Scientific Writing Workshops
Lisa Emerson, Massey University, New Zealand

Series Kick-Off and Introduction
“But I’m going to be a scientist – I don’t need to learn to write, right?”:
Unpacking the myths of writing for science
Thursday, November 12, 4 pm
Livak Ballroom

1) Workshop: Mentoring the writing skills of emerging scientists

Same workshop offered 3 different times (choose one):

Friday, November 13 in HSRF 300
10 am- 12 noon, lunch provided from 12-12:30 pm

Thursday, December 17 in HSRF 400
12:00 pm- 2:00 pm, lunch provided

Friday, January 8 in HSRF 300
9:00 am – 11:00 am, continental breakfast provided

One of the more challenging tasks of many senior scientists is supporting the writing of the people in your lab, whether they’re graduate students, postdocs, or junior faculty members. If you learned to write in your discipline intuitively (e.g. by trial-and-error, or simply by reading in your field), you may feel you lack the skills to teach others how to write. The aim of this workshop is to provide scientists with the tools to teach discipline-appropriate writing to the junior lab members or to graduate students. We will explore issues such as effective writing process in science, when to worry about grammar, locating the central story, teaching the structure of the research paper, audience engagement, effective paragraphing, using sources, inductive vs deductive documents, and revision strategies. At the end of the workshop, you’ll be better able to develop your lab members as effective writers – and you may find your own approach to writing is transformed too.

What to bring with you: writing materials and two papers (hard copy) you think are well-written from journals in your field.

2) Workshop: Running a science writing course

Same workshop offered 2 different times (choose one):

Friday, November 13 in HSRF 300
12:30-2:30 pm, lunch provided from 12-12:30 pm

Thursday, December 10 in HSRF 400
11:00 am-1:00 pm, lunch provided

Lisa Emerson has run short courses and full semester courses on science writing for graduate students for many years. In this workshop she
outlines the central concepts of running a course on writing in science, including effective process, audience-focused writing, identifying the narrative, and developing a language with which to talk about science writing. The outcome of any course should be scientists who can make more intentional decisions about writing, and who are thus able to write clear, audience-appropriate texts. This workshop is introduced by Rae Nishi from the Neuroscience, Behavior, and Health Initiative, who outlines her vision for developing our scientists as writers. The workshop concludes with discussion of how we might run effective courses to support our emerging scientists as writers.

3) A, B, C: Workshop Series: Teaching Emerging Scientists How to Write – a closer look

Workshop 3A Developing a science writing course: Principles and Curriculum

Same workshop offered 2 different times (choose one):

Friday, November 20 in HSRF 400
10:30-12:30 pm, lunch provided

Wednesday, January 6 in HSRF 300
8:30 am - 10:30 am, continental breakfast provided

This workshop lays down the key principles and concepts for developing a science writing course. What format should it take: a full semester course vs. a short course? Why would we develop such a course and what should be its aims and objectives? What might be included in the curriculum – what is and is not important? How might we approach issues such as information literacy and rhetorical reading? How does learning about things like grammar and punctuation intersect with learning about broader issues of identifying gaps and analyzing data? As well as discussing these key concepts, we will also consider practical issues, and begin an exploration of curricula, readings, and course texts. Participants will leave with a sense of priorities that will guide further course development.

Workshop 3B Developing a science writing course: Pedagogy and Assessment

Same workshop offered 2 different times (choose one):

Friday, December 4
10:00 am – 12:00 pm, HSRF 400 lunch provided

Wednesday, January 6 in HSRF 300
11:00 am - 1:00 pm, lunch provided

The second workshop in this series builds on the first by focusing on two critical issues: how do we teach a science writing course (ie how does pedagogy support the curriculum?) and how do we assess and support student learning? We consider issues such as student-centered and student-directed learning, supporting the writing process, reflective writing, and the relationship between thinking and writing. Assessment in a science writing course needs to be authentic and discipline-specific, and it needs to effect changes in students’ beliefs and attitudes: we look at ways to achieve this. Participants who attended workshop 3A will identify pedagogical strategies that best fit the priorities developed in the earlier workshop, but all participants will leave with new ideas about teaching writing in the sciences.

Workshop 3C Integrating writing into existing courses

Same workshop offered 2 different times (choose one):
Friday, December 11
11:00 am- 1:00 pm, HSRF 400, lunch provided

Wednesday, January 6 in HSRF 300
1:30 pm- 3:30 pm, snacks provided

The third workshop is designed for faculty who may not wish to teach a course on science writing but would like to find a way to strengthen their students’ writing and thinking skills within an existing disciplinary course. We will focus on two things: how to use writing to develop students’ thinking skills and support their learning, and how to incorporate discipline-specific genres as part of course assessment. This workshop is highly practical: we will discuss examples of assignments designed within disciplinary courses, and consider the all-important question of how to incorporate writing into a course without being overburdened by responding or grading.

4) Workshop series: Writing and Communicating Science for Trainees

2 hours each
Lisa Emerson, Massey University
Nancy Welch, Director of Graduate Student Writing Center, University of Vermont

We are offering three interactive workshops for emerging scientists (PhDs, post docs, or any junior faculty who wish to extend their skills as a writer and communicator). The workshops are offered as a series, and are interconnected, but you are welcome to join us for just one session if you prefer. The workshop topics are as follows:

A. Understanding effective process, disciplinary style and the communication strategy in your discipline.

Same workshop offered 2 different times (choose one):

Wednesday, November 18 in HSRF 300
8:30-10:30 am, continental breakfast provided

Wednesday, December 2 in HSRF 300
8:30 am- 10:30 am, continental breakfast provided

In this workshop we identify the key elements of writing in your discipline, critically examine your current skills and process, and engage in communication mapping.

What to bring with you: something to write with (laptop/pen and paper), two papers you have written/published and two papers from journal you write for (or would like to write for) written by other people.

B. Effective writing.

Same workshop offered 2 different times (choose one):

Wednesday, November 18 in HSRF 300
11:00 am – 1:00 pm, lunch provided

Wednesday, December 2 in HSRF 300
11:00 am- 1:00 pm, lunch provided
In this workshop we examine the centrality of story, persuasion, and the structure of the scientific paper. The aims of the workshop are to enable you to become more intentional about writing strategies and to help you to develop the skills to write in a range of scientific contexts (papers, grants, public communication).

*What to bring with you:* something to write with (laptop/pen and paper)

C. **Presentation skills.**

*Same workshop offered 2 different times (choose one):*

**Wednesday, November 18 in HSRF 300**
1:30 pm - 3:30 pm, HSRF 300, **snacks provided**

**Wednesday, December 2**
1:00 pm- 3:00 pm, HSRF 300, **breakfast provided**

Presenting at conferences is a key form of communication within science. This workshop helps you to develop key skills in presenting your ideas and engaging your audience. *What to bring with you:* if you are currently working on a conference presentation, bring your notes. Otherwise, writing materials are all you’ll need.

Registration will be available in late September on the NBH website (http://www.uvm.edu/~nbhspire/)