UNI X01: Writing and Publishing in the Health Sciences

COURSE DESCRIPTION
The purpose of this course is to prepare graduate-level basic science and health professions students to develop and improve skills in scholarly writing and proposal development. This course will provide students with both scholarly and practical knowledge on writing and publishing scientific manuscripts in peer-reviewed health related journals. It will cover techniques for writing clear and well-organized manuscripts and ethical issues involving manuscript preparation and publication. Emphasis will be placed on writing, editing, reviewing, and other applicable skills.

COURSE Details:
Winter 2016, Wednesdays 9AM – 10:30 AM BICC 429; 2 credit hours

FACULTY
Jackie Wirz, PhD
wirzj@ohsu.edu | 503.494.3443
BICC 341, Mac Hall 4166

COURSE OBJECTIVES
By the end of the course students will be able to:

• Relate the structure of an academic, professional, or scientific manuscript to the components of a professional document, or research study, in terms of its purpose, scope, content and roles of the author and co-authors.

• Identify the most appropriate target readership and/or journal for a manuscript based on the research question of interest and purpose of dissemination.

• Demonstrate health science writing proficiency, including style, form, content and organization.

• Critically appraise ethical issues in academic and professional writing, including conflict of interest, copyright, open access, plagiarism and self-plagiarism, and scientific honesty.

• Develop a draft of an appropriate academic, professional, or scientific manuscript following the guidelines from an appropriately selected journal or practitioner audience.

SUGGESTED TEXTS


GENERAL CONTENT OUTLINE

Week 1 - Overview
Class Overview
Writing:
- Think about what you have for your own article already - draft, data, proposal, ideas...
- Develop a 10 week plan for your writing, with goals and milestones for each week.

Week 2 - Overcoming writing barriers
Recommended Reading: On Writing Well pp. 1-45
Writing:
- Find one exemplar/sample article in the same genre as your research.
- Locate an original writing sample of yours to share for next class or bring your writing project.
- Write a brief synopsis of your research project for this class in three different versions:
  - A brief sentence or two as if you were introducing your topic at a cocktail party filled with non-scientists
  - A paragraph as if you were giving a TED talk about your work
  - A formal abstract
- Write a brief description of your goals for the class, as well as the format and timeline for your writing project.

Week 3 - Telling the story of your article
Recommended Reading: On Writing Well pp-46-91 (i.e., Methods)
Writing:
- Revise a recent sample of your writing using the MEAL Plan: uwp.duke.edu/uploads/assets/meal_plan.pdf AND http://youtu.be/N8_UomSf95s
- Write 1-2 pages about your experience using the MEAL Plan for revision.
- Circulate both of the above documents via email prior to class. Be sure to send them so that your classmates have enough time to review. We'll discuss in class.

Week 4 - Editing
Reading: Shitty First Drafts, Annie Lamont
Writing:
- Imagine three different people who will be reading your work. Develop a specific editorial question you want each of them to address. Provide a brief synopsis of the individual, their area of expertise, the editorial question, and why you think they would be best to address the question. Be specific!

Week 5 - Writing for deadlines
Writing:
- Review your 10 week writing plan. Update the plan with your current goals and aspirations, including plans for how you will tackle your writing project after this class ends.
- Keep a writing diary for the week – detailing when, where and how much you are writing.
Week 6 – Scholarly Communication and Publishing
Writing:
• Write a small report on the target journal and/or thesis style that you are writing for. Include information about the format of the publication, peer review process, the editorial guidelines, etc. Include information about why you chose this venue for publication.

Week 7 - Ethics

Week 8 – Data Visualization and Writing
Writing: Prepare a figure and corresponding text for the class.

Week 9 – Communicating your Work Broadly
Writing: Prepare a five minute PPT and oral summary of your writing project.

Week 10 – Wrap up
Writing: Examine your 10 week goals and write a summary of your experience with the class.

ATTENDANCE REQUIREMENTS
Attendance at face-to-face meetings and participation in all on-line sessions are required. Absences allowed with instructor approval.

GRADING CRITERIA, ACADEMIC STANDARDS, & RELEASE OF FINAL GRADES

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