ENGL109, Section 018: Introduction to Academic Writing  
University of Waterloo English Department  
Tuesdays & Thursdays 11:30 am-12:50 pm  
Modern Languages Building, Room 246  
Instructor: Virginia Shay  
Instructor Email: vshay@uwaterloo.ca  
Office: PAS1232  
Office Hours: Tuesday 1-2:30 pm, or by appointment

Course Description
The purpose of this course is to teach you the conventions and expectations of academic writing, so that you can learn to communicate and write effectively. Throughout your academic career, you will be expected to organize and communicate your ideas, in writing, in a coherent, concise manner, but what does this mean? What are your instructors expecting from you, and how can you hone your writing skills? This course will teach you what academic audiences, such as your future teaching assistants, professors, and employers expect from you, and we'll learn how to navigate a variety of different academic genres. An important piece of this puzzle is learning to read critically, so that you can thoroughly comprehend and analyse the course material you encounter throughout the rest of your time at university. The best way to hone your critical reading and writing skills is to spend plenty of time practicing, and to receive constructive feedback from your instructor and your peers. This course will provide a supportive environment for you to practice writing, and to receive input on your writing that you can use to strengthen and improve it.

Learning Outcomes
This course is designed to help you:

- To think critically and to communicate effectively.
- To learn and practice a variety of strategies for inventing, drafting, and editing texts.
- To learn and practice writing in a variety of academic genres.
- To learn to read critically.
- To learn to write persuasively by effectively employing elements of formal argumentation.
- To learn how to give and receive useful feedback on writing for the purposes of revision.
- To learn and practice communicating to a variety of academic audiences.

ENGL109 Course Sections
ENGL109 is specifically designed to provide hands-on writing instruction so that students can receive plenty of individual attention from an instructor. As such, the sections of ENGL109 are capped at 25 students per section; by keeping our class sizes small, we can provide better, more personalized assistance for you to achieve the course learning outcomes. It is very important that you attend only the classes for your section. Because much of this course is activity-based,
attending the classes of another section is not an acceptable substitute for attending this class, in this time slot. If you attend another section's classes, you will miss in-class assignments and activities. If you absolutely need to miss a class, it’s better to contact me and let me know what’s going on so that I can try to assist you with missed work.

Course Textbooks

- Select online articles and blog posts on academic writing, links to be provided as needed.

**NOTE ABOUT TEXTBOOK:** Other sections of ENGL109 may be using a different edition of the textbook, or may be using the version of the textbook that does not include readings. We will be making extensive use of the textbook in the course, so it’s very important that you ensure you’ve purchased the correct edition. We will be using specific readings in the textbook for assignments, so you will need access to them. Double check the textbook version and ISBN number before you purchase the textbook, and make sure you’re looking at ENGL109 SECTION 018 when you visit the bookstore.

Course Assessments

**Writing Portfolio:** 60% - due Thurs. Dec. 3.

**Short Writing Assignments:** 20% (4 assignments at 5% each)

**Attendance and Class Participation:** 20%

**Writing Portfolio**

Throughout the course, you will complete three longer writing assignments, each in a different academic genre. You will receive a **temporary** grade on each of these assignments, along with extensive feedback from me that will be designed to help you revise and polish the assignments for the portfolio you’ll submit at the end of the term. In the last week of class, you will submit a writing portfolio that includes each of your three major assignments, revised and polished by you, as well as two of your shorter writing assignments, and your favourite in-class writing assignment. Revising your work and consulting me in person during this process is **highly** encouraged, so that you can create a final writing portfolio that represents your very best work in the course.

Your writing portfolio is due on the last day of class, Thurs. Dec. 3.
Major Writing Assignment #1 – Position Paper: due Tues. Oct. 13 (Week 5)

Major Writing Assignment #2 - Argumentative Essay: due Thurs. Oct. 29 (Week 7)

Major Writing Assignment #3 – Research Report: due Tues. Nov. 17 (Week 10)

Short Writing Assignments

Throughout the term you will complete 4 shorter writing assignments (250-500 words). Each of these assignments is worth 5% of your grade, and you will have the opportunity to choose two to revise and include in your final writing portfolio at the end of term. The short writing assignments are designed to help you practice the reading and writing skills that you’ll need for the longer writing assignments. Some of these assignments will be completed outside of class, and for others you’ll be given class time to complete them.

Please note that you’ll be asked to complete many brief writing exercises in class, throughout the term. These exercises (which are not graded individually) are different than the short writing assignments (which are graded); the exercises are included in your attendance and participation grade (see below). If you’re ever unsure what the difference is, just ask! For the short writing assignments, you will receive an assignment description sheet at least a week in advance of the assignment’s due date.

Short Writing Assignment #1 – Literacy Narrative: due Thurs. Sept. 24 (Week 2).


Short Writing Assignment #3 – Rhetorical Analysis: completed in class on Thurs. Oct. 15 (Week 5).

