Semester at a Glance
Meets 2:00–4:50 p.m. Fridays, online https://illinois.zoom.us/s/98244722496

Writing Workshop is held weekly, unless otherwise noted
In-Class Activities require your attention and enthusiastic participation
Homework Assignments must be emailed to phys496@physics.illinois.edu by the deadline*

Schedule is subject to change; changes will be posted to course website
Questions about the schedule should be directed to Celia Elliott

August 28—first day of class
Introduction to Writing Workshop—rationale and goals
WW #1—“Finding the Right Word”
Course introduction and web tour (Class questions and discussion—come prepared) (cme)
Evaluating a science talk or colloquium (NM)
Effective titles (cme)
No homework due today

September 4
WW #2—Literature search group activity
How to read a physics paper (NM)
Mass, count, and collective nouns (cme)
Standards and values for physicists (group activity)
HW #1—“Evaluating Titles”

September 11
Avoiding plagiarism (NM)
Technical Writing 101 (Review the handout prior to class!)
How to write an abstract (cme)
Writing an abstract—collaborative activity + group presentations
HW #2—“Understanding a Paper”

September 18
WW #3—“Using the Right Word”
Reference rules and styles in scientific writing (cme)
How to get started if you hate to write, Part I (Outlines) (cme)
Analyzing your audience—how to pitch your “story” appropriately (NM)
HW #3—“Abstract & Title”

* Deadline dates and times are listed on each written homework assignment.
September 25
WW #4: “Four-Letter Words in Science Writing”
How to get started if you hate to write, Part II (Paragraphs) (cme)
Guest speaker—Professor Lance Cooper, “How to Pick a Graduate School” (3 p.m.)
HW #4—“Proper Referencing”

October 2
WW #5: “Ambiguous Pronouns”
Revising and editing your work (cme)
Class activity: Rules for capitalization and acronyms (Review the handout prior to class)
HW #5—“Explaining Physics” Draft Due
Colloquium Report #1 Due

October 9
WW #6: “Them Thar Indirect Openings”
The scientific publication process (NM)
Peer reviewing (cme)
Guest speaker—Professor Taylor Hughes, Condensed Matter Theory
HW #6—“Explaining Physics Concepts” Final Version Due

October 16
WW #7: “The Three-Preposition Rule (3PR)”
Effective science talks (NM or cme)
Class activity: Rules for expressing numbers (Review the handout prior to class)
First meeting of journal-club teams
HW #7—Peer Reviews

October 23
WW #8—“Making Verbs Work”
How to present a journal-club talk (cme)
Voice and tense—Making verbs work (cme)
Guest speaker—Professor Elizabeth Goldschmidt, AMO Experiment
Have team scribe submit your paper selection for your journal-club talk
HW #8—Short Science Talk Draft Slides

October 30
WW #9—“Evaluating Figures and Captions”
Collaborative writing in physics (cme)
Acknowledgments in publications, talks, and posters (cme)
Creating good figures and captions (NM)
HW #9—Short Science Talk (presented during class)
Arrange for your JC team to meet with Professor Mason by November 6!
November 6
WW #10: “Parallel Construction”
A framework for ethical decisions (cme)
Hard problems—ethical case studies team activity
Fermi problems (NM)
Making estimates in research (group activity)
HW #10 Evaluating Figures and Captions

November 13
Applications—CVs, resumes, and cover letters (cme)
Writing a statement of purpose for grad school admissions (cme)
Guest speaker—Professor Lucas Wagner, Computational Condensed Matter Physics
HW #11—Making Your Own Figures and Captions

November 20
WW #11—“Shooting for Shorth”
Scientific posters (cme)
The scientific publication process (NM)
Intellectual property and copyright (cme)
Class activity: Eliminating fluff in scientific writing (Review the handout prior to class)
HW #12 Resume and Statement of Purpose or Cover Letter

November 27—No class, Thanksgiving break

Monday, November 30—Mail your nearly final journal club slides to phys496@physics.illinois.edu by NOON!

December 4—last day of class
WW #12—“Putting it All Together—Ms. P-style Editing”
The Last Word on “Due To” (cme)
HW #13 Journal Club Talk (presented during class)