



UNSW Course Outline

BEES2680 Introduction to Science Communication - 2024

Published on the 19 May 2024

General Course Information

Course Code : BEES2680

Year : 2024

Term : Term 2

Teaching Period : T2

Is a multi-term course? : No

Faculty : Faculty of Science

Academic Unit : School of Biological, Earth and Environmental Sciences

Delivery Mode : Online

Delivery Format : Standard

Delivery Location : Kensington

Campus : Sydney

Study Level : Undergraduate

Units of Credit : 6

Useful Links

[Handbook Class Timetable](#)

Course Details & Outcomes

Course Description

Successful scientists - whether in the university environment or the outside workplace - must be effective communicators. They must craft their messages into different shapes for different audiences, whether they are writing a lecture, report, research paper, or presenting to peers or

public audiences. This course is open to students wishing to gain a solid foundation in communication skills. These include effective notetaking, active listening and learning, reading critically, writing succinctly in the narrative, descriptive and academic styles, the steps in university essay writing for science topics, using grammar effectively to improve writing, and the anatomy of a compelling presentation tailored to audiences. Students also learn how to research topics, including searching for and evaluating primary literature and the weight of evidence from secondary sources on the Internet. For those students wishing to add a science communicator career option to their science degree, this course is also a foundation for the third-level course BEES6800 The Science of Science Communication, which requires confident communication skills. BEES2680 is designed for science students but is open to students from any discipline wishing to improve their communication skills.

Course Aims

The overall aim is to teach students foundational science communication skills they can apply in their science degrees, and future careers or postgraduate research. Students gain skills that will enable them to articulate topics in written and oral presentations, to think and read critically, and to be able to choose from, and adapt multiple communication techniques. The course is suitable for non-science students since no science background is assumed. The course also aims to be a foundation for science students wishing to take BEES6800 The Science of Science Communication.

Course Learning Outcomes

Course Learning Outcomes
CLO1 : Compare and evaluate different modes of writing and be able to select the appropriate mode for a particular task.
CLO2 : Demonstrate effective written communication tasks with clear and succinct paragraph and sentence construction that flow for readability.
CLO3 : Synthesise and evaluate evidence, and demonstrate critical thinking.
CLO4 : Deliver a presentation effectively to audiences utilising critical skills such as eye contact, gesturing, pitch, tone, and cadence.
CLO5 : Apply the dramatic story arc technique to create a compelling and persuasive video presentation.
CLO6 : Compose a cohesive and coherent discursive essay, applying structural writing steps of outlining, drafting, editing and submission.

Course Learning Outcomes	Assessment Item
CLO1 : Compare and evaluate different modes of writing and be able to select the appropriate mode for a particular task.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Introductory Exercises
CLO2 : Demonstrate effective written communication tasks with clear and succinct paragraph and sentence construction that flow for readability.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Science in Society EssayIntroductory Exercises
CLO3 : Synthesise and evaluate evidence, and demonstrate critical thinking.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Science in Society Essay
CLO4 : Deliver a presentation effectively to audiences utilising critical skills such as eye contact, gesturing, pitch, tone, and cadence.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Science in Society Presentation
CLO5 : Apply the dramatic story arc technique to create a compelling and persuasive video presentation.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Science in Society Presentation
CLO6 : Compose a cohesive and coherent discursive essay, applying structural writing steps of outlining, drafting, editing and submission.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Science in Society Essay

Learning and Teaching Technologies

Moodle - Learning Management System

Learning and Teaching in this course

The use of AI as a tutor is strongly encouraged. A week's module is devoted to teaching you how to use AI responsibly, ethically, and safely.

Assessments

Assessment Structure

Assessment Item	Weight	Relevant Dates
Introductory Exercises Assessment Format: Individual Short Extension: Yes (2 days)	20%	
Science in Society Presentation Assessment Format: Individual Short Extension: Yes (2 days)	40%	Start Date: Not Applicable Due Date: 10/07/2024 11:59 PM Post Date: 24/07/2024 11:30 PM
Science in Society Essay Assessment Format: Individual Short Extension: Yes (3 days)	40%	Start Date: Not Applicable Due Date: 02/08/2024 11:59 PM

Assessment Details

Introductory Exercises

Assessment Overview

You will undertake three short answer exercises in reading, writing, and critical thinking skills, early in the course. These exercises provide practice in communication techniques and provide the opportunity for swift individual feedback in Turnitin and general feedback in virtual classes from Week 2 to Week 4 to enable students to measure their progress. Each task is less than 300 words.

