I. Course Overview

This course is the study of the development of skills and opportunities that culminate in publishable works in public health and other health science-related professional journals, area-specific journals, cross-disciplinary journals, and other publications. The emphasis is placed on writing, editing, responding to reviews, and other professional development skills that culminate in the publication of papers in peer-reviewed professional journals and other publishing outlets. It is considered an important skill-development course for professional growth and survival in the academic world or anyplace where written communication and information dissemination are necessary job-related tasks.

II. Intended Audience

At the doctoral level in population health and/or for the healthcare provider working in a teaching-research environment, or possibly, as a medical student or resident who is sequentially or concurrently seeking the MPH degree, a course in scholarly writing offers a wide range of benefits. The course is also intended for the advanced MPH or other master’s degree-seeking student who is trying to separate “from the pack.”
III. Course Instructor

Robert J. McDermott, PhD
Office hours 12:00 – 1:00 on class days and by appointment
E-mail: rjmcdermott@wisc.edu

Dr. McDermott is the Editor-in-Chief of the *Journal of School Health*, founder and Editor-in-Chief of the *Florida Public Health Review*, and founding Editor-in-Chief of *Health Behavior and Policy Review*, an online, peer-reviewed journal. He is the author or co-author of three textbooks (each in multiple editions), and covering the period from 1980 to 2015, of approximately 60 book chapters, > 270 articles in peer-reviewed professional journals, and 200+ abstracts, technical reports, non-peer-reviewed papers, Internet publications, computer software, and other publications.

IV. Course Objectives

- Evaluate where writing for publication fits into your professional life.
- Identify opportunities and different forums to get published or otherwise “break into print.”
- Discuss the features of the journals in your field.
- Learn to be a reviewer.
- Develop the environment, the tools, and the habits conducive to successful writing.
- Describe what editors and reviewers seek in scholarly work.
- Demonstrate strategies for identifying and narrowing topics to write about.
- Assess ethical issues in publishing.
- Attain and maintain momentum in publishing.

V. Course Textbooks and Suggested Bibliography

*Textbooks*

Required: None


Suggested Bibliography


VI. Course Mechanics

The course consists of lectures accompanied by PowerPoint slides, written assignments and peer/instructor editing, brief student reports from the reading list, and class discussion.

VII. Grading and Assignments

There are no exams for the course. Feedback will be provided on writing and other performance. In addition to attendance and participation (40%), there are a few assignments: (1) Preparation of a 500-to-750-word essay entitled “Why I Am (Not) Worried about My Post-degree Professional Life – 15%; (authors willing – exemplary papers will be published in the Florida Public Health Review –
http://www.ut.edu/floridapublichealthreview/guidelines/). (2) Preparation of a 1250-1500-word paper entitled “The Challenging Dual Role of Being a [Public Health] Graduate Student and Having a Life outside of School” – 35%; (authors willing – exemplary papers will be published in the Florida Public Health Review – www.ut.edu/floridapublichealthreview/guidelines) (3) Preparation of 5 questions concerning writing for publication that you would like to have answered during this course – 5%; and (4) Identification of “guidelines for authors” for 5 journals in your professional area that you could conceivably publish in during the next 2 years – 5%. Plagiarism will be a topic of discussion during the course, but please do not let it become an object of discussion as well. Ergo, written work should be entirely your own.

93-100 = A  90-92 = AB  84-89 = B  80-83 = BC
70-79 = C  60-69 = D  00-59 = F

VIII. Course Schedule and Readings

Anticipated Schedule

Session 1 (Monday 07/06/15)

• Introduction and course overview
• Why write?
• How writing is a professional tool and benefit
• Opportunities for getting published
  o Data-based research papers
  o Program descriptions – applied theory
  o Theoretical papers – new theory
  o Philosophical papers
  o “How we do it” papers
  o State-of-the-art papers (literature reviews, systematic reviews, meta-analyses)
  o Point-counterpoint papers
  o Historical analyses
  o Case studies
  o Editorials and commentaries
  o Letters to the editor
  o Feature column
  o Photo essay (fotonovella)
  o New story
  o Book review – media review – software review
• Outlets for getting published
  o Journals in your field
  o Journals allied to your field
  o Special issues or theme issues of journals
  o New and emerging journals
  o Conference proceedings
  o Abstracts
  o Newsletters
  o Newspapers, popular press, blogs, and other media
• Where do ideas come from?

Session 2 (Tuesday 07/07/15)
• What editors and reviewers look for
  o Accuracy, accuracy, accuracy
• Author guidelines and bibliographic styles
• Titles and abstracts – defining the scope of a paper
• Research article format
• Selecting a journal and demystifying the review process
• Journal impact factor and other journal ratings
• Uses and misuses and abuses of journal impact factors
• Characteristics of good writing
  o Significant, clear, unified, economical, and grammatical
• Essay of 500-750 words is due @ 4:00 PM – Email rjmcdermott@wisc.edu; Volunteer as 2nd editor
• Due @ 1:00 PM – Email rjmcdermott@wisc.edu a list of 5 or more questions that you would like to have discussed about writing, publishing, life in academia, or related issues.

Session 3 (Wednesday 07/08/15) (Receive feedback on 500-750-word essay)
• Developing the habit – overview of the writing process
• “Paying the price” to write
  o Time and effort, money, and personal sacrifices
• Unlocking your creativity
  o Preparation, incubation, illumination and execution, and verification
• Overcoming writer’s block
• Writing and its recursive properties
• Feedback on essays
• Due @ 1:00 PM - Seek out and submit by email (rjmcdermott@wisc.edu) the URL link for the “Guidelines for Authors” from 5 professional journals in your particular field of interest in which you could conceivably publish in the next 2 years.

