About This Course:

In this course, we will endeavour to improve our academic writing skills and strengthen our abilities to write clearly, concisely and persuasively. In order to do this, we will focus on crucial elements of the academic essay such as thesis statements, body paragraphs, transition sentences, and formal stylistic writing. We will examine the ways that we can go about developing a critical analysis of a topic. Furthermore, we will emphasize the importance of personal revision along with the importance of peer support and consider the ways that others can help us in our writing process. This course also aims to improve research skills and will discuss how to properly include secondary sources into our academic writing. Most importantly, I want to emphasize that this course stresses that academic writing can be an enjoyable experience and that the abilities to think and write critically as well as being able to form opinions on cultural objects are valuable skills that can help us well beyond the academic sphere.

Expectations:

We will be discussing the material in significant detail. My central expectation is that you come to class fully prepared. Being fully prepared means that you have read the required texts, you have given them some thought, and you have arrived in class with something relevant to say about them, or about the class topic that day. You can also come to class with a question in mind. Please be on time, and plan to attend every class.

You are expected to show respect and consideration towards your instructor and fellow classmates. Respect and consideration involves not talking while others are addressing the class, actively listening, and not using any electronic devices (excluding laptops for note-taking) during class time. This means that all cell phones are turned off, no text messaging, no internet browsing, and no social networking.

Course Goals

- Improving skills in reading, writing, and critical thinking
- Learning various strategies to approach the academic essay
- Improving research skills
- Improving skills in style and grammar
- Learning to write persuasively and formally
- Helping you give and receive useful feedback on writing for the purposes of revision
***PLEASE NOTE*** The use of any electronic devices or any type of behaviour that is distracting or disrespectful to others (i.e., chatting, texting, Facebook, etc.) will be noted and will detract from your participation grade.

**Required Texts:**
Course Kit

**Assignments and Evaluation:**
Participation & Attendance: 20%
Literacy Narrative (Due January 25): 10%
Summary, Paraphrase, Quote Assignment (Due February 6): 5%
Essay Outline 1 (Due February 13): 6%
Position Paper (Due March 1): 20%
Short Story Write-Ups: 10%
Essay Outline 2 (Due March 20): 6%
Works Cited Assignment (Due March 27): 3%
Literary Analysis (Due April 3): 20%

**Participation & Attendance** (20%): Participation means that you come to class ready to express your own ideas and exchange them with your other classmates and myself. Attendance is crucial for your participation mark but attendance alone does not count for full participation.

**Literacy Narrative** (10%): This assignment requires you to compose a 800-1000 word report describing a significant moment or development in your engagement with language. You might explain how a particular book changed your view of something about the world, recount a time when you were confronted by a dominant language not your own, or represent the issues that you faced when you were (or are) trying to learn a different language. Due January 25

**Summary, Paraphrase, Quote Assignment** (5%): For this assignment, I will put up a short article on Learn. You will write a 100-250 word paragraph wherein you summarize, paraphrase, and quote from the article as discussed in class. Due February 6

**Essay Outline** (6%): Write a proposal for the upcoming position paper in which you provide the thesis statement as well as the main points of your essay in point form (however, the thesis should be written as a complete sentence or sentences). There is no set page limit, but the more detailed, the better. Aim for at least a full page of points. The purpose of this assignment is to have you thinking about your essays in advance with the understanding that your final paper is subject to change and always a work in progress. Due February 13

**Position Paper** (20%): Write a 1200-1400 word essay in which you take a position on one of the following topics: tuition fees, climate change, violence in sports (fighting in hockey, concussions in football, etc.), the education system (are there better ways to teach students?), social media culture (Facebook, Twitter, etc.), online privacy issues, a book or movie or TV show of Youtube channel you like or don’t like. This essay will
require you to do some research and incorporate at least two peer-reviewed secondary sources into your essay. Please do not hesitate to make an appointment to discuss the essay. Papers should be typed and double-spaced using 12 pt Times New Roman font. The essay should be argumentative and thesis-driven. Use proper MLA citation methods. **Due March 1**

**Essay Outline #2 (6%)**: Write a proposal for the upcoming literary analysis essay. See description of Essay Outline #1 for more details. **Due March 20**

**Works Cited Assignment (3%)**: This assignment requires you to hand in an early draft of what will become your Works Cited for your final essay assignment. For help, please consider visiting the Owl at Purdue website. The Works Cited should include both your primary and peer-reviewed secondary material (at least one of each) and should be in MLA format. **Due March 27**

**Write Ups (2% each, 10% total)**: These write-ups require you to write five to six sentences on each short story we are reading in class. The write-up is due before we read the text in class or it will not receive a mark (note that “The Yellow Wallpaper” write-up is due the class before we are to read it to avoid conflict with the Position Paper; you can hand that into Learn at any time before midnight of February 27th). For this assignment, you can explain why you liked or didn’t like the text, or make a claim about what you think the author was attempting to achieve with this text, or discuss something that you felt didn’t make sense. If you wish to include a question for class discussion as part of your five to six sentences, you may do so as well. These assignments are small and only worth 2% but they do add up and their purpose is to both ensure that you are reading the texts in advance and thinking about them critically as a way to prepare you for your literary analysis essay.

