

**Fall 2017**

**Writing for the Sciences (Section D2)**

**Location: NAC 4/161**

**Class Time: Mon/Wed 12:30–1:45PM**

**Instructor: Debra Williams**

**Email: [Dwilliams3@ccny.cuny.edu](mailto:Dwilliams3@ccny.cuny.edu)**

**Room: NAC 6/335C**

**Office Hours: Wed 2–3PM (by appt. only)**



**Course Description:** This course is designed to strengthen your reading, critical thinking, and writing skills for future academic and professional studies, specifically in the sciences. We will be building on a foundation of scientific knowledge by reading reports and studies from a variety of researchers in different scientific fields to develop an appreciation for scientific writing and thought. You will become a stronger writer and thinker capable of entering scientific discussion with a well-informed point of view. With a focus on examining different concepts and issues within the world around you, this course will help you synthesize information, find answers, and present ideas to an audience in different genres seen often in science writing. In particular, we will analyze various reports and critical reviews that have been recently published which will allow you to compose your own writing in these genres. Furthermore, this class asks that you analyze issues that you are thoroughly concerned about and/or are impacted by.

### **Course Learning Outcomes**

- Explore and analyze, in writing and reading, a variety of genres and rhetorical situations.
- Develop strategies for reading, drafting, collaborating, revising, and editing.
- Recognize and practice key rhetorical terms and strategies when engaged in writing situations.
- Engage in the collaborative and social aspects of writing processes.
- Understand and use print and digital technologies to address a range of audiences.
- Locate research sources (including academic journal articles, magazine and newspaper articles) in the library's databases or archives and on the Internet and evaluate them for credibility, accuracy, timeliness, and bias.
- Compose texts that integrate your stance with appropriate sources using strategies such as summary, critical analysis, interpretation, synthesis, and argumentation.
- Practice systematic application of citation conventions.

**Required Text:** Writing in the Life Sciences: A Critical Thinking Approach by Laurence Greene 3<sup>rd</sup> ed. (Oxford University Press 2010)

**Other Materials:** Blackboard – [www.cuny.edu/portal-login.html](http://www.cuny.edu/portal-login.html)

### **Course Policies**

**Plagiarism and Academic Integrity:** Plagiarism is copying and using other people's words without proper acknowledgment or citation as it is indicated in the CUNY Policy on Academic Integrity. All writing submitted for this course is understood to be your original work. Plagiarism is unacceptable and has serious consequences that can include a failing grade. In cases where I detect academic dishonesty (the fraudulent submission of another's work, in whole or part, as your own), you may be subject to a failing grade for the project or the course, and, in the worst case, to academic probation or expulsion. You are expected to read, understand, and adhere to CCNY's Policy on Academic Integrity, which is available here: <http://www1.ccny.cuny.edu/current/upload/Academic-Integrity-Policy.pdf>.

Students are expected to attend every class session of this course and to be on time. If you miss five classes, your final grade will be dropped by one-half of one letter (a 90 to an 85, for example). If you miss six classes, your

final grade will be dropped one full letter. If you miss seven classes, you will not be able to pass the course. Consistent late arrivals and early departures will have a negative impact on your grade. I will notify you by email if course absences (for full or partial classes) are having an impact on your grade. If you have special circumstances, please see me. I'm happy to work with you to help you complete this course.

**Student Code of Conduct:** All student members of the College community are expected to conduct themselves in a manner that demonstrates mutual respect for the rights and personal/academic well-being of others, preserves the integrity of the social and academic environment, and supports the mission of the College. The College has an inherent right to address behavior that impedes, obstructs, or threatens the maintenance of order and attainment of the aforementioned goals by violating the standards of conduct set forth in the University student conduct policies noted below as well as other policies that may be established by the respective Schools, Global Sites, and administrative offices of the University. The goals of the CCNY Community Standards are:

- To promote a campus environment that supports the overall educational mission of the University
- To protect the University community from disruption and harm
- To encourage appropriate standards of individual and group behavior
- To foster ethical values and civic virtues
- To foster personal learning and growth while at the same time holding individuals and groups accountable to the standards of expectations established by the Code of Conduct: <http://www.cuny.cuny.edu/studentaffairs/community-standards.cfm>

#### Food and Drinks

Please! No eating in the classroom. Your snack could be a real distraction for other students. Drinks are fine.

