PUB HLTH 445
WRITING AND PEER REVIEWING FOR PUBLICATION – 1.0 Credit

Spring Quarter 2015: March 30, 2015 – June 8, 2015
WEDNESDAY- 6:00 to 9:00 pm

NOTE: FIRST CLASS WILL BE WEDNESDAY, APRIL 1
633 N Saint Clair, 20th floor, Mag Mile Conference Room

Course Faculty – Phil B. Fontanarosa, MD, MBA
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Office Hours: By Appointment

Prerequisites – PH 304 - Intro to Epidemiology and PH 302 - Intro to Biostatistics

Optional – but highly desirable – Prior research experience with readiness to write your own research reports

Class size will be limited to 14 students. IF YOU SIGN UP FOR THIS COURSE, PLEASE PLAN TO BE AT EVERY CLASS. STUDENTS WHO MISS MORE THAN ONE CLASS WILL NOT BE ABLE TO COMPLETE THE COURSE.

Course Objectives

Students will demonstrate writing, reading, editing, and reviewing skills by submitting written homework assignments and by discussing in class:

1. A review of an assigned manuscript
2. An abstract and title of an assigned paper
3. A detailed outline of your own research paper or systematic review
4. A complete manuscript reporting your research or systematic review
5. A peer review of a classmate's manuscript
6. A letter responding to a critique of your manuscript
7. An editorial or commentary
Course Description

This course will review and discuss the steps involved in preparing, peer reviewing, revising, and submitting manuscripts for publication. Students will be expected to prepare and hand in written work for each class and to participate actively in class discussion. Advance reading and writing are essential for this course. The course should benefit anyone interested in improving scientific writing skills and in more effectively understanding the biomedical publication process.

Text - Lang, TA. *How to Write, Publish, and Present in the Health Sciences.* ACP Press, 2010

Final Grade

The final grade will be determined as follows:

- Written assignments for each class 65%
  There are 7 written assignments, totaling 65 points. Points are based on the thoroughness and completeness of the work, as well as submitting the assignment on time.

- Class participation 35%
  There are 10 class sessions, each worth 3.5 points. Points for participation are based on being actively engaged in all aspects of in-class discussions including, but not limited to, providing comments related to written assignments, presenting relevant issues for group discussion based on previous reviewing and publishing experiences, and posing questions and providing responses to practical aspects and issues involving the scientific publication process.

Course Evaluation

The Programs in Public Health administer web-based course evaluations to students for each course near the end of the quarter. Your completion of both the unit (course) and faculty evaluation components is required; failure to complete either of the evaluations will result in an incomplete grade until the evaluations are submitted. You will be sent the web link and instructions via email later in the quarter. You will have about two weeks time to complete the evaluations before grades are submitted.
Academic integrity

Every Northwestern faculty member and student belongs to a community of scholars where academic integrity is a fundamental commitment. The Program in Public Health abides by the standards of academic conduct, procedures, and sanctions as set forth by The Graduate School at Northwestern University. Students and faculty are responsible for knowledge of the information provided by The Graduate School on their Web page at [http://www.tgs.northwestern.edu/academics/academic-services/integrity/index.html](http://www.tgs.northwestern.edu/academics/academic-services/integrity/index.html)

Academic misconduct includes, but is not limited to

1. Receiving or giving unauthorized aid on examinations or homework
2. Plagiarism
3. Fabrication
4. Falsification or manipulation of academic records
5. Aiding or abetting any of the above

The PPH follows The Graduate School’s procedure for evaluating alleged academic misconduct, as outlined on the TGS website. [http://www.tgs.northwestern.edu/academics/academic-services/integrity/dishonesty/index.html](http://www.tgs.northwestern.edu/academics/academic-services/integrity/dishonesty/index.html)

Faculty reserve the right to use the “Safe Assignment: Plagiarism Detection Tool” that is part of the Course Management System to evaluate student assignments. Information about this tool can be found at [http://www.it.northwestern.edu/education/course-management/support/assessments/safeassignment.html](http://www.it.northwestern.edu/education/course-management/support/assessments/safeassignment.html)
Class Schedule

Week 1 – (Class 1) – WEDNESDAY, APRIL 1, 2015

TOPIC: The Medical Literature and Scientific Publishing

1. Review backgrounds and goals of the members of the class

2. Overview of course
   a. Review syllabus and class schedule
   b. Discuss grades and attendance policy

3. Discuss the medical literature and the scientific publication process

ASSIGNMENTS:

1. Readings:
   a. Lang, pages 1-23

2. For Discussion:
   a. Be prepared to discuss your goals and expectations for the class
   b. Be prepared to discuss your previous publication experience and issues

3. Distribute Instructions for Assignment #1

Week 2 – (Class 2) WEDNESDAY, APRIL 8, 2015

TOPIC: The Peer Review Process

ASSIGNMENTS:

1. Readings:

2. Written Assignment Due: Assignment #1
   ***Prepare - and bring to class - a detailed, written review of a manuscript***
   (Manuscript will be given out during Week 1 Session).
   Be prepared to hand in your assignment – so please bring it with you.

3. For Discussion:
   a. Be prepared to discuss your experience with the peer review process
   b. Be prepared to discuss your approach to reviewing a paper
   c. Be prepared to share your review in class

4. Distribute Instructions for Assignment #2
Week 3 – (Class 3) - WEDNESDAY, APRIL 15, 2015

TOPIC: Anatomy of a Research Paper - Part 1:
Writing an Informative Title; Writing a Quality Abstract
Writing the Introduction and Methods Sections

ASSIGNMENTS:
1. Readings
   a. Lang, pages 143-158.

