

**ALDS 4415/English 4415:  
The Role of Writing in Science- and Health-Related Professions**

**School of Linguistics & Language Studies  
Carleton University**

**Winter 2023**

**Class time:** Monday & Wednesday 1:05 to 2:25 PM

**Location:** 1201 Richcraft Hall, Carleton University

**Instructor:** Matthew (Matt) Falconer

**Courriel:** [matthewfalconer@cunet.carleton.ca](mailto:matthewfalconer@cunet.carleton.ca)

**Office hours:** by appointment, hour TBD

**Welcome to ALDS 4415/ENGL 4415: Professional Writing II – The Role of Writing in Science- and Health-Related Professions!**

I'm excited to work with you this semester as we form a 'learning community' to explore the role of writing in science- and health-related professions. Please read this syllabus over carefully. We'll be discussing the syllabus in the first class, and I would be happy to meet with you to talk about any aspects of the course.

**Projected Learning Outcomes**

By the end of the course, participants in ALDS 4415/ENGL 4415 in Winter 2023 are will:

- Summarize and apply concepts used by Writing Scholars to explain the roles of writing in science- and health-related professions
- Apply theories from Writing Studies to interpret research on science- and health-related writing
- Identify various roles played by those working in and adjacent to science/health professions in writing specifically, and sharing knowledge through writing more generally
- Participate in ongoing conversations and debates around emerging knowledge of the role of writing in science- and health-related professions
- Demonstrate their ability to perform independent research and write their findings up in a manner fitting an academic course
- Give constructive feedback on in-progress writing projects

**Course Description**

Throughout the term, we will explore various genres or types of writing, practices, and styles of writing used in science and health-related contexts. We will unpack a trajectory of written texts used to convey scientific and health-related knowledge from within expert-oriented communities to general, non-expert audiences.

To do so, we will develop a shared language and toolbox consisting of theories and strategies to make sense of the types of writing done in science- and health-related professions. As we develop a shared understanding of writing, we will then map and explore the many types of writing done in these professions.

Such work will cover many recurring texts used for different purposes in sharing knowledge with various audiences. Some examples of such writing that we'll consider are research reports, grant proposals, case reports, popularizations of science, and press releases.

ALDS 4415/ENGL 4415 is a writing intensive course. Below you'll find information on the focus and organization of the course. This includes a description of [class activities](#), [writing assignments](#), the [grading scheme](#), [course policies](#), requests for [academic accommodation](#), and the [schedule of course readings](#).

### Questions Guiding the Course

This course will provide us with an opportunity for collaborative inquiry into the role that writing and texts play in science- and health-related professions. There are

- What role(s) do(es) writing play in science and health?
- What functions does writing serve in these domains?
- What roles do audience, purpose, and genre play in science- and health-related writing?
- What roles do different intermediary actors play in science writing? In what ways do these roles shape the dissemination of scientific and health-related knowledge?
- How is writing used to effectively share or develop knowledge in, between, and beyond science- and health-related professions?

### Course Work and Grading Scheme

Assessment/task	Weight per item (if applicable)	Total eight (% of grade)
Reading commentaries (7 total)	~3.5% each	25%
In-class journal/reflective writing (10 total)	2.5% each	25%
Participation (in-class, including workshops)	-	10%
Course project	-	40%
Informal presentations (proposal and progress)	2%	
Progress report	3%	
Peer-review report # 01	5%	
Peer-review report # 02	5%	
Research paper	25%	

Course work – readings and specific tasks for each week – is outlined in detail in the [Course Schedule](#).

Your final grade will be derived from your participation in class and from the written work you produce for the course, according to the percentages listed below:

A+ = 90-100    B+ = 77-79    C+ = 67-69    D+ = 56-59    F = below 50

A = 85-89    B = 73-76    C = 63-66    D = 53-56

A - = 80-84    B - = 70-72    C - = 60-62    D - = 50-52

Since there will be no final exam in this course, supplemental and grade-raiser exams won't be possible.

The work for the course is described below. Please note that the following practices will definitely work in your favour regarding your final grade for the course: (1) consistently coming to our class well-prepared to discuss the reading assigned for that day; (2) participating constructively in small-group discussions and whole-class discussions; and (3) handing in all assigned written work on the due date.