#### Resources

Everyone here at City College is committed to making your academic experience an enriching one, and should you find yourself in need of help, please make use of these resources.

#### The Writing Center

<http://www.cuny.cuny.edu/writing/>

The CCNY Writing Center offers a supportive learning environment where students can have one-on-one tutoring sessions with writing consultants. It is a great resource for you to obtain extra help as you write and revise your papers. They DO NOT proofread your papers, but offer assistance on improving certain aspects of them. They also offer ESL tutoring. To set up an appointment or semester-long sessions, contact them in person at the Writing Center, which is located in the NAC, 3<sup>rd</sup> floor plaza or call (212) 650-8104.

#### Gateway Advising Center, NAC 1/220

<http://www.cuny.cuny.edu/gateway/>

Students without a declared major can receive academic advising, especially if you have questions about your course of study, core requirements, etc.

#### AccessAbility Center Tutoring Services, NAC 1/218

<http://www.cuny.cuny.edu/accessability/>

Provides one-on-one tutoring and workshops to all registered students with learning or physical disabilities.

#### SEEK Peer Academic Learning Center, NAC 4/224

Phone: 212-650-5786; email: [seekpals@ccny.cuny.edu](mailto:seekpals@ccny.cuny.edu)

Offers counseling and peer tutoring for students in need of academic and financial support who have registered for the SEEK Program.

## ASSIGNMENTS:

### Essays, Self-Reflections, and Final Portfolio/Self-Assessment Project

During the course of the semester, you will complete four major writing assignments: Informative Review, Position Paper, Proposal/Research Paper, and Portfolio Self-assessment essay. There will also be a short reflection paper for each major assignment.

There will be detailed instruction sheets distributed for each essay assignment, self-reflection, and Final Portfolio/Self-Assessment. All of your assignments will be submitted to our Blackboard (Bb) course site.

<u>Assignments</u>	<u>Grade Percentages</u>
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<b>Letter of Introduction</b>	Not Graded
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The Letter of Introduction tells your reader about your academic goals, career aspirations, and what you wish to gain from taking a Writing for the Sciences course. This assignment also requires you to reflect on your current writing process and approach.

### Scaffolded Review Papers:

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|---|------------|
| - <b>Informative Review (2-3 pages)</b>   | <b>10%</b> |
| The informative review paper updates readers about the state of knowledge on a focused science topic or research issue. The goal is to inform readers about a science discussion without taking a position on the issues. |            |
| - <b>Position Paper (3-4 pages)</b>   | <b>15%</b> |
| This paper is an extension of the informative review paper. You will use the same topic discussion to discuss the opposing positions on the topic and argue your position with evidence.                                  |            |

### Scaffolded Research:

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| - <b>Research Proposal (3-4 pages)</b>   | <b>5%</b>  |
| Students will write a proposal for a research topic focusing on a well-defined science issue, recommendations, and an argument for a proposed solution. This assignment will frame the discussion for the research paper to follow.  |            |
| - <b>Research Paper: (5-7 pages)</b>   | <b>25%</b> |
| This assignment draws from the research proposal where at least four scholarly sources are used to address a researched problem, and propose and argue a position. The IMRAD format will be used for this paper. This assignment includes a class presentation highlighting key features from your research. |            |

<b>Self-Reflection paper for each essay assignment (2-4 pages)</b>	<b>10%</b>
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For each essay you will also complete a **Self-Reflection paper** about your writing process, rhetorical situations presented in your essay and Course Learning Outcomes associated with the essay assignment. All of the assignments will address one or more of the Course Learning Outcomes. You should consider these Course Learning Outcomes for your **Final Portfolio and Self-Assessment Project**. This kind of reflection will help you to better understand your writing process and to transfer what you learn in this class to other writing contexts.