Course Learning Outcomes

- CLO1 : Compare and evaluate different modes of writing and be able to select the appropriate mode for a particular task.
- CLO2 : Demonstrate effective written communication tasks with clear and succinct paragraph and sentence construction that flow for readability.

Detailed Assessment Description

Note that the short extension applies to any of the three parts of this assessment but not to all three because they make up a single assessment (Assessment 1).

Science in Society Presentation

Assessment Overview

IN PART A (15% of the course marks) you will be expected to storyboard a presentation on a Science in Society topic provided (less than 200 words and you must, in addition, include at least three example slides). It is due at the end of Week 5.

IN PART B (25% of the course marks) you will use the feedback from your storyboard to create a four-minute PowerPoint video presentation applying the dramatic story arc to make a persuasive and engaging video presentation using PowerPoint. You must consider the reasons why a non-expert adult public audience would care about the story you are presenting and the action you expect them to take away from your message. You will demonstrate presentation techniques such as eye contact, gesturing, pitch, tone, and varying the speed of delivery. Part B is due in Week 7.

Course Learning Outcomes

- CLO4 : Deliver a presentation effectively to audiences utilising critical skills such as eye contact, gesturing, pitch, tone, and cadence.
- CLO5 : Apply the dramatic story arc technique to create a compelling and persuasive video presentation.

Detailed Assessment Description

Please note the short extension can be applied to either part of the assessment, but not both because they make up a single assessment.

Assessment Length

Video 3-4 minutes

Assignment submission Turnitin type

This assignment is submitted through Turnitin and students do not see Turnitin similarity reports.

Science in Society Essay

Assessment Overview

IN PART A (10% of the course marks), you will provide a draft outline and dot-point the steps you take to research (including references), outline and structure the discursive Science in Society essay (required in Part B) in Week 8. Dot points are encouraged with a word count of 600. You should apply the “And, But, Therefore” technique to set down the current situation, state the problem, and then explore the possible solution by applying critical thinking to the information and data you have collected, and extend that approach into Part B after consideration of feedback, which will be provided in Week 9.

IN PART B (30% of the course marks), you will act on the feedback from Part A to draft and revise the discursive 1,500-word essay building on the work in Part A due at the end of Week 10. The essay must demonstrate cohesion, coherence and clear, succinct construction. You will use

primary literature and academic-level source references (not included in the word count). You are encouraged to use Active Voice.

You will paraphrase all ideas from the information and data collected.

Course Learning Outcomes

- CLO2 : Demonstrate effective written communication tasks with clear and succinct paragraph and sentence construction that flow for readability.
- CLO3 : Synthesise and evaluate evidence, and demonstrate critical thinking.
- CLO6 : Compose a cohesive and coherent discursive essay, applying structural writing steps of outlining, drafting, editing and submission.

Detailed Assessment Description

Please note the short extension can be applied to either part of this assessment, but not both because the two parts make up a single assessment.

Assessment Length

1,500 words

Assignment submission Turnitin type

This assignment is submitted through Turnitin and students can see Turnitin similarity reports.

General Assessment Information

The following notes may be helpful:

1. All material from references must be paraphrased rather than quoted to demonstrate you understand the author's idea or concept. That means you may NOT include any direct quotes. You may not use the words of another author except proper nouns. If you do, you will lose marks for plagiarism, which can be up to 100% of the marks.
2. If you paraphrase another author's work, you must reference in-text and in a reference list. APA is the referencing style used in this course for in-text and listed references.
3. Use of generative AI is permitted, but you must reference the platform or platforms used. You should not copy and paste from AI because (a) that would not constitute your own work, and (b) AI-written text lacks critical thinking (you have to apply that aspect), and lack of critical thinking will impact your marks. Week 2 provides an extensive guide on the responsible and ethical use of AI as a tutor or collaborator, which is strongly encouraged.
4. You are strongly encouraged to ask for help with concepts when needed. Weekly virtual classes to generate a learning community and one-on-one tutorials are offered, the latter upon

request.

