George Mason University
College of Education and Human Development
Exercise, Fitness & Health Promotion

EFHP 690.001 – Scientific Communications Seminar
3 Credits, Spring 2020
Thursdays 8:00 am to 9:00 am
Online

Faculty

Name:	Dr. Justin Merrigan
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Office Location:	Virtual
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Prerequisites/Corequisites
Graduate standing or permission of the instructor

University Catalog Course Description
Studies and applies written and verbal communication skills in reading, analyzing, writing, and distributing scientific information in Applied Kinesiology.

Course Overview
In this course students learn the skills required for scientific communications. Students will review scientific information presented in professional and popular media. Students will also develop a scientific communication proposal that will include describing the significance ability to communicate will be evaluated using in a variety of formats as they present information. Additionally, students will explore various career opportunities available and identify skills, knowledge and abilities employers are currently seeking. Professional communication skills will be developed by a number of in-class and out-of-class activities.

Course Delivery Method
This course will be delivered online (100%) using a synchronous format via Blackboard Learning Management system (LMS) housed in the MyMason portal. You will log in to the Blackboard (Bb) course site using your Mason email name (everything before @masonlive.gmu.edu) and email password. The course site will be available on 1/25/2020.

Under no circumstances, may candidates/students participate in online class sessions (either by phone or Internet) while operating motor vehicles. Further, as expected in a face-to-face class meeting, such online participation requires undivided attention to course content and communication.

Technical Requirements

To participate in this course, students will need to satisfy the following technical requirements:

- High-speed Internet access with standard up-to-date browsers. To get a list of Blackboard's supported browsers see:
  https://help.blackboard.com/Learn/Student/Getting_Started/Browser_Support#supported-browsers

  To get a list of supported operation systems on different devices see:
  https://help.blackboard.com/Learn/Student/Getting_Started/Browser_Support#tested-devices-and-operating-systems

- Students must maintain consistent and reliable access to their GMU email and Blackboard, as these are the official methods of communication for this course.
- Students will need a headset microphone for use with the Blackboard Collaborate web conferencing tool.
- Students may be asked to create logins and passwords on supplemental websites and/or to download trial software to their computer or tablet as part of course requirements.

Expectations

- Course Week:
  Our course week will begin on the day that our synchronous meetings take place (Thursday) as indicated on the Schedule of Classes.
- Log-in Frequency:
  Students must actively check the course Blackboard site and their GMU email for communications from the instructor, class discussions, and/or access to course materials at least 3 times per week. In addition, students must log-in for all scheduled online synchronous meetings.
- Participation:
  Students are expected to actively engage in all course activities throughout the semester, which includes viewing all course materials, completing course activities and assignments, and participating in course discussions and group interactions.
- Technical Competence:
  Students are expected to demonstrate competence in the use of all course technology. Students who are struggling with technical components of the course are expected to seek assistance from the instructor and/or College or University technical services.
- Technical Issues:
  Students should anticipate some technical difficulties during the semester and should, therefore, budget their time accordingly. Late work will not be accepted based on individual technical issues.
- Workload:
  Please be aware that this course is **not** self-paced. Students are expected to meet *specific deadlines* and *due dates* listed in the **Class Schedule** section of this syllabus. It is the student's responsibility to keep track of the weekly course schedule of topics, readings, activities and assignments due.
- Instructor Support:
  Students may schedule a one-on-one meeting to discuss course requirements, content or other course-related issues. Those unable to come to a Mason campus can meet with the

instructor via telephone or web conference. Students should email the instructor to schedule a one-on-one session, including their preferred meeting method and suggested dates/times.

- Netiquette:
  The course environment is a collaborative space. Experience shows that even an innocent remark typed in the online environment can be misconstrued. Students must always re-read their responses carefully before posting them, so as others do not consider them as personal offenses. *Be positive in your approach with others and diplomatic in selecting your words*. Remember that you are not competing with classmates but sharing information and learning from others. All faculty are similarly expected to be respectful in all communications.
- Accommodations:
  Online learners who require effective accommodations to ensure accessibility must be registered with George Mason University Disability Services.

Learner Outcomes or Objectives
This course is designed to enable students to do the following:

1. *Critically* review and evaluate the quality of scientific literature
2. Present scientific information using professional written and verbal communication formats
3. Evaluate personal strengths and weaknesses in light of demands and expectations of employment in the various positions in the field
4. Explore career opportunities in the professional field
5. Develop professional and inter-personal skills and outlets desired by employers

Required Texts
N/A

Course Performance Evaluation
Students are expected to submit all assignments on time in the manner outlined by the instructor (e.g., Blackboard, Tk20, hard copy).