<b>Final Portfolio/Self Reflection (4-5 pages)</b>	<b>25%</b>
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The portfolio and self-assessment are in many ways the most important documents that you'll create for this class. Assembling the portfolio will help you to see your progress as a writer over the course of the semester; the self-assessment will give you the chance to evaluate that work based on your own criteria as well as the course learning outcomes.

The Self-Assessment will provide you with an opportunity to demonstrate that you've understood the rhetorical terms that we've been working with all semester—rhetorical situation, purpose, audience, genre, stance, media/

design, and exigence—and an introduction to your portfolio. The portfolio should include, at a minimum, the Informative Review, Position Paper, Research Proposal and Research Paper.

The portfolios will be collected by the first-year writing program, **so they must be in a digital format**. You will have the option of either collecting the body of your work into a single .pdf document, or creating a WordPress site for your work. The CCNY Writing Program has video guides that you can use to create a WordPress site (search for “CCNY Writing Program” in Youtube). **A more comprehensive assignment sheet will be distributed and discussed for this assignment.**

**Other Writing Assignments: classwork, drafts, and Blackboard posts (Bb) 10%**

The Bb gives you a chance to think through and respond to the reading before class. For each DBP, I’ll provide you with a prompt. Usually, the prompt will ask for a specific response; the DBPs will be evaluated based on how well you respond to the question. While these posts will ask for specific information, the DBPs are informal. You won’t be evaluated for typographical and grammatical correctness as long as these issues don’t interfere with your meaning.

Grades Scored Between	Will Equal
97 % and 100 %	A+
94 % and Less Than 97%	A
90 % and Less Than 94%	A-
87 % and Less Than 90%	B+
84 % and Less Than 87%	B
80 % and Less Than 84%	B-
77 % and Less Than 80%	C+
74 % and Less Than 77%	C
70 % and Less Than 74%	C-
67 % and Less Than 70%	D+
64 % and Less Than 67%	D
60 % and Less Than 64%	D-
0 % and Less Than 60%	F

## Weekly Course Schedule

Date	Homework due in class	In-Class Work
Mon 8/28		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Introductions</li> <li>• Review Course Syllabus/course learning outcomes</li> <li>• Discussion: What is science writing? Informative review, Position papers, Critical Science Research.</li> <li>• <i>Distribute Letter of Introduction Assignment</i> and Handout Orwell / Sagan.</li> <li>• Assign student groups</li> </ul>
Wed 8/30	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Read Orwell and Sagan articles.</li> <li>• Confirm access to Blackboard</li> </ul> <p><b>Due: Letter of Introduction Due</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Review “What is science writing?” handouts (Orwell / Sagan)</li> <li>• WITLS: Rhetorical situations in science writing: primary and secondary audiences</li> <li>• Class exercise (NYT articles)</li> </ul>
<b>Mon 9/4</b>	<b>College Closed</b>	<b>NO CLASSES</b>
Wed 9/6	Read NYT articles in packet (p 9-18) and respond to questions in Bb.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Review NYT articles and HW responses</li> <li>• Review HW: Analyzing Your Audiences</li> <li>• Identifying rhetorical approaches in informative review papers               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>— Savulescu’s <i>Ethics of Cloning</i></li> <li>— Morales’ <i>Psychological aspects of human cloning and genetic manipulation</i></li> </ul> </li> </ul>
Mon 9/11	Read and respond to questions on Savulescu and Morales’ articles on cloning. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Bb: Summarize key issues in Informative Reviews of Savulescu and Morales’ articles</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Review HW: Savulescu and Morales’ articles and quiz.</li> <li>• Identifying the rhetorical situations in Morales’s article</li> <li>• Watch video on cloning</li> <li>• <i>Introduction to essay 1: Informative review paper</i></li> </ul>
Wed 9/13	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Bb: Due <b>Fri 9/15</b> Watch two videos on cloning and respond on Bb.</li> <li>• Bb: Due <b>Mon 9/18</b> comment on peer’s response on the two videos</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Metaphors in science writing</li> <li>• Incorporating visual images in science writing</li> <li>• Conducting on-line peer-reviews</li> </ul>
Mon 9/18	Bb: Due 9/20 First draft of informative review paper and peer-review	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Editing/Proofreading/Grammar workshop</li> </ul>
<b>Wed 9/20</b>	<b>College Closed</b>	<b>NO CLASSES</b>
Mon 9/25	<b>Due: Final draft of informative review paper</b>	Introduction to reflection paper <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reflecting on informative review writing process and rhetorical modes</li> </ul> Introduction to structuring arguments <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Incorporating opposing positions in science: Objections, Concessions, and Counter Arguments</li> </ul>