**Literary Analysis Essay (20%)**: Write a 1200-1400 word essay in which you undertake a literary analysis that focuses on one of the course short stories. I will post essay questions on LEARN later in the term. This essay will require you to do some research and incorporate at least one peer-reviewed secondary source into your essay. Please do not hesitate to make an appointment to discuss the essay. Papers should be typed and double-spaced using 12 pt Times New Roman font. The essay should be argumentative and thesis-driven. Use proper MLA citation methods. **Due April 3**

**Grading Rubric**

A - The paper contains a clear, original, thought provoking, and argumentative thesis statement. The argument is persuasive and argued with coherency. Use of primary and secondary sources is exemplary. Quotations are well chosen and are smoothly integrated into the essay and sharply analyzed. There is a strong flow from paragraph to paragraph as well as from sentence to sentence. “A” papers are structured well, with solid introductions, body paragraphs, topic sentences, and conclusions. The essay remains on-topic throughout. The writing style is formal and professional. The words chosen are
appropriate for the context and the writing is free from grammatical errors. Formatting
details are free of errors.

B - The paper contains a clear and argumentative thesis statement which is argued with
coherency and consistency throughout the paper. Good analysis of primary and secondary
sources. Quotations are well chosen and are usually well integrated into the essay but
they may occasionally be summarized rather than analyzed. There is a flow from
paragraph to paragraph as well as from sentence to sentence. “B” papers are structured
well, with solid introductions, body paragraphs, topic sentences, and conclusions. The
essay remains on-topic for the most part but contains some tangents. The writing in the
essay is clear though there are some awkward word choices and some grammatical errors
throughout. The body paragraphs make good points but are occasionally too long or too
short. Formatting details are mostly free of errors.

C – The paper contains a thesis but it is somewhat descriptive or speculative or, perhaps,
somewhat unclear or awkwardly worded. There is a discussion of the primary and
secondary texts but it does not always serve to reinforce an argument. The essay will
occasionally veer off-topic, being about something other than the primary text. In a paper
that requires research, the secondary source may be used a bit awkwardly or superficially.
There is a structure at work in the paper but the essay occasionally becomes unstructured.
There may be an imbalance of focus on one text over another. Paragraphs might be of
good length or they might be all too long or too short. The writing style has multiple
stylistic and grammatical errors leading to an occasional lack in clarity. Formatting is
good but contains some errors.

D – The paper lacks a clear and coherent thesis statement. The discussion of the primary
and secondary sources is superficial or entirely descriptive. The vast majority of the paper
is off-topic, being about something other than the primary text. The secondary source is
used without clear understanding of the text and the context from which the quotation
comes. There are frequent structural problems throughout. There is little flow in the paper
as it contains mostly awkward transitions. Grammatical and stylistic errors contribute to a
lack in clarity. The formatting contains multiple errors.

F – The paper lacks a thesis statement. The discussion of the primary and secondary
sources is superficial or entirely descriptive. The vast majority of the paper is off-topic,
being about something other than the primary text. It is possible that neither the primary
nor the secondary text is quoted. There is a lack of structure to the paper and grammatical
and stylistic errors render the paper largely unclear. The writing style may be
unprofessional. The formatting either contains multiple errors or is absent entirely.

Participation Rubric

A – Your comments in class display an engagement with both the material as well as
your other classmates. The comments are insightful and thought provoking. Attendance is
excellent.
B – Your comments display an engagement with the material and with the course’s overall themes. While your comments are very good they are not necessarily always contributing to an overall conversation. Attendance is strong.

C – Your level of participation varies from class to class. Here, you might have an excellent attendance record without participating in the conversation. Conversely, you might participate here and there and have several absences.

D – You might have a good attendance record (marked with several absences) without participating in the conversation. You might make rare occasional comments but have missed a good number of classes.

F – You have missed a great number of classes and/or your participation in class is disruptive and/or inappropriate.

Course policies:

Missed classes and assignments
All assignments are to be handed in on LEARN by 11:59pm on the day the assignment is due. Microsoft word documents are preferred over PDF’s and Pages. Marks will be returned on Learn. For the smaller assignments, I will write notes in the comment section provided by Learn. For the larger assignments, I will re-attach the document with my notes and comments on the document itself. The penalty for a late assignment is 2% per day, including weekend days. This will be incurred in all cases except certified emergencies. Papers more than ten days late will not be accepted, and a mark of zero will be given for the assignments.

A doctor’s note is required to avoid a late penalty, and it should document serious illness on and for the period directly preceding the due date for assignments, or on the scheduled dates of exams.

If you miss a class for unavoidable circumstances, please connect with a classmate to discuss the material that was covered during your absence.

Appointments and email:

I am always happy to meet with students to discuss course matters, including difficulties with the material or upcoming assignments. Please feel free to make an appointment to meet with me, or send me an email.