### **1) Attendance and active participation in sessions: 10% of final grade**

The course functions best for everyone when students attend class regularly, keep current with the readings, and participate actively in class discussions. For this reason, *regular attendance and active participation are required and are a significant factor in evaluation.*

Any more than four absences over the term (to allow for colds, flu, medical appointments, snow storms, etc.) will count against your final grade unless there are serious extenuating circumstances. Please contact me by email ([matthewfalconer@cunet.carleton.ca](mailto:matthewfalconer@cunet.carleton.ca)) – preferably before the session, if you are able – to indicate you aren't attending the session.

Please note that it's your responsibility to keep track of the number of classes you miss. If you do miss a class, you're responsible for finding out what we did in class that day and what work has been assigned for the next class. Please note that repeatedly coming to class late or leaving class early will count as absence.

### **2) Reading commentaries: 50% of final grade**

Your reading commentaries will enable you to use the writing process to enhance your understanding of course material and to prompt your own ideas in response. As well, producing reading commentaries over the course of the semester, and receiving feedback on them, can help you strengthen your writing. These claims about reading commentaries are based on research showing that writing (and talking) about new concepts can help us to make sense of these concepts and connect them to our prior experience and knowledge.

Every week, from the second class in January until the end of March, you'll be writing for each session two reading commentaries on the course reading(s) assigned for that week. The reading commentaries will be graded for their content, but not for grammar, punctuation, or spelling.

You'll be writing seventeen (17) reading commentaries during the term, with each reading commentary worth about 3.5% of your overall grade in the course and each reflective writing worth 2.5% of your overall grade in the course (total 50%).

There are two types of writing you will do for this part of your final grade:

1. **Reading commentaries** – There will be seven (7) of these in total. You will write these before each week with assigned readings.

- Each commentary will be approximately 300 words, and you will submit them via Brightspace on the due date indicated.
  - I will provide a prompt at the end of the preceding session for out-of-class commentaries.
  - Your commentaries must respond to these prompts, though you can take them in any direction you desire.
2. **Journal/reflective writing** – There will be ten (10) if these in total. You will be given in-class time each Wednesday session to write these commentaries (no additional work between sessions is needed to produce these commentaries). These will serve as an opportunity for you to reflect-in-practice on course content and create a journal via the 10 entries you will produce throughout the term. Such reflective writing may help with developing ideas for your course project, or for connecting insights that emerge throughout a course.
- Each commentary will be between 150-200 words, and you will similarly respond to a prompt
  - I will provide a new prompt at the start of each reflective writing session.
  - These reflection pieces will then be shared in-class with a partner, who will be asked to add comments, questions, and considerations using the review function in Word.
  - You will then submit your reflective writing commentary to me via Brightspace.
  - These reflection pieces will serve as the basis for the conversation on that date.

#### **Evaluation of reading commentaries:**

The reading commentaries are each graded out of 4.

- If you submit a reading commentary on the day it's due and you've responded appropriately to the prompt you were given and have also included some exploratory writing, you'll receive the full 4/4.
- If you're late submitting the reading commentary and/or if you haven't responded appropriately to the prompt and/or you haven't included some exploratory writing, you'll receive 3/4, 2/4, 1/4 or 0/4.

### **3) Research Project: 40%**

Throughout the term, you'll be carrying out an individual research project – the course project – and writing up your work. The project will involve exploring the role(s) of writing in science and health. I will provide more information on the course project during the first month of the term.

We'll adopt a workshop model for the course project. That means I will create space in our class for you to develop and share your ideas and your writing of the project at different stages. These stages are outline below:

- An informal oral presentation of your project proposal (small groups) **(1% of total grade)**
- A written project proposal. \*\*\* **(3% of total grade)**
- An oral progress report (in a small group). **(1% of total grade)**
- Peer-reviewing of drafts of the research papers (small groups). \*\*\* **(5% of total grade)**
- An in-class work session, with brain-storming on issues related to students' drafts.
- Peer-reviewing of a revised draft of your research paper. \*\*\* **(5% of total grade)**

- The final version the research paper and related material (written proposal, two (2) peer-review reports from partner, and the final paper) due. **(25% of total grade)**

