

University of Manitoba
Faculty of Agricultural and Food Sciences
AGRI 2030 Technical Communications
COURSE OUTLINE
Fall 2020

Instructor: Kathleen Wilson
Contact me by: E-mail: Kathleen.Wilson@umanitoba.ca

IMPORTANT: Please let me know if you have emailed me and not heard back within a 2-3-day time window.

Office hours: **By appointment**

Classes: **All Winter 2021 classes will be recorded and posted to UMLearn.**

Required text: All required readings will be provided to students on UMLearn. **There is no required textbook purchase for this course, so it is expected that you will be diligent in reading the assigned readings and assignments.**

Student learning responsibilities

You are expected to take responsibility for your own learning in this course. It is expected that you'll come to class prepared, ready to contribute to any and all learning activities. **You are responsible for the content of any missed lectures and assignments.**

Instructor Accessibility

I wholeheartedly welcome your questions, and it is my goal to be as accessible to you as possible. You are encouraged to stay online after class to ask quick questions. Appointments are **first-come, first-served**.

You are welcome to email questions to me. Do not leave your questions about assignments to the last minute.

Calendar description

Lectures and workshops to develop written and oral communication skills for preparing and presenting scientific and technical reports. Basic composition skills, communication graphics are included. Prerequisite: 24 credit hours of University.

Course objectives

- Good communications skills lead to career success. The course aims to:
- Introduce communications strategies for various audiences and situations
- Develop students' abilities to transmit technical information clearly and effectively
- Develop students' abilities to choose contextually-appropriate communications strategies
- Enhance students' abilities to research and write effectively
- Develop students' abilities to market themselves to potential employers
- Emphasize the importance of professionalism in all types of communicative situations

By the end of this course, students should be able to:

- Choose an appropriate communication strategy for a given context
- Avoid common grammatical and stylistic errors in writing, and follow some basic style guidelines
- Organize the professional writing task: e-mail, memos and letters
- Recognize and follow the format of an effective professional message
- Demonstrate solid reading comprehension skills via the writing of summaries
- Write persuasively on technical/scientific topics and connect with readers
- Define technical writing and its uses
- Analyze audience role in technical writing
- Gather and interpret relevant scientific information
- Avoid plagiarism by adhering to correct referencing principles
- Use visuals and appropriate formatting to enhance communication
- Write a professional report
- Deliver an effective public presentation

Assignments and Grading

Final grades will be a percentage based on the successful completion of assignments and test materials. Each student's final percentage will be converted into a letter grade in accordance with the following scale:

Letter Grade		Percentage out of 100	Final Grade Point
A+	Exceptional	96-100	4.5
A	Excellent	90-95	4.0
B+	Very Good	85-89	3.5
B	Good	75-84	3.0
C+	Satisfactory	70-74	2.5
C	Adequate	60-69	2.0
D	Marginal	50-59	1.0
F	Failure	Less than 50	0

IMPORTANT: Failure to hand in the major paper in this course will result in an automatic failure, regardless of grades achieved on other assignments. Failure to write the final exam will also result in an automatic failure (potential exemptions to the failure to attend and write the final exam may be granted **ONLY** in accordance with official U of M policy on deferred examinations).

ALL ASSIGNMENTS must be handed in on UMLEARN by 7pm the evening of the due date.

All assignments must:

- Be **typed**.
- Contain a **title page** with the following info: your full name, student number, the course number, the section number, assignment title, and date of submission OR a title page prepared according to APA 7th edition standards
- Include a **word count** at the end of the assignment (use Microsoft Word: word counts do not include the words in your reference list)

NOTE: After the first assignment, I will deduct marks for incomplete or incorrect title pages

Late assignments

Marks will be deducted from late assignments (10% per day, including weekend days, for a max. of four days) unless a written request for an extension has been approved by the instructor. Assignments will not be accepted beyond **four days** after the due date. Extension requests should be submitted in writing at least **48 hours before** the due date, and should state the reason for the desired extension. **Also, documentation of reasons for extensions will be required**

PLEASE NOTE: If an assignment is handed in late, there is no guarantee that feedback (i.e. graded assignments) will be returned in a timely manner. Students will require ongoing feedback to self-assess progress in the course and to incorporate feedback into subsequent assignments. It is strongly recommended that assignments are handed in on time.

