




SENIOR PROJECT  
FALL 2024  
Department of Biology @ CSU Dominguez Hills

Class time and location: TuTh 10a – 11:15a (SBS B137)  
Instructor: Dr. Sonal Singhal  
Office hours: Tu 9a – 10a; Th 11:30a – 12:30p (SCI 210)  
Office:   
Phone:   
E-mail: 

### Course Description

This course will use cover all the final information you should learn before graduating with your biology degree. Topics include: how do you find information & evaluate if it is trustworthy? How do you turn your biology degree into a career? What is your responsibility (if any) as a biologist in modern society? Throughout these explorations, we will focus on improving our writing and on giving others feedback on their writing.

From the course catalog: Application and assessment of previously learned material in courses required in biology and general education. Activities such as the design and conduct of an experiment requiring statistical analysis, resume writing, oral presentations on career choices, and critiques of classmates presentations. 2.5 hours of lecture per week.

*Prerequisites:* Senior Biology student status with proof of filing for graduation, or by permission of the instructor.

### Student Learning Objectives

After finishing this class, you should be able to:

- Find, read, understand, critically evaluate, summarize, and use scientific information in different genres of biological writing
- Analyze and interpret quantitative biological data to be used in biological discourse
- Communicate a knowledge base in biology to members of the community through writing
- Identify and communicate about ethical issues in science
- Communicate an argument for the relevance of scientific research to society through persuasive writing
- Communicate career goals and qualifications
- Determine where and how to find information for graduate or professional schools or advanced careers
- Write in standard formats used to build careers in biology (e.g., resume or CV, personal statement, and cover letter)

### Materials

*Required Material:* None, but please have access to a computer or tablet. The school has some you can borrow for free! <https://techloaner.csudh.edu/>

### Classroom Polices

Come to class ready to learn. We will decide as a class what that means.

### Grading

Your class grade will be decided by three types of assignments.

- Writing assignments: There will be four writing assignments, each of which will have slightly different specifications. Each of which will have a clear rubric. I will evaluate your writing assignment on a scale of 0 – 4. The four writing assignments are as follows:



- Writing feedback: There will be four assignments in which you will evaluate your own writing & your classmates' writing. I will evaluate the quality of your feedback on a scale of 0 – 4.
- Participation Score: You will be evaluating yourself on your participation by tracking your attendance and participation throughout the semester. Ultimately, you will assign yourself a grade at the end of the semester. I reserve the right to change your grade.
- Extra credit: There will be no extra credit given in this class.

Writing is hard, and it takes time. Because of this, you will be given the opportunity to re-submit your writing assignments to improve your grade. You can re-submit each writing assignment up to three times. All revisions on writing assignments need to be resubmitted by December 12th.

Final grades will be determined as listed below.

Final Grade	Required Score on Writing Assignments	Required Score on Feedback Assignments	Required Participation Score
for an A	4 on all 4 assignments	3 or higher on all four	4
for a A-	4 on 3 assignments, 3+ on rest		3
for a B+	4 on 2 assignments, 3+ on rest		
for a B	3+ on all 4 assignments	2 or higher on all four	2
for a B-	3+ on 3 assignments, 2+ on rest		
for a C+	3+ on 2 assignments, 2+ on rest		
for a C	2+ on all 4 assignments	1 or higher on all four	1
for a C-	2+ on 3 assignments, 1 on rest		
for a D	1+ on all 4 assignments	no work turned in	n/a
for a F	no work turned in		

### Recommendations for Success

How can you be successful in this class?

- **Follow the suggested schedule.** I built a lot of flexibility into this class, but if you let work build up, it will become too much and become hard to manage.
- **Listen to your peers' suggestions.** I have learned that your fellow Biology Toros give much better suggestions & advice on your writing than I ever could. Listen to your friends!
- **Come visit me in my office, SCI 210.** Chatting one-on-one can be easier than chatting in class, and sometimes, focused attention can help resolve sticky points in a writing assignment.
- **Go to the Writing Center.** The Writing Center on campus (<https://www.csudh.edu/writing-center/>) offers one-on-one consulting meetings to help you develop your writing.
- **Contact me when life gets complicated.** You don't need to tell me what is going on, but you do need to tell me that you need extra support or time to finish up the class.
- **Take advantage of revisions.** Like most things in life, writing takes time and effort. I designed this class to give you multiple times to express your ideas and then to revise your initial drafts.
- **Have fun!** There are no exams & I offer revisions in this class on purpose. Stress makes it harder to learn. I am trying to create a less stressful environment for you to learn.