Wed 9/27	<b>Due: Reflection Paper</b>	<b>TBD: Meet in CityTech Computer room</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Create wordpress template for essays</li> <li>• Review Incorporating opposing positions in science: Objections, Concessions, and Counter Arguments</li> </ul>
Mon 10/2	<b>BB:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Read articles on Fracking</li> <li>• Identify objections, concessions, and counter arguments</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Structuring arguments in science</li> <li>• Introduction to Position Paper #2</li> </ul>
Wed 10/4	<b>BB:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Read Howarth/Santoro/Ingraffea research on Methane and greenhouse-gas and respond to questions in Bb.</li> </ul>	<b>Discussion:</b> How science research in position papers <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Best practices analyzing science research papers.</li> <li>• Analyzing science writing in research papers.</li> <li>• deciphering difficult text</li> </ul>
Mon 10/9	<b>NO CLASSES</b>	
Wed 10/11	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Summarize two “Opposing View” position papers you will be using for your essay.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Position paper workshop.</li> <li>• Introduction to Abstracts p 175-178</li> </ul>
Mon 10/16	Position Paper 1st Draft	Workshop on 1st draft essay (content/structure)
Wed 10/18	Position Paper 2nd Draft	Peer review workshop on 2nd draft essay (grammar/structure)
Mon 10/23	<b>Due: Position Paper Final Draft</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Position paper reflection workshop</li> <li>• Synthesizing studies with similar and contrasting conclusions</li> <li>• Working with summary charts</li> </ul>
Wed 10/25	<b>Due: Reflection Paper</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Synthesizing studies with similar and contrasting conclusions</li> <li>• Working with summary charts</li> </ul> Introduction to proposals for research
Mon 10/30	Research proposal 1st draft due	Research Proposal workshop and peer-review
Wed 11/1	Identify and respond to focus questions (key features) for research article (page 41-57).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Review research key features for science writing</li> <li>• Organizing a research paper</li> </ul>
Mon 11/6	<b>Due: Research Proposal final draft</b>	
Wed 11/8	Preliminary 1st draft of research paper	Revising for logic and clarity in science writing
Mon 11/13	Research Paper Bb Peer-Review (1st draft) Prepare research presentations	Class presentations
Wed 11/15	Prepare research presentations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Class presentations</li> </ul>
Mon 11/20	Research paper final draft due	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reflection paper workshop</li> <li>• Introduction to self-assessment essay</li> <li>• Review course learning outcomes</li> </ul>
Wed 11/22	<b>Due: Reflection paper</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Self-assessment group workshop</li> <li>• Complete self-assessment evaluation sheet</li> </ul>

Mon 11/27	Self-assessment 1st draft due	Peer-review self-assessment
Wed 11/29	<b>Self-assessment final draft due</b>	Meeting in TechCenter Lab: Portfolio workshop
Mon 12/4	Continue working on portfolio	Meeting in TechCenter Lab: Portfolio workshop
Wed 12/6	Continue working on portfolio	Meeting in TechCenter Lab: Portfolio workshop
Mon 12/11	Portfolio/self-assessment project final	Portfolio presentations