

SYLLABUS
EPOB 3940
Instructor: Margie Krest

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REQUIRED MATERIALS:

1. Course Packet: Argument in Scientific Writing EPOB 3940
Available only at UMC Bookstore
Be sure to purchase the one with my name on it.
2. A three ring notebook (buy a 2-4 inch one) divided into the following sections:
Syllabus and Course Schedule
Assignment 1
Assignment 2
Assignment 3
Course Packet
3. Access to a computer or word processor

GENERAL COURSE DESCRIPTION:

Argument in Scientific Writing is a writing course in which you will develop the writing skills needed to do well in both academic and career settings. The primary focus is on analytical and argumentative writing that scientists must do. We will focus on the following Five Specific Areas:

Bridging the gap between technical/scientific ideas and a scientific audience interested in scientific issues.

2. Writing analytical and argumentative pieces that focus on scientific issues.
3. Applying library skills that are essential to scientists.
4. Learning how to express written ideas clearly and correctly.
5. Learning and practicing the art of revising your own writing and providing constructive comments to others.

Basic Class Structure

Because the purpose of writing is to communicate your ideas to others, this class is set up primarily as a Writing Workshop:

- You will share and discuss all your writing with other class members.
- You and I will confer together about your papers.
- Others in the class will suggest improvements for your work.
- I will do some lecturing on style and content.
- You will practice specific writing techniques.
- You will spend lots of time revising your papers.
- We will discuss various articles about scientific writing.

Practical/Technical Aspects of the Course

ATTENDANCE:

Attendance is very important as much of the class consists of discussion and group work. Given that a specific focus of the course is to learn how to revise your papers and how to provide feedback to others, you need to attend class in order to develop these skills. Your participation grade is based on your contributions to class (both written and oral). If you don't attend class, you are not participating. The 15% of your grade that is based on workshops and participation reflects both your attendance and preparation of drafts.

HOW TO LOSE POINTS:

- miss more than $\frac{1}{4}$ of the class for any reason (8 classes): you will fail the course regardless of your content grade; the exceptions below do not apply
- miss workshopping, practice sentences or reader response sessions: you will lose those points and won't be able to make them up
- don't submit at least 2 of the 3 papers for a Benchmark grade: you will lose 10% of your participation grade
- don't submit the first paper for a Benchmark grade: you will lose 10% of your participation grade

Exceptions to the above: Cases in which you are hospitalized or have a death in the family. In either of these cases you must show written verification.

GRADES:

All Three Final Assignments:	(80%)
Workshops/Practice Sentences, Reader Responses and Active Participation:	(15%)
Revisions:	(5%)

Keep all drafts and revisions in your PORTFOLIO. Your portfolio is the three ring notebook in which you will keep all your writing.

Explanation of Grades

Final Assignments: This is a final product grade. At the end of the semester, I will look at the final copy of each of the papers in your Portfolio and grade these as a whole. In other words, you will not receive a separate grade for each of the papers; instead, at the end of the semester, you will receive one grade that reflects the quality of all your papers as a whole.

Workshops/Participation: This grade reflects three aspects of your work: Workshoping. Your workshop grade will be based on your preparedness of drafts and revisions and your responses to your peers' papers. You cannot make up workshop points if you are absent.

Practice Sentences: A few times a week, you will work on Practice Sentences at the beginning of class. If you don't attend class or if you come to class late, you cannot make up these sentences/points.

Reader Responses: You will read a number of articles on scientific writing and write short, in-class critiques of and responses to the articles.

Active Contributions to class. I expect you to attend class and contribute to discussions. If you are not in class, you are not participating.

Revisions: I will assess the amount of improvement you made on all your papers, the risks you took as a writer, the extent to which you applied the techniques we discussed in class, and the extent to which you applied the techniques and content I noted on your Benchmark papers. Be sure to keep all drafts and revisions of all your papers. (See below for further information on Revision.)

Benchmark vs. Final Papers:

1. You will receive ONE Benchmark Grade for each assignment. Benchmark papers are not necessarily final papers or grades for papers. They are my opportunity to give you detailed feedback on your drafts and your opportunity to find out what your grade would be if you did not do any further revision on a particular assignment.
2. You can revise any or all of the benchmark papers you submit to me throughout the semester. The decision to revise or not to revise papers after you receive a benchmark grade is up to you.
3. I do not give more than one benchmark grade for each assignment. Also, you cannot just resubmit a paper everytime you revise it. However, I will give you as much feedback as you desire on a benchmark revision if you set up a conference with me. (See Revision section below.)
4. Your final grade will never be lower than your Benchmark grade. However, whether the final grade is higher than a Benchmark grade depends upon the extent and depth of your revisions.
5. Your final portfolio grade is based on all three assignments! So, by the end of the semester, you must submit all three assignments.
6. To ensure that you have some idea of your grade in the course throughout the semester, I require that you submit at least two (the first one and one other) of the three assignments for benchmarks. If you do not submit at least 2 assignments for benchmark grades, you will lose 10% of your total Workshop/Participation grade.
7. Be sure to turn in a paper by the last day to submit each assignment for a benchmark grade (see dates on Course Schedule). If you don't turn in a paper by the date designated, you'll lose the opportunity to get a benchmark for that paper.

Conferences and Office Hours

If you are confused about an assignment or are having trouble drafting or revising it, please come see me. Sign up for a conference during office hours. I will be happy to talk over ideas about a paper before you begin to write. I will be happy to look over your paper before you turn it in. My office hours are for the sole purpose of talking to you and working with you.

Twice during the semester, you will be required to attend a 30 min. conference with me. I will talk about these more in class, but the purpose of the one-on-one time is to help you identify the major strengths and weakness of your writing and to help you strengthen and improve particular papers.

Syllabus, page 5

ASSIGNMENTS

See course packet for major assignments. Additional short readings and writings will be announced in class before they are due.

Drafts:

1. All drafts and revisions must be typed.
2. Use 1 1/2" margins on all sides of your papers for your drafts and revisions in order to allow room for comments.
3. You will spend time in class responding to each other's drafts along guidelines we will discuss in class.
4. If you want feedback from me on a draft before or after a benchmark grade (your revision), set up a conference with me.
5. Remember, if you are absent on a workshop day, you cannot make up these points unless you meet one of the exceptions mentioned above.

Plagiarism is a serious offense! Using someone else's ideas or words without citing each source specifically is not acceptable. Your work and ideas must be your own. You'll receive an automatic F on any paper that is in any way plagiarized.

Learning Disabilities

Please let me know if you have a learning disability that might influence your performance in class or if you wish to make special arrangements related to course requirements. Class sessions may be tape recorded, but you must sign an agreement that you will not duplicate, sell or distribute the tape in any way.