



ST. JEROME'S UNIVERSITY

St. Jerome's University in the University of Waterloo
Department of English
Engl 378/MTHEL 300
Professional Communication in Statistics and Actuarial Science
Winter 2021

Instructor

Instructor: Diana Lobb

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Time zone: UTC -05:00; Eastern Time (US & Canada)

Course Description

This course introduces students to oral and written communication in the fields of Statistics and Actuarial Science. With emphasis on the public presentation of technical knowledge, the ability to give and receive constructive feedback, and communication in a collaborative environment, this course helps students develop proficiencies in critical workplace skills. This course is writing intensive and includes extensive collaborative assignments.

Course Goals and Learning Outcomes

- Present highly technical, specialized knowledge to lay-people both orally and in writing.
- Analyze, represent, or translate specialized knowledge to a variety of audiences
- Perform research, read, and accurately summarize peer review articles
- Write, revise, and design professional documents that meet organizational protocols
- Understand the Actuarial Standards of Practice and the ethical guidelines for statistical analysis
- Write collaboratively in a professional context

Required texts

All texts will be available on Learn

Course Requirements and Assessment

Information on course requirements and assessments.

Assessment	Date of Evaluation (if known)	Weighting
Professionalization & Participation	Throughout term	15%
Summary (2 drafts)	Jan. 27 th & Feb. 2 nd	5%
Annotated bibliography	Feb. 9 th	5%
Critical Analysis Essay (2 drafts)	Mar. 2 nd & Mar. 10 th	10%
Oral briefing	Mar. 17 th	15%
Briefing Note (2 drafts)	Mar. 23 rd & Mar. 30 th	20%
Newspaper Article (2 drafts)	Apr. 6 th & Apr. 13 th	15%
Reflection Assignment	Apr. 21 st	15%
Total		100%

More detailed assignment guidelines will be provided on Learn.

1. Professionalism and participation (15%). Because this is a professional communications course, part of your professionalism grade will be based on your e-mail communications with me and your communications with your colleagues in the discussion fora. This grade will also be measured by your completion of peer-review assignments and other review/response assignments that will be assigned throughout the term. Your completion of peer-review assignments and other review/response assignment will be marked not just on your completion of the assignment but your genuine attempt to engage with the topic of the assignment at hand.
2. Summary (5%). You will choose one text from the choices provided on Learn and write a one-page summary of that text. Your summary should mostly consist of paraphrase and the occasional quotation, properly referenced. This assignment will be done in two drafts, the first of which will be shared with the class for peer editing. Your grade for this assignment will be determined on your completion of both required drafts.
3. Annotated bibliography (5%). As part of your team project, your team will produce an annotated bibliography of your research. Each team member will prepare one unique entry for inclusion in the over-all team annotated bibliography.
4. Critical Analysis Essay (10%): As part of your team project, each team member will prepare a unique critical analysis of one of the texts from the research you have done **in addition** to the works summarized for the annotated bibliography. This assignment is done in two drafts, the first of which will be shared to class for peer editing. Your grade for this assignment will be determined on your completion of both required drafts. *NOTE – you **cannot** use the works included in your annotated bibliography for this assignment.
5. Oral briefing (15%): As part of your team project, your team will develop an oral briefing for delivery to the class that relates to your briefing note. This will be delivered through Bongo, the video assignment platform available through Learn.
6. Briefing Note: (20%): As part of your team project, your team will develop a briefing note on an assigned topic. Your grade for this assignment will be determined on the basis of your completion of both required drafts.
7. Newspaper article (15%): Each student will be asked to prepare a newspaper article based on the briefing note prepared by one of the other teams, essentially enacting the “Globe and Mail test.” Your grade for this assignment will be determined on the basis of your completion of both required drafts.
8. Reflection assignment (15%): For this assignment, you will write honestly about your work during the term, focusing on ideas from this course that are important to your development as an academic. You will be expected to provide examples from your work this term to validate your ideas. I urge you to work on this assignment throughout the term and to show me your work in progress at any time. I will provide more information and guiding questions to help you to compose your learning reflections.

Course Outline / Class Schedule: This outline is a guideline. We will try to follow it to the best of our ability.

Notes on readings.

Week	Week Starting	Topic
1	Jan. 11th	Syllabus distribution. Start of term survey. Course introduction. Reading for key ideas.
2	Jan. 18th	Paraphrase, quotation and summary. Introduction of summary assignment.
3	Jan. 25 th	Peer editing summary. Introducing the team project: briefing notes. Teamwork.
4	Feb. 1st	Research workshop with DC library. Annotated bibliographies. Introducing the form of the briefing note.
5	Feb. 8th	Creating a strategic framework. Professional writing standards in Statistics and Actuarial Sciences: what are they and why they are important.
	Feb. 15th	READING WEEK
6	Feb. 22nd	Close reading and argumentation. Research and select the content
7	Mar. 1st	Grammar, Effective Quotation, Peer editing critical response essay
8	Mar. 8th	Oral presentations and visualizations Select the medium
9	Mar. 17th	Delivering the oral briefings. Prepare the briefing note.
10	Mar 22nd	Writing a newspaper article. The "Globe and Mail" test. Peer editing briefing notes and revision of briefing notes
11	Mar. 29th	Audience analysis (revisited) and writing a newspaper article
12	Apr. 5th	Peer editing the "Globe & Mail" test, Course conclusion

Late Work

All assignments are to be submitted electronically to the Learn drop box or discussion fora (as noted in the appropriate, detailed assignment description) by 11:59pm on the date noted. All late assignments will be penalized 3% per day, including weekends (i.e. Saturday and Sunday = 6%). Please note that assignments will not be accepted via e-mail.