Grading Basis

Standard

Requirements to pass course

To get a Pass in this course, you must be able to apply all the concepts taught. Higher marks beyond a Pass will reflect increasing mastery of the course content.

Course Schedule

Attendance Requirements

Students are strongly encouraged to attend all classes and review lecture recordings.

Course Resources

Recommended Resources

The Science of Science Communication by Dr Craig Cormick. There is no need to buy this CSIRO book because you will have electronic access via the UNSW library.

Additional Costs

There are no additional costs.

Course Evaluation and Development

Student feedback is evaluated and applied to the course content and presentation, especially feedback provided in MyExperience.

Staff Details

Position	Name	Email	Location	Phone	Availability	Equitable Learning Services Contact	Primary Contact
Convenor	Carol Oliver		401c, Floor 4, Building D26	0417477612	On request, seven days a week.	No	Yes

Other Useful Information

Academic Information

Upon your enrolment at UNSW, you share responsibility with us for maintaining a safe,

harmonious and tolerant University environment.

You are required to:

- Comply with the University's conditions of enrolment.
- Act responsibly, ethically, safely and with integrity.
- Observe standards of equity and respect in dealing with every member of the UNSW community.
- Engage in lawful behaviour.
- Use and care for University resources in a responsible and appropriate manner.
- Maintain the University's reputation and good standing.

For more information, visit the [UNSW Student Code of Conduct Website](#).

Academic Honesty and Plagiarism

Referencing is a way of acknowledging the sources of information that you use to research your assignments. You need to provide a reference whenever you draw on someone else's words, ideas or research. Not referencing other people's work can constitute plagiarism.

Further information about referencing styles can be located at <https://student.unsw.edu.au/referencing>

Academic integrity is fundamental to success at university. Academic integrity can be defined as a commitment to six fundamental values in academic pursuits: honesty, trust, fairness, respect, responsibility and courage. At UNSW, this means that your work must be your own, and others' ideas should be appropriately acknowledged. If you don't follow these rules, plagiarism may be detected in your work.

Further information about academic integrity, plagiarism and the use of AI in assessments can be located at:

- The [Current Students site](#),
- The [ELISE training site](#), and
- The [Use of AI for assessments](#) site.

The Student Conduct and Integrity Unit provides further resources to assist you to understand your conduct obligations as a student: <https://student.unsw.edu.au/conduct>

Submission of Assessment Tasks

Penalty for Late Submissions

UNSW has a standard late submission penalty of:

- 5% per day,
- for all assessments where a penalty applies,
- capped at five days (120 hours) from the assessment deadline, after which a student cannot submit an assessment, and
- no permitted variation.

Any variations to the above will be explicitly stated in the Course Outline for a given course or assessment task.

Students are expected to manage their time to meet deadlines and to request extensions as early as possible before the deadline.

Special Consideration

If circumstances prevent you from attending/completing an assessment task, you must officially apply for special consideration, usually within 3 days of the sitting date/due date. You can apply by logging onto myUNSW and following the link in the My Student Profile Tab. Medical documentation or other documentation explaining your absence must be submitted with your application. Once your application has been assessed, you will be contacted via your student email address to be advised of the official outcome and any actions that need to be taken from there. For more information about special consideration, please visit: <https://student.unsw.edu.au/special-consideration>

Important note: UNSW has a “fit to sit/submit” rule, which means that if you sit an exam or submit a piece of assessment, you are declaring yourself fit to do so and cannot later apply for Special Consideration. This is to ensure that if you feel unwell or are faced with significant circumstances beyond your control that affect your ability to study, you do not sit an examination or submit an assessment that does not reflect your best performance. Instead, you should apply for Special Consideration as soon as you realise you are not well enough or are otherwise unable to sit or submit an assessment.

Faculty-specific Information

Additional support for students

- [The Current Students Gateway](#)
- [Student Support](#)
- [Academic Skills and Support](#)
- [Student Wellbeing, Health and Safety](#)
- [Equitable Learning Services](#)
- [UNSW IT Service Centre](#)

- Science EDI Student [Initiatives](#), [Offerings](#) and [Guidelines](#)