

GEOS 300 : Writing in the Geosciences

Dr. Jeanette Pope

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Course Goals:

Students in this course will learn to

- 1) effectively communicate their ideas using appropriate geologic terms and concepts,
- 2) adapt their writing style for different audiences, and
- 3) appropriately incorporate references and citations into their papers.

Texts:

Required: Alley, Micheal (1996) *The Craft of Scientific Writing*, 3rd ed, New York: Springer Science and Business Media, 282 p.

Copeland, Peter (2012) *Communicating Rocks: Writing, Speaking, and Thinking about Geology*, New Jersey: Person, Education, Inc. 143 p.

Suggested: Hacker, Diana and Sommers, Nancy (2012) *A Pocket Style Manual* 6th ed., Boston: Bedford's/St. Martin's, 277 p.

Course Description:

Writing is an important skill for professional geoscientists. Whether publishing the results of research in a peer-reviewed journal, communicating the findings of a consulting project to a client in a technical report, or explaining our science to the general public, geoscientists must be able to communicate their ideas with writing that is clear, concise, and accurate. Furthermore, we refine and develop our thoughts and ideas as we strive to convey our message to others in writing.

In this course, you will further develop their writing skills by reading and discussing texts about writing in the geosciences, writing original papers for different audiences, providing feedback for other participants in the class, and editing and revising your own work

Assignments:

Papers (70% of final grade) – Because this is a writing class, the bulk of your grade will be based on the papers and revisions that you complete over the course of the semester. Additional details about these papers will be forthcoming. The due dates for all assignments are posted to Moodle.

Class participation (20% of final grade) – class time will focus on discussing the mechanics of writing. To prepare for this, you will be given reading and writing assignments to be completed out of class each week.

Peer-editing (10% of final grade) – An important part of good writing is learning how to provide constructive feedback to your peers.

Writing in the Geosciences - Class Policies

- ✎ Your attendance and active participation in class are essential for you to learn the material and therefore, **attendance is required**. If you need to miss a class because of sickness or personal emergency (see student handbook), please try to let me know ahead of time so we can arrange a time for you to make up the material. If I do not hear from you within 24 hours of a missed class, your absence will be considered unexcused.
- ✎ Excessive absences, even if they are excused, will seriously compromise your learning in this class. Therefore, **you may be dropped the course if you miss three or more sessions**.
- ✎ In addition to the required text (Copeland's *Communicating Rocks*), I **highly** recommend investing in a writing style guide like *A Pocket Style Manual*. I would like you to use a scientific style for references and citations (e.g. CSE documentation style).
- ✎ Writing Center Tutors are available to help you with your papers for this class. I **highly** recommend that you use their services! Appointments are available M – F from 1:00pm – 5:00pm and S – H 7:00 – 10:00pm. You can schedule an appointment by calling (765) 658 – 4039.
- ✎ Resources for writing are available at the Academic Resource Center (ARC), which is located on the first floor of Asbury Hall. You can also find helpful suggestions on the Writing Center's Webpage: <http://www.depauw.edu/admin/arc/W-center/wandouts.asp>
- ✎ Weekly reading will be posted to Moodle no later than the Wednesday of the week before we discuss them in class. I will also use Moodle to post any announcements for the course. Please be sure to check the site frequently.
- ✎ ****Academic Integrity**** Any activity which gives one student an unfair advantage over other students will be handled in accordance with established University procedures as described in the Student Handbook
- ✎ The DePauw University Student Handbook defines **plagiarism** as “using the words or idea of another writer without attribution, so that they seem as if they are your own. Plagiarism ranges from copying someone else's work word for word, to rewriting someone else's work with only minimal word changes (mosaic plagiarism), to summarizing work without acknowledging the source.”
- ✎ If you have a condition or disability that will affect your ability to participate in any class activity, please make an appointment with Pamela Roberts, Coordinator of Academic Success and Student Disability Services, for further information on how to receive accommodations and support. Academic Success and Student Disability Services is located on the second floor of the Union Building; the office phone number is 765-658-6267.
- ✎ I am looking forward to a productive and informative semester! Please come see me at any time if you have questions or concerns about this course.