MURRAY STATE UNIVERSITY
COURSE SYLLABUS OUTLINE

SCHOOL OF AGRICULTURE

COURSE NUMBER: AGR 602        CREDIT HOURS: 3

I. **TITLE:**

Scientific Writing in Agriculture

II. **CATALOG DESCRIPTION:**

A course designed to give graduate students the skills necessary to write a thesis, and to prepare other professional materials for presentation or publication. Topics covered in this course include: searching the scientific literature; scientific writing style; writing graduate level papers, proposals, projects, and thesis components; preparing scientific presentations; presentation of data; using visual aids; and using word processing, spreadsheet, and presentation software.

III. **PURPOSE:**

To enhance student’s skills necessary to write a thesis, research report, prepare professional materials for presentations and publications.

IV. **COURSE OBJECTIVES:**

At the end of this course, students should be able to:

- Distinguish different types of research, their audiences and how research material might be effectively presented
- Prepare scientific and technical papers, and presentations.
- Format documents and presentations to optimize their visual appeal when viewed in-press, as a podcast or audio/video file format on the internet, or through personal presentations to an audience
- Effectively use features of Microsoft Office to create eye-catching professional documents and presentations.
- Effectively use features of Microsoft Word, Powerpoint, and Excel to create professional looking tables, graphs and figures.
- Accept constructive criticism and use reviewers’ comments to improve quality and clarity of written reports and presentations.
- Demonstrate effective use of the APA manual.
V. **CONTENT OUTLINE:**

A. Introduction  
B. Scientific Research  
C. Beginning to Write  
D. Content  
E. Style and Grammar  
F. Reference Citation  
G. Revising  
H. Poster Presentations  
I. Oral Presentations

VI. **INSTRUCTIONAL ACTIVITIES:**

A. Lectures  
B. Labs  
C. Group Projects  
D. Presentations

VII. **FIELD AND CLINICAL EXPERIENCES:**

No field trips required

VIII. **RESOURCES:**

A. Textbooks and magazines on reserve  
B. Resource personnel  
C. Library Resources  
D. Technical data bulletins on reserve  
E. Microsoft office

IX. **GRADING PROCEDURES:**

90 - 100 = A  
80 - 89 = B  
70 - 79 = C  
60 - 69 = D  
Below 60 = E

Exams will be announced at least one week in advance of the test date. The final exam will be comprehensive. Any exam may be made up when missed providing there is a reasonable excuse. Quizzes over field trips to various agriculture processing facilities are possible. When appropriate, papers on various agriculture processes will be required. More is expected of graduate students and work will be assigned accordingly. Attendance on field trips is critical since most cannot be duplicated.
X. ATTENDANCE POLICY:

Please refer to the most current copy of the Murray State University’s Undergraduate Bulletin and Graduate Bulletin.

XI. ACADEMIC HONESTY POLICY:

(Adopted by the MSU Board of Regents)

Cheating, plagiarism (submitting another person’s material as one’s own), or doing work for another person which will receive academic credit are all impermissible. This includes the use of unauthorized books, notebooks, or other sources in order to secure or give help during an examination, the unauthorized copying of examinations, assignments, reports, term papers, or the presentation on unacknowledged material as if it were the student’s own work. Disciplinary action may be taken beyond the academic discipline administered by the faculty member who teaches the course in which the cheating took place.

NOTE: The School of Agriculture Faculty have adopted and implemented an Academic Honesty Policy in addition to the University Honesty Policy, which can be found in the current Undergraduate Bulletin and Graduate Bulletin. The policy sets guidelines regarding acts of dishonesty and the procedure to follow should an event occur. It is each Agriculture student’s responsibility to obtain and read a copy of this document. The School’s Academic Honesty Policy can be obtained by asking for a copy from any Agriculture Faculty member or the Secretary.

XII. TEXT AND REFERENCES:

Required

Recommended

XIII. PREREQUISITES:

None
XIV. **STATEMENT OF AFFIRMATIVE ACTION AND EQUAL OPPORTUNITY:**

Murray State University endorses the intent of all federal and state laws created to prohibit discrimination. Murray State University does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, gender, sexual orientation, religion, age, veteran status, or disability in employment, admissions, or the provision of services and provides, upon request, reasonable accommodation including auxiliary aids and services necessary to afford individuals with disabilities equal access to participate in all programs and activities. For more information, contact Sabrina Y. Dial, Director of Equal Opportunity, Murray State University, 103 Wells Hall, Murray, KY 42071-3318. Telephone: 270-809-3155 (voice), 270-809-3361 (TDD).

XV. **MSU SCHOOL OF AGRICULTURE CELL PHONE POLICY**

The School of Agriculture recognizes that in today’s world cell phones are a familiar and often necessary form of communication for students.

It shall be the policy of the School that no cell phone usage shall be allowed in class and/or labs without the prior consent of the course instructor. This shall include verbal calling, incoming calls, email, text messaging, and use of cell phone calculators on tests and quizzes.

Cell phones must be kept off and out of sight (i.e. secured to a person’s belt or kept in a bag or purse away from desks and lab counters).

Should a student’s cell phone be visible, ring, or other form of unauthorized usage that is interruptive to the class or lab, the student may be asked to leave class and not return for that class/lab period.

Upon prior consent of the instructor, a student may obtain permission to have their phone on in case of an emergency or in critical family situations.

This policy also includes pagers and other electronic equipment such as blackberries and/or computers/laptops.