Details on the mechanics requirement

The percentage of each assignment and test allotted to mechanics (grammar, spelling, punctuation) will be **20%**. Those who experience difficulties with grammar are encouraged to:

- Learn about common writing errors in a writer's guide of your choice;
- Seek help from the instructor outside of class; and/or
- Get help from the Academic Learning Centre:
<http://umanitoba.ca/student/academiclearning/>

- Get help from the English Language Centre, if English is not your first language: <http://umanitoba.ca/student/elc/> (see full-time and part-time programs)
- See the faculty-specific writing tutor (more info to follow)

Final examination

There is a final examination in this course, and students will be required to remain available for the entirety of the University of Manitoba's designated examination period. Students are responsible for understanding and following all faculty and university examination protocols.

Class conduct

All students are expected to speak and to listen respectfully in class at all times. Any feedback given to peers during writing exercises will be given in a constructive and respectful manner.

Plagiarism and academic dishonesty

All students are responsible for familiarizing themselves with the University of Manitoba's guidelines on academic integrity, as found in the university's General Calendar. According to the University of Manitoba's Undergraduate Calendar, "*To plagiarize is to take ideas or words of another person and pass them off as one's own.*" In order to help students avoid plagiarism, this course devotes class time to the issue of how and when to cite sources in written work.

As the Calendar states, "It will also be considered plagiarism and/or cheating if a student submits a term paper written in whole or in part by someone other than him/herself, or copies the answer or answers of another student in any test, examination or take-home assignment. Plagiarism or any other form of cheating in assignments... examinations or term tests is subject to serious academic penalty (i.e.: suspension or expulsion.) A student found guilty of contributing to cheating is also subject to serious academic penalty."

Another type of academic dishonesty is called "**duplicate submission.**" This occurs when a student submits in one class an assignment they have already received credit for in another class (or, in cases of extreme thoughtlessness, the same class). If a student takes an assignment from one class and makes only minor, superficial changes, then submits it for credit in another class, this is still duplicate submission.

Please note that group projects are subject to the rules of academic dishonesty and that group members must ensure that a group project adheres to the principles of academic integrity.

ASSIGNMENTS

There are two types of classes for this course:

1. Lecture Days- These will be lectures posted in UMLearn via WebEx. They will be recorded.
2. Lab Days- Activities, readings etc. Posted for students to do individually, in pairs, or as a group.

The class types are indicated on the master calendar that can be found at the end of the syllabus.

There are three types of assignments for this course:

1. **Formal Assignments/Tests- Submitted on UMLearn as assignments**
2. **Group Discussion Submissions- Submitted on UMLearn as discussion**
3. **Individual or Partner Participation Submissions- Submitted on UMLearn as assignments**

Assignment types and due dates are indicated on the master calendar that can be found at the end of the syllabus. All need to be submitted on the due date by 7:00pm

Assignment Schedule* subject to change				
Instructions and expectations will be provided in-class for all assignments.				
	Assignment	Details	Weight	Due date
1.	<i>Interview Presentation</i>	<i>1-3 minutes</i>	<i>3%</i>	February 4
2.	<i>Written Correspondence</i>	<i>400 words</i>	<i>7%</i>	February 11
3.	<i>Proposal</i>	<i>200 words</i>	<i>5%</i>	March 2
4.	<i>Annotated bibliography****</i>	<i>400 words</i>	<i>8%</i>	March 18
5.	<i>Midterm Cumulative Review Test</i>		<i>10%</i>	April 1
6.	<i>Investigative Report ****</i>	<i>1500-2000 words</i>	<i>20%</i>	March 25
7.	<i>Partner Presentation</i>		<i>8%</i>	April 13
8.	<i>Group Discussions X 4</i>		<i>7%</i>	Jan 21 Jan 28 Feb 25 March 18

Assignment Schedule* subject to change				
9.	<i>Individual/Partner Submissions</i> <i>X4</i>		<i>7%</i>	Feb 4 March 4 March 26 April 8
10.	<i>Exam</i>		<i>25%</i>	
11.	<i>TOTAL</i>		<i>100%</i>	

NOTE:

Most assignments will be assessed in four major categories: **CONTENT, ORGANIZATION, STYLE, AND MECHANICS.**

It is important that you know the difference and where to submit your work. Work improperly submitted will receive a grade of zero.

