

## EEB 2244W Fall 2014

Writing proficiency is one of the most valuable skills you can learn at a university. The best way to become proficient at writing is to get plenty of practice. This course is designed to be a tutorial that will help you gain writing experience.

### Instructor

Dr. John Cooley

### Contact information:

- Office: TLS 81
- Phone: [REDACTED]
- Email: [REDACTED]
- Office Hours: Thursdays 1:30-3:30 PM
- Or by appointment at: [REDACTED]
- Website: HuskyCT



### Meetings:

- Meetings in this class are one-on-one meetings that you schedule by using the link above or on the HuskyCT website.

### Grading

You will find each assignment in the "Assignments" folder on the HuskyCT website.

<i>Assignment</i>	<i>Description</i>	<i>Due Date</i>	<i>Points possible</i>	<i>Helpful Resources</i>
1. Paper Topic	Paper topic and annotated bibliography	Sept. 12 2014	5	Paper_Guide.pdf Reference_Format.pdf Plagiarism_Policy.pdf Plagiarism_Example.pdf Schembri_2007.pdf
2. Essay	5-paragraph essay	Sept. 19 2014	10	Reading.pdf Says_Does.pdf Pitfalls.pdf Alexander_1994.pdf
3. Partial Draft	Partial draft of term paper	Oct. 13 2014	15	Gopen_Swan_1990.pdf Sand-Jensen_2007.pdf Cummings_Rivara.2002.pdf
4. Draft	Complete draft of term paper	Nov. 3 2014	25	Williams_2004.pdf Kaufman_Schunn_2010.pdf
5. Revised Draft	Final, revised draft of term paper	Dec. 5 2014	45	Revising Prose
<b>Total</b>			<b>100</b>	

## Getting help

Stuck? Need help? Ask!

Email is the best way to contact me, but you must put “EEB 2244W” in the subject line to ensure that your message does not get filtered as SPAM.

The most common mistake made by students is failure to read and follow all instructions. Read carefully and ask questions!

The second most common mistake made by students is to lose control of the calendar. Your success in this course depends on your motivation to make due dates and schedule meetings with me. Students who are more highly motivated tend to do better.

Students With Disabilities: Students who need accommodations should contact the Center for Students with Disabilities as soon as possible to verify their eligibility for reasonable accommodations. For more information, please go to <http://www.csd.uconn.edu/>.

Make use of the resources that are available to you. The far right column of the Assignment Schedule table above lists resources that may be helpful for completing each assignment. These resources are from the literature or they were developed by UCONN faculty and staff for EEB 2244W and EEB 2245W. You will find \*.pdf versions of each document in the “Resources” folder on the HuskyCT website.

Come to office hours! This is a great chance to ask a quick question, get help on ideas or concepts, or advice about your writing. I am happy to meet with you at other times, by appointment, too.

Consider having your friends or roommates read your writing. Or, read your writing out loud.

If you need help writing, take advantage of the Writing Center ([www.writingcenter.uconn.edu](http://www.writingcenter.uconn.edu)), which runs regular tutorials for students. Visit the web site for information on how to make an appointment.

The Writing Center has a section of its web site devoted specifically to advice on writing in biology ([http://www.writingcenter.uconn.edu/s\\_biology.php](http://www.writingcenter.uconn.edu/s_biology.php)) with a lot of superb information. Review this site during the first two weeks of the semester as it will serve you well for the assignments. Pay particular attention to the “Practical Guide to Reading the Primary Literature in Biology” ([http://www.writingcenter.uconn.edu/pdf/Practical\\_Guide\\_to\\_Reading\\_the\\_Primary\\_Literature\\_in\\_Biology.pdf](http://www.writingcenter.uconn.edu/pdf/Practical_Guide_to_Reading_the_Primary_Literature_in_Biology.pdf)) and the “Long Paper Guide”, which provides guidance on how to plan your paper (even though it was developed for EEB 2245W, the general principals

apply to 2244W as well. See:

<http://www.writingcenter.uconn.edu/pdf/245WLongPaperGuide.pdf>).