Important Information

Academic Integrity: To maintain a culture of academic integrity, members of the University of Waterloo and its Affiliated and Federated Institutions of Waterloo (AFIW) are expected to promote honesty, trust, fairness, respect, and responsibility. See the [UWaterloo Academic Integrity](#) webpage for more information.

Discipline: A student is expected to know what constitutes academic integrity, to avoid committing academic offences, and to take responsibility for their actions. A student who is unsure whether an action constitutes an offence, or who needs help in learning how to avoid offences (e.g., plagiarism, cheating) or about "rules" for group work/collaboration should seek guidance from the course professor, academic advisor, or the Associate Dean. When misconduct has been found to have occurred, disciplinary penalties will be imposed under the [St. Jerome's University Policy on Student Discipline](#). For information on categories of offenses and types of penalties, students should refer to [University of Waterloo Policy 71 - Student Discipline](#). For typical penalties check [Guidelines for the Assessment of Penalties](#).

Students should be aware that this course contains the intellectual property of the instructor. This property may include (but is not limited to):

- PowerPoint slides, handouts,
- Lecture content, both spoken and written (includes any audio or video recording),
- Questions from various types of assessments (e.g. assignments, quizzes, tests),
- All course material is protected by copyright.

IMPORTANT: Making available the intellectual property of instructors without their express written consent (e.g. uploading lecture notes, assignments, test questions to an online repository such as Course Hero, OneClass) is considered theft of intellectual property, copyright violation, and subject to disciplinary sanctions as described in Policy 71 – Student Discipline.

Grievance: A student who believes that a decision affecting some aspect of their university life has been unfair or unreasonable may have grounds for initiating a grievance. Read the [St. Jerome's University Policy on Student Petitions and Grievances](#).

Appeals: A decision made or penalty imposed under the St. Jerome's University Policy on Student Petitions and Grievances (other than a petition) or the St. Jerome's University Policy on Student Discipline may be appealed if there is a ground. A student who believes they have a ground for an appeal should refer to the [St. Jerome's University Policy on Student Appeals](#).

Note for Students with Disabilities: The [AccessAbility Services](#) office, located on the first floor of the Needles Hall extension (1401), collaborates with all academic departments to arrange appropriate accommodations for students with disabilities without compromising the academic integrity of the curriculum. If you require academic accommodations to lessen the impact of your disability, please register with the AS office at the beginning of each academic term.

Mental Health Services:

On Campus

Counselling Services: counselling.services@uwaterloo.ca / 519-888-4567 x32655

[MATES](#): one-to-one peer support program offered by Federation of Students (FEDS) and Counselling Services

Health Services Emergency service: located across the creek from the Student Life Centre

Off campus, 24/7

[Good2Talk](#): Free confidential help line for post-secondary students. Phone: 1-866-925-5454

Grand River Hospital: Emergency care for mental health crisis. Extended Assessment Unit

Phone: 519-749-4300 x6880

[Here 24/7](#): Mental Health and Crisis Service Team. Phone: 1-844-437-3247

[OK2BME](#): Support services for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender or questioning teens in

Waterloo. Phone: 519-884-0000 x222

Full details can be found online at the Faculty of ARTS [website](#)

Download [UWaterloo and regional mental health resources \(PDF\)](#)

Download the [WatSafe app](#) to your phone to quickly access mental health support information

Contact Health Services

[Health Services Building](#)

Call 519-888-4096 to schedule an appointment

Call 1-866-797-0000 for free 24/7 advice from a health professional

Contact Counselling Services

[Needles Hall Addition, NH 2401](#)

Call 519-888-4567 x 32655 to schedule an appointment counserv@uwaterloo.ca

Diversity: It is our intent that students from all diverse backgrounds and perspectives be well served by this course, and that students' learning needs be addressed both in and out of class. We recognize the immense value of the diversity in identities, perspectives, and contributions that students bring, and the benefit it has on our educational environment. Your suggestions are encouraged and appreciated. Please let us know ways to improve the effectiveness of the course for you personally or for other students or student groups. In particular:

- We will gladly honour your request to address you by an alternate/preferred name or gender pronoun. Please advise us of this preference early in the semester so we may make appropriate changes to our records.
- We will honour your religious holidays and celebrations. Please inform of us these at the start of the course.
- We will follow AccessAbility Services guidelines and protocols on how to best support students with different learning needs.