

Neuroscience Professional Survival Skills

GMS7795

Course Syllabus

This 3-credit online course is a 14-week course that is offered during the Fall and Spring terms. The course is divided into 11 weekly modules with the exception that modules 9-11 that will each be completed over the course of 2 weeks. The following table shows the module topics that we will cover in this course and the number of weeks that will be spent on each module.

Week	Topics
1	Course Introduction
1	Module 1 - Understanding Expectations of Readers
2	Module 2 - Word Selection and Writing Clarity
3	Module 3 - From Sentences to Paragraphs
4	Module 4 - Scientific Manuscripts: The Introduction
5	Module 5 - Scientific Manuscripts: Materials and Methods
6	Module 6 - Scientific Manuscripts: Results and Discussion
7	Module 7 - Scientific Manuscripts: Abstracts
8	Module 8 - Preparation of Publishable Digital Figures and Figure Legends
9-10	Module 9 - Research Proposals
11-12	Module 10 - Poster Presentations
13-14	Module 11 - Oral Presentations

Course Objectives and Goals

The primary learning objectives for this course are listed below. Each learning module has been structured to help you successfully complete these objectives. Upon completing this course you will be able to:

- Describe how individuals read scientific documents and what the individual's expectations are when they read these documents

- Describe the importance of word selection and how word use affects writing clarity
- Recognize and write logically cohesive passages
- Create "publication ready" digital scientific figures
- Describe the similarities between research papers and research proposals
- Create and deliver effective poster and oral presentations

Instructional Methods

To enable students to get the most out of this course, I have integrated several online communication tools into this course that should make it easier to actively engage in the creative processes of writing and digital media creation. In this course, all lectures and some assignments will involve use of VoiceThread, an asynchronous learning platform. Writing and media creation assignments will be submitted, peer-reviewed, and discussed within the Canvas course platform.

The textbook *Scientific Writing and Communication - Papers, Proposals, and Presentations, 4th Edition*, by Angelika H. Hofmann, Oxford University Press is required for this course. This book is available as a paperback or eTextbook and is worth purchasing because (1) each module contains a reading assignment taken from this textbook and (2) the book will serve as an excellent reference text for you once the course is completed. When appropriate, I have supplemented the assigned textbook chapters with specific papers.

Academic Assignments and Grading

- Readings are assigned from the required textbook (see course materials above) and in some instances, published primary literature.
- VoiceThread lectures are accessible through the course website. Students are encouraged to post any questions they have about the lecture material directly within the lectures using the text, audio, or video + audio commenting features of VoiceThread. These questions will only be visible to the instructor. All questions will be answered by the instructor. The answers to questions that would benefit all students taking the course will be posted in the lecture so all students can view them.
- Module tests have been designed to reinforce the lecture and reading assignments. All tests will be taken using LockDown browser and specific directions for taking and viewing the results of these tests accompany each test. Pay particular attention to when the results of your test will be visible to you.
- Written assignments and assigned peer reviews will be submitted through the Canvas course platform.

- Online, scheduled synchronous meetings between students and the instructor will be available by request throughout the semester using Zoom Conferences.

MODULE TESTS

Modules 1-3 include module tests that will be taken using LockDown browser. The Module tests consist of T/F, multiple choice, matching, fill-in-the-blank, and multiple answer, and short essay questions.

These tests are timed and the questions will be randomized. Importantly, the time limit for completing the exam starts when you start the exam. If you begin a 40 min exam 20 minutes before it is due (e.g. 11:59 pm), you will have only 20 min to complete the exam because Lockdown browser will automatically submit your exam when it is due.

You will receive your score for the test when you submit it but your score will not contain the results for any short written answer questions in the test. You will not receive your final score for the module tests that include short written answer questions until I grade them. I will post the corrected test results within 24 hours of the due date/time. You will then be given 24 hours to view each test and you will be able to see correct/incorrect answers and the comments I post on your tests.

I strongly recommend that you take the ALL online tests well before the time they are due which is 11:59 pm. The speed of the internet can significantly decrease between 10 pm and midnight and can be particularly problematic during times when there is a dramatic increase in online instruction. Thus, to avoid time delays during testing, you should try to complete exams during non-peak hours and of course avoid using Wifi connections.

