

Writing 340: Writing for Sciences

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The 7 Dimensions of Wellness

Purpose (*what we'll do*)

Writing 340 for Sciences develops reading and writing skills that can be applied in STEM and allied health fields. Constructing a solid written argument is important, whether you are pursuing a degree that leads to work in a healthcare environment (i.e., hospital, clinic), or a field that analyzes health data (i.e., biometrics, biostatistics), or a position that advocates or lobbies for citizens (i.e., public health, social work).

This course will help us locate central ethical and moral dilemmas, and determine which stylistic, substantive, and argumentative decisions best service our writing for the public, professionals, and academics. We will emphasize critical analysis, clarity, and the use of solid academic evidence, including the proper use of scholarly research, bibliographies, citations, and other formal features of academic writing. In particular, you'll be introduced to the scientific process including IRB, and how to conduct systematic reviews and metaanalyses.

Tasks (*how we'll do it*)

This is a highly immersive and experiential class. We will use a gradual release model built on lateral (divergent) thinking, reduced cognitive load, and spacing and interleaving. There will be some instructor-led lecture and discussion of assigned readings, but most of our work will be active learning with hands-on experiments in teams, and self-directed field work outside the physical classroom. Think of class as a series of simulations that will help us transfer our writing and communication skills to real-world settings.

Coursework consists of ancillary assignments including hands-on activities, pre-writing that helps prepare for your formal assignments (i.e., prospectus, outline, bibliography), and four formal writings—two of which will be revised and submitted as a final portfolio that is graded by the Writing 340 Committee. One of our formal writings will be a self-designed project that can take a multimodal or traditional writing format.

Criteria (*how we'll know we succeeded*)

By the end of this semester, we should be able to

- Describe and confidently discuss three ethical challenges in the social sciences
- Collect quantitative and qualitative data, visualize it, and write descriptive and inferential statements about it
- Identify our preferred role on a team and be able to contribute towards collaborative work

Point Distribution

Assignment	Assignment Requirements	% Grade
Essay 1	IMRaD, data collection, 10 pages (2500 words)	15
Essay 2	Bioethics essay, ethics discussion, 10 pages (2500 words)	20
Essay 3	Ethnography and presentation, 3-5 pages (750-1200 words)	10
Essay 4	revision and reflection	10
Final Portfolio	Revised Essays 1 & 2 + reflection	25
Ancillary Work Participation	10-15 pages (2500-4000 words)	20

Required Materials

All readings are provided

Access to a laptop or desktop (tablets and mobile devices are welcome, but you'll also need a device with solid processing power to complete our data sciences activities later in the semester)

1 pencil, 1 unlined paper notebook, 1 package of 5 multi-colored highlighters

-----Nice to Know-----

Blackboard

All assignments will be submitted through Blackboard, and all materials needed for the course will also be posted there. I also post regular news/updates and announcements.

Attendance

Your participation grade is not based on seat warming talents but rather on active, meaningful contributions to our discussions and in-class activities. Students who are shy, socially anxious, or speak English as a second or third language are especially encouraged to make use of our safe space to practice sharing.

Late Work

Late ancillary and in-class assignments are not accepted unless you have a legitimate excuse. Legitimate excuses for absences include--but are not limited to--university-sanctioned events (including NCAA participation), documentable serious illnesses, religious holidays, and genuine family emergencies. If you anticipate needing an extension, please be proactive and speak with me well before the deadline to find a solution.

Peer Review

Essential to our course is the idea that writing is a process—something that requires multiple drafts and revision. Throughout the course, we will have four draft revision workshops, or peer review days—one for each major writing assignment. Participation in peer review is mandatory. Participation in peer review includes not only bringing all required copies of a full and complete draft, but also providing insightful, constructive commentary on the drafts of your peers. We will also schedule four individual conferences of 20 minutes each to privately discuss your work, goals, and any personal questions. Sign-ups for conference times will take place through SignUp Genius.

Final Portfolio

Your final portfolio will consist of 2 Writing Assignments that you choose and revise. Instructions for this will be posted to Blackboard later in the semester. The final portfolio is evaluated and a grade recommended through a blind review process by other faculty members in the Sustainability Thematic. I will explain the committee process and approach to paper review and how this impacts your final grade as we approach the semester's end.

Technical Difficulties

USC has many computer facilities at your disposal, including a laptop loaner program (go to <https://itservices.usc.edu/spaces/computingcenters/> for more information). Back up your work to multiple locations, including at least one hard drive copy and one cloud (Google, Box, etc.) copy.

No Jerks Policy

We will observe the distinction between academic inquiry/knowledge that might make initially us uncomfortable or perplexed, on the one hand, and behavior/language that is uselessly rude, on the other. Intellectual, sometimes passionate disagreements are healthy, but we will not tolerate any disruptive, hateful, or divisive comments related to political affiliation, race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, class, physical appearance, professional-sports loyalty, and so forth. Please contact me immediately if you feel in anyway discriminated against or notice bias or inappropriate activity taking place in our class.

Writing Center

Bring the assignment prompt and rubric. They take online appointments and walk-ins (Taper Hall, second floor). <https://dornsife.usc.edu/writingcenter/>

Plagiarism, Cheating, and Dishonesty

Your work must be your own original work. This means that you must document all instances when you directly cite, indirectly paraphrase, borrow, or otherwise utilize someone else's words, ideas, or sundry intellectual materials while writing your stuff, unless you are dealing with a piece of common knowledge (e.g. Abraham Lincoln was a US president). This includes material from other courses you have taken, such as a professor's lecture or other papers you have written or are currently writing (the latter counts as punishable academic dishonesty). You are responsible for abiding by the policies regarding academic integrity in the Writing 150 Course Book, the policies regarding Student Judicial Affairs and Community Standards (www.usc.edu/student-affairs/SJACS/), and the Campus Student Guidebook (scampus.usc.edu/1300-academic-integrity-review/).

***These penalties apply whether a paper is wholly or partially plagiarized. In other words, a paper that is 5% plagiarized nonetheless earns a 100% F and cannot be revised.**

Special Accommodations

Students who require special accommodations must register with Disability Services and Programs (DSP) each semester. A letter of verification for approved accommodations can be obtained from DSP (located in STU 301, open 8:30AM–5PM, Monday–Friday). The phone number for DSP is (213) 740-0776.

***Remember, by law you are not required to disclose the nature of your disability. Faculty are provided with a general letter that acknowledges a need and describes the accommodations to be provided.**

Resources for Underserved Students

Please talk with me if there are special circumstances you are facing related to financial, familial, mental wellness, or other personal challenges that impact your ability to complete work in our class. I will try my best to find a solution with you to ensure that you receive a fair and appropriate education that is rewarding and helps you to thrive and achieve your goals.