2. Written Assignment Due: Assignment #2
   *** Prepare - and bring to class - an informative title and an abstract of 250 words (not longer) for a manuscript. (Manuscript will be given out during Week 2 Session). Be prepared to hand in your assignment – so please bring it with you.

3. For Discussion
   a. Be prepared to share your title and abstract
   b. Be prepared to discuss the quality of your title and the quality of other titles in the class
   c. Be prepared to discuss the quality of your abstract and the quality of other abstracts in the class.
   d. Be prepared to discuss specific manuscript elements depending on study design

4. Distribute Instructions for Assignment #3

Week 4 – (Class 4) WEDNESDAY, APRIL 22, 2015

TOPIC: Anatomy of a Research Paper - Part 2:
Writing the Results and Discussion Sections
Appropriate use of References
Preparing Tables and Figures

ASSIGNMENTS
1. Readings: Lang, pages 67-100; 158-170

2. Written Assignment Due: Assignment #3
   *** Prepare - and bring to class - a detailed outline of an original research paper, meta-analysis, or systematic review on a biomedical or health-related topic of your choice. Be prepared to hand in your assignment – so please bring it with you.

3. For Discussion
   a. Be prepared to discuss and share your work with the class
   b. Be prepared to discuss your strategy for formulating the outline

4. Distribute Instructions for Assignment #4
Week 5 (Class 5) – WEDNESDAY, APRIL 29, 2015

TOPIC: Strategies for Scientific Writing

ASSIGNMENTS
1. Readings:
   a. Lang, pages 50-66

2. For Discussion
   a. Be prepared to discuss your approaches, techniques, and strategies for effective and efficient scientific writing

Week 6 (Class 6) – WEDNESDAY, MAY 6, 2015

TOPIC: Elements of Effective Scientific Writing

ASSIGNMENTS
1. Readings:
   a. Lang, pages 30-48

2. Written Assignment due: Assignment #4
   *** Prepare - and bring to class - your manuscript of an original research report, meta-analysis, or systematic review in a format suitable for submission to a scientific journal. Be prepared to hand in your assignment – so please bring it with you.

   *** NOTE: Please also send me your manuscript by E-MAIL before class (No later than 6:00 PM on Wednesday, May 6)

3. For Discussion
   a. In class exercises on word usage, terminology, point of view, and pronoun and antecedent usage
   b. In class exercises on sentence structure, paragraph structure, and transitional phrases
   c. In class discussion of techniques for creating a compelling, cohesive, critical argument

4. Distribute Instructions for Assignment #5

Week 7 – (Class 7) - WEDNESDAY, MAY 13, 2015

TOPIC: Interacting with Journals
Corresponding with the Editorial Office
Responding to a Review
ASSIGNMENTS:
1. Readings:
   a. Lang, pages 275-280

2. Written Assignment Due: Assignment #5
   ***Prepare - and bring to class - a written peer review of a classmate's paper
   (The paper for you to review will be sent to you by e-mail by Thursday, May 7)
   Be prepared to hand in your assignment – so please bring it with you.

   ***NOTE: Please also send me your review by E-MAIL before class
   (No later than 6:00 PM on Wednesday, May 13)

3. For Discussion:
   a. Be prepared to discuss your experience with interacting with journals and editors.
   b. Be prepared to discuss your approach for responding to the peer reviewer critiques

4. Distribute Instructions for Assignment #6

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**Week 8 (Class 8) – WEDNESDAY MAY 20, 2015**

**TOPICS:** Editorials, Commentaries, and Letters to the Editor

**ASSIGNMENTS:**

1. Reading

2. Written Assignment Due: Assignment #6

   ***Prepare – and bring to class - a detailed Response to Reviewer Comments based on each point in the critique of your paper. (The review of your paper will be sent to you by e-mail by Wednesday, February 18).
   Be prepared to hand in your assignment – so please bring it with you.

3. For Discussion:
   a. Be prepared to discuss examples of effective letters to the editor.
   b. Be prepared to discuss examples of effective editorial and opinion articles.

3. Distribute Instructions for Assignment #7
Week 9 (Class 9) – WEDNESDAY, MAY 27, 2015

TOPIC: Ethical issues in Biomedical Publication:
Authorship, Conflict of Interest, Plagiarism, Fraud

ASSIGNMENTS:

1. Readings:
   a. Lang, pages 177-202

2. For Discussion:
   a. Be prepared to discuss and share your experience with authorship issues.
   b. Be prepared to discuss issues related to conflicts of interest and financial disclosures

3. Written Assignment Due: Assignment #7
   *** Prepare - and bring to class - a Commentary or Editorial on a current important topic of your choice relevant to medicine, health, research, health policy, ethics, etc. Be prepared to hand in your assignment – so please bring it with you.

Week 10 (Class 10) – WEDNESDAY, JUNE 3, 2015

TOPICS: Media coverage of health and biomedical research
Interacting with the reporters
Wrap-up Session

ASSIGNMENTS:

1. Readings:

2. For Discussion:
   a. Be prepared to discuss your experience with media interactions.
   b. Be prepared to discuss examples of media coverage of science, health, and medicine