SCIENCE WRITING, MASTER OF ARTS

MA in Science Writing (https://advanced.jhu.edu/academics/graduate/ma-science-writing/)

Science writing explores and explains how our world works. The best science writing inspires a deeper understanding, a sense of wonder, or a need to act. The online/low-residency MA in Science Writing program strives to guide the next generation of writers and editors, who will help the public comprehend the increasingly complex issues of science, medicine, and technology that affect their lives. Students in the program do not focus on creating scientific research reports, journal articles for peer review, or other scholarly/academic works, nor do they learn technical writing for instruction manuals or regulatory documents. Instead, they develop the craft of translating complicated information about science, medicine, and technology into clear, perceptive prose for a broad audience.

The program recognizes that contemporary science writing involves journalism, communication, multimedia, and the literary arts. A typical student hones journalistic and creative writing techniques to craft enticing, understandable prose for digital or print venues, from magazines and books to social media and websites, for news outlets, companies, research agencies, and universities. Along the way, students acquire communication skills to promote viewpoints and develop expertise to thrive in the digital universe. The program's writers and editors are also challenged to monitor science itself, to disclose how research can falter or be misused.

A brief residency course, required for the degree, provides intensive face-to-face study to complement the group and personal interaction of online courses. (An online version of the residency is offered in some semesters.) During residencies, students have visited a field research site on a Maine island, control rooms at NASA, environmental monitoring projects on the Irish coast, and world-famous genetics and biotech labs in Washington and Baltimore. They have observed surgeons in the operating room, sailed with biologists on the Chesapeake Bay, heard from Nobel and Pulitzer Prize winners, and met with science writers from *The Washington Post*, *The New York Times*, National Public Radio, *National Geographic*, *Discover*, *Science*, *Nature*, and other journalism outlets. From space and the oceans to nanotechnology and climate change, from artificial intelligence and robotics to fitness and genetics, the ever-changing topics chosen by science writers are essential to an enlightened citizenry of the 21st century.

Admissions Criteria for All Advanced Academic Programs (https://e-catalogue.jhu.edu/arts-sciences/advanced-academic-programs/Admission/#admissionrequirementstext)

PROGRAM-SPECIFIC REQUIREMENTS

In addition to the materials and credentials required for all programs, the Master of Arts in Science Writing program requires:

- **Resume**
- **Two Letters of Recommendation**
- **Statement of Purpose:** Please provide a statement, up to one page in length, describing your personal background and/or a part of your life experience that has shaped you or your goals. Feel free to elaborate on personal challenges and opportunities that have influenced your decision to pursue a graduate degree at Johns Hopkins.
- **Writing samples:** The samples should total 10 to 20 typewritten, double-spaced pages (about 2,500 to 5,000 words), and should include some pieces about science, medicine, or technology. A combination of several shorter pieces rather than a single, lengthy piece is recommended. Any factual form is permitted, including news or feature article, commentary/blog, memoir, travel writing, essay, review, profile, book chapter, and creative nonfiction. Applicants may submit published or unpublished works. Digital writing samples should be submitted in their entirety, not as links. The majority of an applicant's samples should be no more than five years old. Academic papers, peer-reviewed research reports, technical writing, or government documents are not recommended as writing samples; the samples should be journalism, communication writing, creative writing, blogging, etc.

Program Requirements

Students in the MA in Science Writing program must complete:

- Three required core courses
- Three customizable core courses
- Three elective courses

Code	Title	Credits
Core Courses - Required:		**12**
AS.491.658	Techniques of Science and Medical Writing	
AS.491.750	Contemporary Science and Medical Writing: Creative and Professional Forms	
AS.491.802	Thesis and Careers in Science Writing	
Core Courses - Customizable		
Select two of the following:		*8*
AS.491.673	Science and Medical Writing Workshop	
AS.491.674	Science and Medical Writing Workshop	
AS.491.675	Science and Medical Writing Workshop	
AS.491.680	Writing the Tech Story Workshop	
AS.491.754	Science Narratives Workshop	
AS.491.755	Science Personal Essay and Memoir Workshop	
AS.491.757	Science Profiles Workshop: Writing About People	
Select one of the following:		*4*
AS.491.691	Science Policy, Funding and Politics	
AS.491.708	Medicine in Action	
AS.491.709	Science in Action	
AS.491.710	In the Field: Science Writing in the Woods, Coasts, & Labs of Mt. Desert Island	
AS.491.711	Public Health in Action	
AS.491.712	Discovering Science History in "The Athens of the North"	
AS.491.713	Science and Global Conflict	
AS.491.785	In the Wild: Science Writers Explore Montana's Wilderness and Wildlife Biology	

Electives		
Select two of the following:		*8*
AS.491.696	The Nature of Nature	
AS.491.697	The Literature of Science	
AS.491.700	Subatomic Writing	
AS.491.701	Communicating Climate Change	
AS.491.702	The Funny Side of Science	
AS.491.704	Science Writing for Change	
AS.491.707	Prizewinners: The Best Writing about Science, Technology, Environment & Health	
AS.491.748	Principles of Editing	
AS.491.807	Independent Study in Science Writing	
AS.491.808	Internship in Science Writing	
AS.490.734	Digital Storytelling and Multimedia Journalism	
Select one additional course from either the customizable core or the electives		*4*
Optional		
AS.491.888	Thesis Continuation	
Total Credits		**36**