

# writing into academic communities - fall 2016

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Welcome to Writing into Academic Communities! In this course, you will be learning about the different ways different academic communities write. You will also soon learn that what it means to "write" can sometimes extend beyond traditional alphabetic essays. In addition to assignments that will ask you to investigate the communicative practices of the academic communities you are a part of (or would like to be a part of), you will also engage in ongoing reflection about our readings and class discussions. The overarching goal of the course will be to make it clear what different fields of study value and privilege when it comes to writing and to help you develop the skills that you need to be successful in your individual fields of study.

## required course materials

- A Wordpress account (to access our course blog at [academiccommunities.wordpress.com](http://academiccommunities.wordpress.com)). Please note that we do not have a textbook for this course. You will be able to access all course readings through the course blog.
- Access to a word processing program that is compatible with Microsoft Word.
- A flash drive to store course files.

## learning outcomes

At the end of this course, you can expect to be able to:

- Use writing as a tool for learning, for communicating, for inquiring, for reflecting, and for engaging.
- Think critically about different writing practices, and to analyze them.
- Respond appropriately to different rhetorical situations and to the needs of different audiences, particularly academic audiences.
- Understand writing as an open, collaborative process.
- Demonstrate control of the conventions of your chosen academic community (i.e., structure, development, citation practices, document design, etc.).
- Identify a need for external support; and to find, evaluate, use, and cite primary and secondary sources in your work.
- Understand your work as part of a larger academic conversation.
- Use a variety of digital technologies to conduct research and to draft, revise, edit, and design documents.

# course policies

## **Attendance**

You cannot benefit from this class if you are not here. However, I understand that you have busy lives and occasionally may need to miss class. You are permitted **three** absences over the course of the semester. For every missed class after that, I will deduct five points from your final course grade. Excessive tardiness can and will be counted as an absence, so do your best to be on time. I realize that there are sometimes extenuating circumstances. Please come to me if you have any attendance issues you need to discuss.

## **Late Work**

I do not accept late work. All assignments are due at the beginning of class on the due date. After that, they will be considered late. If you need to renegotiate a deadline, please see me and I will determine your best course of action.

## **Academic Honesty**

Please refer to the university's student handbook (available online) for information regarding academic honesty policies. These policies and penalties apply to our class, as well as to all other classes at the university.

## **Classroom Environment**

It is my aim to cultivate a culture of respect in the classroom. We will work together to decide more specifically what that means for us, but overall, preparedness, consideration of others' contributions, and a willingness to work collaboratively will go a long way towards fostering a productive classroom environment.

## **(Dis)Abilities Statement**

If you have a documented disability which requires accommodations in order to obtain equal access for your learning, please make your needs known to me, preferably during the first week of the semester. Please note that students who request accommodations need to verify their eligibility through the Office of Disability Services.

## **Religious Holidays**

It is the policy of the university to make every reasonable effort to allow students to observe their religious holidays without academic penalty. In such cases, it is your obligation to provide me with reasonable notice of the dates of religious holidays on which you will be absent. Should you need to miss a class due to a religious holiday, you should understand that absence from classes for religious reasons does not relieve you of responsibility for completing required work. In such an event, you should consult with me well before you leave for the holiday to find out what assignments will be due while you are absent—and you subsequently should have the assignments completed and turned in to me prior to missing class.

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## **Student Veteran-Friendly Campus**

University educators recognize student veterans' rights when entering and exiting the university system. If you are a student veteran, please let me know if accommodations need to be made for absences due to drilling or being called to active duty.

## *course assignments*

During this course, you will be responsible for completing the following assignments. When each assignment is introduced in class, a detailed assignment handout that includes specific grading criteria will be distributed.

### **Digital Demonstrations (5%)**

In small groups, you will present a digital writing tool of your choosing to the class at large. The demonstration will consist of a ten-minute presentation with an accompanying handout that outlines basic instructions for new users.

### **Think Pieces (10%)**

Each week, you will be responsible for composing a 250-300 word response to assigned readings, classroom discussions, writing activities, and the like. I will provide guiding questions, but ultimately, you have the agency to decide how to use the think pieces to facilitate your learning.

### **Interview Activity (15%)**

You will identify someone on campus who works (and writes) in your chosen academic community and interview him or her about the reading, researching, and writing practices he or she engages in as a member of a particular discipline. You will then write a 3-4 page essay that presents and engages with the content of the interview.

### **Curation Activity (10%)**

For this activity, you will be asked to compile a set of texts that have been produced in, for, or by your chosen academic community. Note that "texts" here does not necessarily mean alphabetic texts – they could be, but they could also be websites, videos, slideshows, etc. You will then create a PowerPoint or Prezi to house your representative sample and to briefly discuss how you identified these texts as belonging to your chosen academic community.

