

BIOSC 1095: Honors Research Writing Practicum

Spring 2022

This class will be held in person when conditions permit. All classes will also be Zoomed and recorded. Zoom sessions can be accessed via the Canvas class website; recordings in the Panopto folder.

Instructor:

Lesley Ashmore
LJA7@pitt.edu

Office hours: to be determined
Zoom office:

Course Goals

- To prepare an Honors Thesis supported by student-generated lab data. *Note: in 2022 we are allowing more creativity in the format of the Honors Thesis document.*
- To present your Thesis orally in a 12-minute PowerPoint presentation.

Course Objectives

- Use your composition skills to learn how to think and express yourself as a scientist.
- Use your accumulated biology knowledge to synthesize a professionally written thesis.
- To obtain frequent feedback from your mentor and others in the class to effectively identify areas where your writing or organization is unclear.
- Constructively assess the effectiveness of other peoples' written and oral communication.

Required Materials/Resources

Reference manager software (e.g. EndNote or whatever program your lab uses)

EndNote can be purchased for \$5 at:

Software Distribution Services (SDS), 204 Bellefield Hall, or University Store on Fifth

LibGuide for using EndNote: <http://pitt.libguides.com/endnote>

Poster printing services are available in the microscope facility; contact Tom Harper for details.

Guide to preparing abstracts: <http://www.biology.pitt.edu/abstract>

Guide to preparing posters: <http://www.biology.pitt.edu/poster>

University Writing Center: <http://writingcenter.tamu.edu/>

Attendance

Lectures are interactive, so student attendance is recorded and participation is expected. Although class will not meet every week, please plan to stay for the full duration of class.

Please come to class even if you have not completed the week's assignment. Classes have a lot of peer review components.

Assignments

Assignments are due at the start of the class on the specified class day, unless otherwise noted on the assignment schedule and Canvas. Assignments may be submitted on Canvas, and revised first and final drafts will be submitted to the Honors Committee via Box as well.

Final Grade

Successful completion of a Writing Intensive course in your major is required by the University of Pittsburgh for graduation. There are two components to “passing” this course:

The first is the academic component (BIOSC 1905), which I grade. The writing portion of the class does move very quickly, so please review the syllabus for a timeline of due dates to manage your time effectively. **Students are expected to work closely with mentors on drafts.**

Note that one of the required elements of the course is **participation in the spring Undergraduate Research Symposium**. See “resources” section on previous page for links for preparing for the symposium. If you have already presented a poster locally or at a meeting, you can ask to be excused from presenting. (*Note: this requirement may be waived in 2022 due to COVID restrictions.*)

The second is approval of your thesis by the Biological Sciences Honors Committee. Their final approval will result in you receiving (or not) Honors from our department, which will appear on your diploma upon graduation.

The final letter grade will be determined based on a percentage out of 200 points, using a standard grading scale (i.e., 90% or above is an A- or better, 80% or above is a B- or better, etc.):

assignments	35
practice talk	20
attendance	25
<u>paper drafts</u>	<u>120</u>
total	200

Emergency Situations

Assignments missed due to emergency situations (illness, serious injury, or death in your immediate family) will be considered on an individual basis. Requests for an extension must be submitted in writing (email sufficient). Additionally: 1.) Your request for an extension must include your name, a detailed description of the nature of the emergency, and the assignment that you missed. 2.) Your request must be emailed to me no later than 3 days after the assignment’s due date. 3.) If the emergency is due to a medical condition, you must include evidence that you have sought medical care. Failure to comply with these guidelines could result in a zero for the assignment.

Plagiarism

Plagiarism consists of claiming the words, ideas, or organization of another author as your own. All materials written for your Thesis must be your own; please do not recycle portions of publications from your lab *not written by yourself*. All ideas must be properly attributed and cited. Plagiarism is a violation of academic integrity and will be severely punished.

