

GS21 1152 Scientific Writing Course
Directors: Dr. Humam Kadara and Dr. Wassim Chehab
Tuesday/Thursday 2:00 – 3:30 PM
GSBS Large Classroom S3.8371
Two semester credit hours
Grading System: Pass/Fail

1. Prerequisites: Students should be in their second year of training in their current degree program, have affiliated with a faculty advisor, and developed an idea for a specific thesis project. Registration requires permission of the course director.

This course meets the GSBS Writing Course Requirement for PhD students.

2. Mode of Delivery: We expect all lectures for this class to be offered in-person in the GSBS Large Classroom. Students who are not be able to attend an in-person session due to health reasons should notify the course director prior to class. The course director will consider making any needed and reasonable accommodations to allow virtual participation in otherwise in-person sessions.

3. Weekly lectures: Required lectures will begin on January 9th. Time for all lectures is 2:00 – 3:30. See Schedule for details. Slides and updated course materials will be posted on the course site in Canvas <https://uth.instructure.com> prior to the lecture.

4. Small group meetings: These required sessions will be held with a faculty facilitator who is matched to the student's area of research as best possible. Sessions will be held on Thursdays at 2:00 or at a time determined by the facilitator and agreed to by all students in the group. The delivery mode of these sessions will also be determined by the facilitator who will consult with students in the group regarding the most appropriate mode.

5. Course Description: The objectives of the course are to teach critical thinking and the fundamentals of proposal writing that will help students write candidacy exam proposals, fellowship applications, grants, papers, meeting abstracts, and theses/dissertations. Students will develop a research plan and write a "6 +1" page proposal following the format used for NIH fellowship applications. Students will also learn to edit and critique their fellow students' proposals, which will help prepare the students for writing and editing their candidacy exam proposal. Weekly meetings will consist of lectures from faculty/experts addressing how to compose grant proposal sections, organize ideas and revise/polish writing. In addition, students will meet weekly with faculty in small groups to critique/discuss writing assignments during which they will be given feedback on their proposal content/style by faculty and fellow students.

6. Grading: Pass/Fail. A passing grade requires that the student:

- A. Attend all lectures and small group sessions unless excused by the instructor/moderator.
- B. Complete all assignments to the satisfaction of the course instructor and group facilitator.
- C. Participate satisfactorily in each small group session as determined by the faculty moderator.
- D. Submit a satisfactory and complete research proposal at the end of the course on time as instructed. See "Final Research Proposal Format Guidelines" on Canvas for details of formatting your proposal.

7. Plagiarism and Originality: The goal of this course is to develop your ability to write an original scientific research proposal such as those submitted in fellowship and grant applications. To accomplish this, it is vital that all materials you submit during this course are from your own original writing.

Plagiarism is the act of presenting the ideas or words of others as your own and is a serious form of academic misconduct. Any student determined to have purposely committed plagiarism will be given a failing grade and may be subject to further disciplinary action including dismissal from the GSBS.

Please note that this means no part of the proposal, including specific aims, can be taken from the writing others. This includes your advisor's grant proposals.

8. A note on your proposal from this class and the candidacy exam:

The proposal written for this course may be used in students' candidacy exam pending approval from your Advisor and Program Director. If your intention is to use your proposal written in this class for the candidacy exam, then please discuss that with your advisor and program director prior to the first small group session on January 25th

GS21 1152 GSBS Scientific Writing

Class Schedule - Spring 2024

Tuesday Lectures: 2:00 – 3:30 PM, Room BSRB S3.8371. All lectures are intended to be 1 to 1.5 hrs in length

Thursday Small Group: Scheduled time is 2:00 – 3:30 Thursdays starting January 25. Location to be determined by the faculty facilitator. Groups may decide on a different time to meet if all agree.

Faculty Facilitators for small groups: BCB – Dr. Melvin Klegerman; CB – Dr. Gabriel Lopez; IMM – Dr. Askar Akimzhanov, Dr. Alex Reuben, MP – Dr. Kristy Brock; NS – Dr. Kartik Venkatachalam; QS: Dr. Sachet Shukla, G&E – Dr. Keila Torres, Dr. Marcelo Aldaz, Dr. Dondossola.

Schedule

- Jan 9 – **Lecture:** Class Organization Session & Why Write a Research Proposal? (**Kadara/Salinas**)
Jan. 11 – **no class**
- Jan 16 – **Lecture:** How to Organize What You Are Writing (**Bryan Tutt**)
Jan 18 – **no class**
- Jan 23 – **Lecture:** Developing & Clearly Stating your Hypothesis (**Mikhail Kolonin**)
Jan 25 – **Small Group:** Topics/Hypothesis Presented
- Jan 30 – **Lecture:** Formulating Specific Aims (**Angela Ting**)
Feb. 1 – **Small Group:** Specific Aims Presented
- Feb 6 – **Lecture:** How to write a Specific Aims Page (**Angela Ting**)
Feb 8 – **Small Group:** Specific Aims Critique
- Feb 13 – **Lecture:** Figures/Graphical Abstracts (**Brian Taylor**)
Feb 15 – **Small Group:** Specific Aims Page Critique 1
- Feb 20 – **Lecture:** How to write a Significance/Innovation Section (**Scott Evans**)
Feb 22 – **Small Group:** Specific Aims Page Critique 2
- Feb 27 – **Lecture:** How to Write a Research Plan I (**Hui-Wen Lo**)
Mar 29 – **Small Group:** Significance/Innovation Critique
- Mar 5 – **Lecture:** How to write a Research Plan II (**Hui-Wen Lo**)
Mar 7 – **Small Group:** Research Plan Critique
- Mar 12 – **Class Discussion:** Faculty Panel Q&A (**Jyotika Sharma, Pierre McCrear, and Valeria Vasquez Robaina**)
Mar 14 – **Small Group:** Research Plan Critique
- Mar 19 – **No Class – GSBS Spring Break**
Mar 21 – **No Class – GSBS Spring Break**
- Mar 26 – **Lecture:** Fine Tuning Your Proposal (**Amy Ninetto**)
Mar 28 – **Small Group:** Final Proposal Critique
- April 2 – **Lecture:** Abstract Writing (**Erica Goodoff**)
April 4 – **Small Group:** Final Proposal Critique/Discuss Abstract Content
- April 9 – **Small Group:** Presentations/Mock Review Panels/Continued Feedback
April 11 – **Small Group:** Presentations/Mock Review Panels/Continued Feedback
- April 16 – **Small Group:** Presentations/Mock Review Panels/Continued Feedback (OPTIONAL)
- April 18/23 – **No Class** – finalize proposals for submission
- April 25 FINAL PROPOSAL DUE (5 PM) – upload as a single PDF file at the course Canvas sit**

Course Directors

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