

## 2007 Summer Focus Writing Course Syllabus

### Course Instructors:

### Course Facilitators:

### Goals

The goals of this course are to familiarize you with the style, format, and content of scientific papers; to develop your ability to peer-review others' work; to facilitate understanding of your own research as well as others' research at a basic level; and to help you develop an appreciation of the different ways science can be written and spoken about.

### Assignments

Your weekly assignment will be a one-page summary of the research you have completed that week. It will need to be presented in a mini-scientific paper format, and you will be given examples of this on the first day of class. This assignment is designed to help you learn the basic building blocks of a scientific paper, to provide you with material to use in your final paper, and to allow you to identify areas where you may be having trouble understanding a concept. You should bring three copies of your paper to class each week. As you leave class, you will be given two papers from your peers to critique. These should be turned in on the next class period.

A scientific paper on your research project will be due at the end of the summer. This should be at least five pages long, double-spaced with 12-point Times New Roman font. We encourage you to write a longer paper if you would like to use the paper for science competitions. Additionally, we want to see a draft of your paper on the fourth class period. We realize that some sections may not be complete because you may still be working on the experiments. However, you should still be able to write an introduction section and pieces of the other sections.

### Expectations

As with all things, what you get out of the class will be directly proportional to how much you put into it, so your participation in classes will benefit you. As such, attendance is mandatory (unless you have a valid reason for missing and you inform a course facilitator ahead of time). You will not receive any grades for any assignment you turn in; instead, the course facilitators will give you written comments to improve your writing. We don't expect you to write a perfect paper at the end of the summer, but we do expect to see improvement of your writing skills throughout the summer and we expect you to put a reasonable amount of effort into both the class and the paper. We are not asking you to write a paper just to waste your time; you may find in the future that you will need to talk about your research, provide admissions committees with a written summary, or you may decide you want to compete in a science competition. In any of these situations, this paper will be valuable to you.