- **Assignments and/or Examinations**
  - **Resume / Cover Letter**
    - Create a resume and cover letter. If you already have a resume use this assignment as an opportunity to update and improve it. Reviewing the Resume Contents sections that describe and give examples of an Objective, Education, Experience, etc. will help you create the rough draft of your resume. Job description and post used to direct the cover letter must also be included.
  - **Professional Social Media Outlets**
    - Create social media outlets (i.e. Linkedin / Twitter / Instagram) for professional use. Follow individuals in your class and discuss ways to improve these tools to best increase your attractiveness to headhunters.
  - **Search Committee Candidate Summary and Interview**
    - You will act as interviewers and interviewees in Zoom breakout rooms. This group activity will require you to answer and ask a few questions in preparation for serving as both interviewees and interviewers. Following the in-class experience, we will meet briefly for discussion as a class and each

student will write a short synopsis (1 paragraph) on their experience as the interviewer (who they would have selected and why) and interviewee (what questions they struggled answering).

- o **Educational Video**
  - Make a short (1-3 minute) video explaining a concept or demonstrating proper exercise technique for a movement/lift of your choice. These educational videos are commonly used to educate clients by a variety of professionals. The exercise or assessment should be a complex movement or core movement explained at a "master's" level. Option to practice 3-minute thesis presentation.
- o **Story Telling with Data**
  - Although the entire manuscript is important to write, many authors fail to spend enough time on key parts of their manuscript that will be read most often. Thus, this project will focus on creating a title, research statement, keywords, abstract, and data presentation (figures, tables) for a dataset you have. The main part of this assignment is to display the data in an appropriate and easily digestible manner, with other pieces required as background information to the data presented.
- o **Infographics**
  - Develop an infographic from your data, a topic of interest, or a recent article (less than a year old). The end product should be an informative .png.
- o **Presenting Posters**
  - Students will submit a poster and present based on the same data discussed from the story telling with data assignment.
- o **Professional Reflection**
  - Write a 1-page reflection on your professional strengths and weaknesses. For each weakness develop a plan to improve. Include short-, medium- and long-term career goals.
- o **Article / Topic Critiques**
  - Throughout the semester students and guests may present a variety of articles and/or topics (including infographics or posters) to the class. For some of these articles / topics you will be asked to either submit a 1-page critique or short discussion.

- **Other Requirements**
  - o **Attendance**
    - Attendance will include synchronous meetings and class discussions. Students are expected to be on time, attend all class meetings and complete all discussion board posts on time. Excused absences from synchronous meetings include the following: illness (must email note from a doctor), family death, athletic/academic event, and others at the discretion of the instructor. For known upcoming absences, students must contact the instructor at least one week in advance to the missed class to make up work. In the case of illness or some other unforeseen absence, the student must contact the instructor via e-mail. It is the student's obligation to pursue any make-up work.
  - o **Academic Load**

- Although many students must work to meet living expenses, employment and personal responsibilities are not acceptable reasons for late arrivals, missed classes, or incomplete assignments. Employment must not take priority over academic responsibilities. For additional information on this subject, please see the GMU Academic Catalog (http://catalog.gmu.edu/content.php?catoid=5&navoid=104#Registration_attendance). Students failing to observe these guidelines should expect no special consideration for academic problems arising from the pressures of employment.

- **Honor Code**
  - Students are held to the standards of the George Mason University Honor Code (see http://honorcode.gmu.edu for details). Violations, including cheating and plagiarism, will be reported to the Honor Committee. Student assignments may be put through plagiarism detecting software.

- **Written Assignments**
  - All assignments must be typed in Microsoft Word, and formatted as follows (*unless otherwise specified*): double spaced, 12 point Times New Roman font, 1 inch margins, your name and title in the running header at top left had corner, continuous line numbers on left margin, and page numbers centered in footer. Failure to comply with any or all parts of this format will result in an unacceptable assignment, which corresponds to zero (0) points.
  - Pay close attention to spelling and grammar as these will count towards your grade on written assignments. American Medical Association Manual (AMA) of Style (10th edition) format must be used for all written work in this class (e.g., in referencing, creation of tables, and formatting headers for paper sections).
  - Assignments must be turned in on Blackboard/MyMason Portal by ***11:59 pm on Saturday*** of the week the assignment is due (*unless otherwise specified*). No late assignments will be accepted. It is recommended that students keep copies of all submitted work.

