English 109 (01): Introduction to Academic Writing
Spring 2000 Course Outline

Instructor: Mark Spielmacher
Office: HH 246, extension 5320; mailbox located in HH229
Office Hours: Monday 11:30 - 12:30; W 12:30 - 1:30
E-mail: msspielm@artssh.uwaterloo.ca
Meet time: Lecture: Monday 12:30 - 1:30 in EL 204
          Tutorial (01): Monday 1:30 - 3:30 in HH 227
          Tutorial (02): Wednesday 1:30 - 3:30 in ML 315

Course Description: This course is designed to familiarize students with strategies and issues related to persuasive academic writing. Emphasizing the process of critical reading and responding, drafting, editing, revising, rewriting, and proof-reading, we will look at various conventions, techniques, and rhetorical variables. Several written assignments will give students practice in written academic discourse. Lectures will focus on writing concepts and research strategies, and practical, hands-on work—including editing—will take place in the workshop tutorials.


Recommended Text: any reliable grammar guide, such as the Harbrace College Handbook, the Prentice Hall Canada Guide to Grammar and Usage, or The Little, Brown Compact Handbook (First Canadian Edition). (All royalties derived from the sale of the last text will be donated to the Department of English Scholarship fund).

Assigned Work:

1  **Summary** (15%). Choose one reading from "Part 2" of Ackley that interests you and summarize it succinctly (1-2 pages). Your summary should mostly consist of paraphrase and the occasional quotation, properly referenced. The draft of your summary is due in your workshop in Week 5 for peer review and editing. The final copy is due in your workshop in Week 6.

2  **Critical Response paper** (20%). In this essay of 3-4 pages develop a position on an issue raised in one of the readings in "Part 3" of Ackley. This essay must have a thesis and demonstrate effective use of quotation, paraphrase and summary. Focus on critically responding to the ideas being expressed in the article you've chosen. The draft for this essay is due in your workshop in Week 8 for peer review and editing, and the final copy is due in your workshop in Week 9.

3  **Grammar Report** (5%). Students will be individually assigned a grammatical, punctuation, or stylistic error to research and report on (the choice will likely reflect a recurring error in the student's writing). Define the error in your own words; provide an example of the error and explain it; provide a corrected version and explain why it is correct; finally, turn in a copy of any papers in which the error has occurred and provide a correction. All sources used must be referenced. This report is due in your workshop in Week 12.
4 **Critical Comparison** (35%). Choose a topic from either "Part 4" or "Part 5" of Ackley and compare two of the readings. You may also choose one reading from Ackley and another from a different source, if you wish. In order to compare two texts, you will need to establish *criteria* for comparison as a means for evaluating the readings against each other. These criteria must be clear in your opening paragraph. Your paper will also make use of paraphrase, summary, and quotation. This paper is due in your workshop in the last week of classes. You must also attach a stamped, self-addressed envelope.

5 **Reading Journal** (15%). This assignment is to be done over the course of the term, and is due on the last day of classes. Choose 6 of the readings in Ackley (any chapter, do not write on any readings used in assignments) and record your reactions or responses. Each response should be dated, may be informal in tone, and should be 1-2 pages in length. There may be opportunities to write in your journals in the workshops. I am mostly interested in your ideas here, and will not grade for grammatical correctness. If you wish, you may bring your journal to me mid-way through the term for feedback. You may send your journal responses as e-mail attachments, if you wish.

6 **Attendance, Participation and Peer-Editing** (10%). This grade will be derived from your presence in classes and workshops, and the quality of your involvement in assisting other students in improving their papers.

**Course Policies:**

Failure to bring a *good* draft of your papers to workshops (weeks 5 and 8) will result in the loss of 10% of the final grade of the paper. **Late papers** will be penalized 5% per day late. Sometimes, however, students do have legitimate reasons for late assignments; reasonable excuses along with appropriate documentation may justify an extension.

Note on avoidance of *academic offences*: All students registered in the courses of the Faculty of Arts are expected to know what constitutes an academic offense, to avoid committing academic offenses, and to take responsibility for their academic actions. When the commission of an offense is established, disciplinary penalties will be imposed in accordance with Policy #71 (Student Academic Discipline). For information on categories of offenses and types of penalties, students are directed to consult the summary of Policy #71 which is supplied in the Undergraduate Calendar (p. 1:11). If you need help in learning how to avoid offenses such as plagiarism, cheating, and double submission, or if you need clarification of aspects of the discipline policy, ask your course instructor for guidance. Other resources regarding the discipline policy are your academic advisor and the Undergraduate Associate Dean. Any incident of *plagiarism* will automatically cause a paper to fail, could cause you to fail the course, and will be reported to the Dean’s office.

I urge you to come and see me during my office hours if you wish assistance with your writing. Finally, papers not handed in directly to me must be signed and dated by a department secretary and placed in my mailbox in HH229.
Schedule:

Week 1 (May 1 lecture): Introduction to English 109. No workshops this week.

Week 2 (May 8 lecture): Reading and responding critically; preparing to write.

Week 3 (May 15 lecture): Paraphrase, Summary, Quotation, and Referencing.

Week 4 (May 22: Class and workshops cancelled this week.)

Week 5 (May 29 lecture): Rhetorical strategies. Copy-editing and Re-drafting.

draft of summary due in workshop

Week 6 (June 5 lecture): Structure, Organization, Outlining.

summary due in workshop

Week 7 (June 12 lecture): The First Paragraph—hooks, thesis/purpose statements, forecasting your paper's structure.

Week 8 (June 19 lecture): The Concluding Paragraph.

draft of critical response due in workshop

Week 9 (June 26 lecture): Grammar and Style.

critical response due in workshop

Week 10 (July 3: Class and workshops cancelled this week.)

Week 11 (July 10 lecture): Grammar and Style continued.

Week 12 (July 17 lecture): More Grammar and Style.

grammar report due

Week 13 (July 24 lecture): Concluding Remarks.

comparison paper due; response journal due