Session 4 (Thursday 07/09/15)
• Publishing and ethics
  o Prior, duplicate, repetitive, fragmented, and redundant publication
  o The LPU (least publishable unit)
  o Increasing specialization and multiple authorships
  o Conferred, gratuitous, guest, ghost, denied, and earned authorship
  o Post-hoc authorship
• Who’s an author?
  o International Committee of Medical Journal Editors criteria
  o American Psychological Association authorship criteria
  o Other conventions for determining authorship
  o Guidelines vs. practices vs. politics and realities
• Other ethical do’s and do-not’s
• The scope and breadth of plagiarism
• Communication among authors, editors, and reviewers
  o Publishing from the author’s perspective
    ▪ Authors and co-authors expectations
    ▪ Roles of lead author and co-authors during revision and resubmission
  o Publishing from the reviewer’s perspective
    ▪ The role of reviewers
    ▪ Feedback and recommendation to publish or not to publish
  o Publishing from the editor’s perspective
    ▪ Selecting reviewers
    ▪ Collating multiple reviews and making a publication decision
• Dealing with rejection and moving on to another publishing outlet
• Revision of 500-750-word essay is due at 11:00 PM (evening) – Email rjmcdermott@wisc.edu
• First draft of dual-role paper is due at 1:00 PM (afternoon) – Email rjmcdermott@wisc.edu

Session 5 (Friday 07/10/15) (Receive feedback on dual-role paper)
• Other forums for disseminating your scholarly work
  o Workshops, symposia, oral papers vs. poster presentations, and roundtable discussions
• Writing conference abstracts – there’s an ‘art’ to it
  o Characteristics of good and bad abstracts
• Review process for conference abstracts
  o Program planner’s perspective and role
  o Reviewers’ role and perspective
• Writing textbooks – pros and cons
• Writing grants – survival in academia and elsewhere
• Final take-home messages
  o Strategies for developing and maintaining momentum
  o Writing goals for the next 30, 60, and 90 days
• Feedback on challenge papers
• Celebrating your successes

Post course (Wednesday 07/15/15)
• Revision of dual-role paper is due at 11:00 PM – Email rjmcdermott@wisc.edu
IX. Academic Policies

Nondiscrimination Policy
The UW Madison is committed to creating a dynamic, diverse and welcoming learning environment for all students and has a non-discrimination policy that reflects this philosophy. Disrespectful behaviors or comments addressed towards any group or individual, regardless of race/ethnicity, sexuality, gender, religion, ability, or any other difference is deemed unacceptable in this class, and will be addressed publicly by the professor.

Disability Reasonable Accommodation Policy
If you qualify for accommodations because of a disability, please submit a letter to the course director that outlines your request in a manner that is timely and consistent with established university policies for making such request so that your needs may be addressed. Policies for accommodating disabilities are available through the McBurney Disability Resource Center, 903 University Ave., 608-263-2741 (phone), 263-6393 (TTY), 265-2998 (Fax), mcburney@uwmadmail.services.wisc.edu
For additional information, please see http://www.mcburney.wisc.edu/

Religious Reasonable Accommodation Policy
Every effort shall be made to reasonably and fairly accommodate all students who, because of religious obligations, have conflicts with scheduled exams, assignments, or required attendance, provided advance notification of the conflict is given. Whenever possible, students should give at least one week advance notice to request special accommodation.

Student Honesty and Rules of Conduct

Academic honesty requires that the course work (e.g., quizzes, papers, exams) a student presents to an instructor honestly and accurately indicates the student's own academic efforts. These policies are available at http://www.studentaffairs.wisc.edu/ UWS 14 is the chapter of the University of Wisconsin System Administrative code that regulates academic misconduct. UW-Madison implements the rules defined in UWS 14 through our own "Student Academic Misconduct Campus Procedures." UWS 14.03 defines academic misconduct as follows: "Academic misconduct is an act in which a student:

a. seeks to claim credit for the work or efforts of another without authorization or citation;
b. uses unauthorized materials or fabricated data in any academic exercise;
c. forges or falsifies academic documents or records;
d. intentionally impedes or damages the academic work of others;
e. engages in conduct aimed at making false representation of a student's academic performance;
f. assists other students in any of these acts."
If you are accused of misconduct, you may have questions and concerns about the process. If so, you should feel free to call Student Advocacy & Judicial Affairs (SAJA) in the Offices of the Dean of Students at (608) 263-5700 or send an email to dos@bascom.wisc.edu

Civility Policy

Members of the University of Wisconsin-Madison community are expected to deal with each other with respect and consideration. The civility policy for this course promotes mutual respect, civility and orderly conduct among the faculty, teaching assistants, and students. We do not intend this policy to deprive any person of his or her right to freedom of expression. Rather, we seek to maintain a safe, harassment-free workplace for the students, faculty, and teaching assistants. Positive communication is encouraged and volatile, hostile, or aggressive actions and language will not be tolerated. If the civility policy for this course is violated, the individual is subject to removal from the class and possibly the course altogether. In addition, the proper authorities at the UW Departmental, School, and University levels will be notified of such behavior accordingly and further action may be taken if necessary.