

**City University of Hong Kong**

**Information on a Course  
offered by Department English  
with effect from Semester A in 2009 / 2010**

This form is for completion by the Course Co-ordinator. The information provided on this form will be deemed to be the official record of the details of the course. It has multipurpose use: for the University's database, and for publishing in various University publications including the Blackboard, and documents for students and others as necessary.

Please refer to the Explanatory Notes attached to this Form on the various items of information required.

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**Part I**

Course Title: Communicating Scientific Knowledge

Course Code: EN3252

Course Duration: 1 semester

No. of Credit Units: 3

Level: B3

Medium of Instruction: English

Prerequisites: (*Course Code and Title*) : EN2251 Communication Skills I

Precursors: (*Course Code and Title*) : Nil

Equivalent Courses: (*Course Code and Title*): Nil

Exclusive Courses: (*Course Code and Title*): Nil

**Part II**

**Course Aims**

This course aims to help students master and develop skills in technical and academic scientific research writing and competence in spoken English for professional communication in the field of Biology and Chemistry.

### Course Intended Learning Outcomes (CILOs)

(state what the student is expected to be able to do at the end of the course according to a given standard of performance)

Upon successful completion of this course, students should be able to:

No.	CILOs	Weighting (if applicable)
1	Select a focused research topic and identify relevant scientific literature sources	1
2	Summarize the contents of a selected article, identify its strengths and weaknesses and evaluate it critically as a group	2
3	Write an introduction and review of literature for a scientific research report by identifying a problem and summarizing critically, evaluating the relevant literature	4
4	Deliver an oral presentation of the introduction and review of literature	2
5	Participate actively in class and group activities, and reflect actively on learning and all the CILOs through creating an e-portfolio on Blackboard	1

### Teaching and Learning Activities (TLAs)

(Indicative of likely activities and tasks designed to facilitate students' achievement of the CILOs. Final details will be provided to students in their first week of attendance in this course)

CILO No.	TLAs	Hours/week (if applicable)
1	<i>Selecting a focused research topic and identifying relevant scientific literature sources</i> Students will learn how to select and narrow down a topic by creating concept maps and generating research questions. They identify relevant scientific literature sources by engaging in library research skills. Teacher guides students in identifying the basic definition of research and the different stages involved in performing scientific research-related tasks. Students will be provided tasks to identify a variety of electronic and printed literature for a research topic.	2 weeks
2	<i>Summarizing and critiquing the contents of a selected article</i> Students will learn summarizing skills. They will critically evaluate the strengths and weaknesses of academic research articles by learning particular approaches of critiquing skills. They will learn how to compile end-text references by examining and analyzing academic referencing conventions.	3 weeks
3	<i>Writing an introduction and review of literature</i> Students read and analyse the introduction and	6 weeks

	literature reviews of five articles. They will learn to identify the kinds of bibliographic details to document, and the ways to arrange and format the details. Students will learn the skills of citation of sources and knowledge that can be drawn from different types of literature and genres to inform the introduction and literature review through in-text citation and end-text references. They will be provided tasks that draw on authentic materials to consolidate these skills. They will learn how to identify the conventions and writing skills that are related to direct and indirect citations, and the differences between paraphrasing and direct citations, and the use of reporting verbs and other language conventions. They will learn to write an introduction and review of literature by reading and analysing scientific reports and Final Year Projects in the field. They will be provided exercises and writing tasks that were drawn on authentic materials and articles to consolidate learning that prepare them to write an introduction and review of literature	
4	<i>Delivering an oral presentation of the introduction and review of literature</i> Students will watch a short video clip which illustrates essential oral presentation skills. Teacher will guide them to explore the communicative purposes of presentations for assessment purposes. They will be provided exercises and tasks to analyse the language used in oral presentations	2 weeks
1-5	<i>Participating actively in class and group activities and reflecting actively on learning and all the CILOs through learning how to create an eportfolio on Blackboard.</i>	Throughout the course