**Note:** You'll be receiving detailed guidelines and a schedule for the course project project. In the meantime, please familiarize yourself with the following course policies regarding the course project:

- *You must participate actively in all stages of the workshop process to receive full credit for the research project.*
  - This means, for example, that for the activities marked with an \*\*\* in the schedule above, you must submit a draft of your research paper for peer-reviewing in class.
  - *If you fail to participate in the different stages of the workshop process, you could lose up to 15 of the 40 marks allocated for the research project.*
- You're expected to hand in the research paper by the due date, which is **April 12, 2023**. Extensions will be granted only under serious circumstances, and only if you contact me **before** the due date.

## Course Schedule

Between early January and early April 2023 (except for Reading Week, February 20-24, 2023), we will meet every Monday and Wednesday from 13:05 to 14:25 in Richcraft Hall 1201.

Below is a list of each week for ALDS 4415/ENGL4415 for Winter 2023. Each section will list the week number, session dates, assigned reading(s), and a brief description for the planned activity for each session.

Each are available for free as a pdf through Carleton University's library. You can use the google scholar search feature to access them.

Week/day	TOPIC	Readings	Notes
W01 – Jan 09	Introducing the course		
W01 – Jan 11	Prior assumptions about writing in science/health		Journal entry 01 (in-class, submit on Brightspace)
W02 – Jan 16	Science writing	Bazerman (1983) Scientific writing as a social act	Reading commentary 01 due
W02 – Jan 18	~ Continued	Smart, Currie, & Falconer (2014) research on knowledge-making in professional discourses	Journal entry 02 (in-class, submit on Brightspace)
W03 – Jan 23	Writing in the health professions	Schryer & Spoel (2005)	Reading commentary 02 due

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W03 – Jan 25	~ Continued	~Continued	Journal entry 03 (in-class, submit on Brightspace) Instructor to provide info on the course project
W04 – Jan 30	Hidden writing in science/health	Mehlenbacher (2019) Crowdfunding & op-ed	Reading commentary 03 due
W04 – Feb 01	~Continued	~Continued	Journal entry 04 (in-class, submit on Brightspace)
W05 – Feb 06	WORKSHOP 01 – Science/health journal articles	Topic/article TBD by the group	A ‘rhetorical moves’ analysis
W05 – Feb 08	~Continued	~Continued	Journal entry 05 (in-class, submit on Brightspace)
W06 – Feb 13	Course project development	In-class informal discussion(s) of project ideas	Use this session to help prepare your project proposal
W06 – Feb 15	~Continued		Project proposal due Journal entry 06 (in-class, submit on Brightspace)
Feb 20-24	Reading week	No Classes	
W07 – Feb 27	Knowledge exchange and writing on the boundaries of science/health	Falconer (in-press) ‘transforming data’ chapter	Reading commentary 04 due
W07 – Mar 01	~Continued	Klenk et al (2022) technical report: KE in CFS (pp. 5-12)	Journal entry 07 (in-class, submit on Brightspace)
W08 – Mar 06	Science communicators (general audiences/ plain language)	TBD – Cormick?	Reading commentary 05 due
W08 – Mar 08	~Continued	~Continued	Journal entry 08 (in-class, submit on Brightspace)
W09 – Mar 13	Popularizations of science/health	Orpin (2019) #Vaccineswork or fahnestock?	Reading commentary 06 due
W09 – Mar 15	Progress report	Informal progress reports on course projects	Journal entry 09 (in-class, submit on Brightspace)
W10 – Mar 20	Other forms of writing in	Smart & Falconer (2019) <i>Laudato Si</i> chapter	Reading commentary 07 due

	science/health professions		
W10 – Mar 22	~Continued	~Continued	Journal entry 10 (in-class, submit on Brightspace)
W11 – Mar 27	Workshop 2 – science communication genres	Science communication genres (popularizations, press releases, blogs, tweets)	TBD by the group
W11 – Mar 29	Peer-review session # 01		Bring a complete-as-possible draft of your course project for peer-review
W12 – Apr 03	Course project development session		In-class work session, with brain-storming on issues related to students' drafts
W12 – Apr 05	Peer-review session # 02		Bring a <b>revised</b> complete-as-possible draft of your course project to the session
Apr 10	TBD	Tentatively peer-review (final copy edit)	TBD
Apr 12	No class (Friday schedule)		<b>COURSE PROJECT DUE</b> (submit on Brightspace)

## Course Policies

### Attendance

Regular attendance in our classroom is required, as is prompt arrival to the classroom.

