

# Scientific Writing Practicum 280C

<b>Spring 2021</b>	<b>Fridays, 9:00 am to 12:00 pm (4 Unit Course)</b>
<b>Instructors:</b>	<b>Elena Martinez, PhD: <a href="mailto:e8martinez@ucsd.edu">e8martinez@ucsd.edu</a> Adriane Wynn, PhD : <a href="mailto:awynn@health.ucsd.edu">awynn@health.ucsd.edu</a></b>
<b>Assistant:</b>	<b>Lita Hinton: <a href="mailto:lhinton@ucsd.edu">lhinton@ucsd.edu</a></b>
<b>Location:</b>	<b>Zoom</b>

## Overview

This practicum will prepare students to write a scientific paper, which is a written report describing original research results. The entire course is focused on writing a publication quality paper based on the analyses/tables completed in FMPH 280B. Topics will include overall document construction, logical flow, paragraph and sentence construction, and grammar. We will also cover topics, such as peer review, responding to critiques and revising a manuscript, and selecting a journal and formatting for specific journal. It is expected that the scientific paper will be submitted to a peer-reviewed journal for publication.

## Learning Objectives

Students will:

- Develop critical thinking, research, and writing skills related to public health research.
- Complete in-class writing exercises that test their ability to write quickly and with quality.
- Perform peer critiques of scientific writing to develop reviewer skills.
- Finish an entire scientific paper to be submitted for publication based on the statistical output prepared in the statistical analyses practicum.

## Class Format

This is a skills class and therefore considerable time will be spent writing (in and out of class). The four course units will be earned not only in class time but also meeting individually with the course instructors to go over revisions of your work. You will also be critiquing each other's writing in class. Students must bring a laptop computer for in-class writing exercises (see schedule).

Missed classes must be made up and class participation is considered necessary to receive a passing grade. Instructors will meet with students individually if concerns arise about a student's performance. If there are valid reasons why assignments are missing, the student will receive an incomplete.

## Grade Components

10% Attendance  
10% Participation  
30% Homework

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50% Final manuscript

Assignments will be graded based on timely submission and the quality of the work. Please note that late assignments will lose 10 grade percentage points for every day that they are late. Loss in points may also result from assignments that are not responsive to instructor's prior input.

## Textbook

*How to Write and Publish a Scientific Paper*, Eighth Edition. Robert A. Day and Barbara Gastel.

## Articles

Kotz D and Cals JWL. Writing Tips Series. Effective writing and publishing scientific papers. Parts I-XII. *J Clin Epidemiol* 64, 2014.

## Homework

There will be a total of nine homework assignments due throughout the course. Homework assignments must be turned in through the course website (Canvas) before the deadline. Students are responsible for checking the course website and syllabus for homework assignment due dates. Timely submission of assignments is required. Late assignments will lose 10 percentage points for every day that they are late and will be accepted for up to 5 days. Assignments will be graded based on timely submission and the quality of the work. In addition, assignments that do not take into account the instructor's prior recommendations to the revisions will also result in loss of points. Homework assignments will be graded based on completion, quality and effort and will be **due by 11:59pm on the due date** listed (one day before class).

## Class Attendance and Participation

Students are expected to attend all classes and participate in classroom discussions and activities. Regular absences or tardiness/leaving early will count negatively towards the attendance and participation grade. Attendance will be taken each lecture and one absence will be allowed throughout the course. After one absence, each additional absence will deduct 10% of the points from the attendance and participation grade. If a student expects to miss more than one class due to extreme circumstances such as illness, injury or personal emergency, consultation with the instructor is required and sufficient evidence of such circumstances must be provided to prevent deduction of points for attendance and participation.

Recommended reading is expected to be completed by the date it is listed and students should come to class prepared to discuss the assigned reading. Please silence all cell phones before class begins.

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### Class Syllabus for FPM 280C Scientific Writing Practicum (Spring 2021)

CLASS # DATE		HOMEWORK
1 Apr 2	<p><b>Class Outline</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Introductions</li> <li>• Course overview (Dr. Martinez)</li> <li>• Overview of scientific writing (Dr. Martinez)</li> </ul> <p><b>In-class presentations of research topics and analyses</b></p>	<p><b>DUE APRIL 8</b></p> <p><b>Readings:</b>  <i>How to Design Effective Tables</i> (Chapter 16)  <i>How to Prepare Effective Graphs</i> (Chapter 17)</p>
2 Apr 9	<p><b>Class Outline</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Putting together an outline (Dr. Wynn)</li> <li>• Formatting Tables and Figures (Dr. Wynn)</li> </ul>	<p><b>DUE APRIL 15</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Hypothesis, specific aims/objectives and paper outline</li> <li>• Draft of Tables and Figures</li> </ul> <p><b>Readings:</b>  <i>How to Write the Materials and Methods Section</i> (Chapter 11)</p>
3 Apr 16 (Dr. Martinez out)	<p><b>Class Outline</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How to Write a Methods Section (Dr. Wynn)</li> <li>• Writing style &amp; common mistakes (Dr. Wynn)</li> <li>• In class exercise: review of journal article (Dr. Wynn)</li> </ul>	<p><b>DUE APRIL 22</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Draft of Methods</li> </ul> <p><b>Readings:</b>  <i>How to Cite the References</i> (Chapter 15)  <i>How to Write the Results</i> (Chapter 12)</p>
4 Apr 23	<p><b>Class Outline</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Feedback on Tables and Figures</li> <li>• Putting together Results section (Dr. Martinez)</li> <li>• Conducting a literature review (Dr. Martinez)</li> <li>• How to select journals and formatting for specific journal (Dr. Martinez)</li> <li>• Impact factors and the process of submitting a manuscript</li> <li>• Class exercise: Review existing journal search engines</li> </ul>	<p><b>DUE APRIL 29</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• List of potential journals relevant to your research area</li> <li>• Draft of Results Section</li> <li>• Revised Tables and Figures</li> </ul> <p><b>Readings:</b>  <i>How to Write the Introduction</i> (Chapter 10)</p>

