**Course Overview**
This 7-week course is designed to introduce students to basic scientific writing skills and is ideal for second year graduate students preparing for qualifying examinations. Participants will review the general principles of clear, persuasive writing, and will apply these principles to writing for a scientific audience. Particular emphasis will be placed on conveying the significance of your research, outlining the aims, and discussing the results for scientific papers and grant proposals. The course will also provide an overview of the structure and style of research grant proposals and scientific manuscripts. Classes are highly interactive, and the majority of class time will be spent discussing student scientific writing. The goal of the course is to encourage active and open interaction among students. Ideal endpoints include improved self-editing, and development of effective strategies for offering and receiving concise editorial recommendations among peers. *Note that substantive discussions about scientific methodology or interpretation of results are outside the scope of this course. All homework assignments are limited to 1 page only!*

**Course Directors:**
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**Required or Recommended Reading Materials:**
1. The Course Syllabus, including Five Principles of Clear Writing
   The syllabus will be distributed at the first session, as will other short reading materials.
3. J.M. Williams, Style: The Basics of Clarity and Grace. Recommended. For a more in depth book, try J.M. Williams, Style: Lessons in Clarity and Grace. These books can be obtained from Amazon.

**Class Organization:**
The whole class will meet on **Monday January 12 at 1 pm in BRB 253** for a discussion about the class organization and an introduction to principles of clear writing. The small groups will start meeting the same week on Wednesday, Thursday, or Friday from 1 – 2:30 pm. Each group will be lead by at least two instructors

**Specific Writing Assignments:**
Writing assignments will be designated within each section. Students should email writing assignments to their instructors and students in the section in advance of class (due dates tabulated below), allowing instructors and students to read them in advance of the in-class critique. Students whose samples are not discussed in a particular week will be read and critiqued by instructors only. Students can also arrange to meet with instructors individually to discuss their writing.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section meeting day</th>
<th>Assignment Due date</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Wednesday</td>
<td>Sunday, 3 PM</td>
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<tr>
<td>Thursday</td>
<td>Monday, 3 PM</td>
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<tr>
<td>Friday</td>
<td>Tuesday, 3 PM</td>
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**Grading Policy:** Grades are based on attendance, completion of assignments, and participation in class, not on the quality of the writing itself. While most students receive an A in this course, grade decrements will certainly result from 1) failure to meet due dates and times, 2) lateness to class by more than 20 min. or 3) missed class, without prior approval of instructors.
2015 Course Overview

Week 1: Introduction
- **Large group meeting – January 12, 1 – 2:30 pm, BRB 253**
  - Discuss Course goals
  - Weekly topics
  - Logistics (required reading, assignment deadlines, grading policy)
  - Introduce key terms that students will encounter in first assignment
- **Homework assignment for this week**
  - Read “Five Principles of Clear Scientific Writing” in Syllabus
  - Read “The Science of Scientific Writing” by Gopen and Swan
  - Perform rewriting exercises from syllabus (suggested revisions are included in the faculty syllabus and are on pages 33-34 of the student syllabus)
  - Revise “problematic” abstract AND specific aims page from syllabus using “Five Principles of Clear Scientific Writing”

Week 1: Principles of Clear Scientific Writing
- **Small group session – January 14-16, 1 – 2:30 pm**
  - Address any questions arising from rewriting exercises
  - Discuss revisions of “problematic” abstract and specific aims page
- **Homework assignment for next week**
  - Read “Parts of a Grant Proposal and Significance and Innovation”, with examples
  - Write a one page narrative on the **Significance** of your proposal and a **Title** placing your research in context

Week 2: Parts of a Grant Proposal – Significance
- **Small group session – January 21-23, 1 – 2:30 pm**
  - Discuss “Significance” write-ups
- **Homework assignment for next week**
  - Read “Parts of a Grant Proposal – “Preliminary Data (for grants) Results” in syllabus
  - Write 1-2 paragraphs of Results text with an accompanying Figure and Legend. You can use your data, a colleague’s data, or made-up data. Again, use a title.

Week 3: Parts of a Grant Proposal – Preliminary Data
- **Small group session – January 28-30, 1- 2:30 pm**
  - Discuss Results text, Figures and Legend
  - Discuss questions regarding “Parts of a Grant Proposal - Preliminary Data”
- **Homework assignment for next week**
  - Read “Parts of a Grant Proposal – Specific Aims and Research Design” in syllabus
  - First group of students ONLY: Write a Specific Aims page describing your research

Week 4: Parts of a Grant Proposal – Specific Aims – Group 1
- **Small group sessions – February 4-6, 1 – 2:30 pm**
  - Address questions regarding “Parts of a Grant Proposal – Specific Aims, Research Design”
  - Discuss Specific Aims from first group of students
- **Homework assignment for next week**
  - Read “How to write Approach (grants) and Discussion (papers)
  - Second group of students ONLY: Write a Specific Aims page describing your research

Week 5: Parts of a Grant Proposal – Specific Aims – Group 2
- **Small group sessions – February 11-13, 1 – 2:30 pm**
  - Discuss Specific Aims from second group of students
- **Homework assignment for next week**
  - Read “How to write an Abstract (grants and papers)”
  - Third group of students ONLY: Write a Specific Aims page describing your research
Week 6: Parts of a Grant Proposal – Specific Aims – Group 3
  o Small group sessions – February 18-20, 1 – 2:30 pm
    ▪ Discuss Specific Aims from third group of students

Section Leaders
Section 001  Wednesday  1 – 2:30 pm  501 BRB
Phillip Mason  MasonP@email.chop.edu
Ling Qin  qinling@mail.med.upenn.edu

Section 002  Thursday  1 – 2:30 pm  501 BRB
Dennis Kolson  dennis.kolson@uphs.upenn.edu
Struan Grant  grants@email.chop.edu

Section 003  Thursday  1 – 2:30 pm  1413 BRB
Robert Heukeroth  HeuckerothR@email.chop.edu
Craig Bassing  bassing@mail.med.upenn.edu

Section 004  Friday  1 – 2:30 pm  104 Stellar Chance
Andrew Wells  adwells@mail.med.upenn.edu
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Section 005  Friday  1 – 2:30 pm  801 BRB
Jonathan Katz  jpkatz@mail.med.upenn.edu
Sparky Lok  jlok@vet.upenn.edu