

Course Information

The primary purpose of English 312x is to teach students effective writing and communication methods in the biological sciences including: presentation of research data, methods of bibliographic citation, ethical communication, use of oral and visual presentation methods for biological information, and report preparation. Though the primary emphasis will be on academic writing, English 312x is designed not only to help prepare students to communicate technical information to their biologically-knowledgeable peers, but also to managers, clients, and coworkers who may not understand the ramifications of the data itself. This necessarily involves an appreciation of not only the technical information, but also the rhetorical (communicative) situation, as well as the social, political, and ethical issues at work in biological communication. It is the role of this class to help students explore how to communicate the technical information of your discipline with a much greater awareness of these issues. To that end, English 312x will help students study four primary areas:

- Rhetorical analysis and awareness
- Communication processes (including development, revision, and distribution)
- Written, oral, and visual information design
- Social, political, and ethical issues in biological communication

To help develop these areas, students will read about and produce an assortment of academic and technical documents. Additionally, students will explore how communication issues were involved in prominent scientific or technical cases in the biological sciences and related fields. This process of skill development and exploration of social, political, and ethical issues will be facilitated by the following major assignments:

Table 1: Assignments by Weight and Goal

Assignment	Grade %	Rhetorical	Processes	Info Design	SPE Issues
Journal Analysis	10	X	X		X
Lab Report	10	X		X	
Poster Presentation	10	X		X	X
Field Document	10	X	X	X	
Midterm Examination	10	X	X	X	
Research Paper	10	X	X	X	X
Case Presentation	10	X	X	X	X
Final Portfolio	20	X	X	X	X
Quizzes	10	X	X	X	X

Major Assignment Descriptions

Journal Analysis: To facilitate student academic journal literacy they will prepare a rhetorical analysis of a research journal in their field of study. This process will help orient students toward scholarly writing and facilitate future academic research.

Lab Report: Students will revise a lab report from one of their biological classes, past or present, based on their growing knowledge of rhetorically effective information design.

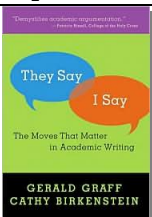
Poster Presentation: Students will prepare a poster presentation summarizing recent research findings. This poster presentation will replicate the type of presentation students might give at academic conferences.

Field Document: Students will prepare a document specific to their field. This document should communicate technical information to a non-technical audience, and should include a balanced mix of visual and written information. Possible options include (but are not limited to): a drug information pamphlet, a research press release, sick animal care instructions, or a corporate brief.

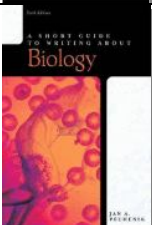
Research Paper: Students will author a research paper that models a journal review essay. Students will summarize and analyze recent research in a particular field of study. In so doing students will need to make use of proper research essay organizational, stylistic, and citation conventions.

Case Presentation: The case presentation assignment will allow students to explore a social, political, or ethical case involving biological communication. Students will explore the role of communication in one particular situation from their field of study. They will share this information with the class through a formal oral presentation.

Required Text Books



Graff & Birkenstein. *They say, I say: The moves that matter in academic writing.* Norton ISBN 0-393-92409-2



Jan A. Pechenik. *A short guide to writing about biology* (6th edition). Pearson/Longman ISBN 0-321-38592-6



Kimball & Hawkins. *Document design: A guide for technical communicators.* Bedfords/ St. Martin ISBN 0-312-43699-8

Tentative Calendar

DATE	IN-CLASS	ASSIGNMENT DUE
T 1/13	Introduction to Course	
R 1/15	Time for interview	SGWB pp. 21-32
T 1/20	Intro to Rhetorical Analysis	TSIS pp. 1-14 DD pp. 1-19
R 1/22	Rhetorical Analysis Practice	Bring RA Materials
T 1/27	Rhetorical Analysis Continued	Bring RA Materials
R 1/29	Peer-review Journal Analysis	Complete JA Draft
T 2/3	SPE Day	Journal Analysis
R 2/5	Introduction to Lab Reports	SGWB pp. 151-196
T 2/10	Evaluating Lab Reports	SGWB pp. 199-212
R 2/12	Peer-review Lab Reports	Complete Lab Report Draft
T 2/17	SPE Day	Lab Report
R 2/19	Poster Tour	SGWB pp. 244-250
T 2/24	Visual Design	DD pp. 20-37
R 2/26	Software Practice	DD pp. 199-244
T 3/3	Peer Review Posters	Complete Poster Draft
R 3/5	Poster Presentations	Poster Presentations
T 3/10	Midterm Exam Review	
R 3/13	Midterm Exam Review	Midterm Exam
3/16-3/20	SPRING BREAK	SPRING BREAK
T 3/24	Document Types	SGWB pp. 251-255 DD pp. 71-113 FD Proposal Due
R 3/26	Document Types	Reading-Based Homework Bring Sample Documents
T 3/31	Draft & Review Day	Field Document Drafts
R 4/2	SPE Day	Field Document
T 4/7	Review Articles	SGWB pp. 130-148 TSIS pp. 17-47
R 4/9	SPE Day	Bring Cases
T 4/14	Style Statistics	SGWB pp. 52-68 Homework as given
R 4/16	Conferences	Conferences
T 4/21	Conferences	Conferences
R 4/23	Peer-review Research	Complete RP Draft
T 4/28	Revision/ Portfolios	Research Paper
R 4/30	TBA	TBA
5/7	ALL DUE AT NOON	Revision & Portfolio