Independent Studies, Writing Skills
Health Services 600
Instructor: Deborah Shattuck

Course Description
The graduate-level course is designed to help you improve your professional writing skills.

Pre-requisites:

- two 10-page, double-spaced papers that are your best efforts, not drafts. These can be class paper, thesis, research proposal, or work-related paper.
- ability to use Microsoft Track Changes.

Format of Course: On-line distance. I provide individualized feedback on papers that may address grammar, punctuation, cohesion, and coherence. Techniques for presenting and discussing research results and citing the research literature may also be suggested. You incorporate my edits and suggestions for revision into the paper and continue editing and making revisions to the rest of the document.

The course textbook and assignments give you a chance to brush up on your writing skills.

Course Objectives
You demonstrate your learning by revising and rewriting papers and by completing assignments. You will learn how to:

- Identify nominalizations and use Williams' technique "diagnose, analyze, rewrite" to revise sentences containing nominalizations. Understand when the use of a nominalization is appropriate.
- Identify the passive voice and rewrite to active voice. Understand when the use of the passive voice is appropriate
- Understand and apply conventions of technical writing style, for example, avoiding use of articles with noncount words and using a gerund rather than the conjunction "that"
- Recognize language that may imply bias and rewrite to make it bias-free ("person with diabetes" rather than "diabetic")
- Identify wordiness and rewrite concisely, applying techniques such as removing padding from around verbs ("provides" rather than "plays a role in providing"), reducing redundancy ("private" rather than "privacy sensitive"), and deleting over-used phrases and clichés ("the fact that," "as already stated," "in terms of")
- Vary sentence length to create interest and add transitions between sentences to create coherence
- Cite sources to avoid repeating information in text and using direct quotes
- Expand vocabulary and use of punctuation
- Overcome writer's block by experimenting with techniques listed in Strategies for Overcoming Writer's Block
- Develop a library of writing resources
- The course is credit/no credit. To obtain credit, you are required to submit and revise two 10-page papers and complete all course assignments.