If you need to miss a class for some reason, please email me ([matthewfalconer@cunet.carleton.ca](mailto:matthewfalconer@cunet.carleton.ca)) explaining your situation or indicating you will be absent. I'll send you the lesson plan for that day.

If you're absent from a class, you are still responsible for completing the assigned work. You will need to submit any assigned work that was due that day as soon as possible; and as well, you're expected to be fully prepared for the next class.

### Communication between us

I'll be happy to meet with you individually in-person or virtually at any point during the term to talk about how the course is going for you. My office hours are TBD, and I will host virtual meetings through Brightspace on zoom.

As well, feel free to e-mail me ([matthewfalconer@cunet.carleton.ca](mailto:matthewfalconer@cunet.carleton.ca)) about any questions or concerns you might have during the semester regarding the course. *Please use your Carleton e-mail account when sending me an e-mail* (this is a legal requirement of Ontario's Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act).

## Academic integrity

In all written work, students must avoid plagiarism—that is, presenting the work or ideas of another person as one's own. Forms of plagiarism include the following: copying from the work of another author without proper use of footnotes and quotation marks; using the ideas of others without acknowledging the source; extensively paraphrasing another person's work without acknowledging the source; submitting the work of another person as one's own; and handing in substantially the same piece of work for academic credit in more than one course without prior written permission of the course instructor. Plagiarism is a serious offence, which will be reported to the Office of the Dean of the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences.

For further information consult the [Undergraduate HYPERLINK](#)

["https://calendar.carleton.ca/undergrad/regulations/academicregulationsoftheuniversity/academic-integrity-and-offenses-of-conduct/"](https://calendar.carleton.ca/undergrad/regulations/academicregulationsoftheuniversity/academic-integrity-and-offenses-of-conduct/) HYPERLINK

["https://calendar.carleton.ca/undergrad/regulations/academicregulationsoftheuniversity/academic-integrity-and-offenses-of-conduct/"](https://calendar.carleton.ca/undergrad/regulations/academicregulationsoftheuniversity/academic-integrity-and-offenses-of-conduct/)Calendar on Academic Integrity.

## Mental health

As a university student you may experience a range of mental health challenges that significantly impact your academic success and overall well-being. If you need help, please speak to someone. There are numerous resources available both on- and off-campus to support you. Here is a list that may be helpful:

Emergency Resources (on and off campus): <https://carleton.ca/health/emergencies-and-crisis/emergency-numbers/>

Carleton Resources:

- Mental Health and Wellbeing: <https://carleton.ca/wellness/>
- Health & Counselling Services: <https://carleton.ca/health/>
- Paul Menton Centre: <https://carleton.ca/pmc/>
- Academic Advising Centre (AAC): <https://carleton.ca/academicadvising/>
- Centre for Student Academic Support (CSAS): <https://carleton.ca/csas/>
- Equity & Inclusivity Communities: <https://carleton.ca/equity/>

Off Campus Resources:

- Distress Centre of Ottawa and Region: (613) 238-3311 or TEXT: 343-306-5550, <https://www.dcottawa.on.ca/>
- Mental Health Crisis Service: (613) 722-6914, 1-866-996-0991, <http://www.crisisline.ca/>
- Empower Me: 1-844-741-6389, <https://students.carleton.ca/services/empower-me-counselling-services/>
- Good2Talk: 1-866-925-5454, <https://good2talk.ca/>
- The Walk-In Counselling Clinic: <https://walkincounselling.com>

## Statement on pandemic measures

It is important to remember that COVID is still present in Ottawa. The situation can change at any time and the risks of new variants and outbreaks are very real. There are [a number of actions you can take](#) to lower your risk and the risk you pose to those around you including being vaccinated, wearing a mask, staying home when you're sick, washing your hands and maintaining proper respiratory and cough etiquette.



