts the entire class. Two instances of tardiness count as one absence. This applies to both in-person and synchronous Zoom classes. When attending a Zoom class, make sure you join the class early enough to correct any technological issues you encounter. Make sure to mute your microphone upon entry.

### Class Recording Policy

The State of Florida has passed a law regarding the recording of classes by students.

- A Student may record a **class lecture** for three specified purposes as outlined in House Bill 233/Section 1004.097, Florida Statutes:
  1. For the student's own personal educational use;
  2. In connection with a complaint to the University where the recording is made
  3. As evidence in, or in preparation for, a criminal or civil proceeding.
- Students may audio or video record a class lecture for a class in which the student is enrolled. Students do not need advance permission, or to provide notice, to record.
- A class lecture is defined as an educational presentation delivered by faculty (instructor of record) or guest lecturer, as part of a University of Florida course, intended to inform or teach enrolled students about a particular subject. Lecture is inclusive of faculty-led discussions that are integrated into the educational presentation.
- A class lecture **does not** include lab sessions, student presentations, clinical presentations such as patient history, **academic exercises involving student participation**, assessments (quizzes, tests, exams), field trips, private conversations between students in the class or between a student and the faculty or lecturer during a class session.

- A recording of a class lecture may not be published without the consent of the lecturer.
  - **Publish** is defined as sharing, transmitting, circulating, distributing, or providing access to a Recording, regardless of format or medium, to another person (or persons), including but not limited to another student within the same class section.
  - A recording, or transcript of the recording, is considered to be published if it is posted on or uploaded to, in whole or part, any media platform, including but not limited to social media, book, magazine, newspaper or leaflet.
- A student who publishes a recording without written consent may be subject to a civil cause of action instituted by a person injured by the publication and/or discipline under UF Regulation 4.040 Student Honor Code and Student Conduct Code.

## Classroom Demeanor

Please keep in mind that students come from diverse cultural, economic, and ethnic backgrounds. Some of the texts we will discuss and write may engage controversial topics and opinions. Diversified student backgrounds combined with provocative texts require that you demonstrate respect for ideas that may differ from your own. Disrespectful behavior will result in dismissal, and accordingly absence, from the class.

**If attending class via Zoom**, there are a few guidelines we expect you to follow.

- Avoid distractions during class time. Close unnecessary apps and put your phone away. Attend from an area with no distractions. (If circumstances require you to work from an area with distractions, let your instructor know. For example, if you have to share a room with family, let your teacher know that your mom might be walking in the background or your brother is doing his class at the dining room table at the same time.)
- Make sure that whatever is visible (your attire, the background) is reasonable for class. Would you wear it to class? Would you show that poster in class? Would you bring that pile of dirty clothes to class?
- Zoom requirements: During class, you are expected to be visible to the instructor and be able to communicate with the instructor by audio or writing in the chat box.
  - **You will need a web cam and microphone for Zoom class. If you work in a noisy or distracting environment, we strongly recommend headphones with a microphone.**

## ACADEMIC HONESTY

As a University of Florida student, your performance 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** is a serious violation of the Student Honor Code. The Honor Code prohibits and defines plagiarism as follows:

**Plagiarism. A student shall 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. Quoting oral or written materials including but not limited to those found on the internet, whether published or unpublished, without proper attribution.**
- 2. Submitting a document or assignment which in whole or in part is identical or substantially identical to a document or assignment not authored by the student.**

(University of Florida, Student Honor Code, 8, October, 2013)

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. You commit plagiarism when you present the ideas or words of someone else as your own. If you are unsure if what you are doing is considered academic dishonesty, ask your instructor before turning in an assignment

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. You commit plagiarism when you present the ideas or words of someone else as your own. 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. Some (but not all!) examples of plagiarism are copying-and-pasting anything from the Internet without proper quotations and attributive tags, using work you have turned in to other classes without permission from the instructor, and insufficient paraphrasing.

If you commit academic dishonesty, you will receive a zero for the assignment, and the instructor will submit the incident to the Dean of Students Office as an Honor Code violation. Punishments can vary, but the instructor will recommend failing the course. (If you commit plagiarism in the workplace, at the very least you will be reprimanded. You could also be fired or even lose your career.)

**Important tip:** There should never be a time when you copy and paste something from the Internet and don't provide the exact location and citation information for the source.

#### DUE DATES, MAKE-UP POLICY, AND IN-CLASS WORK

Papers and drafts are due online at the assigned deadline. Late papers will be counted down one grade for each day they are late; after 3 days, late papers will not be accepted. Failure of technology is not an excuse. If illness or injury prevents a student from turning in a paper on time, the student should consult with the instructor to turn in the work as soon as is feasible given the situation.

#### EVALUATIONS

Students are expected to provide feedback on the quality of instruction in this course based on 10 criteria. These evaluations are conducted online at <https://evaluations.ufl.edu>. Evaluations are typically open during the last two or three weeks of the semester, but students will be given specific times when they are open. Summary results of these assessments are available to students at <https://evaluations.ufl.edu>.



## STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

The University of Florida complies with the Americans with Disabilities Act. Students requesting classroom accommodation must first register with the Dean of Students Office. The Dean of Students Office will provide documentation to the student who must then provide this documentation to the instructor when requesting accommodation.

