



UNIVERSITY OF CALGARY  
FACULTY OF SCIENCE  
DEPARTMENT OF PHYSICS AND ASTRONOMY  
COURSE OUTLINE

1. **Course:** PHYS 691.13/.23 Effective Scientific **Writing** for MSc/PhD Students      Fall 2017

**Instructor:** Dr. Jo-Anne Brown | SB 527 | (403) 220.8014 | [jocat@ucalgary.ca](mailto:jocat@ucalgary.ca) | Office Hours: TBA

**Lecture Sections:** PHYS 691.13 | F 12:00-12:50 pm | ST 126 (MSc Students)  
PHYS 691.23 | F 12:00-12:50 pm | ST 126 (PhD Students)

**Course Website:** [d2l.ucalgary.ca](http://d2l.ucalgary.ca)

**Departmental Office:** SB 605, 403-220-5385, [phasugrd@ucalgary.ca](mailto:phasugrd@ucalgary.ca)

2. **Prerequisites:** Registration in graduate studies as a student in the department of Physics and Astronomy.
3. **Grading:** The University policy on grading and related matters is described sections [F.1](#) and [F.2](#) of the online University Calendar. In determining the overall grade in the course the following weights will be used:

Participation, Exercises, and Presentation(s): pass or fail. More than 2 unexcused absences will result in a fail.

4. **Missed Components of Term Work:** The regulations of the Faculty of Science pertaining to this matter are found in the Faculty of Science area of the Calendar in [Section 3.6](#). It is the student's responsibility to familiarize himself/herself with these regulations. See also [Section E.6](#) of the University Calendar.

5. **Scheduled out-of-class activities:** None

**REGULARLY SCHEDULED CLASSES HAVE PRECEDENCE OVER ANY OUT-OF-CLASS-TIME-ACTIVITY.** If you have a clash with this out-of-class-time-activity, please inform your instructor as soon as possible so that alternative arrangements may be made for you.

6. **Course Materials:** No course materials are required.
7. **Examination Policy:** No exams in this course.
8. **Approved Mandatory and Optional Course Supplemental Fees:** None
9. **Writing across the curriculum statement:** In this course, the quality of the student's writing in laboratory reports will be a factor in the evaluation of those reports. See also [Section E.2](#) of the University Calendar.
10. **Human studies statement:** Students in the course will not be expected to participate as subjects or researchers. See also [Section E.5](#) of the University Calendar.

11. **OTHER IMPORTANT INFORMATION FOR STUDENTS:**

(a) **Misconduct:** Academic misconduct (cheating, plagiarism, or any other form) is a very serious offence that will be dealt with rigorously in all cases. A single offence may lead to disciplinary probation or suspension or expulsion. The Faculty

of Science follows a zero tolerance policy regarding dishonesty. Please read the sections of the University Calendar under [Section K](#). Student Misconduct to inform yourself of definitions, processes and penalties.

- (b) **Assembly Points:** In case of emergency during class time, be sure to FAMILIARIZE YOURSELF with the information on [assembly points](#).
- (c) **Academic Accommodation Policy:** Students needing an Accommodation because of a Disability or medical condition should contact Student Accessibility Services in accordance with the Procedure for Accommodations for Students with Disabilities available at [http://www.ucalgary.ca/policies/files/policies/procedure-for-accommodations-for-students-with-disabilities\\_0.pdf](http://www.ucalgary.ca/policies/files/policies/procedure-for-accommodations-for-students-with-disabilities_0.pdf). Students needing an Accommodation in relation to their coursework or to fulfill requirements for a graduate degree, based on a Protected Ground other than Disability, should communicate this need, preferably in writing, to the Associate Head of the Department of Physics and Astronomy, Dr. David Feder, by email ([dfeder@ucalgary.ca](mailto:dfeder@ucalgary.ca)) or by phone (403.220.3638).
- (d) **Safewalk:** Campus Security will escort individuals day or night (<http://www.ucalgary.ca/security/safewalk/>). Call 220-5333 for assistance. Use any campus phone, emergency phone or the yellow phones located at most parking lot pay booths.
- (e) **Freedom of Information and Privacy:** This course is conducted in accordance with the Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act (FOIPP). As one consequence, students should identify themselves on all written work by placing their name on the front page and their ID number on each subsequent page. For more information see also <http://www.ucalgary.ca/secretariat/privacy>.
- (f) **Student Union Information:** [VP Academic](#) Phone: 220-3911 Email: [suvpaca@ucalgary.ca](mailto:suvpaca@ucalgary.ca).  
SU Faculty Rep: Phone: 220-3913  
Email: [science1@su.ucalgary.ca](mailto:science1@su.ucalgary.ca), [science2@su.ucalgary.ca](mailto:science2@su.ucalgary.ca) and [science3@su.ucalgary.ca](mailto:science3@su.ucalgary.ca)  
Student Ombuds Office: 403 220-6420 Email: [ombuds@ucalgary.ca](mailto:ombuds@ucalgary.ca); <http://ucalgary.ca/provost/students/ombuds>
- (g) **Internet and Electronic Device Information:** You can assume that in all classes that you attend, your cell phone should be turned off unless instructed otherwise. Also, communication with other individuals, via laptop computers, Blackberries or other devices connectable to the Internet is not allowed in class time unless specifically permitted by the instructor. If you violate this policy you may be asked to leave the classroom. Repeated abuse may result in a charge of misconduct.
- (h) **U.S.R.I.:** At the University of Calgary, feedback provided by students through the Universal Student Ratings of Instruction (USRI) survey provides valuable information to help with evaluating instruction, enhancing learning and teaching, and selecting courses ([www.ucalgary.ca/usri](http://www.ucalgary.ca/usri)). Your responses make a difference - please participate in USRI Surveys.

## 12. OTHER COURSE RELATED INFORMATION:

### (a) Course Description

Required, multi-component, program of courses for all graduate students in the Department of Physics and Astronomy designed to assist students in improving their scientific oral and written communication skills. Each student must complete a minimum of three terms of [Physics 691](#) during each graduate course, although the normal load is four terms, and additional terms may be required of students on an as-need basis.

### (b) Course Learning Incomes

### (c) Course Learning Outcomes

**P691.13/P691.23 Scientific Writing**

By the end of the course, the students will be expected to be able to:

- 1) Formulate an effective abstract for their presentations and thesis by incorporating the 'magic 3' rule.
- 2) Propose a thesis outline for their work that has a 'closed' structure.
- 3) Critique a piece of written work and provide appropriate feedback.
- 4) Organize their life experience and accomplishments into an effective resume a/o CV.

**(d) Syllabus (Schedule is tentative)**

**P691.13/P691.23 Scientific Writing**

Lecture 1 Sept 22: Introduction to the course

Lecture 2 Sept 29: Visualizing a Paper

Lecture 3 Oct 6: Grammar and Writing Review

Lecture 4 Oct 13: Scholarship Applications

Lecture 5 Oct 20: Communication styles

**No Lecture: Oct 27**

Lecture 6 Nov 3: Writing an Abstract and Thesis Outline

**No Lecture: Nov 10 – Reading Day**

Lecture 7 Nov 17: Writing a Referee Report

Lecture 8 Nov 24: Responding to Referees

Lecture 9 Dec 1: Guest Lecture (Gwendolyn Blue)

Lecture 10 Dec 8: CV and Resume writing

Department Approval \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_