### Assessment Tasks/Activities

(Indicative of likely activities and tasks designed to assess how well the students achieve the CILOs. Final details will be provided to students in their first week of attendance in this course)

CILO No.	Type of Assessment Tasks/Activities	Weighting (if applicable)	Remarks
1	Topic selection and Resource identification	10%	Group work
2	Research paper summary and critique	20%	Group work
3	Introduction and literature review	40%	Individual work
4	Oral presentation	20%	Individual work
5	Participation	10%	Individual

			work
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**Grading Criteria for Writing Assignments:** Refer to Grading of Courses in the Academic Regulations (Attachment) and to the Explanatory Notes.

Grading pattern: Standard (A+, A, A-....F). Grading is based on student performance in assessment tasks/activities.

<b>CILO 1: Topic Selection and Resource Identification (10%)</b>		
<b>Items to be assessed</b>	<b>Topic Selection</b>	<b>Relevance of Article</b>
<b>A</b>	Very clear focus on the topic that is precise, appropriately narrow, and well focused and concise	The article is very well focused on the topic and/or specific sub-aspects of the topic
<b>B</b>	Clear focus on the topic that is adequately precise	The article is relevant to the topic and/or specific aspects of the research topic
<b>C</b>	Topic has a discernable focus but lacks precision	The article is only vaguely related to the research topic
<b>D</b>	Topic has an imprecise or unclear focus	The article covers a very broad area and does not adequately deal with specific aspects of the focused topic
<b>F</b>	Topic has an imprecise focus that needs to be narrowed or clarified	The article selected is not appropriate for supporting the topic focus.

**CILO 2: Research Paper Summary and Critique (20%)**

<b>Items to be assessed</b>	<b>Article Choice</b>	<b>Article Summary</b>	<b>Article Critique</b>	<b>Citation Style</b>	<b>Mechanics / Appearance &amp; Formatting</b>
<b>A</b>	Article selected is current (<5 years), and the topic is scientific. Article requires some additional research.	Article summary is accurate, well organized, coherent and well written.	Critique of article is based on facts. Student uses theories and facts from class to evaluate article.	Cited words with no errors.	All grammar/spelling correct and very well-written. All sections in order, well-formatted, very readable.
<b>B</b>	Article selected is current (<5 years), topic is scientific. Article does not require any additional research.	Summary is accurate but organization could be improved.	Critique is generally based on fact. Student uses theories and facts from class to evaluate article.	Cited works with minor style errors only.	Less than 3 grammar/spelling errors; mature, readable style. Formatting generally good but could still be improved.
<b>C</b>	Article is scientific but work is outdated.	Summary is reasonably accurate.	Critique is either not factual or does not use scientific knowledge to evaluate article.	Cited works, but citation contained errors.	Occasional grammar/spelling errors, generally readable with some rough spots in writing style. Formatting is rough but readable.
<b>D</b>	Article's scientific nature is questionable.	Summary is inaccurate.	Critique is minimal.	Citation contained significant language errors that affected retrievability	Some grammar and/or spelling errors, writing style is rough and immature. Organization poor, sloppy formatting
<b>F</b>	Article is not scientific.	No summary provided.	No critique provided.	Did not cite works.	Full of grammar and/or spelling errors, writing style is extremely rough and immature. Organization extremely poor, sloppy formatting and unreadable.