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Edanz Journal Selector <a href="http://www.edanzediting.com/journal_selector">http://www.edanzediting.com/journal_selector</a></li> <li>- Elsevier Journal Finder <a href="http://journalfinder.elsevier.com/">http://journalfinder.elsevier.com/</a></li> <li>- Journal Article Name Estimator (Jane) <a href="http://www.biosemantics.org/jane/">http://www.biosemantics.org/jane/</a></li> <li>- Cofactor Journal selector <a href="http://cofactorscience.com/journal-selector">http://cofactorscience.com/journal-selector</a></li> <li>- Journal Suggester (Springer) <a href="http://journalsuggester.springer.com/">http://journalsuggester.springer.com/</a></li> <li>- IEEE Publication Recommender = <a href="http://publication-recommender.ieee.org/home">http://publication-recommender.ieee.org/home</a></li> </ul>	
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>5</b> <b>Apr 30</b> (Dr. Wynn out)</p>	<p><b>Class Outline</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Feedback on Methods section</li> <li>• How to write Introduction section (Dr. Martinez)</li> <li>• Citing references (Dr. Martinez)</li> <li>• In class exercise: reducing text</li> </ul>	<p><b>DUE MAY 6</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Draft of Introduction</b></li> <li>• <b>Revised Methods section</b></li> </ul> <p><b>Reading:</b> <i>How to Write the Discussion</i> (Chapter 13)</p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>6</b> <b>May 7</b> (Dr. Martinez out)</p>	<p><b>Class Outline</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Feedback on Results section</li> <li>• How to write a Discussion Section (Dr. Wynn)</li> </ul> <p><u>Presentation: Responding to Reviewers' Critiques and Incorporating these in the Revision (Dr. Martinez)</u></p>	<p><b>DUE MAY 13</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Revised Results section</b></li> <li>• <b>Draft of Discussion section</b></li> </ul> <p><b>Reading:</b> <i>How to Prepare the Title</i> (Chapter 7) <i>How to Prepare the Abstract</i> (Chapter 9)</p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>7</b> <b>May 14</b></p>	<p><b>Class Outline</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Feedback on Introduction section</li> <li>• How to compose a title (Dr. Wynn)</li> <li>• How to write an Abstract (Dr. Wynn)</li> <li>• In-class exercise: write an abstract</li> </ul> <p><u>Presentation: The Journal Editor's Perspective (Dr. Martinez)</u></p>	<p><b>DUE MAY 20</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Revised Introduction</b></li> <li>• <b>Draft of abstract</b></li> <li>• <b>Manuscript title</b></li> <li>• <b>Find an interesting op-ed regarding a research paper (or scientific area) and compare the contents (i.e., interpretation) with the original research article.</b></li> </ul> <p><b>Reading:</b> <b>Bibliography and Cover Letter</b></p>

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8 <b>May 21</b>	<b>Class Outline</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Prior student feedback</li> <li>• Feedback on Discussions section</li> <li>• Bibliography</li> <li>• Composing a Cover Letter</li> <li>• Sign-up for 1:1 meetings with instructor during next class</li> </ul>	<b>DUE MAY 27</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Revised Discussion</b></li> <li>• <b>Revised Abstract</b></li> <li>• <b>Bibliography</b></li> </ul>
9 <b>May 28</b>	<b>Meet 1:1 with Instructors.</b> Discussion will focus on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Questions about finalizing the paper</li> <li>• Overall issues with paper constructions</li> <li>• Self-assessment of writing skills</li> </ul>	<b>DUE JUNE 3</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Assembled final paper</b></li> <li>• <b>Draft of cover letter</b></li> <li>• <b>Self-assessment of writing skills</b></li> <li>• <b>Action Plan for continuing to improve writing</b></li> </ul> <p><b>Students will be provided with assignments for critiquing each others' work.</b></p>
10 <b>June 4</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Last day of class</li> <li>• Students will critique each other's work.</li> </ul>	<b>DUE JUNE 9</b> <b>FINAL PAPER</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>All manuscript guidelines required components: Cover Letter, Title Page, Abstract, Body of Manuscript, References, etc.</b></li> <li>• <b>Self-assessment</b></li> </ul>
11 <b>June 7-11</b>	<b>FINALS WEEK. NO CLASS</b> Individual meetings with Instructors	

*\*Tentative schedule; may be modified at instructors' discretion; any changes made during the quarter will be announced in class*

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### Due dates for Manuscript Components

<b>Topic</b>	<b>Class presentation</b>	<b>HW assignment due</b>	<b>Feedback to student</b>	<b>Class discussion</b>
Hypothesis, Specific Aims, Objectives & Paper Outline. Draft of Tables & Figures	April 9	April 15	Before April 23	April 23
Methods (draft)	April 16	April 22	Before April 30	April 30
Results (draft) Also due: Review of journals, & revised Tables & Figures	April 23	April 29	Before May 7	May 7
Introduction (draft) Also due: Revised Methods	April 30	May 6	Before May 14	May 14
Discussion (draft) Also due: Revised Results	May 7	May 13	Before May 30	May 30
Abstract (draft), manuscript title, oped, Also due: Introduction (revised),	May 14	May 20	Before May 21	May 21
Bibliography & Cover Letter Also due: Revised Discussion & Abstract	May 21	May 27	Before May 28	May 28
Draft full paper, cover letter, & self-assessment		June 3		
Final paper		June 9		