WRITTEN ASSIGNMENTS

Student will complete seven assignments that involve writing and/or written critiques of written material and two peer reviews. These assignments are accompanied by grading rubrics that will provide you with guidelines about how your assignments will be evaluated.

ORAL PRESENTATION

Students will create a short oral presentation (5 min) using VoiceThread in Module 11. These presentations will be shared with the class and each student will be assigned one presentation to peer review. Projects and peer reviews will be graded using rubrics provided with the assignments.

GRADING

The percent of the total points possible for this course (497 points) that you earn from the three module tests (95 points possible), the eight writing assignments (316 points possible), the two peer reviews (36 points possible), and the oral presentation (50 points possible) will determine your final grade for this course.

Module tests will be graded automatically except for any short answer questions which will be graded by me. Grading rubrics will be used to evaluate writing assignments, peer reviews, and the oral presentation. You will be given the rubrics ahead of time so that you will understand what is required to successfully complete these assignments and projects and how they will be evaluated.

Students are expected to complete all assignments by the deadlines found in the online course syllabus. Students should carefully examine the auto-generated Canvas course syllabus that lists the specific assignments associated with each module and the dates/times that these assignments are due. It is important to make a note of due dates for the various quizzes, tests, and assignments since they vary across modules.

There will be no deadline extensions for completion of a module unless an extension is requested by the student and granted by me (see Exam/Assignment Policy below). Failure to submit a module assignment, quiz, test, or the final project by the course deadline will be recorded as zero if no extension was granted.

Assignment Type	Points Available
Module Tests (3)	95
Writing Assignments (8)	316
Peer Reviews (2)	36
Oral Presentation (1)	50
	Total points 497

% Total Points Earned	Letter Grade	Grade Points
93-100	A	4.0
90-92	A-	3.67
87-89	B+	3.33
83-86	B	3.0
80-82	B-	2.67
77-79	C+	2.33
73-76	C	2.0
70-72	C-	1.67

67-69	D+	1.33
63-66	D	1.0
60-62	D-	0.67
Below 60	E	0.0

Please be aware that a C- is not an acceptable grade for graduate students. If you obtain a C- in a course, it may be possible for you to retake the course but your C- will remain part of your calculated cumulative GPA. If you are enrolled in either the Biomedical Neuroscience Certificate or MSc programs you must have a cumulative final GPA of 3.00 or higher.

Additional information on UF grading policy may be found at: <https://catalog.ufl.edu/graduate/regulations/#text>

Late assignments, quizzes and tests

We recognize that personal circumstances arise that may interfere with your ability to meet a deadline. If you anticipate missing a deadline, please let the instructor know as soon as possible and they will work with you to resolve the issue. Your emails will be responded to within 24 hours (typically sooner). Please see the [UF Attendance Policies](#) concerning absences, religious holidays, and illness. In general, late assignments, quizzes, and tests will not be accepted unless you have obtained a deadline extension from the instructor.

If you encounter technical difficulties with assignments (e.g. LockDown browser malfunction), be sure to include a UF helpdesk ticket number in your request for a deadline extension if you plan to request one. The extension request MUST be submitted within 24 hours of the technical difficulty.

REQUIRED TECHNOLOGY

- Laptop or desktop computer equipped with microphone and video camera. The microphone and video camera can be used to post comments/questions to VoiceThread and will be used to create the VoiceThread projects. There are VoiceThread apps that are available for free for iOS and Android devices that can be used to view the VT and comment on them. I strongly recommend that you use a laptop or desktop computer when working on your VT projects for this course.
- High speed, broad band internet connection such as DSL or cable. A broadband Internet connection is strongly recommended. Slower connections may affect your ability to interact with materials in the course. It is also recommended that you try to submit course exams and assignments well ahead of the deadline since we have found that network speeds can significantly slow as the deadline

approaches due to increased use. SPECIAL NOTE: Some users with satellite Internet service may find their online courses do not load quickly or consistently due to satellite network design issues.

