MICR 354: Scientific Writing
Fall 2013: 3 Credits
Prerequisite: MICR 350, ENGL 120

Instructor
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Office Hours
By appointment.

Course Description
This course will emphasize the qualities of sound logic, good structure, and honesty in the writing of scientific articles for professional and general audiences.

Learning Objectives
You will study and implement the tools for expressing ideas simply and clearly in writing.

You will learn how to read and analyze the structure of journal articles and other types of formal writing. You will use this understanding to develop professional scientific documents.

You will practice a disciplined approach to drafting, writing, and revising.

You will explore the conventions of writing science documents for general audiences.

Required Text and Materials

Readings provided on Blackboard.

Useful Texts for Reference


**Assignments & Grading**

**Professional Materials (200 points)**
You will develop a personal essay, resume, and cover letter for a future job, graduate school, or professional school program.

**Online Communication (150 points)**
In this assignment, you will be in charge of the department homepage. You will write and post one blog entry and two “microbiology in the news” entries.

**Science Information Project (200 points)**
In this group project, you will design a newsletter for the Department of Veterinary and Microbiological Sciences.

**Journal Article (250 points)**
You will research, plan, and write a journal article based on a data set that I provide.

**Scientific Presentation (100 points)**
You will design and present a 10-minute powerpoint presentation based on your journal article assignment.

**Course Notebook (100 points)**
Most class sessions will involve some sort of independent or group writing exercises. You will collect all of these activities in an actual notebook or in an electronic document that you will submit at the end of the semester.

**Course Policies**

*Assignments:* There is a one-day grace period around due dates for major assignments. An assignment that is two days late cannot earn better than a B. An assignment that is three days late cannot earn better than a C, etc.

*Honor System:* 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](http://www.ag.ndsu.edu/academics/honor-system-1)).

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>(90%-100%) = excellent documents/projects in all aspects; some slight room for improvement</td>
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<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>(80%-89%) = some aspects of documents/projects might be excellent, others good</td>
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<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>(70%-79%) = documents/projects acceptable; room for improvement in most areas</td>
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<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>(60%-69%) = a major aspect of the documents/projects has not been completed</td>
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<td>F</td>
<td>(below 60%) = incomplete documents/projects; conventions of genre not met, research not completed, page length not met, documentation not adequate, etc.</td>
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Honor System 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. All work in this course must be completed in a manner consistent with NDSU University Senate Policy Section 335: Code of Academic Responsibility and Conduct (http://www.ndsu.edu/fileadmin/policy/335.pdf).

*Academic Honesty Defined:* All written and oral presentations must “respect the intellectual rights of others. Statements lifted verbatim from publications must be cited as quotations. Ideas, summaries or paraphrased material, and other information taken from the literature must be properly referenced” (*Guidelines for the Presentation of Disquisitions*, NDSU Graduate School).

*Cell phones and computers:* Cell phones should be off and stowed for class meetings. Computers may be used for taking notes and/or opening Bb documents for discussion.

*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/](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.