**CILO 3: Introduction and Literature Review (40%)**

<b>Items to be assessed</b>	<b>Content</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Language and style</b>
<b>A</b>	Has reviewed the 5 selected published sources; has very appropriate direct and indirect in-text citations; very informative and comprehensive; correct well-organized collection of end-text references	Has a very well- organized structure of stages; all citations in stage II are in very good order	Language (sentence structure, word order, use of tenses, articles, prepositions, parts of speech, etc.) is about 80-100% accurate; style and tone are very appropriate
<b>B</b>	Has reviewed 4/3 published sources has appropriate direct and indirect in-text citations; generally informative and comprehensive; most entries of end-text references are correct and organized	Has a generally well-organized structure of stages; most citations in stage II are in good order	Language (sentence structure, word order, use of tenses, articles, prepositions, parts of speech, etc.) is about 65-79% accurate; style and tone are quite appropriate
<b>C</b>	Has reviewed 2 selected published sources; has some appropriate direct and indirect in-text citations; informative and comprehensive to a certain extent; some entries of end-text references are correct and organized	Shows some signs of a structure of stages; some citations in stage II are in good order	Language (sentence structure, word order, use of tenses, articles, prepositions, parts of speech, etc.) is about 50-64% accurate; style and tone are fairly appropriate
<b>D</b>	Has only reviewed ONE selected published source; has only a few appropriate direct and indirect in-text citations; not quite informative and comprehensive; only a few entries of end-text references are correct and organized	Shows a few signs of a structure of stages; a few citations in stage II are in good order	Language (sentence structure, word order, use of tenses, articles, prepositions, parts of speech, etc.) is about 40-49% accurate; style and tone are not quite appropriate

<p><b>F</b></p>	<p>Has not reviewed ANY published sources has no appropriate direct and indirect in-text citations; not informative and comprehensive; no correct and organized end-text references</p>	<p>Shows no signs of a structure of stages; citations in stage II have no order</p>	<p>Language (sentence structure, word order, use of tenses, articles, prepositions, parts of speech, etc.) is below 40% accurate; style and tone are not appropriate</p>
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<b>CILO 4: Oral Presentation (20%)</b>					
	<b>Content + Organization</b>			<b>Delivery Skills</b>	<b>Visual aids</b>
<b>Items to be assessed</b>	<b>Introduction Body Conclusion</b>	<b>Transitional sentences</b>	<b>Coherence</b>	<b>Naturalness, Eye contact, Gestures, Accuracy, Articulation and Rhythm and intonation</b>	<b>Design + use of visuals</b>
A	Has 3 elements-very clear & effective; stressed all the main points; very clear and effective conclusion.	Are used adequately	All parts fit together to create a meaningful representation of the work. There is an extremely clear focus on the study throughout the presentation, and an identifiable theme, structure or graphic that serves to tie the presentation together	Spoke naturally without notes & visual aids; good eye contact with audience; very appropriate gestures no grammatically inaccurate sentences; correct articulation, rhythm and intonation	Are appropriate, clear and useful.
B	Has 3/2 elements – clear stressed most of the main points Clear conclusion.	Some are used	Most of the parts fit together to create a meaningful representation of the work. There is a very clear focus on the study throughout the presentation, and an identifiable theme, structure or graphic that serves to tie the presentation together.	Most of the time - spoke naturally but occasionally read notes / visual aids; most of the time; eye contact with audience most of the time; appropriate gestures; very few grammatically inaccurate sentences; correct articulation, rhythm and intonation.	Most are appropriate, clear and useful.
C	Has 1 element missing; stressed some main points; incomplete / unclear conclusion.	A few are used	Some of the parts fit together to create a meaningful representation of the work. There is a clear focus on the study throughout the presentation, and an identifiable theme, structure or	Sometimes read notes / visual aids or both; from time to time; eye contact with audience most of the time; appropriate gestures; some grammatically	Half are appropriate, clear and useful.

