



## WRITING: THE MYTH OF THE “BIG CHUNK OF TIME”

ENTM798B (1 credit)

Spring 2018

(Last Modified: February 1, 2018)

**Instructor:** Kelly A. Hamby

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**Office hours:** By appointment.

### Course sessions:

Thursday 9:30AM-11:30AM Seminar Plant Sciences Bldg., Room 4102,  
Gahan Conference Room

### SYNOPSIS

Weekly meetings will focus on short tips and tricks for science writing with the rest of the class based on activities. The course also functions as a writing accountability group so make sure to have writing projects (e.g., thesis/dissertation, grant, blog,

proposal). Some flexibility is built into the topics so please let me know if there is something specific you'd like to discuss (e.g., how to write a critical review for a journal, how to approach a big writing project).

## **COURSE OBJECTIVES**

This course is designed for students to:

1. Practice writing and editing habits, including time management,
2. Build skills in science writing, peer-editing, and critical review; and
3. Develop their own writing process.

## **RESOURCES**

No specific text is required for this course. Required readings will include book chapters and journal articles and will be provided. Optional textbooks that I will occasionally use are listed for your information.

### **Optional Textbook:**

Schimmel, J. Writing Science: How to write papers that get cited and proposals that get funded. 1- Ed.

ISBN-10: 0199760241

Strunk, W., and White, E.B. The Elements of Style. 4 Ed.

ISBN-10: 9780205309023

### **Graduate Writing Center:**

<https://www.gradschool.umd.edu/graduate-school-writing-center>

## **ASSIGNMENTS AND READINGS**

All assignments and readings should be completed **prior** to the class period for which they are listed. Readings and assignments will be posted on ELMS.

## **GRADING**

Assignments (outside of class activities)	200 pts
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Participation (in class activities, discussions of readings, etc. )	200 pts
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Total	400 pts
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*Course Grading Scale: A+ (100-97%), A (96-94%), A- (93-90%), B+ (89-87%), B (86-84%), B- (83-80%), C+ (79-77%), C (76-74%), C- (73-70%), D+ (69-67%), D (66-64%), D-(63-60%), F (<60%)*

## **COURSE SCHEDULE**

**1/25** - *Lecture Topic:* No class meeting

*Assignment 1:* Introductory survey and readings

*Reading 1:* The 1 Hour Workday; Writing Accountability Groups: 4 Writing Myths

**2/1** – *Lecture Topic:* Part 1 - Writing project, course expectations, etc.

Part 2 - Prioritizing discussion topics, discussion of Assignment 1 and Reading 1

*In-Class Activity:* Begin “Introduction to OCAR”

**2/8** – *Lecture Topic:* Story structure, recognizing structure

*In-Class Activity:* Finish “Introduction to OCAR”, exchange and discuss with peers

**2/15** - *Lecture Topic:* “The Opening” setting and hooking the audience

*In-Class Activity:* Analyze the openings of peer-reviewed articles

*Assignment 2:* Bring in an example article from your field

**2/22** - *Lecture Topic:* Guided group-edit of an opening

*In-Class Activity:* Peer-edit and discuss openings

*Assignment 3:* Bring in 3 copies of the first 1-2 paragraphs of the intro from your current writing project

**3/1** - *Lecture Topic:* Finishing the introduction, building to the “Challenge,” connecting the O to the C

*Reading 2:* CH 5 and 6 Josh Schimel's Writing Science

**3/8** - *Lecture Topic:* “The Challenge”

*In-Class Activity:* Glossing

*Assignment 4:* Bring in 3 copies of the full introduction from your current writing project

**3/15** - *Lecture Topic:* “The Action”

*Assignment 5:* Read and gloss the first draft of Galen’s paper

**3/22** - Spring Break

**3/19** - *Lecture Topic:* “The Resolution”

*In-Class Activity:* Discuss Galen’s drafts, what changed?

*Assignment 6:* Read and gloss 2- draft of Galen’s paper

**4/5** - *Lecture Topic:* Peer review

*In-Class Activity:* Go through peer review comments on Galen's paper

**4/12** - *Lecture Topic:* Readers' expectations

*In-Class Activity:* Discuss Galen's paper

*Reading 3:* Read the published version of Galen's paper

**4/19** - *Lecture Topic:* Crafting sentences and paragraphs with deliberation (style and flow)

*In-Class Activity:* Comment on a troublesome paragraph identifying whether it meets readers' expectations, also look for issues with flow

*Reading 4:* The Science of Science Writing

*Assignment 7:* Bring in 3 copies of a "troublesome paragraph"

**4/26** - *Lecture Topic:* Occluding clarity: common issues in science writing (passive voice and wordiness)

*Reading 5:* Part 1: So I wrote a draft, now what?, Part 2: Advice to students and faculty on science writing

*Assignment 8:* Submit a ½ to full page piece of writing you are having particular trouble with for peer-editing

**5/3** - *Lecture Topic:* Self-editing and when to get help from peers

*In-Class Activity:* Discuss troublesome paragraphs and peer-edits

*Assignment 9:* Turn in peer-edits (**due 5/1**)

**5/10**- *Lecture Topic:* Semester wrap-up, end-of-semester survey

*In-Class Activity:* Introduction to OCAR revisited