## **Submitting your assignments**

You will submit all your assignments via HuskyCT Safe Assign as MS Word documents. When you upload your file to HuskyCT, **name the file as specified in the assignment**. When you submit a paper through HuskyCT, it will be checked for plagiarism by SafeAssign. Before the due date, you will be able to submit drafts of your paper to see how Safe Assign works. In general, lower SafeAssign scores are better, but interpreting SafeAssign output can be tricky, and the outputs cannot really be taken at face value. If you have any questions, please let me know, and I can help you interpret the output.

## **How to start**

Start immediately. Do not wait. Choose a term paper topic as soon as possible and discuss it with me. Getting a head start will allow you to get instant feedback in case your project needs to be modified.

The Library resources sessions on reference search strategies can help you get a head start. Try finding some relevant references by using a key word search on Web of Science (through UCONN Library Main Page) or one of the other databases. Also try a “Google Scholar” (not regular Google) search for key words (compare the results to your Web of Science search); follow this up with some Web of Science “Cited Reference Searches” to find more recent papers that have cited your first choice papers.

Another approach is to look in the journals *Trends in Ecology and Evolutionary Biology* or *Annual Review of Ecology, Evolution and Systematics*. Here you will find review papers written by scientists. These review articles are good examples of what you are trying to achieve. However, starting with a review paper that is already written can make the job of writing your own review paper more difficult because if you are writing on the same topic, you will need to make your synthesis different from theirs. One approach is to choose a review that is four or five years old and then use a Web of Science “Cited Reference Search” to find more recent papers that cite the review or works contained within it. Then you can easily write a review of developments to that topic since the time of the previous review. This approach will narrow your list of potential references and give you a good base from which to work.

## **Other policies**

Your grade in the W section is 25% of your course grade in EEB 2244W. In accordance with university regulations, a failing grade for this section will result in failure of the entire course.

## *EEB2244W Fall 2014 Syllabus and Schedule*

Note that different EEB244W sections have different assignments and due dates, but all have the same penalty rules for late assignments. If you have a valid medical excuse for lateness be sure to get a doctor's note to document it. Other valid excuses (e.g., interviews; UCONN team sports) must be presented prior to the deadline, not after.

3% of the points will be deducted for each day an assignment is late. However, each student is entitled to 2 free late days (the first 2 used, no questions asked). Late submission of assignments, whether excused or not, will affect grading turnaround time.

No assignment will be accepted until all previous assignments have been submitted. For example, this means that you cannot submit a revised term paper unless you submitted, and received feedback on, a complete draft.

Grading rubric: The table linked below explains some of the major differences distinguishing strong, satisfactory and problematic papers. Although this checklist was developed for EEB 2245W, the general principles also apply to EEB 2244W. Use this as a checklist to improve your grade.

[http://hydrodictyon.eeb.uconn.edu/eebedia/index.php?title=EEB2245W\\_Grading\\_Rubric](http://hydrodictyon.eeb.uconn.edu/eebedia/index.php?title=EEB2245W_Grading_Rubric)

Learning to identify errors yourself and edit your own text are critical writing skills. Consequently, I will only correct spelling, grammar, syntax, etc. for the first ~20% of each paper. After that I will identify only the most significant problems. You should use these my suggestions to guide your revision of your entire assignment.

The ability to keep your writing concise is an important skill. Therefore, I may choose not to read beyond the assigned word count if you write more than the assignment calls for. The word counts listed in each assignment should be sufficient for successful completion of that assignment. Remember also that if you have questions about length, don't hesitate to ask!

If you are unable to attend class for any reason, please alert me as soon as possible, but certainly before class. The sooner you tell me, the easier it will be to arrange a make-up assignment. You are responsible for all assignments even if you miss class, regardless of the reason.

I cannot give "extra-credit" under any circumstances. To do so would be unfair to other students who were not given the same opportunity to gain such credit.

Academic misconduct will result in lowered grades, failure of the course, or other disciplinary actions. You must cite any references used in your written assignments and the papers you submit must be your own original work. Please see the University policy on this topic at: [http://www.community.uconn.edu/academic\\_misconduct\\_faq.html](http://www.community.uconn.edu/academic_misconduct_faq.html). If you turn in a paper that you did not write, that is not based on your ideas, or that does not appropriately cite other peoples' work, you will almost certainly fail the course.