

AGCOM 810 – Scientific Communication  
Distance section via K-State Online  
Fall 2013

---

**INSTRUCTOR**

Jason D. Ellis, Ph.D., Associate Professor  
jdellis@ksu.edu  
305 Umberger Hall  
785-532-3438

---

**REQUIRED TEXTBOOK**

Day, Robert A., & Gastel, Barbara (2011). How to Write and Publish a Scientific Paper. 7<sup>th</sup> ed. Westport, Conn.: Greenwood Press

**Recommended:** Style guide for your discipline and a guide for grammar, if necessary.

---

**PURPOSE AND OUTCOMES**

The purpose of this course is to improve written, visual, and oral communications for soon-to-be scientists. We do this through studying communications through scientific papers, graphics, technical presentations, grant applications, etc. Your work will be critiqued because we learn to improve our communications by continuing to communicate. Specific learning outcomes include the following:

- a. Compose and describe different sections of journal article and other scientific communication.
- b. Discuss faculty work.
- c. Exhibit improved grammatical and usage skills.
- d. Create graphic forms to illustrate data.
- e. Examine the obligation of scientists to communicate to the public and media.

---

**STATEMENTS OF UNIVERSITY POLICY****Statement on Academic Honesty**

Kansas State University has an Honor System based on personal integrity, which is presumed to be sufficient assurance that, in academic matters, one's work is performed honestly and without unauthorized assistance. Undergraduate and graduate students, by registration, acknowledge the jurisdiction of the Honor System. The policies and procedures of the Honor System apply to all full and part-time students enrolled in undergraduate and graduate courses on-campus, off-campus, and via distance learning. The honor system website can be reached via the following URL: [www.ksu.edu/honor](http://www.ksu.edu/honor). A component vital to the Honor System is the inclusion of the Honor Pledge, which applies to all assignments, examinations, or other course work undertaken by students. The Honor Pledge is implied, whether or not it is stated: "On my honor, as a student, I have neither given nor received unauthorized aid on this academic work." A grade of XF can result from a breach of academic honesty. The F indicates failure in the course; the X indicates the reason is an Honor Pledge violation.

### **Statement for Academic Accommodations for Students with Disabilities**

Any student with a disability who needs a classroom accommodation, access to technology or other academic assistance in this course should contact Disability Support Services (dss@k-state.edu) and/or the instructor. DSS serves students with a wide range of disabilities including, but not limited to, physical disabilities, sensory impairments, learning disabilities, attention deficit disorder, depression, and anxiety.

### **Statement Defining Expectations for Classroom Conduct**

All student activities in the University, including this course, are governed by the Student Judicial Conduct Code as outlined in the Student Governing Association By Laws, Article VI, Section 3, number 2. Students who engage in behavior that disrupts the learning environment may be asked to leave the class.

## **COURSE FORMAT**

---

### **Course Content**

Rather than a traditional course where content, assignments, interaction, etc., all take place on a given day and time of the week, this online course is structured on a weekly format. Each Monday by 5 p.m. Central a new set of course content will be posted to K-State Online. At the same time, that week's content-oriented Question of the Week also will be posted. Students will have until 5 p.m. that Friday to answer the Question of the Week and then should read other posts and provide comments and feedback.

### **Assignments**

Assignments will be explained through the week's lecture and on an assignment sheet posted to K-State Online. Assignments will be submitted through K-State Online and are due by 5 p.m. on the Monday of the week listed on page 3 in the Tentative Schedule. For example, the Article Response is due Monday, September 9, at 5 p.m. Central.

## TENTATIVE SCHEDULE

Week of:	Class Topic	Assmt. Due – Reading Assmt.
Aug. 26	Class Orientation, expectations, course needs	Article: Transformation of Scientific Communication
Sept. 2	HOLIDAY	
Sept. 9	Importance of SC, SC as a field, transformation of SC	<b>Article Response</b> Preface, Ch. 1-5
Sept. 16	Writing style, common errors	Ch. 30-34
Sept. 23	Scientific papers	Ch. 7-14
Sept. 30	Graphics, citations, ethics and plagiarism	C. 15-18
Oct. 7	Submissions/Editors/Review process	<b>Draft of Journal Article</b> Ch. 6, 19-22, 40
Oct. 14	Grants – sources	<b>Peer Review</b> Ch. 37, KSU FDA/USRG info
Oct. 21	Grants – writing process	
Oct. 28	CV, Presentations and graphics	<b>Journal Article</b> Ch. 27, 36
Nov. 4	Posters	<b>Vitae</b> Ch. 28
Nov. 11	Non-technical audiences	<b>Technical Presentation</b> Ch. 26
Nov. 18	Working with the media	<b>Poster</b> Ch. 39
Nov. 25	HOLIDAY	
Dec. 2	Writing opinion, editorials	<b>Lay Presentation</b> Ch. 24
Dec. 9	NO CLASS	<b>Grant Proposals</b>

<b>Assignments</b>	<u>Percent of Grade</u>
Article Response	5
Peer Review	10
Journal Article	15
Vitae	5
Technical presentation	15
Poster	15
Lay presentation	10
Grant	15
Participation	10

## **DESCRIPTION OF ASSIGNMENTS (more information provided later)**

---

**Article Response** – You will write a one- to two-page discussion and response to the article “The Transformation of Scientific Communication: A Model for 2020” posted to K-State Online. This is a credit/no credit exercise to give me a better perspective of your writing skills. **Due Sept. 9.**

**Journal Article** – You will write a journal article following the IMRAD formula and to the style of a journal in your field. Please submit the author guidelines along with your journal article. A draft will be used for peer review feedback and is **due Oct. 7.** The final draft is due **Oct. 28.**

**Peer Review** – Each student will conduct a peer review of another student’s draft journal article. The instructor will assign papers for review and will provide a review guide/form to use. Due back to the instructor **Oct. 14.**

**Vitae** – You will write a curriculum vita for yourself. **Due Nov. 4.**

**Technical Presentation** – You will develop a technical presentation using professional equipment. If you do not have research data to present, you may present a review of literature with recommendations on research. Consult with the instructor before selecting the literature review option. **Due Nov. 11.**

**Poster** – You will produce a poster and submit a PDF for grading. Content for the poster will come from the journal article submitted Oct. 28. **Due Nov. 18.**

**Lay Presentation** – You will select a journal article from your field of study and develop a non-technical presentation for a lay audience. **Due Dec. 2.**

**Grant Proposal** – You will produce an interdisciplinary grant proposal, which will include appropriate paper work and narrative. **Due Dec. 9.**

**Participation** – Each Monday a content-oriented Question of the Day will be posted to K-State Online. Students will have until that Friday to post an answer to this question on the KSOL site. You also are encouraged to provide comments on posts from other students.