### **Rhetorical Analysis (15%)**

You will select one of the texts from your curation activity and critically examine it for its purpose, attention to audience, style, tone, language, development, and design (among other criteria). Your aim will be not only to evaluate the text's effectiveness, but also its adherence to the communicative conventions of your chosen academic community. You will choose the medium for this assignment.

### Discipline-Specific Writing Activity and Presentation (20%)

For your final project, you will be asked to compose an alphabetic text on a topic of your choosing that demonstrates your knowledge of the communicative conventions of your chosen academic community. Your content and your approach will be driven by what you have learned is valued in that community. This assignment should be 7-8 pages in length. Part of your grade for this assignment is also dependent on a presentation of your work.

### Rhetorical Self-Analysis and Reflection (20%)

This is technically the second part of your final project. Just as you rhetorically analyzed a text from your curation activity, you will rhetorically analyze your own writing by commenting directly on the text. Afterwards, you will compose a 1-2 page reflection on your choices, and on the writing and analyzing processes.

### Attendance and Participation (5%)

This is fairly self-explanatory.

## grading scale

Noting that other factors can affect your final course grade, your final course grade will be calculated from your total point value based on the following scale:

A			B			C			D		
Total Points	Letter Grade	GPA	Total Points	Letter Grade	GPA	Total Points	Letter Grade	GPA	Total Points	Letter Grade	GPA
97-100	A	4.00	85-88	B	3.00	74-76	C	2.00	65-67	D	1.00
93-96	A-	3.67	81-84	B-	2.67	70-73	C-	1.67	60-64	D-	0.67
89-92	B+	3.33	77-80	C+	2.33	68-72	D+	1.33	0-59	F	0

## the schedule

The course schedule may change due to cancellations, advanced or slowed progress through material, or my assessment of the class's needs.

Date	Class Time	Homework Assignment for Next Class
Week 1		
Tuesday	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Introductions</li><li>• How-To: Using Wordpress</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Review the syllabus.</li><li>• Post a think piece on the blog: What is the academic community you will study this semester? Why did you choose to investigate it?</li></ul>

Thursday	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Discussion: Academic Communities</li> <li>• Distribution of Digital Demonstration Assignment Sheet</li> <li>• Distribution of Interview Activity Assignment Sheet</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Begin to brainstorm potential interviewees.</li> <li>• Read "<a href="#">How to conduct an interview</a>" (link on the course blog).</li> </ul>
<b>Week 2</b>		
Tuesday	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How-To: Solicit an Interview</li> <li>• Digital Demonstrations Sign-Up</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Read Porter, "<a href="#">Why technology matters to writing: a cyberwriter's tale</a>" (link on the course blog).</li> <li>• Reach out to your potential interviewee.</li> </ul>
Thursday	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In-Class Activity: Mock Interviews</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Post a think piece on the blog reflecting on the process of conducting an interview.</li> <li>• Read Blakeslee and Fleischer, "How Do I Find Answers?" (available on the course blog).</li> </ul>
<b>Week 3</b>		
Tuesday	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Discussion: Purpose of the Interview – What do we want to know?</li> <li>• How-To: Writing Interview Questions</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Post a think piece on the blog reflecting on what you want to learn from your interviewee and how you might get at that knowledge.</li> <li>• Begin to draft your interview questions, using the sample questions from the assignment sheet as a guide.</li> </ul>
Thursday	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Writing Workshop: Interview Questions</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Post your interview questions to the blog.</li> <li>• Read Ward and Vander Lei, "Reading Rhetorically" (available on the course blog).</li> </ul>
<b>Week 4</b>		
Tuesday	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Discussion: Reading Rhetorically – What can it teach us?</li> <li>• Digital Demonstration: TBA</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Review your feedback on your interview questions, make adjustments as necessary, and begin conducting your interviews.</li> <li>• Post a think piece on the blog: How might (or do) you find texts that are produced for, by, or in your academic community? How comfortable do you feel working with those texts?</li> </ul>
Thursday	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How-To: Accessing Discipline-Specific Source Material</li> <li>• Distribution of Curation Activity Assignment Sheet</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Read Desjardins, "<a href="#">You Suck at PowerPoint!</a>" and Dirk, "<a href="#">Navigating Genres</a>" (link on the course blog).</li> </ul>
<b>Week 5</b>		
Tuesday	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Technology Demonstration: Power Point</li> <li>• Digital Demonstration: TBA</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Post the slideshow you created in today's class to the blog. Spend some time viewing one another's contributions and offer commentary.</li> </ul>