- **E-mail Correspondence**
  - Only messages that originate from a George Mason University address will be accepted. ***Emails with no text in the body will not be acknowledged.*** *Note:* All email will be responded to in the order in which it is received. Students should allow 48 hours for a response.

- **Grading**

Assignments	% of Total Grade	Course Objectives
Resume / Cover Letter	5%	3, 4 & 5
Professional Social Media Outlets	5%	2, 3, 4 & 5
Interview Assignment	5%	3, 4 & 5

Educational Video	10%	1, 2, 3, 4 & 5
Storytelling with Data	15%	1, 2, 3, 4 & 5
Infographics	10%	1, 2, 3, 4 & 5
Poster & Presentation	15%	1, 2, 3, 4 & 5
Professional Reflection	10%	3, 4 & 5
Article / Topic Critiques	5%	1 & 2
Participation	20%	1, 2, 3, 4, & 5
Total	100%	

Grade	Percentage	Quality Points	Grade	Percentage	Quality Points
A	93%	4.00	B-	80%	2.67*
A-	90%	3.67	C	73%	2.00
B+	87%	3.33	F	<73%	0.00
B	83%	3.00			

Professional Dispositions
 See https://cehd.gmu.edu/students/polices-procedures/

Class Schedule

Week / Date	Topic	Chapter/Assignment Due
1 / Jan 25	Welcome Back! Overview of course / EXPRESS Meeting	
2 / Feb 1	Resumes & Cover Letters	**Resume & Cover Letters – Submit to be reviewed by a Peer**
3 / Feb 8	Social Media Outlets / Professions / Goals	**Resume & Cover Letters – Final Submit on BB – Create or update social media accounts – discuss professions**
4 / Feb 15	Search Committee and Interview Assignment	**Prepare for and participate in the in class meeting and submit the summary report.**

5 / Feb 22	Communicating Effectively with Data: Tables and Figures	
6 / March 1	Story Telling with Data: Titles, abstracts, keywords	**Submit Story Telling with Data Assignment**
7 / March 8	Non-traditional methods of Sharing Knowledge	
8 / March 15	Non-traditional methods of Sharing Knowledge	**Submit Infographic**
9 / March 22	Presentations	
10 / March 29	Presentations	**Educational Video – Submit on BB**
11 / April 5	Posters	
12 / April 12	Presenting Research with Posters	**Submit Posters**
13 / April 19	Presenting Research with Posters	**5 min - Poster Presentations (Synchronous)**
14 / April 26	End of the semester wrap-up	**Professional Reflection – Submit on BB**

Note: Faculty reserves the right to alter the schedule as necessary, with notification to students.

Core Values Commitment

The College of Education and Human Development is committed to collaboration, ethical leadership, innovation, research-based practice, and social justice. Students are expected to adhere to these principles: http://cehd.gmu.edu/values/.

GMU Policies and Resources for Students

Policies

- Students must adhere to the guidelines of the Mason Honor Code (see http://oai.gmu.edu/the-mason-honor-code/).

- Students must follow the university policy for Responsible Use of Computing (see http://universitypolicy.gmu.edu/policies/responsible-use-of-computing/).

- Students are responsible for the content of university communications sent to their Mason email account and are required to activate their account and check it regularly. All communication from the university, college, school, and program will be sent to students **solely** through their Mason email account.

- Students with disabilities who seek accommodations in a course must be registered with George Mason University Disability Services. Approved accommodations will begin at the time the written letter from Disability Services is received by the instructor (see https://ds.gmu.edu/).

- Students must silence all sound emitting devices during class unless otherwise authorized by the instructor.

Campus Resources

- Support for submission of assignments to Tk20 should be directed to tk20help@gmu.edu or https://cehd.gmu.edu/aero/tk20. Questions or concerns regarding use of Blackboard should be directed to https://its.gmu.edu/knowledge-base/blackboard-instructional-technology-support-for-students/.

- For information on student support resources on campus, see https://ctfe.gmu.edu/teaching/student-support-resources-on-campus

Notice of mandatory reporting of sexual assault, interpersonal violence, and stalking:

As a faculty member, I am designated as a "Responsible Employee," and must report all disclosures of sexual assault, interpersonal violence, and stalking to Mason's Title IX Coordinator per University Policy 1202. If you wish to speak with someone confidentially, please contact one of Mason's confidential resources, such as Student Support and Advocacy Center (SSAC) at 703-380-1434 or Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS) at 703-993-2380. You may also seek assistance from Mason's Title IX Coordinator by calling 703-993-8730, or emailing titleix@gmu.edu.

For additional information on the College of Education and Human Development, please visit our website https://cehd.gmu.edu/students/ .

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