Syllabus for 4096W
Spring/Summer/Fall 2013

Grading: S/N

Description: (2 credits) This course provides an opportunity for professional experience in horticultural businesses, government agencies, arboreta, and botanical gardens achieved through a supervised practical experience. Students will also produce a final publication that is focused on writing for lay audiences. This writing project will start just before the internship begins and end approximately two months after the internship is complete. HORT 4096W may not be repeated. This course has been approved as an Experiential Learning course within the College of Food, Agricultural, and Natural Resource Sciences.

Instructor: Eric Watkins
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Course Approval

1. Make an appointment early in the process with your adviser about the type of experience you would like to have and to make sure it would qualify for credit. You may use any faculty member as an internship advisor but most students use their academic advisor.

2. Obtain a Learning Agreement Form from Evonne Kuyper, Horticulture, Internship Coordinator, 305 Alderman Hall (kuype001@umn.edu; 612-624-4242)

3. Obtain the signatures of both your internship advisor and your site supervisor and return it to the internship coordinator (Evonne) to get a registration permission number. You can register for HORT 4096W credit in either the spring or fall but registration must occur prior to the start of the internship. If you register for fall credit, you must register prior to May 1 of the same calendar year to ensure inclusion in the online writing instruction component of the course.

4. Credit will be granted upon completion of your internship, which includes the completed writing project and completed student and employer evaluation forms: http://horticulture.cfans.umn.edu/What_Can_I_Study/Internship/InternshipRequirements/index.htm

Academic requirements
During your internship, you will take part in an online learning experience with other students in the course. Several short informal and formal writing assignments will be assigned as a way to prepare you for your final writing project. Completion of all the assignments and writing project at a satisfactory level is required for completion of the internship.

Important policies

1. The Learning Agreement form must be submitted prior to beginning the internship experience and the evaluation form must be submitted at the end.
2. Horticulture students are required to complete either HORT 4096 or HORT 4096W in order to graduate. In order to receive credit, you must work a minimum of 250 hours and complete the writing requirement.

3. If you have not completed your internship requirements by the end of the term in which you have registered, you will receive a “K” indicating that the course is in the process of being completed. The internship and writing project must be completed by the due date; if you are not able to complete your requirements in that time-frame you must submit a petition to request an extension of the deadline or you will receive a failing grade.

4. If you did not obtain the required signatures prior to the beginning of your internship experience, you must petition to receive permission to register. You will need to show extenuating circumstances that explain why you were not able to register prior to the beginning of the experience.

5. Credit will not be granted for past experience.

6. If you are a small business owner, and conducting an internship with another company is deemed unrealistic, you can fulfill your internship requirement at your own company. You will need to get permission to count this experience ahead of time. The academic requirements listed previously apply to all students.

Quality standards for internship

As you consider internship options, be sure they meet these standards to ensure a positive experience:

1. The vast majority of the tasks you undertake should be professionally relevant.
2. The activities afford the opportunity to learn new things.
3. Supervision by a friend or family member is STRONGLY discouraged.
4. Completing an internship where you have previously worked is STRONGLY discouraged.
5. You should be supervised by someone who knows more about the field than you and can mentor and guide you in learning the tasks outlined in your learning agreement.

Writing Component

In early May, all students enrolled in 4096W will attend a meeting on campus to discuss the upcoming internship season and the expectations of the course. The online component will be taught using Moodle (go to moodle2.umn.edu to log in). The final writing project will be focused on writing for lay audiences. A series of shorter writing assignments, both informal and formal, will be used to help you develop your topic and develop your final document. This final document should be seen as something that you can use when you look for a job after graduation—this project will allow potential employers to see the communication skills that you have in a document related to your field.
This course is **writing intensive.** The process of writing is important and the schedule of the online modules allows you to gradually work through the writing process. Along the way, you will receive writing instruction and the instructor will respond to drafts in order to assist in the writing and revision process. In addition, you will work together with your peers—who are also working at internship sites—to discuss and respond to one another’s writing and ideas.

**Objectives for Writing Component**

Students that complete this course should be able to:

1. Understand how to write for lay audiences
2. Communicate scientific research to a lay audience
3. Select a proper document form for a written project

**Schedule and Assignments:**

There will be an assignment due every 2 weeks. It is very important that deadlines are met so that the process leading to the final writing product can be useful. Assignments will always be due on Monday at 7:00 am (central time). No late assignments will receive full credit. A deduction of 10% from the total number of points will be given for each day late. Assignments that are more than 5 days late will receive **NO CREDIT**.

Four of the writing assignments will be forum postings; students are also encouraged to post comments on other student’s blogs. Each forum post should be at least 250 words. The remaining four assignments will be more formal writing assignments. Each of these assignments will build towards the final writing project.