Thursday	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Technology Demonstration: Prezi</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Post the slideshow you created in today's class to the blog. Spend some time viewing one another's contributions and offer commentary.</li> <li>Post a think piece on the blog: Which slideshow software do you think will you use for the curation activity? Why?</li> <li>Post on the "Curation Activity Grading Criteria" page on the blog.</li> </ul>
<b>Week 6</b>		
Tuesday	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Researching Workshop: Finding Materials for the Curation Activity</li> <li>Digital Demonstration: TBA</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Continue to compile texts for your curation activity.</li> <li>Post on the "Curation Activity Grading Criteria" page on the blog.</li> </ul>
Tuesday	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>How-To: Close Reading and Annotation</li> <li>Reading Workshop: Get to Know your Texts</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Post a think piece to the blog: What are you learning about the communicative practices of your academic community as you read the representative texts you've found?</li> <li>Post on the "Curation Activity Grading Criteria" page on the blog.</li> </ul>
<b>Week 7</b>		
Tuesday	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Self-Guided Workshop: Curation Activity</li> <li>Digital Demonstration: TBA</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Continue to work on your Curation Activity Project.</li> <li>Vote, via the link on the blog, to accept the assessment criteria for the final project.</li> </ul>
Thursday	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>No Class – Fall Break</b></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Live your life. ☺</li> </ul>
<b>Week 8</b>		
Tuesday	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Peer Review</li> <li>Digital Demonstration: TBA</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Taking your peer feedback into account, make revisions to your Curation Activity project.</li> </ul>
Thursday	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Discussion: Reflecting on the Rhetorical Choices of Slideshow Creation</li> <li>Distribution of Rhetorical Analysis Assignment Sheet</li> <li><b>Last Day to Submit Interview Activity</b></li> <li><b>Curation Activity Due</b></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Post a think piece to the blog discussing which of the texts from your Curation Activity you are considering for your Rhetorical Analysis. Also, discuss potential mediums you are considering for the final product.</li> <li>Read Ward and Vander Lei, "Writing Rhetorically" (available on the course blog).</li> </ul>
<b>Week 9</b>		
Tuesday	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Discussion: Writing Rhetorically – What should we do?</li> <li>Digital Demonstration: TBA</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Read Kiefer, "<a href="#">Doing a Rhetorical Analysis of a Text</a>" and Carroll, "<a href="#">Backpacks vs Briefcases: Steps Toward Rhetorical Analysis</a>" (links on the course blog).</li> <li>Post your medium of choice for the Rhetorical Analysis on the "Rhetorical Analysis" page on the course blog.</li> </ul>

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Thursday	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Presentation: Submission Standards for Rhetorical Analysis</li> <li>• “Blurred Lines” versus “Defined Lines” Exhibition and Discussion</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Post a think piece to the blog reflecting on our activity in class today.</li> </ul>
<b>Week 10</b>		
Tuesday	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Group Activity: Spoofing Advertisements</li> <li>• Digital Demonstration: TBA</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Find a resource that outlines the citation practices of your academic community. If applicable, post a link to your resource on the blog. If it is a print text, post the bibliographic information.</li> </ul>
Thursday	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Group Activity: Find Your (Citation) Friends</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Post a think piece to the blog: What citation method does your academic community use? Why? What did you learn from the group activity today?</li> </ul>
<b>Week 11</b>		
Tuesday	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Peer Review</li> <li>• Digital Demonstration: TBA</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Taking your feedback into consideration, make revisions to your Rhetorical Analysis.</li> </ul>
Thursday	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Writing Workshop: Rhetorical Analysis</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Post a think piece to the blog: What are you learning from the process of writing the rhetorical analysis? What did you learn from the peer review process?</li> </ul>
<b>Week 12</b>		
Tuesday	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>No Class – Veterans’ Day</b></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Be thankful for those who serve(d). ☺</li> </ul>
Thursday	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How-To: Choose An Appropriate Research Topic</li> <li>• Technological Demonstration: Commenting in Microsoft Word</li> <li>• Distribution of Final Project Assignment Sheet</li> <li>• <b>Rhetorical Analysis Due</b></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Begin brainstorming and researching potential research topics. Post a think piece to the blog that discusses your process. Comment on your classmates’ think pieces and offer your insight on their potential topics.</li> </ul>
<b>Week 13</b>		
Tuesday	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Research Workshop: Final Project</li> <li>• Presentation Sign-Up</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Begin to read and annotate the sources you have found.</li> </ul>
Thursday	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Writing Workshop: Final Project</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Continue to work on your final project.</li> </ul>
<b>Week 14</b>		
Tuesday	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Writing Workshop: Final Project</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Continue to work on your final project.</li> </ul>
Thursday	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>No Class – Thanksgiving Break</b></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Eat turkey, if you are so inclined. ☺</li> </ul>
<b>Week 15</b>		
Tuesday	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Peer Review</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Taking your feedback into consideration, make revisions to your Final Project.</li> </ul>
Thursday	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Poster-Style Presentations</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Continue to work on your Final Project.</li> </ul>
<b>Week 16</b>		
Tuesday	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Poster-Style Presentations</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Continue to work on your Final Project.</li> </ul>
Thursday	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Poster-Style Presentations</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Continue to work on your Final Project.</li> </ul>
<b>Exam Week</b>		
Final Exam (Date TBD)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Final Project Due</b></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Feel proud of what you have accomplished this semester and enjoy your break!</li> </ul>

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