- Installation of LockDown Browser on computer that you will use for this course. The computer you use to take exams should be “hard wired” to the internet. WiFi is not stable enough to support a reliable connection.
- Canvas courses are best viewed using Chrome or Firefox. For specific questions about browser compatibilities and general questions about e-learning at UF please go to <https://elearning.ufl.edu/student-help-faqs/>

COURSE EVALUATION

Students are expected to provide feedback on the quality of instruction in this course by completing online evaluations course evaluations online via GatorEvals at the end of the course. Guidance on how to give feedback in a professional and respectful manner is available at <https://gatorevals.aa.ufl.edu/students/>. You will be notified when the evaluation period opens, and can access and complete evaluations through either the email you receive from GatorEvals, the Canvas course GatorEvals menu item, or via <https://ufl.bluera.com/ufl/>. Summaries of course evaluation results are available to students at <https://gatorevals.aa.ufl.edu/public-results/>.

PLAGIARISM

Students must understand what plagiarism is and must not engage in this behavior when completing assignments and tests in this course. The University of Florida Student Honor Code states that plagiarism includes but is not limited to:

- Quoting oral or written materials including but not limited to those found on the internet, whether published or unpublished, without proper attribution.
- Submitting a document or assignment that in whole or in part is identical or substantially identical to a document or assignment not authored by the student.

Student whose assignments/tests exhibit evidence of plagiarism will receive zeros for those assignments and tests for the first offense and will receive a warning. Students who continue to engage in this behavior after the warning will be reported to the UF Dean of Students Office.

PROHIBITED COLLABORATION OR CONSULTATION

Student found to be involved in sharing answers and/or collaborating on exams or assignments will receive zeros for those exams and assignments. Students who continue to engage in this behavior after the warning will be reported to the UF Dean of Students Office.

HOW TO SUCCEED IN ONLINE COURSES

First, you need to be aware that online learning poses its own unique challenges. Because the online classroom is available to you 24 hours a day it is easy to delay work

on course material, forget deadlines, and not put enough time in to perform well on exams. These challenges are exacerbated when a student is not a 'self-starter' or if does not possess good time management skills including use of reminders.

Unlike traditional instructional settings in which each student goes to the same class, the online setting enables every student to "create" the class of his or her choosing. In theory, this type of instruction should be more adaptable to a variety of learning styles; however, the reality is that some students have not yet determined what their optimal learning style is. Poor performance in online courses often can be directly linked to procrastination and poor time management (trying to do a week's worth of work just before the deadline). Rushing to complete assignments before the 11:59 pm deadlines on Sundays is NOT a good strategy because you forfeit your opportunity to ask questions about material you do not understand. Completing the self-check quizzes during the work week can help you to pinpoint problem areas. In general, we are able answer questions you have about course content within 12-24 hrs of your posting of your question. Oftentimes, we answer much more quickly. Questions posted on Sundays may not be answered before you take your exams that are due at 11:59 pm on Sunday.

You are expected to adhere to the posted assignment deadlines; however, you should note that the assignments, quizzes, and tests associated with each Module can be completed at your own pace over the course of each week. The self-check quizzes associated with each module are due throughout the week. You should pay special attention to these deadlines since extensions to complete these quizzes will NOT be made. It is possible to request a deadline extension, but requests must be submitted to the instructor and approved prior to the deadline. The tests associated with each Module are due by 11:59 pm each Sunday. Finally, for the Beyond-the Basics assignments will be due on Saturdays at 11:59 pm when assigned.

ACADEMIC HONESTY

As a result of completing the registration form at the University of Florida, every student has signed the following statement: "I understand that the University of Florida expects its students to be honest in all their academic work. I agree to this commitment to academic honesty and understand that my failure to comply with this commitment may result in disciplinary action up to and including expulsion from the University."

We fully support the intent of the above statement and will not tolerate academic dishonesty.

All students enrolled in GMS 6021 are expected to follow the University of Florida Honor Code (excerpt above). The full text can be found at:

<http://regulations.ufl.edu/chapter4/40412008.pdf>

Student guidelines for ethical behavior can be found at:

<http://www.registrar.ufl.edu/catalog/policies/students.html>.

Please also review the use of copyrighted materials, which can be found on the Health Science Center Library's web page:

<http://www.library.health.ufl.edu/services/copyright.htm>

WHEN DO I CONTACT THE UF HELPDESK?