Individual assignments will be posted on the site approximately two weeks prior to their due date.

**Schedule and Assignment Description:**

*Week 2*

Forum Post: Introduce your work site (size, number of employees, surrounding community, etc.). Which topics from your coursework do you expect to engage in your internship work? How do you expect those topics to apply to your work? (5 pts)

*Week 4*

For this course, you will produce a final, professional written document related to your internship. This document could take any number of forms including a brochure, newsletter, web page, digital story (with transcript), newspaper article, extension article, white paper, training materials, etc. You will select a document type that is suitable for your internship site and that you imagine will be important to the kind of work you would like to do in the future.
Topic and Document Type Proposal: Propose at least 3 topics for your internship writing project. Topics should be closely related to your internship work. In this week’s lesson, we have given you several writing document examples. After examining these examples, for each topic, propose at least 2 different document types (brochure, informational letter, summary of test results, short report, digital story, newsletter column, etc.). Document types should be professionally relevant for your area. Whether they engage technical or lay audiences, you should consider this project to be a potentially valuable part of your professional portfolio—something that will be telling to a potential employer of your knowledge and communication skills. (10 pts)

Week 6

Discussion Forum: Which topic will you pursue for your final project? Why have you made this decision? (You must also respond to at least one other students proposed topic—this response should include some questions you may have about the topic including your overall thoughts on the choice of topic.) (5 pts)

Document critique assignment: For this assignment, evaluate one of the document examples you found for week 4. What worked? What didn’t?

Week 8

Your internship writing project relies upon technical information from credible professional sources such as peer-reviewed scientific journals. Information from several of these sources will need to be integrated into your internship project document in a way that is appropriate to its specific audience and purpose. Find one peer-reviewed, primary source that contains information and/or data that is necessary for your internship project. Extract a core idea and explain it in writing to a lay audience in approximately 500 words. Imagine specifically who you might be trying to reach. Ideally, this will become part of your internship project document. (10 pts)

Week 10

Forum Post: Oftentimes, you will need to take scientific information and translate it to a lay audience. Sometimes the connection between the scientific information and the topic may not be obvious. Describe an instance during this internship when your academic learning intersected with your field-based learning. Was the intersection complementary? Or contradictory? What have you learned about “book learning” and “field learning”? (5 pts)

Week 12

Document Design: For documents to be successful professionally, care and attention need to be given to their visual and spatial design. Too much text crammed onto a page can drive readers away. An absence of images and visuals misses opportunities to reinforce information in a way that is both efficient and compelling. Without worrying too much about the content, lay out your document. Based upon the format, genre, and dimensions of your final document, start with a
blank page and plan where the various elements of the document belong. If you have chosen a
digital story, your document design will be submitted as a storyboard (see:
http://multimedia.journalism.berkeley.edu/tutorials/starttofinish/storyboarding/). Like writing,
this will require going through a process of drafts. When you arrive at your final version, you
should be able to explain why the document is planned as it is. Sketches, schematics, and
templates should be converted to .pdf documents so you can post them to the course website. (10 pts)

Week 14

Forum Post: Write a short post reflecting on your internship. What was the most important
thing you learned? Was there anything that you didn’t do that you had hoped to experience?
Has the internship changed your career goals? (5 pts)

Week 16

Draft for Peer Response: Put together a complete draft of your writing project to share with your
group for their response (the instructor will assign groups earlier in the summer). Careful, guided
input from your readers will be invaluable in making revisions towards a better, more complete
final document. You will be provided with guidelines and prompts for the review you offer on
your group members’ projects. The final document must be at least 1000 words. (20 pts; 10 for
draft, 10 for peer review).

After revising your first draft based on peer review comments and input, you will submit a
second draft for instructor feedback. This draft will be due in late September.

October 28: Final project due (30 pts)

Grading

In order to receive credit for the internship, a passing grade of at least 70% is needed on the
writing component.

Incompletes

No incompletes will be given unless you have a prior written agreement with the instructor.
Legitimate excuses for missing assignments/exams include significant doctor-verified illnesses
and family emergencies. See below for the University’s policy.

Grading

In order to receive credit for the internship, a passing grade of at least 70% is needed on the
writing component.

University of Minnesota Policies
Student Conduct Code:

The University seeks an environment that promotes academic achievement and integrity, that is protective of free inquiry, and that serves the educational mission of the University. Similarly, the University seeks a community that is free from violence, threats, and intimidation; that is respectful of the rights, opportunities, and welfare of students, faculty, staff, and guests of the University; and that does not threaten the physical or mental health or safety of members of the University community.

