

Winter 2021 MIMM 301- Scientific Communication & Skills in Microbiology & Immunology

Class: Mondays 1:35 PM – 2:25 PM
Mode of Delivery: In-person in Duff Amphitheatre

Instructors:

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*Office hours by appointment via: <https://calendly.com/jasmin-chahal/mimm-content-questions>

*If this time does not work, please send me an email and we can meet in-person or via zoom

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Collaborator:

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Prerequisites: MIMM323, MIMM324, MIMM384

Co-requisite: MIMM314, MIMM385

Course description

MIMM301 is a one-credit course that allows students to acquire necessary scientific skills and communication skills. In this course, you will learn how to search the literature, read primary papers, manage citations and use them appropriately in your writing, interpret scientific data, synthesize findings from the scientific literature, and write a scientific

paper. This course will allow you to practice and develop your scientific writing skills through various steps intended to provide feedback.

Course Expectations

Although this course is unconventional and scientific writing can be difficult, we are here to help you. When facing a challenge, it is best to embrace it and use it as an opportunity to develop and learn. We would like for you to put in effort and seek help from your mentors, TAs and instructors when you need it. Learning is a shared responsibility, and we will do our best to facilitate your learning.

Learning Outcomes

By the end of the course, you will be able to:

1. Develop information literacy skills to find and evaluate sources of information
2. Read and analyze primary research papers at an intermediate level
3. Cite references appropriately and become proficient at using a citation management software
4. Model the collaborative environment of research by discussing scientific data and providing constructive feedback to peers both orally and in writing
5. Synthesize and communicate scientific information by writing at an intermediate level

Instructional methods

This class uses a combination of lectures, targeted workshops, and small group interactions with Mentors.

1. Lectures

- Dr. Chahal and Dr. Babaei will provide lectures on scientific writing processes

2. Targeted workshops

Students will participate in 2 required workshops on zoom. These workshops will be facilitated by a medical sciences librarian, Ms. Andrea Miller-Nesbitt.

These workshops are:

- a. Endnote workshop
- b. Literature search workshop

3. Small group interactions/Mentors

Students will sign up for a topic they are interested in via MyCourses (it is first come first serve). Based on the what the students sign up for, they will be supervised by a Mentor. Each Mentor will be responsible for a small group of students. The Mentor will assign their students a topic, help guide them to select a focus paper, and supervise their progress for this assignment. These Mentor groups will work together during the semester, during which students will work on their term paper assignment through a series of intermediary steps. You are expected to meet as a group 3 times during the semester. These meetings can be held in-person or via zoom. These meetings will focus on:

- a. **First Meeting (Jan 16 – Jan 23):** Assignment of topic and discussion of expectations
- b. **Second Meeting (February 13 – February 20):** Feedback on the outline and monitor peer-feedback
- c. **Third Meeting (March 21 – March 28):** Monitor peer-feedback on draft term paper

All students are expected to attend class, the workshops, and the small group interactions with their Mentor.

Evaluation and feedback

In this course you will complete a variety of assignments, described further below. All deadlines are at **11:59 PM EST** on the date indicated below. The mark distribution for the course is as follows:

Assessments	Deadlines	Submission	%
Formative quizzes (5)	Throughout the semester	MyCourses (Quizzes)	10
Participation in small group interactions	Throughout the semester	Mentor group meetings	10
Journal Club Assignment	February 6	MyCourses (Assignments)	5
Outline	Feb. 6 – Feb. 13	Email to Mentor and group	15
Peer-feedback on outline	Feb. 13 – Feb. 20	Author and MyCourses (Assignments)	5
Draft version of term paper	March 13 – March 20	MyCourses (Assignments) and Email to group	5
Peer-feedback on draft paper	March 21 – March 28	Author and MyCourses (Assignments)	10
Final term paper	April 4 – April 12	Email to Mentor	40
TOTAL			100

Formative quizzes

Students will be tasked with completing a series of short formative quizzes associated with key lectures. The deadlines for each quiz will be posted on MyCourses. The quizzes will be open for only **24 hr** (from Monday at 2:30 PM to Tuesday at 2:30 PM). These will be found in the quizzes tab on myCourses.

