

Core Courses Syllabi

COM701 - Research Communication and Dissemination

Title	Research Communication and Dissemination
Code	COM701
Loading	3 Credit-hours
Prerequisites	None
Catalog Description	In this course, students will learn how to effectively communicate and disseminate their research findings, both orally and in written form, to the larger community. In addition to acquiring hard communication skills, students will also be familiarized with how these skills fit into a broader context, learning, for instance, the importance of peer review, how to select a journal or conference for publication, how to measure impact factor, how to gauge and adjust to different audiences, the various ethical issues that can arise, etc.
Goal	The aim of this course is to help students develop strong written and oral communication skills that can be applied to effectively publicize their research findings. In addition, students will become familiarized with how the manuscript selection process works, and what it takes to get published in top journals and conferences.
Content	Introduction: What Makes a Great Paper, Principles of Effective Writing, How to Write Compelling Titles and Abstracts, Main Body of a Manuscript: From Introduction to Conclusion, Data Presentation and Discussion, Authorship and Authors' Responsibilities, Selecting a Journal/Conference for Publication and Submitting Your Paper, Understanding Peer Review, Journal/Conference Decisions, Writing and Publishing a Review Paper, Plagiarism and Other Ethical Issues, Conference Talks and Abstracts, Content and Organization of a Scientific Talk, Giving a Scientific Talk, Final Presentations.
Recommended Textbooks	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Angelika Hofmann, Scientific Writing and Communication: Papers, Proposals, and Presentations, Oxford University Press (2010). 2. Swales and Feak, Academic Writing for Graduate Students: Essential Tasks and Skills, The University of Michigan Press (2004). 3. Strunk and White, The Elements of Style, Pearson (1999).
Recommended References & Supplemental Material	Additional material will be handed out or made available on the course web page.



Teaching Week	Topics
1	Introduction: What Makes a Great Paper Lectures <ul style="list-style-type: none">Students will become familiarized with the main components of a good academic paper and learn how to tell an interesting story from the reader's and editor's perspectives. Lab <ul style="list-style-type: none">Instructor-led walk-through of an example and in-class exercise for practice. Assessment Item <ul style="list-style-type: none">Assignment 1 handed out.
2	Principles of Effective Writing Lecture <ul style="list-style-type: none">Students will learn to "cut the clutter" and write in a clear and concise manner. Lab <ul style="list-style-type: none">Instructor-led walk-through of an example and in-class exercise for practice.
3	How to Write Compelling Titles and Abstracts Lecture <ul style="list-style-type: none">Students will learn how to develop a strong title and write a clear abstract that will capture a reader's interest and reach as broad an audience as possible. Lab <ul style="list-style-type: none">Instructor-led walk-through of an example and in-class exercise for practice.
4	Main Body of a Manuscript: From Introduction to Conclusion Lecture <ul style="list-style-type: none">Students will learn how to effectively structure each section of a paper. Lab <ul style="list-style-type: none">Instructor-led walk-through of an example and in-class exercise for practice. Assessment Item <ul style="list-style-type: none">Assignment 1 due at the end of the week.Assignment 2 handed out.
5	Data Presentation and Discussion Lecture <ul style="list-style-type: none">Students will learn how best to present and discuss different types of data. They will also learn to write clear and concise titles for their tables and figures. Lab <ul style="list-style-type: none">Instructor-led walk-through of an example and in-class exercise for practice.



Teaching Week	Topics
6	Authorship and Authors' Responsibilities Lecture <ul style="list-style-type: none">Students will learn how to decide who should be an author and how to share authorship. Lab <ul style="list-style-type: none">Instructor-led walk-through of an example and in-class exercise for practice.
7	Selecting a Journal/Conference for Publication and Submitting Your Paper Lecture <ul style="list-style-type: none">Students will learn what to take into account when selecting a journal or conference for publication. Additionally, they will also learn how to prepare a cover letter and navigate the submission process. Lab <ul style="list-style-type: none">Instructor-led walk-through of an example and in-class exercise for practice. Assessment Item <ul style="list-style-type: none">Assignment 2 due at the end of the week.Students will be asked to identify a topic for the mock manuscript to demonstrate their understanding of the topics.
8	Understanding Peer Review Lecture <ul style="list-style-type: none">Students will learn the importance of peer review, the different models that exist, how reviewers are selected, and how to be a good reviewer. Lab <ul style="list-style-type: none">Instructor-led walk-through of an example and in-class exercise for practice.
9	Journal/Conference Decisions Lecture <ul style="list-style-type: none">Students will learn how editorial decisions are made and how to write an effective rebuttal/appeal. Lab <ul style="list-style-type: none">Instructor-led walk-through of an example and in-class exercise for practice.
10	Writing and Publishing a Review Paper Lecture <ul style="list-style-type: none">Students will learn how to plan, structure and write a compelling review or proposal and how/where to get it published. Lab <ul style="list-style-type: none">Instructor-led walk-through of an example and in-class exercise for practice.



Teaching Week	Topics
11	Plagiarism and Other Ethical Issues Lecture <ul style="list-style-type: none">Students will learn about the ethical issues that can arise, how to recognize them, and how to avoid them. Lab <ul style="list-style-type: none">Instructor-led walk-through of an example and in-class exercise for practice.
12	Conference Talks and Abstracts Lecture <ul style="list-style-type: none">Students will learn how to develop an effective abstract for being selected to speak at a conference. Lab <ul style="list-style-type: none">Instructor-led walk-through of an example and in-class exercise for practice. Assessment Item <ul style="list-style-type: none">Mock manuscript due.
13	Content and Organization of a Scientific Talk Lecture <ul style="list-style-type: none">The student will learn how to select what is important for their scientific talk, how to display it in clear, uncluttered slides, and how to discuss it in simple, easy-to-understand English. They will also learn the importance of visual aids and how to use them to clarify and reinforce their talks. Lab <ul style="list-style-type: none">Instructor-led walk-through of an example and in-class exercise for practice.
14	Giving a Scientific Talk Lecture <ul style="list-style-type: none">Students will learn the various elements essential for giving a convincing and compelling scientific talk. We will focus on how to prepare and practice in advance, word-choice and vocabulary, voice and delivery, pace, body actions and motions, etc. Lab <ul style="list-style-type: none">Instructor-led walk-through of an example and in-class exercise for practice.
15	Final Presentations Assessment Item <ul style="list-style-type: none">Students will put what they've learnt into practice by giving a final mock conference talk, which will form part of their final assessment.