HLTH 742 – Professional Writing and Presentations

Semester:	Spring, 2020
Section:	0101
Classroom and Time:	Online
Instructor:	Cheryl L. Knott, PhD
Office:	SPH 1234W
Phone:	(301) 405-6659
Email:	cholt14@umd.edu

Course Description: The purpose of this course is to familiarize students with a variety of types of scientific and professional writing required of public health professionals, including but not limited to: CV/resumes, cover letters, scientific oral and poster presentations, peer-reviewed journal articles, and grant applications. The course will cover both the form and content of a range of technical documents as well as the processes of writing, including peer review and revision.

Course Pre- and Co-requisites: N/A

Course Learning Objectives:
Upon completing this course, the student will be able to develop and/or learn about:
1. research summaries for lay audiences
2. research data reports for lay audiences
3. CVs and cover letters
4. professional letters of recommendation
5. health education materials/brochures
6. policy briefs
7. strategic plans
8. research questions and testable hypotheses
9. scientific poster and oral presentations
10. literature review elements
11. peer-reviewed journal articles and the publication process, including revise/resubmit
12. NIH-style grant applications, including revised applications

Program Competencies Addressed in this Course:
1. Use appropriate theory to describe, explain, predict, and/or change a particular health problem within a given population and context.
2. Specify multiple targets and levels of intervention for social and behavioral science programs and/or policies.
3. Be conversant about current health behavior theories and theory-based research.
4. Assess limitations of the internal and external validity of research.
5. Critically appraise reports of research and evaluation.
6. Identify sources and processes for research funding.
7. Present clear, engaging, and informative oral research reports.
8. Apply the steps involved in independent research.

Skills Learned or Reinforced in this Course: Students will strengthen their scientific and professional writing skills and learn how to develop a variety of clear and effective scientific and professional writing pieces in public health.

Required Texts and Other Readings: Recommended readings will be distributed by the Professor.

Required Technology and Other Materials: Access to computer, internet, and online course platform.

Course Communication: All enrolled students are provided access to the University's email system and an email account. *All official University email communication will be sent to this email address* (or an alternate address if provided by the student). Email has been adopted as the primary means for sending official communications to students, so email must be checked on a regular basis.
Students are responsible for keeping their email address up to date or for redirecting or forwarding email to another address. Failure to check email, errors in forwarding email, and returned email (from "full mailbox" or "unknown user" errors for example), will not excuse a student from missing University announcement, messages, deadlines, etc. Email addresses can be quickly and easily updated at *www.my.umd.edu* or in-person at the Student Service Counter on the first floor of the Mitchell Building.

For technical support for University email: *www.helpdesk.umd.edu* or call 301-405-1400.

Course Requirements and Expectations: This course is offered in an asynchronous, 100% online manner. While this format provides great flexibility, it also requires self-discipline and planning. There are no meetings or allocated times when students will need to log in. It is expected that students submit coursework/assignments before the posted deadline, and check the online system for feedback from instructor and classmates. Students will engage in active, hands-on learning in this course. They will submit written work by the assigned due date. These written assignments will be critiqued by other students and the Professor. The student will then revise their written work in accord with recommendations and feedback. Students will develop a portfolio of scientific and professional writing samples that have been refined and strengthened through extensive peer and instructor feedback.

Major Graded Assignments*: See below*

Use of Course Assistance Websites and Online Group Forums: Course assistance websites, such as CourseHero and others, are not permitted sources for SPH courses, unless the professor explicitly gives permission for you to use one of these sites. Material pulled from these sites can be deemed unauthorized material and a violation of academic integrity. These sites offer information that might not be accurate and more generally stifle the learning process. In addition, it is understandable that students may use one of a variety of online or virtual forums for course-wide discussion (e.g., GroupME, WeChat, etc.). Collaboration in this way regarding concepts discussed in this course is permissible. However, collaboration on graded assignments is strictly prohibited. Examples include: asking classmates for answers on quizzes or exams, asking for access codes to clicker polls, etc. Additional information on academic integrity is found in **University Course Related Policies**, below.

