

Scientific Writing for Graduate Students

A MANUAL ON THE TEACHING OF SCIENTIFIC WRITING

Edited by F. PETER WOODFORD, The Rockefeller University

A Council of Biology Editors Manual

Prepared by the CBE Committee on Graduate Training in Scientific Writing

FROM THE PREFACE

This book has been written because the members of the Council of Biology Editors, like all editors of scientific journals, are acutely aware that many scientists write badly. . . . Although the reasons may be complex, one contributing factor seems clear: few universities provide formal training in scientific writing, and few even encourage their students to develop a rational technique for writing scientific papers through the study of any of the excellent available textbooks. . . .

The considerations involved in this kind of writing . . . necessitate hard thinking about the requirements of scientific proof, the logical development of scientific argument, and precision of scientific expression. For these reasons we believe that the instruction is most effectively given at a late stage of a scientist's training—in graduate school—and that it is best given by a scientist.

. . . the manual is intended primarily for use by the *teacher* of scientific writing, and is therefore different in purpose from the many textbooks . . . that are meant to be used by the student himself. Nevertheless, sufficiently motivated students will be able to use this manual directly if no instructor is available.



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