### Tentative Schedule

Date	Module	Topic	Due
Tue., Aug. 27	1 Introduction	Plan A	
Thu., Aug. 29	1 Career	Resume or CV	
Tue., Sep. 3	2 Career	Personal Statement	
Thu., Sep. 5	2 Career	Cover Letter	
Tue., Sep. 10	3 Career	Job Search	
Thu., Sep. 12	3 Career	Plan 0 and Plan B	
Tue., Sep. 17	4 Career	Hodgepodge	
Thu., Sep. 19	4 Career	Peer & Self-Feedback Day	Assignment 1 Draft
Tue., Sep. 24	5 Writing for Biologists	Peer & Self-Feedback Day	Assignment 2 Draft
Thu., Sep. 26	5 Writing for Biologists	Using AI to Write 1	Assignment 1
Tue., Oct. 1	6 Writing for Biologists	Using AI to Write 2	
Thu., Oct. 3	6 Writing for Biologists	Technical Writing	
Tue., Oct. 8	7 Writing for Biologists	Adding Citations	
Thu., Oct. 10	7 Writing for Biologists	Figures	
Tue., Oct. 15	8 Writing for non-Biologists	Brainstorming Day (My Unique Voice)	
Thu., Oct. 17	8 Writing for non-Biologists	Evaluating Sources 1	Assignment 2
Tue., Oct. 22	9 Writing for non-Biologists	Science Communication 1	
Thu., Oct. 24	9 Writing for non-Biologists	NO CLASS	
Tue., Oct. 29	10 Writing for non-Biologists	Science Communication 2	
Thu., Oct. 31	10 Writing for non-Biologists	Rubric Day	
Tue., Nov. 5	11 Writing for non-Biologists	Peer & Self-Feedback Day	Assignment 3 Draft
Thu., Nov. 7	11 Science & Society	Biology & Society / Brainstorming Day	
Tue., Nov. 12	12 Science & Society		Assignment 3
Thu., Nov. 14	12 Science & Society	How to write persuasively	
Tue., Nov. 19	13 Science & Society		
Thu., Nov. 21	13 Science & Society		
Tue., Nov. 26	14 Science & Society		
Thu., Nov. 28	Thanksgiving – NO CLASS		
Tue., Dec. 3	15 Science & Society	Peer & Self-Feedback Day	Assignment 4 Draft
Thu., Dec. 5	15 Close-Out	Show & Tell	Assignment 4 & Exit Survey

Thu., Dec. 12

Revisions &amp; Participation Assessment due at 11:59p

### University Policy

*Academic Integrity:* This course will be conducted in accordance with the University Policy on Academic Integrity (p.14 University Catalog). Any student caught cheating or plagiarizing will receive an F (0 points) on the assignment and will be penalized according to University regulations. Cheating or plagiarism is subject to discipline as provided in Title 5, California Code of Regulations. Plagiarism is a very serious offense. See the University Catalog under Academic Integrity for further information.

*Exams:* no cellphone use of any kind is allowed during exams. Cellphones will be turned off and secured in your bookbag, which will be placed on the floor for the duration of the exam.

*Plagiarism:* it is imperative that you cite all your sources on assignments. Academic misconduct of any kind, including cheating on exams and plagiarism, will result in a grade of F for the course, and possibly other sanctions. Once you have completed this course, do not share assignments etc. with students in subsequent semesters. If anyone turns in your assignment in a future semester, you will be held accountable and face sanctions.

*Disruptive Students:* Behavior that persistently or grossly interferes with classroom activities is considered disruptive behavior and may be subject to disciplinary action. Such behavior inhibits other students' ability to learn and an instructor's ability to teach. The instructor may require a student responsible for disruptive behavior to leave class pending discussion and resolution of the problem and may report a disruptive student to the Student Affairs Office (WH A-410, 310-243-3784) for disciplinary action.

*CSUDH adheres to the Americans with Disabilities Act* with respect to providing reasonable accommodations for students with temporary and permanent disabilities. To receive accommodations, students with disabilities must register with Students disAbility Resource Center. For more information, please contact their office in Welch Hall D-180 at (310) 243-3660 (voice) or (310) 243-2028 (TDD).

*Computer/Information Literacy Expectations for Students enrolled in this class:* Students in this class are expected to:

- Use assigned Toromail account or other university approved email.
- Have ability to navigate and use Blackboard.
- Have basic information and computer literacy in one of the computer formats (Windows, Macintosh, or GNU/Linux).
- Upload files in all of the computer formats (.doc, .docx, .jpeg, .ppt, .pdg, .xps).
- Access and choose appropriate library and other scholarly sources of information.
- Search for and find relevant scholarly information effectively.
- Be able to paraphrase concepts without plagiarizing.
- Maintain the minimum computer Hardware requirements\*
- Maintain the minimum computer Software requirements\*

\*Please visit <http://www.csudh.edu/academic-technology/instructional-technologyresources/online-courses-tech/> for the most up-to-date Hardware & Software computer requirements