

Communicating Research about Shelter Medicine

VME 6951

1 credit

University of Florida Distance Education Graduate Program in Shelter Medicine

Instructor(s):

Aimee Dalrymple, DVM, MS E-mail: amdalrymple@ufl.edu

Terry Spencer, DVM, MEd E-mail: tspencer@ufl.edu

Course Description

Apply principles of good writing and strong visual layouts for transforming academic research into public documents that can be shared during your Capstone Project Presentation as well as at conferences, meetings, or the animal shelter workplace. Understand how to read a scientific paper.

Course Content

This online course fulfills the “Writing in the Sciences” requirement needed to complete the MS Concentration in Shelter Medicine. It is best taken after your advisor has approved your Capstone Project Proposal so you can begin working on your presentation. In this course you will review the mechanics of strong writing, crafting clear messages, and delivering visually appealing presentation materials for an online audience. You will also review what goes into writing a scientific paper and how to review a scientific study. With individual coaching from your instructors and classmates, you will develop a scientific poster, PowerPoint presentation slides, educational handouts, and a recorded presentation that you can use when you present your Capstone Project during your final semester of the MS degree, at scientific conferences, or within an animal shelter for educational purposes. You will also participate in an Online Journal Club.

Course Prerequisites

None

Co-Requisites

Course is best taken after your advisor has approved your Capstone Project proposal (or research topic) so you can begin working on your presentation.

Course Website

<https://onlinesheltermedicine.vetmed.ufl.edu/>

Course Objectives

By the end of this online course, students will be able to:

- Identify the various audiences with whom they wish to communicate.
- Craft the message they wish to deliver verbally and visually.
- Express research in a “science narrative” style appropriate to academics.
- Design a poster, PowerPoint presentation, and educational handouts that effectively communicate a controlled message.
- Record a potential capstone-presentation specific version of their research that will be further refined and delivered in the final semester prior to graduation.
- Review at least four scientific papers to identify journal type, impact factor, study methodology, study type, and rate confidence in the evidence presented.

Materials and Supplies Fees

None

Required Textbooks and Software

All required and recommended readings are available within the online Course Reserves.

Required Technology: Computer with reliable, high speed internet access; your preferred web browser; video player with ability to play MP4 videos; speakers and/or headphones and working sound; PDF reader. For more information on hardware and software necessary to run Canvas, visit <https://community.canvaslms.com/docs/DOC-2059> (Links to an external site.). Canvas offers mobile applications for both [Apple](#) (Links to an external site.) and [Android](#) (Links to an external site.) products. These apps may be downloaded in the respective app stores. Depending on the device and your equipment, not all Canvas features may be available on the app at this time. For more information on Canvas apps, visit <https://community.canvaslms.com/docs/DOC-1542> (Links to an external site.).

Course Schedule

This online course is taught in four modules, with assignments due at the end of each module.

Modules/Weeks	Topics/Concepts	Assignments
1. Review Good Communication Skills (4 weeks)	<p>Introductions, Writing for academic audiences Writing for general audiences Making materials understandable Common writing mistakes Read and discuss recent scientific papers</p>	<p>Discussion (1) Quiz (1) Assignments (4)</p>
2. Organize Your Ideas (3 weeks)	<p>Analyzing the components of a research project by: describing the project; identifying the audience; writing the project's story; determining whether the project is experimental-based or literature-based; and determining whether the project involves primary or secondary research</p>	<p>Assignments (4)</p>
3. Prepare Visuals (2 weeks)	<p>Principles of effective visual layouts Designing effective scientific posters, PowerPoint slides, educational handouts, and infographics</p>	<p>Assignments (2) with peer reviews</p>
4. The Oral Presentation (3 weeks)	<p>Developing learning objectives/outcomes Creating storyboards to guide presentation Scripting a presentation Presenting remotely Add "human-ness" to presentation</p>	<p>Assignments (5), one with peer reviews</p>

Evaluation of Grades

EVALUATION FRAMEWORK

Assignment	Weight	Grading Criteria
Completes Assignments	100%	Student submits each assignment by due date, reviews and responds to instructor and peer feedback, revises drafts based on feedback, demonstrates reviewed instructional material provided in each module prior to submitting assignments

Grading Policy

GRADING SCALE

Percent	Grade	Grade Points
93 -100	A	4.0
90 - 92	A-	3.67
87 - 89	B+	3.33
83 – 86	B	3.00
80 - 82	B-	2.67
77 - 79	C+	2.33
73 – 76	C	2.00
70 - 72	C-	1.67
67 - 69	D+	1.33
63 - 66	D	1.00
60 - 62	D-	0.67

0 - 59	E	0.00
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More information on UF grading policy may be found at:

<http://gradcatalog.ufl.edu/content.php?catoid=10&navoid=2020#grades>

<https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/regulations/info/grades.aspx>

EXPECTATIONS AND POLICIES

Students are responsible for meeting all academic objectives as defined by the instructor. Plagiarism ([as defined by the UF Student Honor Code](#)) will not be tolerated. Be sure to cite your sources and references and attribute any verbatim quotations included in your submissions and posts.

[UF Maples Center for Forensic Medicine Code of Conduct and Professionalism \(our Department\)](#)

Instructional Policy:

This course is part of the distance education program at the University of Florida. Instead of traditional lecture format, the medium for communication between course instructors, teaching assistants and students will be via Canvas e-learning. (<http://elearning.ufl.edu>)

Attendance: Students must participate in the online discussions, and are required to visit the course e-learning daily for important updates and announcements.