Academic Writing Tutor Requirement***

There are two writing assignments for this course that involve meeting with a writing tutor from the Academic Learning Centre in the Elizabeth Dafoe Library. **The Annotated Bibliography AND Investigative Report.** The writing tutors can help you with the organization and structure of your paper as well as the flow of your ideas. They can also provide you with information about citing and referencing your sources.

Instructions for booking an appointment with a course-based writing tutor (CBWT) will be provided in class lecture, but you may visit Room 146 or 147, Elizabeth Dafoe Library if you have questions about making appointments (COVID restrictions apply and in person meetings will not be happening). **Please note that you will receive 5% of your assignment grade for meeting with a tutor.** You will get this additional mark for submitting a confirmation slip to me that you have met with a tutor assigned to this course.

Other Important Information

Writing and Learning Support

The Academic Learning Centre (ALC) offers services that may be helpful to you throughout your academic program. Through the ALC, you can meet with a learning specialist to discuss concerns such as time management, learning strategies, and test-taking strategies. The ALC also offers peer supported study groups called Supplemental Instruction (SI) for certain courses that students have typically found difficult. In these study groups, students have opportunities to ask questions, compare notes, discuss content, solve practice problems, and develop new study strategies in a group-learning format.

You can also meet one-to-one with a writing tutor who can give you feedback at any stage of the writing process, whether you are just beginning to work on a written assignment or already have a draft. If you are interested in meeting with a writing tutor, reserve your appointment two to three days in advance of the time you would like to meet. Also, plan to meet with a writing tutor a few days before your paper is due so that you have time to work with the tutor's feedback.

These Academic Learning Centre services are free for U of M students. For more information, please visit the Academic Learning Centre website at: <http://umanitoba.ca/student/academiclearning/> You can also contact the Academic Learning Centre by calling 204-480-1481 or by visiting 201 Tier Building.

University of Manitoba Libraries (UML)

As the primary contact for all research needs, your liaison librarian can play a vital role when completing academic papers and assignments. Liaisons can answer questions about managing citations, or locating appropriate resources, and will address any other concerns you may have, regarding the research process. Liaisons can be contacted by email or phone, and are also available to meet with you in-person. A complete list of liaison librarians can be found by subject: <http://bit.ly/WcEbA1> or name: <http://bit.ly/1tJ0bB4>

In addition, general library assistance is provided in person at 19 University Libraries, located on both the Fort Garry and Bannatyne campuses, as well as in many Winnipeg hospitals. For a listing of all libraries, please consult the following: <http://bit.ly/1sXe6RA>. When working remotely, students can also receive help online, via the Ask-a-Librarian chat found on the Libraries' homepage: www.umanitoba.ca/libraries.

Mental Health Support

For 24/7 mental health support, contact the Mobile Crisis Service at 204-940-1781.

Student Counselling Centre

Contact SCC if you are concerned about any aspect of your mental health, including anxiety, stress, or depression, or for help with relationships or other life concerns. SCC offers crisis services as well as individual, couple, and group counselling. *Student Counselling Centre:* <http://umanitoba.ca/student/counselling/index.html>

474 University Centre or S207 Medical Services
(204) 474-8592

Student Support Case Management

Contact the Student Support Case Management team if you are concerned about yourself or another student and don't know where to turn. SSCM helps connect students with on and off campus resources, provides safety planning, and offers other supports, including consultation, educational workshops, and referral to the STATIS threat assessment team.

Student Support Intake Assistant <http://umanitoba.ca/student/case-manager/index.html>

520 University Centre
(204) 474-7423

University Health Service

Contact UHS for any medical concerns, including mental health problems. UHS offers a full range of medical services to students, including psychiatric consultation.

