Health Science Writing
English 207

Overview

English 207 introduces the theory and practice of health science writing. While it will prove interesting and useful to students from many majors, its target audiences are students in the College of Health Sciences, the College of Nursing, Pre-Medicine, Dental, and other medical fields.

The course focuses on technical and professional communication in the health sciences; however, it works from the thesis that good communication will require a holistic understanding of the contemporary health system. As a result, the syllabus includes elements of the “medical humanities” that will ask students to think critically about the social, technological, and cultural contexts of medical practice, especially as they pertain to the role medical expertise plays in a democratic society.

Broadly, then, the course has two goals: it seeks to train students in the rhetorical principles that underlie effective communication, and it seeks to help students apply these principles to engagements with diverse audiences in the medical field. To achieve these goals, students will be exposed to audience analysis, critical theory, multimodal composition, and more.

Learning Objectives

Students that successfully navigate the course will be able to:
1. Analyze the social and cultural dimensions of health fields
2. Identify & employ genres typical to the health sciences
3. Discriminate between strong and weak sources in research
4. Apply sources to the construction of persuasive arguments
5. Adapt arguments to suit different audiences, contexts & media
Course Texts


Prerequisites

To enroll in this course, students must have fulfilled one of the following two conditions:
- A score of 4 or higher on the EPT (English Placement Test)
- Completion of English 102 with a grade of “C,” or higher

OCW-B Requirement

This course satisfies the OWC-B requirement. It combines a series of speaking and writing assignments, based on research and course materials, adapted to specific audiences and purposes. Assignments throughout the semester build toward a final research project. Three course assignments receive feedback in draft form, and each student will have the opportunity to conference with the instructor in advance of the final project.

Time Commitment

Students should expect to spend 4-6 hours per week on assigned readings. When written assignments are due, students should expect to spend an additional 2-3 hours that week. See “Addendum A” at the end of the syllabus for more information on the university’s time commitment policy.

Assignments

Full assignment prompts and rubrics are available on the course website.

Commitment (individual): 15%
Annotated Bibliography (individual, group-oriented): 15%
Audience Analysis (individual, group-oriented): 10%
Job Packet (individual): 10%
Visualization (individual): 5%
Ted Talk (group): 10%
Podcast (group): 15%
Recommendation Report (group): 15%
Final Reflection (individual): 5%

Policies

*Assignment Submission*
You must turn in all written work to the appropriate dropbox by the deadline in order to pass the class.

Late Submission Policy
For written assignments, there will be two dropboxes: the first is for work turned in on time. This will be open until the deadline. The second dropbox is for late work and it will be open from the original deadline until five days after that deadline. Once the deadline has passed, one letter grade will be deducted from the grade for each 24-hour period that it is submitted late, until the final deadline has passed. To receive full credit, all assignments are due by the date and time indicated in the syllabus.

Group work
In order for a class with presentations to function effectively, there must be both speakers and an audience present. Therefore, it is imperative that you attend class on speaking days. Due to the difficulty of verifying excuses, there will be almost no excuses accepted for missing speaking days. Basically, if you don't show up on the day you are assigned to speak, you will get a zero for that assignment.

Formats
Unless otherwise specified, all written work must be saved in Word, and must be submitted to Canvas. Materials in other formats, or submitted to the instructor via e-mail, will not be accepted.

Syllabus Modification
In the event that some modification is needed, advance notice will be given. Please regularly check the class website for any modifications that may be made.

Plagiarism
Acts of plagiarism and cheating represent serious acts of misconduct. You are expected to abide by general UWM rules and regulations regarding academic misconduct. Misconduct includes, but are not limited to, cheating on exams and knowingly presenting the work of others as though it was your own, including copying language from others, and using the ideas of others without acknowledging your sources in papers and presentations. You should label any work that is not your own, using a standard citation style. When in doubt, ask whether, and how, to cite a source. Work turned in for credit in other courses may NOT be turned in for credit in this course. https://www4.uwm.edu/dos/conduct/academic-misconduct.cfm

Additional Policies

Statement of Basic Needs. Any student who faces challenges securing their food or housing and believes this may affect their performance in the course is urged to contact the Dean of Students for support. Furthermore, please notify the professor if you are comfortable in doing so. This will enable them to provide any resources that they may possess.

