

Department: NUSC

Course number: NUSC 237W

Course title: Writing in Nutritional Sciences

Credits: 1

Contact Person: Hedley Freake

Catalog Copy: - NUSC 237W. Writing in Nutritional Sciences. Second semester. One credit. Must be taken concurrently with NUSC 236. Open only with consent of the instructor. A writing-intensive class that emphasizes both style and content consistent with the discipline of Nutritional Sciences.

Course Information: -

Course: NUSC 237W

Proposed Title: Writing in Nutritional Sciences

Course Instructor: Richard M. Clark

Office: Roy E Jones room 208

Telephone: 486-0121

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Course Description: This is a writing-intensive class primarily for NUSC majors that will permit them to critically evaluate and summarize published research on a topic in the field of nutrition. They will learn various search techniques for primary and secondary sources of research information. An understanding of the importance of peer review process to nutrition research and participation in a peer review panel will be required. Written assignments will emphasize both style and content consistent with the discipline of Nutritional Sciences.

W Criteria: This class will be taken concurrently with NUSC 236, Principles of Nutrition. It will allow students to pursue topics in greater depth and with more independence than is possible in the parent class. The first writing assignment will be to choose a relevant nutrition problem and then follow a cyclical process of identification and refinement to precisely articulate the problem and its significance. Development of an annotated bibliography will further refine the topic and allow the identification of important points. This will be followed by an outline and then a draft of the final paper. The draft will be evaluated by the instructor but also by the other students who will assess its organization and clarity of presentation. Feedback from both sources will be used for the final revisions. Overall the structure and format of this class will assist students in their understanding of nutrition research and the its underlying processes. The final paper will be 15 pages, although it will incorporate pieces written earlier in the class, for example, the statement of the research question. The paper constitutes 65% of the grade for the class. Failure of the writing component will result in failure in the course.

Multiple modes of writing instruction will be used, including class instruction and written and oral feedback (both to the class and individually). In addition the peer review process included will allow feedback from other students in the class.

Opportunities for revision will be included for all writing components, including problem identification, annotated bibliography (to ensure appropriateness of sources and adequacy of coverage) and the full draft, following instructor and student feedback.

Role of Grad Students: -None

Supplemental Information:

Prerequisites: Concurrent enrollment in NUCS 236; open to juniors or higher; permission of instructor.

Enrollment: Limited to not more than 19 students.

Student Outcomes:

At the end of this semester students should be able to:

- Define a good research question.
- Describe the peer review process.
- Identify, locate and evaluate relevant primary literature and secondary information impacting the field of nutrition.
- Demonstrate the ability to summarize nutrition research and effectively communicate this information through a written paper.

Grading policy

- All assignments are required and due on deadline.
- Final written report will be evaluated on clarity and correctness of writing style, content and depth of thought.
- Students must pass the written project in order to pass the course.
- Plagiarism will result in a failing grade.

Grade

20% from attendance and active participation in all class periods.

15% from contribution to critical peer evaluations

65% from written report

NUSC 237W

Tentative Schedule of Discussion Topics and Assignments

Class 1.

Course structure and assignments.

Review of the research process.

Importance of peer-review process in nutrition research.

Generation of a list of potential research topics.

Students identification of useful sources of information.

Assignment: Use information sources to research potential topics.

Class 2.

Student discussion of criteria to define a viable research question.

Creation of a list of potential research questions.

Directions on use of Web-based search engines for information.

Assignment: Select a potential research question. Perform a web-based search on topic.

Class 3.

Group discussion of strengths and weaknesses of the potential research questions.

Selection of students' specific research questions.

Assignment: Draft a statement of importance of your research question with contextual information.

Class 4.

Oral presentations of students' research questions with relevant background and contextual information. (Based on web search and other secondary sources of information)

Due: Two-three page statement of research question and its contextual importance.

Class 5.

Instruction on search techniques for primary sources of information.

Assignment: Begin to develop an annotated bibliography on research topic.

Class 6.

Discussion of expectations for research paper.

Development of criteria for selection of appropriate citations.

Due: Completion of annotated bibliography.

Class 7.

Peer critique of annotated bibliography.

Development of timeline for completion of project.

Assignment: Prepare an outline of the project.

Class 8.

Ethical ramifications of nutritional research.

Due: Outline of writing project.

Class 9.

Peer review process for Federal Granting agencies (USDA, NIH, etc.)

Due: Draft of writing project.

Classes 10&11.

Student panel peer review of research paper

Critical peer evaluation

Assignment: Prepare final draft of paper responding to instructor and peer critiques.

Classes 12&13.

Open discussions of projects with instructor

Class 14.

Class summary

Due: Final Draft of Writing Project

Written Project: The final written project will be at least 15 typed pages, doubled-spaced in length and will be graded. Assignments for Class 3 (Statement of research question and contextual information); Class 6 (Annotated bibliography); Class 8 (Paper outline); and Class 10 (Draft of written project) will be critiqued by the instructor but not graded. These critiques will be used to assist you in the preparation of your final written project. Please hand in all previous written assignments (with instructor comments) with the final draft of the written project.