## NOTIFICATION LETTER FROM THE DEAN OF STUDENTS' OFFICE

Students who experience a family or personal emergency (death in the family, unplanned hospitalization, etc.) may contact the Dean of Students Office and request notification letters be sent to their professors. Students are required to provide faculty members with appropriate documentation to support their absence unless, due to the nature of the issue, the information is provided to and verified by the Dean of Students' Office.

The University of Florida complies with the Americans with Disabilities Act. Students requesting classroom accommodation must first register with the Dean of Students Office. The Dean of Students Office will provide documentation to the student who must then provide this documentation to the instructor when requesting accommodation.

## STUDENTS IN DISTRESS

For guidance during distressing situations, please contact U Matter We Care or the Dean of Students Office. They can help students navigate resources and academic procedures for personal, medical, and academic issues.

U Matter We Care: <http://umatter.ufl.edu>, [umatter@ufl.edu](mailto:umatter@ufl.edu), 352-294-2273 (CARE)

Dean of Students: <https://dso.ufl.edu/>, 202 Peabody Hall, (352) 392-1261

Counseling and Wellness Center: <https://counseling.ufl.edu/>, 3190 Radio Road, (352) 392-1575

Field and Fork Pantry: <https://fieldandfork.ufl.edu/>, located near McCarty B, 352-294-2208

Student Health Care Center: <http://shcc.ufl.edu/>, multiple locations, (352) 392-1161

Aid-a-Gator: <https://www.sfa.ufl.edu/aidagator/>, S-107 Criser Hall, (352) 392-1275

## ACADEMIC RESOURCES

*E-learning technical support:* Contact the [UF Computing Help Desk](#) at 352-392-4357 or via e-mail at [helpdesk@ufl.edu](mailto:helpdesk@ufl.edu).

[Career Connections Center](#): Reitz Union Suite 1300, 352-392-1601. Career assistance and counseling services.

[Library Support](#): Various ways to receive assistance with respect to using the libraries or finding resources.

[Teaching Center](#): Broward Hall, 352-392-2010 or to make an appointment 352- 392-6420. General study skills and tutoring.

[Writing Studio](#): 2215 Turlington Hall, 352-846-1138. Help brainstorming, formatting, and writing papers. Online only for Fall 2020.

*Student Complaints On-Campus*: [Visit the Student Honor Code and Student Conduct Code webpage for more information.](#)

*On-Line Students Complaints*: [View the Distance Learning Student Complaint Process.](#)

Notes & Questions

## CLASS SCHEDULE

### Week 1 -- Course Introduction

#### Readings

- History of Evidence Based Medicine, Sur & Dahm (*Indian Journal of Urology*)
- Real World Evidence: what it is and what it can tell us, Sherman et al. (*NEJM*)

#### Activities/Assignments

- Update Canvas Bio (optional)
- Reading Med Prose Activity

### Week 2 – Synthesis Series / Bullet Analyses

#### Readings

- none

#### Activities/Assignments

- Bullet Analyses 1, 2

### Week 3 – Synthesis Series Paper

#### Readings -- none

#### Activities/Assignments

- BA 3
- Synthesis Paper

### Week 4 – The Review Paper

#### Readings

- A Typology of Reviews, Grant & Booth (*Health Information and Libraries Journal*)

#### Activities/Assignments

- Reviews in your field of medicine
- Focus your review topic

### Week 5 – Annotated Bibliography

#### Readings – none

Activities/Assignments

- Use library databases
- AB entry 1

**Week 6 – Review Paper: Crafting POVs**

Readings – none

Activities/Assignments

- AB entries 2-5

**Week 7 -- Review Paper: The Body**

Readings – none

Activities/Assignments

- Outline the review paper
- Draft Introduction
- Annotated Bibliography

**Week 8 – Review Paper: Conclusions**

Readings – none

Activities/Assignments

- Peer Review section/s of paper
- Review Paper

APPLY TO MEDICAL/GRAD SCHOOL

**Week 9 – Applying to Med School**

Readings

- [The Healthcare Student's Guide to Internships](#), Kaple & Kaple

Activities

- Centralized Application Services
- Resumes

**Week 10 – Personal Statements**

Readings – none

#### Activities

- Personal Statement
- Audio Statement of Motivation
- Interview fun in class

### THE CONTINUING MEDICAL EDUCATION UNIT

#### **Week 11 The CME Project**

##### Readings

- [Effectiveness of continuing medical education](#), Maranopolous, et al.

##### Activities

- Form the CME Team
- Complete CME Steps 1 & 2 on your own

#### **Week 12 -- CME Proposals**

##### Readings

- Game-based versus traditional case-based learning --  
<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC2939136/>
- Making it stick: use of active learning strategies in continuing medical education --  
<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC7798232/>
- What are the implications of implementation science for medical education? --  
<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC4409632/>

##### Activities

- CME Proposal

#### **Week 13 -- CME: Structure of Final Paper / Creating a Case Study**

Readings – none

Activities – group work on CME

#### **Week 14 -- CME Presentations**

Readings – none

Activities – group work on CME

#### **Week 15 – CME work**

Readings – none

Activities – group work on CME

**Week 16 -- CME Presentations** (Dec 7 – Dec 9; reading days Dec 10 - 11)

Readings – none

Activities – CME Presentations