Students with disabilities. Students with disabilities requiring accommodation should contact the Accessibility Resource Center (ARC) as soon as possible to secure the necessary documentation. Additional information is available on the ARC website. http://www4.uwm.edu/sac/SACltr.pdf

Religious observances. Accommodations for absences due to religious observance shall be made available according to applicable UWM policies. http://www4.uwm.edu/secu/docs/other/S1.5.htm

Students called to active military duty. Accommodations for absences due to call-up of reserves to active military duty should be made available according to applicable UWM policies. http://www4.uwm.edu/current_students/military_call_up.cfm
Incompletes. An "incomplete" may be given in lieu of a final grade to a student who has carried a subject successfully until the end of a semester but who, because of illness or other unusual and substantiated cause beyond the student's control, has been unable to take or complete the final examination or to complete some limited amount of term work. [http://www4.uwm.edu/secu/docs/other/S31.pdf](http://www4.uwm.edu/secu/docs/other/S31.pdf)

**Discriminatory conduct** (such as sexual harassment). Discriminatory conduct will not be tolerated by the University. It poisons the work and learning environment of the University and threatens the careers, educational experience, and well-being of students, faculty, and staff. [http://www4.uwm.edu/secu/docs/other/S47.pdf](http://www4.uwm.edu/secu/docs/other/S47.pdf)

**Complaint procedures.** Students may direct complaints to the head of the academic unit or department in which the complaint occurs. If the complaint allegedly violates a specific university policy, it may be directed to the head of the department or academic unit in which the complaint occurred or to the appropriate university office responsible for enforcing the policy. [http://www4.uwm.edu/secu/docs/other/S49.7.htm](http://www4.uwm.edu/secu/docs/other/S49.7.htm)

**Grade appeal procedures.** A student may appeal a grade on the grounds that it is based on a capricious or arbitrary decision of the course instructor. Such an appeal shall follow the established procedures adopted by the department, college, or school in which the course resides or in the case of graduate students, the Graduate School. These procedures are available in writing from the English 205 Business Writing Page 5 respective department chairperson or the Academic Dean of the College/School. [http://www4.uwm.edu/secu/docs/other/S28.htm](http://www4.uwm.edu/secu/docs/other/S28.htm)
## Course Schedule

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<th>Week</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Readings / Activities</th>
<th>Assigned/Due</th>
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| 1 (9/4) | Defining the Field(s) | **Tuesday:** Bonk 1, Markel 1  
**Thursday:** Fisher, Angeli | |
| 2 (9/11) | Contemporary Health Care in Context | **Tuesday:** Gawande, O’Rourke, Cole  
**Form Working Groups**  
**Thursday:** Shaywitz, Quinton, Gunderman | Topic Selection & Presentation Assigned; Annotated Bibliography Assigned |
| 3 (9/18) | Communication & Consequence in the Health Sciences | **Tuesday:** Bonk 5, Markel 6  
**Library Research Workshop**  
**Thursday:** Gordon et al., Vermeir et al., McCreadie | |
| **Diagnostic (Rhetoric)** | | | |
| 4 (9/25) | Rhetoric Overview | **Tuesday:** Bonk 3 & 4  
**Thursday:** Topic Presentations | Topic Presentation & Selection Due |
| 5 (10/2) | Audience Analysis | **Tuesday:** Bonk 2; Markel 5  
**Thursday:** Bonk 9, 10 & 11 | Audience Analysis Assigned |
| 6 (10/9) | Argumentation | **Tuesday:** Bonk 6  
**In-Class Peer Review (Annotated Bibliography)**  
**Thursday:** Markel 8 & 9 | **Annotated Bibliography Due; Job Packet Assigned** |
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<th>Surgical (Professional/Technical Writing)</th>
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<td>7</td>
<td><strong>Genre</strong></td>
<td><strong>Tuesday</strong>: Markel 3, 14 Justin Gruby Q &amp; A</td>
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<td><strong>Thursday</strong>: Markel 18 In-Class Peer Review (Audience Analysis)</td>
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<td><strong>Style</strong></td>
<td><strong>Tuesday</strong>: Bonk 8, Markel 10 In-Class Peer Review (Memo)</td>
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<td><strong>Thursday</strong>: Jan Willman Q &amp; A Workshop</td>
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<td><strong>Applications</strong></td>
<td><strong>Tuesday</strong>: Markel 15 Career Services Presentation</td>
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<td><strong>Thursday</strong>: In-Class Peer Review (Resume &amp; Cover Letter)</td>
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<td><strong>Multimodal Composition</strong></td>
<td><strong>Tuesday</strong>: Bonk 7, Markel 12 Podcast/Public Speaking Workshop (DH Lab)</td>
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<td><strong>Thursday</strong>: Markel 21 Podcast/Public Speaking Workshop (DH Lab)</td>
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<td>Therapeutic (Public Communication)</td>
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<td>11</td>
<td><strong>Public Speaking</strong></td>
<td><strong>Tuesday</strong>: Presentations</td>
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<td>11/20</td>
<td>Thanksgiving Break</td>
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<td>11/27</td>
<td>Podcast</td>
<td>Tuesday: Multimodal Writing / Workshop</td>
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<td>Thursday: Multimodal Writing / Workshop</td>
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<td>12/04</td>
<td>Podcast</td>
<td>Tuesday: Workshop</td>
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<td>Thursday: In-Class Peer Review (Recommendation Report)</td>
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<td>Recommendation Report Draft Due</td>
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<td>12/11</td>
<td>Podcast</td>
<td>Tuesday: Workshop</td>
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<td>Thursday: Presentations</td>
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<td>Recommendation Report Due, Visualization</td>
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