

## BIOMEDDC 2W03: Write Right for Your Science: Scientific Writing for the Biomedical Sciences

### Winter 2020

Wednesday 12:30-2:20 in ITB 139

Friday 12:30-1:20 in ITB 139

### Instructor and course coordinator:

Michelle MacDonald ([macdonml@mcmaster.ca](mailto:macdonml@mcmaster.ca))

### Instructor:

Deb Sloboda ([sloboda@mcmaster.ca](mailto:sloboda@mcmaster.ca))

**Office Hours:** By appointment

### TA(s):

Kaushal Baid ([baidk@mcmaster.ca](mailto:baidk@mcmaster.ca))

Devon Morrison ([morridat@mcmaster.ca](mailto:morridat@mcmaster.ca))

**Materials & Fees:** We will use an online peer review platform called Kritik with a \$15 fee for the term

### Introduction:

This course will develop fundamental writing skills with application to writing for the biomedical sciences. We will review basic principles of effective scientific writing, and review good and bad writing. Students will be given practical examples of science writing and will be given writing exercises with opportunities for frequent feedback and review to advance their written communications.

### Learning Outcomes:

By the end of this course, students should be able to:

- Understand the distinction between scientific writing and other types of writing
- Apply proper sentence structure and punctuation in their writing
- Understand and apply the appropriate use of passive vs active voice
- Write a paragraph
- Write a scientific introduction, body and conclusion
- Critically analyze published papers
- Write a literature review

### Assessment Overview:

Grade Item	Due Date	Weight (%)
Participation (attendance, completion of in-class work, homework, engagement)		20
Reflection	April 10, 11:59 pm to Avenue to Learn Assignment Folder	10
Revised critique	April 15, 11:59 pm to Avenue to Learn Assignment Folder	25
Literature review	April 15, 11:59 pm to Avenue to Learn Assignment Folder	45

## Course Policies

### Academic Integrity

You are expected to exhibit honesty and use ethical behaviour in all aspects of the learning process. Academic credentials you earn are rooted in principles of honesty and academic integrity.

Academic dishonesty is to knowingly act or fail to act in a way that results or could result in unearned academic credit or advantage. This behaviour can result in serious consequences, e.g. the grade of zero on an assignment, loss of credit with a notation on the transcript (notation reads: "Grade of F assigned for academic dishonesty"), and/or suspension or expulsion from the university.

It is your responsibility to understand what constitutes academic dishonesty. For information on the various types of academic dishonesty please refer to the Academic Integrity Policy, located at [www.mcmaster.ca/academicintegrity](http://www.mcmaster.ca/academicintegrity).

The following illustrates only three forms of academic dishonesty:

- Plagiarism, e.g. the submission of work that is not one's own or for which other credit has been obtained.
- Improper collaboration in group work.
- Copying or using unauthorized aids in tests and examinations.

### Academic Accommodation of Students with Disabilities

Students with disabilities who require academic accommodation must contact Student Accessibility Services (SAS) to make arrangements with a Program Coordinator. Student Accessibility Services can be contacted by phone 905-525-9140 ext. 28652 or e-mail [sas@mcmaster.ca](mailto:sas@mcmaster.ca). For further information, consult McMaster University's Academic Accommodation of Students with Disabilities policy.

### **Requests for Relief for Missed Academic Term Work**

In the event of an absence for medical or other reasons, students should review and follow the Academic Regulation in the Undergraduate Calendar “Requests for Relief for Missed Academic Term Work”.

### **Academic Accommodation for Religious, Indigenous or Spiritual Observances**

Students requiring academic accommodation based on religious, indigenous or spiritual observances should follow the procedures set out in the RISO policy. Students requiring a RISO accommodation should submit their request to their Faculty Office normally within 10 working days of the beginning of term in which they anticipate a need for accommodation or to the Registrar's Office prior to their examinations. Students should also contact their instructors as soon as possible to make alternative arrangements for classes, assignments, and tests.

### **Extreme Circumstances**

The University reserves the right to change the dates and deadlines for any or all courses in extreme circumstances (e.g., severe weather, labour disruptions, etc.). Changes will be communicated through regular McMaster communication channels, such as McMaster Daily News, A2L and/or McMaster email.

### **Courses with an On-Line Element**

In this course we will be using Avenue to Learn and Kritik. Students should be aware that, when they access the electronic components of this course, private information such as first and last names, user names for the McMaster e-mail accounts, and program affiliation may become apparent to all other students in the same course. The available information is dependent on the technology used. Continuation in this course will be deemed consent to this disclosure. If you have any questions or concerns about such disclosure please discuss this with the course instructor.

### **Authenticity/Plagiarism Detection**

In this course we will be using a web-based service (Turnitin.com) to reveal authenticity and ownership of student submitted work. Students will be expected to submit their work electronically either directly to Turnitin.com or via Avenue to Learn (A2L) plagiarism detection (a service supported by Turnitin.com) so it can be checked for academic dishonesty.

Students who do not wish to submit their work through A2L and/or Turnitin.com must still submit an electronic and/or hardcopy to the instructor. No penalty will be assigned to a student who does not submit work to Turnitin.com or A2L. All submitted work is subject to normal verification that standards of academic integrity have been upheld (e.g., on-line search, other software, etc.). To see the Turnitin.com Policy, please go to [www.mcmaster.ca/academicintegrity](http://www.mcmaster.ca/academicintegrity).