In the event that you have **technical difficulties with E-learning**, please contact the UF helpdesk at learning-support@ufl.edu, or (352) 392-4357 - select option 2. If your technical difficulties will cause you to miss a due date, you **MUST** report the problem to E-learning. Include the ticket number that you are given in an e-mail to the instructor to explain the late assignment/quiz/test.

Types of questions that should be directed to the Help Desk:

1. I can't log into E-learning
2. I have clicked on the "submit" button for my quiz and nothing is happening
3. I can't upload an assignment (be sure that you have reviewed the tutorial on how to do this **BEFORE** you contact the Help Desk)
4. E-learning has given me an error message and I can't submit my assignment.

NOTE: Late work that involves technical difficulties with E-learning **MUST** be accompanied by a ticket number from the Help Desk.

ALSO - Be sure to be familiar with the hours of operation for the UF help desk since they are oftentimes not available after 10:30pm on workdays and after 8:00 pm on weekends. Their hours are posted at <http://helpdesk.ufl.edu/about/business-hours/>

WHEN DO I POST QUESTIONS TO THE COURSE QUESTIONS DISCUSSION BOARD?

Questions that deal with the course itself should be submitted to the Course Questions board. Posted questions should **NOT** be about grades or a private matter. Do not post personal grade questions on the Course Questions discussion board.

Before posting a question, check those already posted to be sure that you are not duplicating a question. These should be things that other students in the class might have trouble with. For example:

1. I am unable to post comments to VoiceThread.
2. The link to Blendspace or a specific VoiceThread is not working.
3. One of the quiz questions did not display properly.

Posting on the Course questions board is the fastest way to get an answer to your question. Be sure to give it a meaningful heading!

Questions of a private nature should be e-mailed to the course instructor (see below on how to e-mail within E-learning). In all cases, please allow 24 hours for a response.

Every effort will be made to answer questions posted over the weekend with 24 hours. If not addressed, they will be addressed on the following Monday.

WHEN DO I EMAIL MY INSTRUCTOR?

Questions about the course should be e-mailed to the instructor through the e-mail tool in Elearning.

Examples of e-mail questions for the instructor to get clear, concise responses:

1. I think there is an error in my grade for the assignment in module 3 (be sure to explain exactly why you think there is an error and provide documentation)
2. I am behind in the course and I would like to know how I may catch up (in such a case, your instructor may ask you to set up a Skype meeting or a time to call on the telephone)

If you have questions about the course itself, please reread the syllabus before asking a question. If the answer is not in the syllabus, check the Course Questions discussion board (this discussion board can be located by clicking on the discussions menu tab on the left of the course home page). If the answer to your question is not there, please post the question on the Course Questions discussion board.

DO NOT e-mail the instructor with general course questions. If your question is of a personal nature, e-mail your instructor from within e-learning system using the instructions below. Late work that involves technical difficulties with E-learning **MUST** be accompanied by a ticket number from the Help Desk.

HOW TO EMAIL YOUR INSTRUCTOR

When emailing your instructor, please do so through Canvas.

To send an e-mail from the course:

1. Click on the mail icon that is located the left side of your screen.
2. Click the "Compose Message" button.
3. "To: window" will display.
4. Locate your instructor's name.
5. Always include a description in your subject line
6. Type your message and add any necessary attachments. Be sure that your subject line is meaningful.
7. Click "send."

STUDENT SUPPORT SERVICES

As a student in a distance learning course or program you have access to the same student support services that on campus students have. For course content questions contact your instructor.

For any technical issues you encounter with your course please contact the UF computing Help Desk at 352-392-4357. For Help Desk hours visit: <http://helpdesk.ufl.edu/>.

For a list of additional student support services links and information please visit: <http://www.distance.ufl.edu/student-services>

Special Accommodations

Students requesting disability-related academic accommodations must first register with the Disability Resource Center (<http://www.dso.ufl.edu/drc/>). This should be done as early in the semester as possible.

****All audio lectures in this course are accompanied by written closed caption transcripts****

The Disability Resource Center will provide documentation to the student who must then provide this documentation to the Instructor when requesting accommodation. The Disability Resource Center is located in 001 Building 0020 (Reid Hall). Their phone number is 352-3928565.