University Health Service <http://umanitoba.ca/student/health/>

104 University Centre, Fort Garry Campus
(204) 474-8411 (Business hours or after hours/urgent calls)

Health and Wellness

Contact our Health and Wellness Educator if you are interested in information on a broad range of health topics, including physical and mental health concerns, alcohol and substance use harms, and sexual assault.

Health and Wellness Educator <http://umanitoba.ca/student/health-wellness/welcome.html>

Katie.Kutryk@umanitoba.ca

469 University Centre
(204) 295-9032

Live Well @ UofM

For comprehensive information about the full range of health and wellness resources available on campus, visit the Live Well @ UofM site:

<http://umanitoba.ca/student/livewell/index.html>

Copyright

All students are required to respect copyright as per Canada's *Copyright Act*. Staff and students play a key role in the University's copyright compliance as we balance user rights for educational purposes with the rights of content creators from around the world. The Copyright Office provides copyright resources and support for all members of the University of Manitoba community.

Visit <http://umanitoba.ca/copyright> for more information.

U of M Student Rights and Responsibilities

As a student of the University of Manitoba you have rights and responsibilities. It is important for you to know what you can expect from the University as a student and to understand what the University expects from you. Become familiar with the policies and procedures of the University and the regulations that are specific to your faculty, college or school.

The [Academic Calendar](http://umanitoba.ca/student/records/academiccalendar.html) <http://umanitoba.ca/student/records/academiccalendar.html> is one important source of information. View the sections *University Policies and Procedures* and *General Academic Regulations*.

While all of the information contained in these two sections is important, the following information is highlighted.

- If you have questions about your grades, talk to your instructor. There is a process for term work and final **grade appeals**. Note that you have the right to access your final examination scripts. See the Registrar's Office website for more information including appeal deadline dates and the appeal form <http://umanitoba.ca/registrar/>
- You are expected to view the General Academic Regulation section within the Academic Calendar and specifically read the **Academic Integrity** regulation. Consult the course syllabus or ask your instructor for additional information about demonstrating academic integrity in your academic work. Visit the Academic Integrity Site for tools and support <http://umanitoba.ca/academicintegrity/> View the **Student Academic Misconduct** procedure for more information.
- The University is committed to a respectful work and learning environment. You have the right to be treated with respect and you are expected conduct yourself in an appropriate respectful manner. Policies governing behavior include the:

Respectful Work and Learning Environment

http://umanitoba.ca/admin/governance/governing_documents/community/230.html

Student Discipline

http://umanitoba.ca/admin/governance/governing_documents/students/student_discipline.html and,

Violent or Threatening Behaviour

http://umanitoba.ca/admin/governance/governing_documents/community/669.html

- If you experience **Sexual Assault** or know a member of the University community who has, it is important to know there is a policy that provides information about the supports available to those who disclose and outlines a process for reporting. The **Sexual Assault** policy may be found at:
http://umanitoba.ca/admin/governance/governing_documents/community/230.html More information and resources can be found by reviewing the Sexual Assault site
<http://umanitoba.ca/student/sexual-assault/>
- For information about rights and responsibilities regarding **Intellectual Property** view the policy
[http://umanitoba.ca/admin/governance/media/Intellectual_Property_Policy - 2013_10_01.pdf](http://umanitoba.ca/admin/governance/media/Intellectual_Property_Policy_-_2013_10_01.pdf)

For information on regulations that are specific to your academic program, read the section in the Academic Calendar and on the respective faculty/college/school web site
<http://umanitoba.ca/faculties/>

Contact an **Academic Advisor** within our faculty/college or school for questions about your academic program and regulations <http://umanitoba.ca/academic-advisors/>

Student Advocacy

Contact Student Advocacy if you want to know more about your rights and responsibilities as a student, have questions about policies and procedures, and/or want support in dealing with academic or discipline concerns.

<http://umanitoba.ca/student/advocacy/>

520 University Centre

204 474 7423

student_advocacy@umanitoba.ca