

Homework Assignment #5, Writing for a General Audience

The purpose of this assignment is to practice explaining scientific concepts to a general audience and to learn “journalistic” writing style, which is quite different from standard scholarly writing.

For the assignment, you’ll interview a UI faculty member about his or her research program and write a brief news article, suitable for publication on the Physics Illinois website, about it. Your article should be written for an audience of undergraduate physics students and should both capture their attention and teach them something new.

Your article, which should be no more than three pages, including text and figures, must contain the following elements:

1. An engaging title.
2. A “byline” (your name and the date of the article).
3. A strong “lead” for the first sentence to capture the audience’s interest.
4. A central finding (the “news”).
5. A direct quotation from the person interviewed.
6. At least two illustrative images, with appropriate credit given to the sources. (You do not have to create these figures yourself, but you must credit the original authors and identify where they came from.)
7. At least four embedded hyperlinks* to related, supplementary material. (Links to Wikipedia® articles do not count.)
8. A funding-agency disclaimer, if required. (Ask the professor.)

Emulate good examples:

UI News Bureau (<http://illinois.edu/lb/iList/914>)

Inside Science (<http://www.insidescience.org/>)—I particularly liked the “[Physicists and Archaeologists Tussle over Long-Lost Lead](#)”[†]—cme)

The National Science Foundation (http://www.nsf.gov/discoveries/index.jsp?prio_area=11)

New York Times “science” section (<http://www.nytimes.com/pages/science/>)

Due: **Friday, March 6, Midnight**. Email your assignment to both Professor Gammie and Celia. Late submissions will be downgraded and will be ineligible for rewrite points.

Total—100 points

* See <http://www.gcfllearnfree.org/word2010/13.2> for instructions on how to insert a hyperlink in a Word document.

[†] This title is an example of how to embed a hyperlink in your narrative.