University Course Related Policies:

<u>All University of Maryland-approved course policies are provided at the following website:</u>
http://www.ugst.umd.edu/courserelatedpolicies.html

Policy descriptions, resources, and links to official policy documents are provided for:

Academic Integrity: What is cheating? What is plagiarism? What is the Honor Pledge?
Code of Student Conduct: What behavior is prohibited?
Sexual Misconduct: What to do in case of sexual harassment or sexual assault.
Non-Discrimination: Procedures to prohibit discrimination, complaints about discrimination, harassment, and retaliation.
Accessibility: Information about disability support services (DSS) and accommodations.
Attendance, Absences, or Missed Assignments: The student must notify the instructor in a timely manner (typically first week of class). Read this prior to Schedule Adjustment date.
Student Rights Regarding Undergraduate Courses: What should I find in the course syllabus? Am I allowed to see my exams after they are graded?
Official UMD Communication: Use of email, communication with faculty, communication about cancelled class meetings, and weather-related or other urgent notifications.
Mid-Term Grades: Provided for 100 and 200 level courses, and all student athletes.
Complaints About Course Final Grades: Questions about course grades should first be addressed to the course instructor.
Copyright and Intellectual Property: Who owns the work that I produce in class?
Final Exams: Final exams are scheduled by the University.
Course Evaluations: The School of Public Health is committed to the use of student course evaluations for improving the student experience, course and curriculum delivery, and faculty instruction.
Campus Resources: ELMS, counseling, learning workshops, tutoring, writing help, questions about graduation, adding or dropping classes, withdrawing from the semester, etc.

Course Procedures and Policies:

Late work and Assignments:
If written assignments are turned in late, a **10% per-(business)day deduction in points** will be assessed for each day late. Documentation provided must refer to the specific date of the absence.

All assignments should be submitted using the course online system.

Ground Rules:

Show respect for yourself and others. Be professional, appropriate, and civil when providing feedback to other students on assignments. Through this course you will learn to give and receive critical feedback on writing.

Available Support Services: *The UMCP Writing Center, library facilities/tools, computer facilities and helpdesk at OIT.*

Grading Procedures:

Grading
There are generally 1-2 assignments per Unit for a total of 30 points for each Unit. This yields a total of 435 possible points for the course.

Grades will be based upon total points earned throughout the semester. In accord with Departmental policy, there is no provision for additional points through "extra credit." Grades will not be "rounded" up to the next higher bracket. |

Grade	Percent		Grade	Percent	
A+	100-96		C	75-73	
A	95-93		C-	72-70	
A-	92-90		D+	69-66	
B+	89-86		D	65-63	
B	85-83		D-	62-60	
B-	82-80		F	<60	
C+	79-76				

Course Outline / Course Calendar:

Course Schedule Summary					
Unit	Week	Topic	Assignments*	Due Date	Points
# 1	1	Introduction to Scientific and Professional Writing	1. -20% word count 2. -50% word count		15 15
# 2	2	Writing for Lay Audiences	1. Lay abstract 2. Lay data report		15 15
# 3	3	CVs and Cover Letters	1. CV revision 2. Cover letter		15 15
# 4	4	Letters of Recommendation	1. Letter of recommendation 2. Letter of recommendation		15 15
# 5	5	Health Education Materials	1. Brochure 2. Infographic		15 15
# 6	6	Policy Briefs	1. Policy brief		15

			2. Policy brief		15
# 7	7	Strategic Plans	1. Strategic plan critique		15
			2. Strategic plan critique		15
# 8	8	Research Questions and Hypotheses	1. Research question, aims, hypotheses		30
# 9	9	Poster Presentations	1. Poster		30
# 10	10	Oral Presentations	1. Slides 30 min		15
			2. Slides 15 min		15
# 11	11	Literature Reviews	1. Literature review		30
# 12	12	Introduction to Peer-reviewed Journal Articles	1. Journal rationale		15
			2. Peer review		15
# 13	13	Writing Peer-reviewed Journal Articles	1. Results section		15
			2. Data table		15
# 14	14	Grant Applications	1. Specific aims page		30
# 15	15	Wrap Up and Reflection	1. Reflections piece		30

* See description of assignments document for more detail

Note: Numbers in brackets after learning objectives show linkage between material covered in each session and the numbered program competencies shown on page 1 of this syllabus.

