

Special Topics in Biological Sciences: Genetically Modified Organisms

Guidelines for Preparing a Rough Draft 80 points

Deadline for Rough Draft: Tuesday, October 16

Your task: Read your collected references, and if necessary, collect and read additional references. Develop a clear set of objectives (your proposal assignment was the first step). Write a review paper in which you: 1) describe an application or applications of genetically modified organisms; and 2) assess the risks and benefits, *or* ethics of the application(s).

As noted in the instructions for development of your topic, there are several types of reviews. These are described below. Choose one of these models for your paper:

- A *state-of-the-art review* presents an up-to-date, interpretive synthesis of our knowledge of a subject or issue, emphasizing recent literature.
- A *comparison of perspectives review* critically examines two or more ways of seeing an issue
- A *synthesis of two fields review* provides new insights to one field of study by examining literature from another field of study.

Role and Audience: DO write your paper to an audience of educated, scientifically literate professionals or students. Consider yourself to be on equal ground to this audience, so that you are writing from a position of power. DO NOT write your paper to the instructor or to experts in the field of genetic engineering. Why? It is unnatural to write an explanatory paper to a more educated audience.

Additional Reading: We have been reading excerpts from Pechenik each week, and discussing some of the readings in class. These readings include direct and excellent advice about preparing a draft. Do refer back to these readings while preparing your draft. If you compare these instructions here to Pechenik, you will see that much of what you are asked to do here is consistent with what Pechenik advises.

Format of Paper: 8 -10 pages, not including the title page, references or any figures or tables
double-spaced, typed and neatly stapled
one-inch margins
labeled sections
includes the following sections:
title, abstract, introduction, discussion, conclusions, references
reference list is properly formatted (see the proposal instructions)
cite references in the text, using only the authors and year
without plagiarism or falsification

Criteria for Evaluation: Rough drafts need not be perfect. They are useful because the process of writing is complex, and serve to guide us towards a better end result (a well written paper). In general, lower order concerns, such as grammar, are not as important in a draft as higher order concerns, such as the statement of your objectives and the quality of the argumentation. Once your draft is accepted (see “Submitting your Rough Draft “), the following questions will be considered in its evaluation:

- Does the paper have identifiable objectives?
- Is cited information analyzed or assessed, rather than reported merely for the sake of citation?
- Are the conclusions reasonable, given the results and discussion?
- Is blatant plagiarism or falsification absent?
- Is there a reference list, and citations in the text?
- Is the paper free of most (not all) grammatical errors?

If the answer to any of these questions is “no”, your draft will receive no higher than some sort of C. If the answer to all of these questions is “yes”, the following questions will be evaluated to determine whether your draft deserves an A or B:

- Does the introduction give adequate background on your topic?
- Are the objectives of the paper clearly defined in the introduction?
- Can the objectives be evaluated with the evidence (references) at hand?
- How thoughtful is the paper? Does it show originality?
- How thorough is the analysis throughout the paper? Are the objectives addressed?
- How well organized is the paper? (For example: Does every paragraph have a clear topic? Are the transitions well made? Is content placed in the correct section?)
- Is the writing style efficient and clear?
- Is the title concise and descriptive?
- Are literature citations correctly used in the text?
- Is the reference list correctly formatted?

While your draft need not be perfect, it is clear from these criteria that you need to prepare your draft with care and thought. Notice that the draft is not referred to as a first draft. This is because in all likelihood, you will need to prepare a draft and revise it one or more times to have it conditioned to be turned in as a rough draft.

Feeling overwhelmed?

That’s natural. Writing is a complex process that requires gestation time and iteration (repetition). Give yourself plenty of time to prepare the draft *and revise it* before turning it in. If you put it off until a day or two before it is due, you will have difficulty satisfying the evaluative criteria. And the experience will be more frantic than satisfying!

Submitting your Rough Draft:

- Either deliver the copy directly to me OR slide it under my office door.
- Do not put it in the instructor's mailbox or the bin outside my door.
- **e-mails or electronic copies will not be accepted (no exceptions)**

Rough drafts that do not conform to the following format guidelines will not be accepted:

- 8-10 pages, not including the title page, references or any figures or tables
- double-spaced, typed and neatly stapled
- one-inch margins (use a ruler, if necessary)
- labeled sections
- includes the following sections:
- title, abstract, introduction, discussion, conclusions, references

Late penalties (see below) will apply to any draft submitted without all of the format features listed above.

Late Penalty: 5 points per day, including weekends. Rough drafts submitted more than 15 days late will receive no credit, but will be evaluated.

As a reference, this page and the follow pages are the evaluation sheets that the instructor will use.

