

Scientific Writing in English for Physics Students

Fudan University

7-18 July 2014

Preliminary Syllabus – version 1.0 (13 February 2014)

Instructor: Dr. Jeff Wragg

Course meetings: MWF 3 × 45 minutes each day, two weeks

Resources: [Mayfield Handbook](#) [San Francisco Edit Newsletters](#)
[Physical Review Style](#) [Nature Style Guide](#)
[JURP Manuscript Prep](#) [Rev. of Modern Physics Style Guide](#)
[APS Info for Authors](#)

Overview: This course will involve writing, editing, reviewing, speaking and other tasks to improve skill and confidence in preparing scientific work for English language publication and presentation. It will be based on the experiences and goals of the students. The course will build on editorial guidance from prominent journals and experienced editors. If you have a manuscript that you wish to prepare for submission, it can be your primary working document for this course.

Day 1 - Monday

1. Class introduction. Tell us what your interests and goals are.
2. Activity: Write a short paragraph about your interests, directed to the class
3. Activity: Peer editing
4. Review and discussion: Editorial guidelines, identifying the audience, writing titles and abstracts

Day 2 - Wednesday

1. Assignment due: Bring a writing sample, a title and abstract of an experiment
2. Activity: Peer editing titles and abstracts
3. Discussion: Components of lab reports and manuscripts
4. Discussion: Lab reports versus journal publications
5. Selecting a final project—
The final project will be a compete paper and an oral presentation including visual aids (up to 6 PowerPoint-type slides)

Day 3 - Friday

1. Assignment due: Summarize the results and write the conclusion to an experiment you have done.
2. Activity: Peer edit the assignment
3. Activity: Groups (2-3 students) write a title and abstract for a lab report
4. Activity: Edit and discuss papers written by American students
5. Discussion: Preparing for a presentation: speaking and slides

Day 4 - Monday

1. Assignment Due: Draft of final project
2. Activity: Peer editing final project drafts
3. Discussion: Author responsibilities
4. Discussion: Oral presentation skills, slide preparation
5. Activity: Beginning and ending an oral presentation

Day 5 - Wednesday

1. Assignment: Final lab report due
2. Discussion: Dealing with the news media
3. Activity: Practice news media interviews
4. Activity: Review final lab reports

Day 6 - Friday

1. Assignment: Final written manuscript and slides due
2. Activity: PowerPoint (or similar) oral presentation with up to 6 slides
3. Activity: peer review of oral presentations
4. Discussion: Class wrap-up and evaluation

Optional Activities

- Write and edit personal statements for graduate school applications
- Job interview practice
- Write and edit American-style resume/CV
- Discussion, Q&A about applying to graduate schools
- Grant Proposal editing
- LaTeX for documents and presentations