Required Session Outline	
Unit 1	**Week 1**
Introduction to Scientific and Professional Writing Learning Objectives for Session [Competencies: #5] - General best practices for scientific writing - How to be succinct in scientific writing Recommended readings: See course web site Assignments – See *HLTH 742 Assignments* document	
Unit 2	**Week 2**
Writing for Lay Audiences Learning Objectives for Session [Competencies: #5; 7] - Reading level testing for written materials - How to write lay research summaries and data reports	

Recommended readings: See course web site Assignments – See *HLTH 742 Assignments* document	
Unit 3	**Week 3**
CVs and Cover Letters Learning Objectives for Session [Competencies: N/A] - How to develop a strong CV and professional cover letter Recommended readings: See course web site Assignments – See *HLTH 742 Assignments* document	
Unit 4	**Week 4**
Letters of Recommendation Learning Objectives for Session [Competencies: N/A] - How to write effective professional letters of recommendation Recommended readings: See course web site Assignments – See *HLTH 742 Assignments* document	
Unit 5	**Week 5**
Health Education Materials Learning Objectives for Session [Competencies: #1, 2, 3, 5, 7] - How to develop effective health education materials - Consideration of source, message, channel, and receiver factors in health education - How to identify evidence-based health promotion interventions Recommended readings: See course web site Assignments – See *HLTH 742 Assignments* document	
Unit 6	**Week 6**
Policy Briefs Learning Objectives for Session [Competencies: #5, 7] - How to write an effective public health policy brief Recommended readings: See course web site Assignments – See *HLTH 742 Assignments* document	
Unit 7	**Week 7**
Strategic Plans Learning Objectives for Session [Competencies: #7] - How to write an effective strategic plan	

- Use of metrics in strategic planning Recommended readings: See course web site Assignments – See *HLTH 742 Assignments* document	
Unit 8	**Week 8**
Research Questions and Hypotheses Learning Objectives for Session [Competencies: #5, 8] - How to develop a research question - How to develop research specific aims - How to develop testable hypotheses Recommended readings: See course web site Assignments – See *HLTH 742 Assignments* document	
Unit 9	**Week 9**
Poster Presentations Learning Objectives for Session [Competencies: #5, 7] - How to develop a scientific poster presentation Recommended readings: See course web site Assignments – See *HLTH 742 Assignments* document	
Unit 10	**Week 10**
Oral Presentations Learning Objectives for Session [Competencies: #5, 7] - How to develop scientific slides and give effective oral presentations Recommended readings: See course web site Assignments – See *HLTH 742 Assignments* document	
Unit 11	**Week 11**
Literature Reviews Learning Objectives for Session [Competencies: #4, 5, 8] - Learn about the different types of literature reviews - How to conduct and write a literature review Recommended readings: See course web site Assignments – See *HLTH 742 Assignments* document	
Unit 12	**Week 12**

Introduction to Peer-reviewed Journal Articles

Learning Objectives for Session [Competencies: #5, 8]
- Learn the process involved in peer-reviewed journal articles from submission to publication
- How to identify the right journal for your work and evaluate journal quality
- Ethics issues around authorship and publication

Recommended readings: See course web site

Assignments – See *HLTH 742 Assignments* document

Unit 13	Week 13

Writing peer-reviewed Journal Articles

Learning Objectives for Session [Competencies: #5, 8]
- Learn the anatomy of a journal article and best practices for writing each section
- How to create data tables
- How to manage reference lists
- How to revise a manuscript after peer review

Recommended readings: See course web site

Assignments – See *HLTH 742 Assignments* document

Unit 14	Week 14

Grant Applications

Learning Objectives for Session [Competencies: #1, 2, 3, 4, 6, 8]
- Learn about major funding sources and mechanisms
- Orientation to an NIH-style grant application and its' components
- Learn about the grant revision process from peer review

Recommended readings: See course web site

Assignments – See *HLTH 742 Assignments* document

Unit 15	Week 15

Wrap Up

Learning Objectives for Session [Competencies: N/A]
- In this Unit we will reflect on what we learned about ourselves as writers during the course semester.

Assignments – See *HLTH 742 Assignments* document