Special Topics in Biological Sciences: Genetically Modified Organisms

Evaluation of Rough Draft

80 points

Deadline for Submission of Revised Paper: November 27, in class

Name: _____

In evaluating your draft, the following questions will be assessed first:

- 1) Does the paper have labeled sections, including an abstract, introduction, discussion and conclusions?
- 2) Are the objectives of the paper described in the introduction?
- 3) Is cited information analyzed or assessed, rather than reported merely for the sake of citation?
- 4) Are conclusions present, and relatable to the introduction and discussion?
- 5) Is blatant plagiarism or falsification absent?
- 6) Is there a reference list, and citations in the text?
- 7) Is the paper free of most (not all) grammatical errors?

If the answer to any of the questions below is “no”, your draft will receive no higher than some sort of C (60 or fewer points). If the answer to all of these questions is “yes”, the following questions will be evaluated to determine whether your draft deserves an A (71-80) or B (61-70):

- 8) Is the title concise and descriptive?
- 9) Does the introduction give adequate background on your topic?
- 10) Are the objectives of the paper specific and clearly defined in the introduction?
- 11) Can the objectives be evaluated with the evidence (references) at hand?
- 12) How thoughtful is the paper? Does it show originality?
- 13) How thorough is the analysis throughout the paper? Are the objectives addressed?
- 14) How well organized is the paper? (For example: Does every paragraph have a clear topic? Are the transitions well made? Is content placed in the correct section?)
- 15) Is the writing style efficient and clear?
- 16) Are literature citations correctly used in the text?
- 17) Are the conclusions sufficiently clear and focused? Are they derived from, rather than repeating, the introduction and discussion?
- 18) Is the reference list correctly formatted?
- 19) Is the abstract a concise summary of the background, objectives and results of the paper?
(Always write the abstract last.)

Late penalty (5 points deducted per day) _____

Total Points: _____

Grade Scale : A: 71 - 80
C: 40 - 60

B: 61 - 70
Concern: 0 - 39

About comments and markings on your draft:

What do all the markings mean on your draft? It is not feasible for the instructor to write explanations or suggestions for every aspect of your draft that might be revised. Instead, only a few higher order aspects of your draft that are most in need of revision will be addressed in some detail.

For lower order concerns that may need revision, a number from the key on the next page will be written next to portions of the paper that illustrate the problem. For simple grammatical errors, such as spelling, use of verb tense, case, and syntax (word order), an 'X' will be written next to the line containing the error. If an error is repeated throughout the text, it will only be identified when it first occurs, and nowhere else in the text. It is your task to discover the error within the line, and other errors of the same type, and make corrections.

It is important that you understand that no reviewer of your work will ever provide a complete assessment of how your writing may be improved. Think of the instructor's review as merely providing you with some examples of ways it can be improved. You will need to carefully consider your draft as you revise it, realizing that there are other areas for improvement.

Comments from the Instructor:

A Key to Numbered Comments Regarding Lower Order Concerns

(These are examples of common errors.)

(Note: this page may be revised before your draft is evaluated.)

Grammatical Concerns

1. Proofread for spelling, punctuation and spacing
2. Run-on sentence
3. Sentence fragment
4. Use verb tenses correctly
5. Use singular and plural forms correctly
6. Colloquialism (should be avoided): use a more formal style
7. Imprecise language or terminology
8. *Italicize* Latin words, including names of species

Organization and Expression in Sentences and Paragraphs

9. Repeats what has already been said
10. Expression should be direct and concise
11. Write concisely: eliminate unnecessary words
12. Paragraphs should have a topic sentence
13. The content of the paragraph should support its topic sentence
14. Avoid overuse of quotations; put in your own words whenever possible

Literature Citations in the Text

15. Cite the last name(s) only
16. Cite the author(s) and date (page numbers are acceptable, but optional)
17. If the author is unknown, use Anonymous
18. Use *et al.* when there are three or more authors
19. Cite the source in the beginning of the sentence (or paragraph), not after presenting information from it.

References

20. Write out all authors in the References (use *et al.* only in the text of the paper)
21. If the author is unknown, use Anonymous
22. List the last name first of the first author
23. Alphabetize by last name of first author
24. Use one format for first names throughout the reference list
25. Use one format for dates throughout the reference list
26. Indent the second and following lines of each reference citation
27. Indent each citation in the same way
28. Cite volume and page numbers of journal articles
29. Cite the journal, volume and page numbers instead of the web address
30. The type of reference (book, periodical, *etc.*) should not be included in reference citations
31. Proofread carefully for spacing, punctuation and format
32. Use the same sequence of information for each type of reference