

UConn | COLLEGE OF LIBERAL ARTS AND SCIENCES

COMMITTEE ON CURRICULA AND COURSES

Proposal to Add a New Undergraduate Course

1. Date: 1/30/2014
2. Department requesting this course: Physiology and Neurobiology
3. Semester and year in which course will be first offered: Second Semester, 2015

Final Catalog Listing

Assemble this after you have completed the components below. This listing should not contain any information that is not listed below!

PNB 3120W. Scientific Writing in Physiology and Neurobiology

Second semester. One credit. Prerequisite: One 2000 level course in PNB. ENGL 1010 or 1011 or 3800. Open to juniors or higher. Instructor consent required.

Principles of effective scientific writing focusing on the communication of physiology and neurobiology to lay audiences.

Items Included in Catalog Listing

Obligatory Items

1. Standard [abbreviation](#) for Department, Program or [Subject Area](#): PNB
2. [Course Number](#): 3120W
3. Course Title: Scientific Writing in Physiology and Neurobiology
4. [Number of Credits](#): One
5. [Course Description](#) (second paragraph of catalog entry): Principles of effective scientific writing focusing on the communication of physiology and neurobiology to lay audiences.

Optional Items

6. [Pattern of instruction](#), if not standard: standard
7. [Prerequisites](#), if applicable: One 2000level course in PNB; ENGL1010 or 1011 or 3800
 - a. [Consent of Instructor](#), if applicable: required
 - b. [Open to sophomores/juniors or higher](#): open only to juniors or higher
8. [Recommended Preparation](#), if applicable:
9. [Exclusions](#), if applicable:
10. [Repetition for credit](#), if applicable: not applicable
11. [Skill codes](#) "W", "Q" or "C": W
12. University General Education Content Area(s), if any: _____
 - a. If Content Area 1, specify a CLAS area, A-E: _____
 - b. Justification for inclusion in CLAS area, A-E:
(Please consult [CLAS guidelines](#) for areas A-E.)
13. [S/U grading](#): no

Justification

1. **Reasons for adding this course:** The PNB department currently offers two W courses, both tied to a laboratory. This more broadly focused course will give all PNB majors the opportunity to meet their graduation requirements within our department in a non-laboratory based W course.
2. **Academic merit:** This new course, "Scientific Writing in Physiology and Neurobiology", is designed to be a writing intensive course within the Physiology and Neurobiology department. It will enroll 19 students in a single section, which will be offered in the Spring semester beginning in Spring 2015. Students who pursue higher education in the sciences acquire highly specialized knowledge and skillsets to prepare them for a wide variety of careers. Many of these careers will require our graduates to have some level of interaction with a lay audience. There are currently no courses offered within our department that are specifically designed to teach students the skills to communicate effectively about topics related to physiology and neurobiology with a non-scientific audience. This course will expose students to primary literature spanning various topics in physiology and neurobiology. With guidance from the instructor, the students will learn to identify the key components of a research study and practice their ability to summarize primary literature by writing short abstracts, and ultimately, a focused review article on a topic of their choosing. In the second half of the course, the students will be given writing samples from professional scientific writers (e.g. articles from *Scientific American* or *The New York Times*) and asked to compare and contrast this popular media with the primary source material on that topic. They will then rewrite their abstracts from earlier in the semester, now specifically for a lay audience, and suitable for publication in a newspaper or magazine. Written assignments will be reviewed by both the instructor and fellow students (i.e., peer reviewing and editing). Several rounds of revision will be required prior to the completion of a final draft. Additionally, students will have the opportunity to submit samples of their final work for publication to the campus newspaper and other outlets.
3. **Overlapping courses:** none
4. Number of students expected: 19
5. Number and size of sections: 1 section of 19 students
6. **Effects on other departments:** The course will not affect any other departments. Biology (MCB, EEB) departments, English and Journalism have been notified about this new course offering and have not expressed any concerns.
7. Effects on regional campuses: none
8. **Staffing:** John Redden
9. **Dates approved** by
Department Curriculum Committee: 2/7/2014
Department Faculty: 2/7/2014
10. Name, Phone Number, and e-mail address of principal contact person: John Redden (john.redden@uconn.edu)

Syllabus

A [syllabus](#) for the new course must be attached to your submission email.