

Writing a Scientific Literature Review
ENT 770 - 3 credits
Fall 2016

"I get a pleasant sense of imminent doom when I think about writing"
A Former Student

Instructor	Jason Harmon Jason.Harmon@ndsu.edu	269 Hultz Hall (701) 231-5083
Office hours	By appointment.	
Prerequisites	No prerequisites.	
Meeting times	11:00-12:15 Wednesdays and Fridays in 272 Hultz Hall	

Bulletin description

Explore how and why to create a scientific literature review in this writing intensive class. Hands-on exercises will help improve scientific writing, peer-review, and self-assessment while working throughout the semester to create your own review.

Course objectives

1. Locate, summarize, and critically evaluate information from the scientific literature.
2. Practice effective scientific writing principles.
3. Make substantial progress on an original paper in the format of a traditional scientific manuscript. The paper may either contain research data (as in a journal article) or not (thesis proposal)
4. Make substantial progress on an original review over the course of the semester.

Required student resources

Schimmel, J. 2012. *Writing Science: How to Write Papers That Get Cited and Proposals That Get Funded*. Oxford University Press, Oxford.

Evaluation procedures and grading criteria

Since the primary goal of this course is for each student to make substantial progress on **two scientific papers** assignments will be based (either directly or indirectly) on developing and improving those papers. It is not necessarily expected that by the end of the semester each paper is ready to include in a thesis or be submitted for publication, but each student should have a very complete, well written draft that s/he can take to the advisor and/or research committee. For the review, students may not be able to cover the breadth or depth of topics needed for publication. However, it is expected that students will go through all the steps of writing a scientific literature review and have a substantial "product" at the end of the semester.

To develop each paper students will do multiple assignments/exercises that are specifically related to 1) the skills needed to write a review and 2) making progress on the papers. There will also be multiple evaluations of the final project itself, including drafts of various sections, self-assessments, peer-reviews, and a final presentation of the work in written form.

As students are reading and critiquing the literature for their reviews, they will also create multiple short summaries of scientific articles in the form of blog postings. There will also be numerous writing exercises in class and outside class to help improve the semester long project itself or a skill related to completing it.

Classroom discussions will be based on the steps in producing a literature review and on the specific assignments performed to support those efforts. Points for discussion participation will be based on the quality of the participation and how it furthers the discussion. Quality participation is based on student preparation, authentic and respectful participation, furthering discussion, and asking thoughtful questions.

As part of the participation grade, all students will be required to visit the NDSU Graduate Center for Writers at least twice during the semester (<http://www.ndsu.edu/cfwriters/>). By making an appointment with the center you will be able to work with a writing counselor to help you work on a specific part of your review and help improve you as a writer. Dr. Enrico Sassi will visit the class with more information about the center.

Criteria for grading

Participation in Class Discussions & Assignments	15%
Regular assignments	35%
Final project (all pieces)	<u>50%</u>
Total	100%

Pieces of the final project include outlines, writing assignments, drafts of sections, peer reviews, and the final version of the literature review.

Grading System

A ≥ 90%; B = 80-89.9%; C = 70-79.9%; D = 60-69.9%; F < 60%

Attendance Statement

According to [NDSU Policy 333](#), attendance in class is expected. Since much of the class will be discussion based, attendance and participation are both important parts of the grade. Students can have two unexcused absences without losing any points. However, students who miss class are still responsible for turning in assignments due that day and for completing assignments due the next class period. After two unexcused misses, a student will lose 20 points (2% of your **total** semester-long grade) for every additional class missed. If you want to try to get an “excused” absence, you will have to talk to me before class and get it okay. I want to avoid as many of these as possible.

Late work

Any assignment turned in after the due date/time will be marked down 10%. For every week the assignment is late, another 10% will be marked off the grade given to the assignment until the end of the semester. If an assignment is not turned in by the date of the final exam it will be graded as a zero. All assignments will have to be turned in by the date of the final. Any not turned in by then will receive a zero unless special arrangements are made ahead of time.

Class schedule to be determined***Plagiarism***

Plagiarism is a very serious issue in the classroom and something that is equally important issue in scientific research. To put it bluntly, scientists throw away their entire careers by plagiarizing. At the beginning of the course we will discuss what plagiarism is and how to avoid it. Discussions in class 2 and the first assignment will provide adequate training on plagiarism so that you will be able to avoid it. However, *if you are ever confused or unsure about whether something constitutes plagiarism ASK!*

If I believe plagiarism has occurred on an assignment you will have a chance to meet about it, but if I believe the plagiarism was deliberate or extensive you will receive no points for the assignment and a Student Academic Misconduct Tracking Form will be filed as per NDSU policy 335. Excessive instances of plagiarism and/or multiple offenses will receive additional harsher punishments up to and including moving to have the student expelled.

Additional statements

Academic Honesty: All students taking any course in the College of Agriculture, Food Systems, and Natural Resources are under the Honor System (<http://www.ag.ndsu.edu/academics/honor-system-1>). The Honor System is a system that is governed by the students and operates on the premise that most students are honest and work best when their honesty, and the honesty of others, is not in question. It functions to prevent cheating as well as penalize those who are dishonest. It is the responsibility of the students to report any violations of the honor pledge to the instructor, honor commission or the Dean of the College of Agriculture, Food Systems, and Natural Resources.

The academic community is operated on the basis of honesty, integrity, and fair play. [NDSU Policy 335: Code of Academic Responsibility and Conduct](#) applies to cases in which cheating, plagiarism, or other academic misconduct have occurred in an instructional context. Students found guilty of academic misconduct are subject to penalties, up to and possibly including suspension and/or expulsion. Student academic misconduct records are maintained by the [Office of Registration and Records](#). Informational resources about academic honesty for students and instructional staff members can be found at www.ndsu.edu/academichonesty.

Students with special requirements: Any students with disabilities or other special needs, who need special accommodations in this course are invited to share these concerns or requests with the instructor as soon as possible. The instructor may ask for verification and that, plus other assistance, can be requested from Disability Services in Wallman Wellness Center 170 (231-8463). <http://www.ndsu.edu/disabilityservices/>.

Veterans and military personnel: Veterans or military personnel with special circumstances or who are activated are encouraged to notify the instructor as early as possible.

Important NDSU Dates

August 31	Last day to add classes via Campus Connection
August 31	Last day for no-record drop of classes @ 100% refund
August 31	Last day to withdraw to 0 credits @ 100% refund
September 5	Labor Day holiday (no classes/offices closed)
September 6	Financial Aid applied to Student Accounts
September 12	Last day to submit request to audit, pass/fail
September 16	Undergraduate fall graduation application due
September 23	Graduate student fall Intent to Graduate forms due
October 14	Grades of Incomplete convert to F
October 24	Advising begins for Summer/Fall semesters
October 31	Spring registration begins
November 11	Veteran's Day (no classes/offices closed)
November 13	Last day to withdraw to 0 credits
November 13	Last day to drop classes with record (W)
November 24-25	Thanksgiving (offices open on Friday)
December 2	Fall commencement participation deadline
December 5-9	Dead Week
December 12-16	Final Examinations
December 16	Commencement
December 22	Fall grade access begins online