Feeling sick? Remaining vigilant and not attending work or school when sick or with symptoms is critically important. If you feel ill or exhibit COVID-19 symptoms do not come to class or campus. If you feel ill or exhibit symptoms while on campus or in class, please leave campus immediately. In all situations, you should follow Carleton's [symptom reporting protocols](#).

Masks: Masks are no longer mandatory in university buildings and facilities. However, we continue to recommend masking when indoors, particularly if physical distancing cannot be maintained. We are aware that personal preferences regarding optional mask use will vary greatly, and we ask that we all show consideration and care for each other during this transition.

Vaccines: While proof of vaccination is no longer required to access campus or participate in in-person Carleton activities, it may become necessary for the University to bring back proof of vaccination requirements on short notice if the situation and public health advice changes. Students are strongly encouraged to get a full course of vaccination, including booster doses as soon as they are eligible and submit their booster dose information in [cuScreen](#) as soon as possible. Please note that Carleton cannot guarantee that it will be able to offer virtual or hybrid learning options for those who are unable to attend the campus.

All members of the Carleton community are required to follow requirements and guidelines regarding health and safety which may change from time to time. For the most recent information about Carleton's COVID-19 response and health and safety requirements please see the [University's COVID-19 website](#) and review the [Frequently Asked Questions \(FAQs\)](#). Should you have additional questions after reviewing, please contact [covidinfo@carleton.ca](mailto:covidinfo@carleton.ca).

### Student services

- Writing Services – 506 & 507 MacOdrum Library (W 2023 location)
  - <https://carleton.ca/csas/writing-services/>
- Student Academic Success Centre – 2<sup>nd</sup> floor MacOdrum Library (W 2023 location)
  - <https://carleton.ca/csas/>

### Requests for Academic Accommodation

You may need special arrangements to meet your academic obligations during the term. For an accommodation request, the processes are as follows:

#### Pregnancy obligation

Please contact your instructor with any requests for academic accommodation during the first two weeks of class, or as soon as possible after the need for accommodation is known to exist. For more details, visit the Equity Services website for [pregnancy obligation](#).

#### Religious obligation

Please contact your instructor with any requests for academic accommodation during the first two weeks of class, or as soon as possible after the need for accommodation is known to exist. For more details, visit the Equity Services website for [religious obligation](#).

#### Academic accommodations for students with disabilities

If you have a documented disability requiring academic accommodations in this course, please contact the [Paul Menton Centre for HYPERLINK "https://carleton.ca/pmc/" HYPERLINK "https://carleton.ca/pmc/"Students with Disabilities](#) (PMC) at 613-520-6608 or [pmc@carleton.ca](mailto:pmc@carleton.ca) for

a formal evaluation or contact your PMC coordinator to send your instructor your Letter of Accommodation at the beginning of the term. You must also contact the PMC no later than two weeks before the first in-class scheduled test, exam or evaluated assignment requiring accommodation (if applicable).

After requesting accommodation from PMC, meet with your instructor as soon as possible to ensure accommodation arrangements are made.

#### Survivors of Sexual Violence

As a community, Carleton University is committed to maintaining a positive learning, working and living environment where sexual violence will not be tolerated, and its survivors are supported through academic accommodations as per Carleton's Sexual Violence Policy.

Visit the [university sexual violence and support website](#) for more information about the services available at the university.

#### Accommodation for Student Activities

Carleton University recognizes the substantial benefits, both to the individual student and for the university, that result from a student participating in activities beyond the classroom experience. Reasonable accommodation will be provided to students who compete or perform at the national or international level. Write to me with any requests for academic accommodation during the first two weeks of class, or as soon as possible after the need for accommodation is known to exist. <https://carleton.ca/senate/wp-content/uploads/Accommodation-for-Student-Activities-1.pdf>

#### Self Declaration Form

Carleton has suspended the need for a doctor's note or medical certificate for academic accommodation requests as of 2022. In place of a doctor's note or medical certificate, students can complete [the self-declaration form](#) available on the Registrar's Office website to request academic accommodation for missed course work including exams and assignments. Students are encouraged to connect directly with their instructors to discuss required accommodations arising from the COVID-19 situation.