Participation in small group interactions

The Mentor will be responsible for submitting a final participation grade for the students under their supervision. This mark will be based on completion of a rubric that includes an assessment of the students' contribution to group discussions.

Journal Club

You will be assigned a TA that will lead a journal club instead of a lecture on February 6th. Depending on your TA, this will either be held in-person or over zoom. You will be informed of who your TA is, the article you are expected to read and the location of the

journal club. Following the journal club, you will complete a short assignment that you will upload onto MyCourses. Details of the journal club can be found on MyCourses.

Outline

Students must submit a completed outline and will be graded according to a rubric posted on MyCourses. The deadline for the Outline will be agreed upon with the Mentor.

Term paper draft

Students will submit a complete draft of their term paper to the other students in their group and on MyCourses under Assignments. The completion of the draft term paper will be graded. The requirements for this draft and the rubric will be discussed in class and instructions will be available on MyCourses. Students are required to provide detailed feedback on one of their peers’ draft papers. The extensiveness of the feedback will be graded. The deadlines will be agreed upon with the Mentor.

Final term paper

Students must submit their final term paper according to the instructions discussed in class and available on MyCourses. The deadlines will be agreed upon with the Mentor.

Work submitted for evaluation as part of this course may be checked with text-matching software within myCourses.

Course schedule

All lectures will be recorded and available under lecture recordings on MyCourses. **The library workshops will be held over zoom (please find link on MyCourses).**

Week	Day	Topic	Instructor	Quiz deadline (11:59 PM)
1	Jan 9	<u>Lecture:</u> Introduction and term paper guidelines	Dr. Chahal	-
2	Jan 16	<u>Lecture:</u> Outline, reading a research paper and peer-feedback	Dr. Chahal	Quiz #1: Jan 17
3	Jan 23	<u>Workshop:</u> Literature search library	Ms. Andrea Miller-Nesbitt	Quiz #2: Jan 24
4	Jan 30	<u>Workshop:</u> Endnote library	Ms. Andrea Miller-Nesbitt	Quiz #3: Jan 31
5	Feb 6	<u>Journal Club</u>	Your assigned TAs	-
6	Feb 13	<u>Lecture:</u> Integrating research in writing	Dr. Babaei	Quiz #4: Feb 14
7	Feb 20	<u>Lecture:</u> The mechanics of scientific writing	Dr. Babaei	Quiz #5: Feb 21
	Feb 27	READING WEEK		
8-13	Mar 6 – Apr 10	Writing & feedback time		

Class recording

The pre-lab lectures will be recorded to allow you to review material outside of scheduled class time. Class recordings do not replace a student's presence in a class; rather, they provide complementary pedagogical support for student learning. The recordings will be uploaded 24 h after the lecture date on MyCourses.

Intellectual property considerations

I ask for everyone's cooperation in ensuring that the course videos and associated material are not reproduced or placed in the public domain. This means that each of you can use it for your own purposes, but you cannot allow others to use it by posting it online or giving it or selling it to others who may copy it and make it available.

Lateness:

A 5% deduction will be applied for each day of late submission of an assignment and will received a 0 after a week.

Inclusive Learning Environment

This course is designed to help you learn to communicate professionally both during your time at McGill and in your future workplaces. In keeping with McGill's policies on student rights and responsibilities, it is expected that during class discussions and small group interactions you will communicate constructively and respectfully. Sexist, racist, homophobic, ageist, and ableist expressions will not be tolerated in the classroom or during group meetings held outside of class.

McGill is committed to providing an inclusive and supportive learning environment. If you experience barriers to learning in this course, do not hesitate to discuss them with me. If you have a special learning need or disability, you are encouraged to contact the Student Accessibility & Achievement office: <https://www.mcgill.ca/access-achieve/>.

Health and Wellness

Student wellbeing is a priority for the University. To help students find the support they need as quickly as possible, all of McGill's health and wellness resources have been integrated into a single [Student Wellness Hub](#), a one-stop shop for everything related to physical and mental health. If you need access to services or would like more information, you are strongly encouraged to visit the Virtual Hub: <https://www.mcgill.ca/wellness-hub/>.