As a student at the University you are expected adhere to Board of Regents Policy: Student Conduct Code. To review the Student Conduct Code, please see: http://www1.umn.edu/regents/policies/academic/Student_Conduct_Code.html.

Note that the conduct code specifically addresses disruptive classroom conduct, which means "engaging in behavior that substantially or repeatedly interrupts either the instructor's ability to teach or student learning. The classroom extends to any setting where a student is engaged in work toward academic credit or satisfaction of program-based requirements or related activities."

Scholastic Dishonesty:

You are expected to do your own academic work and cite sources as necessary. Failing to do so is scholastic dishonesty. Scholastic dishonesty means plagiarizing; cheating on assignments or examinations; engaging in unauthorized collaboration on academic work; taking, acquiring, or using test materials without faculty permission; submitting false or incomplete records of academic achievement; acting alone or in cooperation with another to falsify records or to obtain dishonestly grades, honors, awards, or professional endorsement; altering, forging, or misusing a University academic record; or fabricating or falsifying data, research procedures, or data analysis. (Student Conduct Code: http://www1.umn.edu/regents/policies/academic/Student_Conduct_Code.html) If it is determined that a student has cheated, he or she may be given an "F" or an "N" for the course, and may face additional sanctions from the University. For additional information, please see: http://policy.umn.edu/Policies/Education/Education/INSTRUCTORRESP.html.

The Office for Student Conduct and Academic Integrity has compiled a useful list of Frequently Asked Questions pertaining to scholastic dishonesty: http://www1.umn.edu/oscai/integrity/student/index.html. If you have additional questions, please clarify with your instructor for the course. Your instructor can respond to your specific questions regarding what would constitute scholastic dishonesty in the context of a particular class-e.g., whether collaboration on assignments is permitted, requirements and methods for citing sources, if electronic aids are permitted or prohibited during an exam.

Makeup Work for Legitimate Absences:

Students will not be penalized for absence during the semester due to unavoidable or legitimate circumstances. Such circumstances include verified illness, participation in intercollegiate athletic events, subpoenas, jury duty, military service, bereavement, and religious observances. Such circumstances do not include voting in local, state, or national elections. For complete information, please see: http://policy.umn.edu/Policies/Education/Education/MAKEUPWORK.html.
Appropriate Student Use of Class Notes and Course Materials:

Taking notes is a means of recording information but more importantly of personally absorbing and integrating the educational experience. However, broadly disseminating class notes beyond the classroom community or accepting compensation for taking and distributing classroom notes undermines instructor interests in their intellectual work product while not substantially furthering instructor and student interests in effective learning. Such actions violate shared norms and standards of the academic community. For additional information, please see: http://policy.umn.edu/Policies/Education/Education/CLASSNOTESSTUDENTS.html.

Grading and Transcripts:

For additional information, please refer to: http://policy.umn.edu/Policies/Education/Education/GRADINGTRANSCRIPTS.html.

Sexual Harassment

"Sexual harassment" means unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and/or other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature. Such conduct has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with an individual's work or academic performance or creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive working or academic environment in any University activity or program. Such behavior is not acceptable in the University setting. For additional information, please consult Board of Regents Policy: http://www1.umn.edu/regents/policies/humanresources/SexHarassment.html.

Equity, Diversity, Equal Opportunity, and Affirmative Action:

The University will provide equal access to and opportunity in its programs and facilities, without regard to race, color, creed, religion, national origin, gender, age, marital status, disability, public assistance status, veteran status, sexual orientation, gender identity, or gender expression. For more information, please consult Board of Regents Policy: http://www1.umn.edu/regents/policies/administrative/Equity_Diversity_EO_AA.html.

Disability Accommodations:

The University is committed to providing quality education to all students regardless of ability. Determining appropriate disability accommodations is a collaborative process. You as a student must register with Disability Services and provide documentation of your disability. The course instructor must provide information regarding a course's content, methods, and essential components. The combination of this information will be used by Disability Services to determine appropriate accommodations for a particular student in a particular course. For more information, please reference Disability Services: http://ds.umn.edu/student-services.html.
Mental Health Services:

As a student you may experience a range of issues that can cause barriers to learning, such as strained relationships, increased anxiety, alcohol/drug problems, feeling down, difficulty concentrating and/or lack of motivation. These mental health concerns or stressful events may lead to diminished academic performance and may reduce your ability to participate in daily activities. University of Minnesota services are available to assist you. You can learn more about the broad range of confidential mental health services available on campus via the Student Mental Health Website: [http://www.mentalhealth.umn.edu](http://www.mentalhealth.umn.edu).