Students in this course are expected to comply with the University of Pittsburgh’s “Academic Integrity Policy Guidelines: Student Obligations”. Cheating/plagiarism will not be tolerated. Students suspected

of violating the University of Pittsburgh Policy on Academic Integrity, from the February 1974 Senate Committee on Tenure and Academic Freedom reported to the Senate Council, will be required to participate in the outlined procedural process as initiated by the instructor. A minimum sanction of a zero score for the assignment will be imposed. View the complete policy at <http://www.cfo.pitt.edu/policies/policy/02/02-03-02.html>.

Students agree that by taking this course, all papers may be subject to submission for textual similarity review to Turnitin.com for the detection of plagiarism. All submitted papers will be included as source documents in the Turnitin.com reference database solely for the purpose of detecting plagiarism of such papers. Use of Turnitin.com page service is subject to the Usage Policy and Privacy Pledge posted on the Turnitin.com site.

Email Policy

Each student is issued a University e-mail address (username@pitt.edu) upon admittance. This e-mail address may be used by the University for official communication with students. Students are expected to read e-mail sent to this account on a regular basis. Failure to read and react to University communications in a timely manner does not absolve the student from knowing and complying with the content of the communications. The University provides an e-mail forwarding service that allows students to read their e-mail via other service providers (e.g., Hotmail, AOL, Yahoo). Students that choose to forward their e-mail from their pitt.edu address to another address do so at their own risk. If e-mail is lost as a result of forwarding, it does not absolve the student from responding to official communications sent to their University e-mail address, including those associated with this course. To forward e-mail sent to your University account, go to <http://accounts.pitt.edu>, log into your account, click on Edit Forwarding Addresses, and follow the instructions on the page. Be sure to log out of your account when you have finished. (For the full Email Communication Policy, go to www.bc.pitt.edu/policies/policy/09/09-10-01.html.)

I check my course-related email once a day. Please allow at least one working day for a response.

Students with Disabilities

If you have a disability for which you are or may be requesting an accommodation, you are encouraged to contact both your instructor and Office of Disability Resources and Services, 140 William Pitt Union; 412-648-7890/ 412-624-3346(Fax), as early as possible in the term. Disability Resources and Services will verify your disability and determine reasonable accommodations for this course. For more information, visit www.studentaffairs.pitt.edu/drsabout.

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Schedule (topics still being revised)

Date	Class Topic	Assignment(s) due on this date
1/10	Structure of a research report, writing the abstract and introduction, organizing references using Endnote	none
1/17	<i>no class today</i>	
1/24	Peer reviews of abstract and introduction sections; writing up results and discussion	Class: Abstract and introduction Bring one double-spaced printed copy Canvas: Submit one review article to help me understand your topic.
1/31	<i>no class today</i>	
2/7	Peer review of results and discussion sections; tips for writing figure legends, materials and methods	Class: results and discussion Bring one double-spaced printed copy Canvas: Revised Abstract and Introduction
2/14	Peer review of materials and methods, figure legends	Class: materials and methods, figure legends Bring one double-spaced printed copy Canvas: Revised Results and Discussion
2/21	<i>no class today</i>	
2/28	Revising manuscript for organization, clarity, and conciseness.	
3/4 (F)		First draft submitted to Canvas and mentors for review and comments
3/7	<i>no class today</i>	
3/11 (F)		Canvas: Mentor comments on first draft due
3/14	Constructing an oral presentation	(revising papers)
3/21	Peer review of oral presentation slideshow	Class: oral presentation powerpoint slides due Bring laptop to class.
3/25 (F)		Canvas and Box folder: Revised first draft due to Honors Committee.
3/28	Practice oral presentations	Canvas : Revised draft of oral presentations Come to class prepared to give your talk.
4/4	Practice oral presentations	Canvas : Revised draft of oral presentations Come to class prepared to give your talk
4/8 (F)		(Honors Committee comments due)
?	Oral presentations	
4/11	<i>no class today</i>	
?	Oral presentations	
4/18	<i>no class today</i>	Canvas and Box folder: Final revised draft due by midnight