			graphic that serves to tie the presentation together.	inaccurate sentences quite correct articulation, rhythm and intonation.	
D	Has only 1 element; stressed a few main points; conclusion missing.	Rarely used	A few parts fit together to create a meaningful representation of the work. There is a lack of focus on the study throughout the presentation, and an identifiable theme, structure or graphic that serves to tie the presentation together.	Most of the time read notes & visual aids very little eye contact with audience; inappropriate gestures; a lot of grammatically inaccurate sentences; incorrect articulation, rhythm and intonation.	Most are inappropriate, unclear and not useful
F	3 elements missing; confusing content; conclusion missing.	Never used	There is hardly any part that fits together to create a meaningful representation of the work. There is no focus on the study throughout the presentation, and no identifiable theme, structure or graphic that serves to tie the presentation together.	Completely read notes & visual aids; no eye contact with audience; inappropriate gestures; too many grammatically inaccurate sentences; incorrect articulation, rhythm and intonation.	NO visual aids

<b>CILO 5: Participation (10%)</b>					
<b>Items to be assessed</b>	<b>Attendance</b>	<b>Punctuality</b>	<b>Participation</b>	<b>Eportfolio reflection</b>	<b>Use of English</b>
<b>A</b>	Attended all classes	Punctual for all classes	Always participated actively in class and group activities	Created an eportfolio and reflected on all CILOs	Always spoke in English in class
<b>B</b>	Attended 90-99% of the classes	90-99% punctual for class	Frequently participated actively in class and group activities	Created an eportfolio and reflected on three CILOs	Frequently spoke in English in class
<b>C</b>	Attended 80-89 % of the classes	80-89% punctual for class	Occasionally participated actively in class and group activities	Created an eportfolio and reflected on two CILOs	Occasionally spoke in languages other than English in class
<b>D</b>	Attended 70-79% of the classes	70-79% punctual for class	Almost never participated actively in class and group activities	Created an eportfolio and reflected on one CILO	Frequently spoke in languages other than English in class
<b>F</b>	Attended less than 70% of the classes	Less than 70% punctual for class	Never participated actively in class and group activities	Created an eportfolio but did not reflect on any of the CILOs	Never spoke in English in class

## Part III

### Keyword Syllabus

English for Science, Academic writing, Research skills, Collaborative skills and learning, Summary and Critique, Writer standpoint, Oral presentation, Verbal delivery skills, Non-verbal delivery skills, Introduction and Literature review, Language in use, Organisation and structure, Citation and referencing,

### Recommended Reading

#### Text(s)

### Suggested Reading

Blicq, R.S. (1986). *Technically-Write!*, 3<sup>rd</sup> ed. Prentice Hall.

Booth, W.C., Colomb, G.G., Williams, J. M. (2003). *The Craft of Research*, 2<sup>nd</sup> edition. Chicago: University of Chicago press.

Brinegar, B.C., & Skates, C.B. (1983). *Technical Writing: A Guide with Models*. Glenview, IL: Scott, Foresman and Company.

Burnett, R.E. (1990). *Technical Communication*. Belmont, California: Wadsworth Publishing Company.

Cargill, M. (2009). *Writing Scientific Research Articles: Strategy and Steps*. John Wiley & Sons, Inc.

Gerson, S. J., Gerson, S.M. (1972). *Technical Writing: Process and Product*. New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, Inc.

Turabian, K.L.A. (2007). *A Manual for Writers of Research Papers, Theses, and Dissertations: Chicago Style for Students and Researchers*. Chicago: University of Chicago press.

Weissberg, R., Buker, S. (1990). *Writing up Research: Experimental Research Report Writing for Students of English*. Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, Inc.

### English language resources

Guide to Grammar and Writing, <http://grammar.ccc.commnet.edu/grammar/>

Online Writing Lab, <http://owl.english.purdue.edu/>

### **Journals and magazines**

BBC Science and Nature, <http://www.bbc.co.uk/sn/>

Directory of Open Access Journals, <http://www.doaj.org/doaj?func=home>

National Geographic, <http://www.nationalgeographic.com/>

Nature, <http://www.nature.com/>

Science, <http://www.sciencemag.org/>

Scientific American, <http://www.sciam.com/>

### **Online resources**

<http://www.naturalnews.com/Index.html>

<http://www.britannica.com/>

### **Returned by:**

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