If you send me an email, please wait 24 hours before sending me a reminder. I may not be able to respond right away, or I may be looking into the matter on your behalf, but I will get back to you as soon as possible. If you have not received a response after 24 hours, or 48 hours on a weekend, please email me again. Please note that mail from some external email servers, such as Hotmail or Yahoo, may be bounced by the university server.
Email should be reserved for relatively simple communication matters, such as brief questions or to make an appointment. If your query will require a longer conversation as in, for example, the discussion of a grade or an assignment, please make an appointment to meet with me in person. In general, I will not give out marks over email.

**Academic Integrity:** In order to maintain a culture of academic integrity, members of the University of Waterloo are expected to promote honesty, trust, fairness, respect and responsibility. See the UWaterloo Academic Integrity webpage and the Arts Academic Integrity webpage for more information.

**Discipline:** A student is expected to know what constitutes academic integrity, to avoid committing academic offences, and to take responsibility for his/her actions. A student who is unsure whether an action constitutes an offence, or who needs help in learning how to avoid offences (e.g., plagiarism, cheating) or about “rules” for group work/collaboration should seek guidance from the course professor, academic advisor, or the Undergraduate Associate Dean. When misconduct has been found to have occurred, disciplinary penalties will be imposed under Policy 71 – Student Discipline. For information on categories of offenses and types of penalties, students should refer to Policy 71 - Student Discipline. For typical penalties check Guidelines for the Assessment of Penalties.

**Grievance:** A student who believes that a decision affecting some aspect of his/her university life has been unfair or unreasonable may have grounds for initiating a grievance. Read Policy 70 - Student Petitions and Grievances, Section 4. When in doubt, please be certain to contact the department’s administrative assistant who will provide further assistance.

**Appeals:** A decision made or penalty imposed under Policy 70 - Student Petitions and Grievances (other than a petition) or Policy 71 - Student Discipline may be appealed if there is a ground. A student who believes he/she has a ground for an appeal should refer to Policy 72 - Student Appeals.

**Note for students with disabilities:** The AccessAbility Services office, located on the first floor of the Needles Hall extension (1401), collaborates with all academic departments to arrange appropriate accommodations for students with disabilities without compromising the academic integrity of the curriculum. If you require academic accommodations to lessen the impact of your disability, please register with the AS office at the beginning of each academic term.

**Mental Health Support**

**On Campus**

- Counselling Services: counselling.services@uwaterloo.ca / 519-888-4567 xt 32655
- **MATES**: one-to-one peer support program offered by Federation of Students (FEDS) and Counselling Services
• Health Services Emergency service: located across the creek from Student Life Centre

Off campus, 24/7
• **Good2Talk**: Free confidential help line for post-secondary students. Phone: 1-866-925-5454
• **Grand River Hospital**: Emergency care for mental health crisis. Phone: 519-749-433 ext. 6880
• **Here 24/7**: Mental Health and Crisis Service Team. Phone: 1-844-437-3247
• **OK2BME**: set of support services for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender or questioning teens in Waterloo. Phone: 519-884-0000 extension 213

Territorial Acknowledgement
We acknowledge that we are living and working on the traditional territory of the Attawandaron (also known as Neutral), Anishinaabe and Haudenosaunee peoples. The University of Waterloo is situated on the Haldimand Tract, the land promised to the Six Nations that includes ten kilometres on each side of the Grand River.

Schedule:
**January 4**: Introduction
**January 9**: Narratives
**January 11**: Brainstorming, Strategies, Organization, Outlines, Style, Audience
**January 16**: Thesis Statements
**January 18**: Paragraphs, Transitions, Incorporating Quotations, Introductions and Conclusions
**January 23**: Smart Reading, Critical Thinking
**January 25**: Chomsky Video and Assumptions, **Literacy Narrative Due (10%)**
**January 30**: Beginning Your Own Research, Finding Print and Online Sources
**February 1**: Evaluating Sources, Summarizing Sources, Paraphrasing Sources
**February 6**: Discussion of Issues, **Summary, Paraphrase, Quote Assignment (5%)**
**February 8**: Common Errors
**February 13**: Literary Analysis, **Essay Outline Due (6%)**
**February 15**: “A Modest Proposal,” Jonathan Swift “A Modest Proposal” Write-Up Due
**February 27**: Peer Review, **“The Yellow Wallpaper” Write-Up Due**
**March 1**: “The Yellow Wallpaper,” Charlotte Perkins Gilman, **Position Paper Due (20%)**
**March 6**: “Munitions!,” J.G. Sime, “Munitions” Write-Up Due
**March 8**: “Chronopolis,” J.G. Ballard “Chronopolis” Write-Up Due
**March 13**: “Borders,” Thomas King “Borders” Write-Up Due
**March 15**: Analyzing Quotations
**March 20**: Formatting, MLA, **Essay Outline Due (6%)**
**March 22**: Grades, Stretching Points
**March 27**: Guest Speaker, **Works Cited Assignment Due (3%)**
**March 29**: Peer Review Day
**April 3**: Course Wrap-Up, **Literary Analysis Due (20%)**