

EEB 2245W

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.

Instructor: Dr. John Cooley Office TLS 81
Office Hours: Tuesday 9:00- 11:45 AM, and by appointment
Email: [REDACTED]

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.

Read the entire EEBdia page for EEB 2245W carefully. The most common mistake made by students is failure to read and follow all instructions. Read carefully and ask questions! The page is found at

http://www.eeb.uconn.edu/eebedia/index.php/EEB2245W_Spring_2014

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/>.

Assignment Schedule

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

<i>Assignment</i>	<i>Description</i>	<i>Due Date</i>	<i>Grade Percentage</i>	<i>Helpful Resources</i>
Paper Topic	Paper topic and annotated bibliography	January 31 2014	0% (but submission deadline is enforced!)	Paper_Guide.pdf Reference_Format.pdf Plagiarism_Policy.pdf Plagiarism_Example.pdf Schembri_2007.pdf
Essay	5-paragraph essay	February 5 2014	10%	Reading.pdf Says_Does.pdf Pitfalls.pdf Alexander_1994.pdf
Partial Draft	Partial draft of term paper	February 28 2014	15%	Gopen_Swan_1990.pdf Sand-Jensen_2007.pdf Cummings_Rivara.2002.pdf
Draft	Complete draft of term paper	April 4 2014	25%	Williams_2004.pdf Kaufman_Schunn_2010.pdf
Revised Draft	Final, revised draft of term paper	May 2 2014	50%	

Getting help

Stuck? Need help? Ask!

Make use of the resources that are available to you. The far right column of the Assignment Schedule table above lists resources that will 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), 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) 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) and the “Long Paper Guide”, which provides guidance on how to plan your paper (<http://www.writingcenter.uconn.edu/pdf/245WLongPaperGuide.pdf>).

Submitting your assignments

You will submit all your assignments via HuskyCT, 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 SafeAssign handles it. In general, lower SafeAssign scores are better, but interpreting SafeAssign output can be tricky. 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.

Your Library resources session will discuss reference search strategies but you can also 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 listed on our EEBdia page. 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 one quarter of your course grade in EEB 2245W. In accordance with university regulations, a failing grade for this section will result in failure of the entire course.

Note that all EEB245W sections must abide by the same deadlines and 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 this and scan and email it to me. 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 requirements have been met. 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 lined below explains some of the major differences distinguishing strong, satisfactory and problematic papers. Use this as a checklist to improve your grade.

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

EEB2245W Syllabus and Schedule

each paper. After that I will identify only the most significant problems. You should use these marks to guide your revision of your entire assignment.

The ability to keep your writing concise is an important skill. Consequently, 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 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.

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

Quiz scores are not used in calculating W grades. However, students must receive at least the minimum passing score indicated on HuskyCT prior to submitting the assignment due the same day. Failure to complete the quizzes as required will result in late penalties for the associated assignment.