McGill Writing Centre Tutorial Service

Writing well is key to both academic and professional success. The McGill Writing Centre (MWC) offers credit courses in academic and professional writing, and a tutorial service open to all McGill students: <https://www.mcgill.ca/mwc/tutorial-service>. The tutorial service offers one-to-one sessions with seasoned instructors and experienced tutors who will work with you at any stage of the writing process.

During the campus closure period, there will be no tutors on site and no administrative staff at the MWC to answer inquiries. Tutoring sessions will be conducted online via the Microsoft Teams platform. This application is available for free to all students through

Office 365: <https://www.mcgill.ca/it/office365-software>. For information about how to book an appointment through Microsoft Teams, please go to <https://www.mcgill.ca/mwc/tutorial-service>.

McGill Library

Discover the McGill Library's rich array of resources. Watch a short welcome video in English, French, Arabic, Chinese, Hindi, Persian, Spanish, or Urdu: <https://www.mcgill.ca/library/orientation>.

Additional Statements

- McGill University values academic integrity. Therefore, all students must understand the meaning and consequences of cheating, plagiarism and other academic offences under the Code of Student Conduct and Disciplinary Procedures” (see www.mcgill.ca/students/srr/honest/ for more information)
- In accord with McGill University's Charter of Students' Rights, students in this course have the right to submit in English or in French any written work that is to be graded/ *Conformément à la Charte des droits de l'étudiant de l'Université McGill, chaque étudiant a le droit de soumettre en français ou en anglais tout travail écrit devant être noté (sauf dans le cas des cours dont l'un des objets est la maîtrise d'une langue)*
- The [University Student Assessment Policy](#) exists to ensure fair and equitable academic assessment for all students and to protect students from excessive workloads. All students and instructors are encouraged to review this Policy, which addresses multiple aspects and methods of student assessment, e.g. the timing of evaluation due dates and weighting of final examinations.
- © Instructor-generated course materials (e.g., handouts, notes, summaries, exam questions, etc.) are protected by law and may not be copied or distributed in any form or in any medium without explicit permission of the instructor. Note that infringements of copyright can be subject to follow up by the University under the Code of Student Conduct and Disciplinary Procedures.
- *As the instructor of this course I endeavor to provide an inclusive learning environment. However, if you experience barriers to learning in this course, do not hesitate to discuss them with me and the [Office for Students with Disabilities](#), 514-398-6009*
- [End-of-course evaluations](#) are one of the ways that McGill works towards maintaining and improving the quality of courses and the student's learning experience. You will be notified by e-mail when the evaluations are available. Please note that a minimum number of responses must be received for results to be available to students.

- In keeping with McGill's preparedness planning strategies with respect to potential pandemic or other concerns, the Administration suggests that all course outlines contain the statement: "In the event of extraordinary circumstances beyond the University's control, the content and/or evaluation scheme in this course is subject to change."
- Additional policies governing academic issues which affect students can be found in the McGill Charter of Students' Rights (see the [Handbook on Student Rights and Responsibilities](#)).
- McGill has policies on sustainability, paper use and other initiatives to promote a culture of sustainability at McGill. (See the [Office of Sustainability](#).)
- Guidelines for the use of mobile computing and communications (MC2) devices in classes at McGill have been approved by the APC. Consult the [Guidelines](#) for a range of sample wording that may be used or adapted by instructors on their course outlines.
- Since polling records may be used to compute a portion of course grades, **responding as someone other than yourself is considered an academic offense**. During class, possession of more than one response device or using the credentials of another student will be interpreted as intent to commit an academic offense. Please refer to McGill's policy on Academic Integrity (<http://www.mcgill.ca/deanofstudents/plagiarism>) and code of Conduct (<http://www.mcgill.ca/students/srr/honest>).
- To maintain a safe and respectful classroom environment, please ensure that any polling responses you submit are appropriate and relevant to the question asked. Please note that unless the poll is labelled as anonymous, your responses are identifiable to the instructor. Please see the [Code of Student Conduct and Disciplinary Procedures](#).