Additional information regarding attendance/absences can be found at:

<https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/regulations/info/attendance.aspx>

Class Participation: Students are expected to constructively join in online discussions with appropriate preparation, to post interesting and relevant information on the class bulletin board, and to interact professionally with their classmates.

Performance Expectations: Students are expected to produce quality work of a standard comparable to any graduate level didactic course. Bulletin postings and discussions must be legible, constructive and appropriate. Students are required to think for themselves and will be expected to complete assignments that require the application of logic and reasoning skills when the answer may not be found in a book or the course notes.

Due Dates and Late Submissions: Pay close attention to the due dates posted in e-learning on your personal Dashboard and the Canvas Calendar for each assignment. Late submissions are eligible for up to 50% of the available points for each assignment.

This course is designed for working professionals like yourself. So we understand that sometimes life gets in the way of our best plans for juggling work, home, and school. If you

anticipate you will likely miss a due date, request an extension in advance of the due date by sending an email through the Canvas Inbox to your instructors that explains the reason you need more time and when you expect to submit the work. Please title these posts clearly with "REQUEST EXTENSION FOR ASSIGNMENT 6A" (or whatever you need). Please avoid overuse of this option as it interferes with your classmate's ability to complete their own assignments.

NOTE: We honor most, but not all, requests for extensions.

Grade Changes: Grades will be changed only when a grading error has been made. If you think an error has been made, you should email the instructor as soon as possible. Your entire assignment will then be re-graded.

Incomplete grades: Under special circumstances, if a student is unable to finish a course before the end of the semester we may be able to assign an incomplete grade. An incomplete grade is a non-punitive grade assigned at the discretion of the course instructor. In this course an incomplete grade may be assigned if 1/3rd or more of the course assignments have been completed and if the student has remained in communication with TA's and instructors throughout the course, or has made an effort to request an incomplete grade. If an incomplete grade is assigned, outstanding assignments must be completed by the end of the next semester. If the assignments are not completed in this time you will be assigned a grade based on the completed assignments.

Students Requiring Accommodations

Students with disabilities requesting accommodations should first register with the Disability Resource Center (352-392-8565, <https://www.dso.ufl.edu/drc>) by providing appropriate documentation. Once registered, students will receive an accommodation letter which must be presented to the instructor when requesting accommodation. Students with disabilities should follow this procedure as early as possible in the semester.

Course Evaluation

Students are expected to provide professional and respectful feedback on the quality of instruction in this course by completing course evaluations online via GatorEvals. Guidance on how to give feedback in a professional and respectful manner is available at gatorevals.aa.ufl.edu/students/. Students will be notified when the evaluation period opens, and can complete evaluations through the email they receive from GatorEvals, in their Canvas course menu under GatorEvals, or via ufl.bluera.com/ufl/. Summaries of course evaluation results are available to students at gatorevals.aa.ufl.edu/public-results/.

University Honesty Policy

UF students are bound by The Honor Pledge which states, "We, the members of the University of Florida community, pledge to hold ourselves and our peers to the highest standards of honor and integrity by abiding by the Honor Code. On all work submitted for credit by students at the

University of Florida, the following pledge is either required or implied: “On my honor, I have neither given nor received unauthorized aid in doing this assignment.” The Honor Code (<https://www.dso.ufl.edu/sccr/process/student-conduct-honor-code/>) specifies a number of behaviors that are in violation of this code and the possible sanctions. Furthermore, you are obligated to report any condition that facilitates academic misconduct to appropriate personnel. If you have any questions or concerns, please consult with the instructor or TAs in this class.

Software Use

All faculty, staff, and students of the University are required and expected to obey the laws and legal agreements governing software use. Failure to do so can lead to monetary damages and/or criminal penalties for the individual violator. Because such violations are also against University policies and rules, disciplinary action will be taken as appropriate. We, the members of the University of Florida community, pledge to uphold ourselves and our peers to the highest standards of honesty and integrity.

Student Privacy

There are federal laws protecting your privacy with regards to grades earned in courses and on individual assignments. For more information, please see:

<http://registrar.ufl.edu/catalog0910/policies/regulationferpa.html>

Campus Resources:

Health and Wellness

U Matter, We Care:

If you or a friend is in distress, please contact umatter@ufl.edu or 352 392-1575 so that a team member can reach out to the student.

Counseling and Wellness Center: <http://www.counseling.ufl.edu/cwc>, and 392-1575; and the University Police Department: 392-1111 or 9-1-1 for emergencies.

Sexual Assault Recovery Services (SARS)

Student Health Care Center, 392-1161.

University Police Department at 392-1111 (or 9-1-1 for emergencies), or

<http://www.police.ufl.edu/>.

Academic Resources

E-learning technical support, 352-392-4357 (select option 2) or e-mail to Learning-support@ufl.edu. <https://lss.at.ufl.edu/help.shtml>.

Career Resource Center, Reitz Union, 392-1601. Career assistance and counseling. <https://www.crc.ufl.edu/>.

Library Support, <http://cms.uflib.ufl.edu/ask>. Various ways to receive assistance with respect to using the libraries or finding resources.

Teaching Center, Broward Hall, 392-2010 or 392-6420. General study skills and tutoring. <https://teachingcenter.ufl.edu/>.

Writing Studio, 302 Tigert Hall, 846-1138. Help brainstorming, formatting, and writing papers. <https://writing.ufl.edu/writing-studio/>.

Student Complaints Campus:

https://www.dso.ufl.edu/documents/UF_Complaints_policy.pdf.

On-Line Students Complaints: <http://www.distance.ufl.edu/student-complaint-process>