Short Writing Assignment #4 – Annotated Bibliography: due Tues. Nov. 10 (Week 9).

Attendance and Class Participation

Your attendance and participation in class is essential to your success in this course. This course is activity-based, meaning that in order for you to hone your writing skills and achieve the learning outcomes of the course, you will need to be present and active in our classes together. Expect to write in every class, and expect to learn valuable reading and writing skills from class time that you won’t get from simply reading the textbook. We will be actively honing our writing skills and strategies in each class, and poor class attendance will make it very difficult to catch up. Effective academic writing is a skill that can only be improved with consistent practice.
and feedback, and each class will provide you with the opportunity to write in a supportive
environment, with (ungraded) feedback.

I will be taking attendance in every class, and missing more than three classes may result in a
failing participation grade. If you need to miss class for any reason, please let me know what’s
going on as soon as possible.

In each class, I will ask you to write for approximately 10-15 minutes, in response to a prompt
that I will give you (sometimes at the beginning of class and sometimes at the end). You will
hand your responses in at the end of class. The purpose of these prompts is to get you thinking
about the ideas we’re covering in class that day, and to provide you with as many opportunities
as possible to receive feedback on your writing. Your responses to these prompts will also
provide a way for me to gauge how you’re doing in the course, and give me an opportunity to
offer extra assistance for anyone that may need it.

Contact with Course Instructor

The more interactive your learning experience in this course is, the more confident you will
become in your writing skills. As such, I highly encourage you to make use of my office hours
whenever you have a question. If my scheduled office hours conflict with your schedule, please
email me (vshay@uwaterloo.ca) and we can arrange another time to meet. No question is too
small or too big, and I look forward to meeting with all of you one on one.

While asking questions over email is also welcome, I may ask you to visit me during office hours
if your question is fairly complex and difficult to answer over email. During the week (Monday
through Friday) you can expect a reply to your email within 24 hours; on the weekend, my reply
may take up to 48 hours.

The Writing Centre

The Writing Centre works across all faculties to help students clarify their ideas, develop their
voices, and write in the style appropriate to their disciplines. Writing Centre staff offer one-on-
one support in planning assignments and presentations, using and documenting research,
organizing and structuring papers, and revising for clarity and coherence.

You can make multiple appointments throughout the term, or drop in at the Library for quick
questions or feedback. To book a 50-minute appointment and to see drop-in hours, visit
www.uwaterloo.ca/writing-centre. Group appointments for team-based projects,
presentations, and papers are also available.
Please note that writing specialists guide you to see your work as readers would. They can teach you revising skills and strategies, but will not proof-read or edit for you. Please bring hard copies of your assignment instructions and any notes or drafts to your appointment.

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.

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.

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.

Appeals:
A student may appeal the finding and/or penalty in a decision made under Policy 70 - Student Petitions and Grievances (other than regarding a petition) or Policy 71 - Student Discipline if a ground for an appeal can be established. Read Policy 72 - Student Appeals.

Accommodation for Students with Disabilities
Note for students with disabilities: The AccessAbility Services office, located on the first floor of the Needles Hall extension, 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.
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<th>Week 1</th>
<th>Tuesday</th>
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| Sept. 15 | • Introduction and discussion of class syllabus, assignments, and expectations.  
• Introduction to freewriting and literacy narratives. | Sept. 17 – read ch. 1 - Narratives (pgs. 4-33); ch. 35 – Revising Your Own Work (pgs. 422-427); and Jonathan Franzen’s *The Comfort Zone* (pgs. 628-644).  
• Brainstorming and freewriting.  
• Types of narratives.  
• Explanation of literacy narrative assignment. |
| Week 2 | Sept. 22 – read ch. 19 -Brainstorming (pgs. 334-339); ch. 36 – Peer Editing (pgs. 428-433) of *HtWA*; read Anne Lamot’s “Shitty First Drafts,” link to be provided.  
• Writing workshop: crafting a literacy narrative; providing peer review feedback and implementing this feedback. | Sept. 24 – no readings for class today; Literacy Narrative due in class.  
• In class: how to read and analyze material critically: tips and strategies.  
• Connecting brainstorming and freewriting to reading comprehension. |
| Week 3 | Sept. 29 – read pgs. 66-80 (first half of chapter on Arguments); read ch. 8 – Rhetorical Analyses (pgs. 218-249)  
• Introduction to argumentative writing.  
• Analysing texts critically.  
• Writing a strong thesis. | Oct. 1 –“Ethos, Pathos, and Logos: Three Ways to Persuade” (link to be provided) pgs. 80-91 and 96-98 (“Can We Stop Worrying About Millenials Yet?”); ch. 10 – Position Papers  
• How to read and think critically continued.  
• Taking a position: how to write a strong thesis.  
• Audience and ethos. |
| Week 4 | Oct. 6 –read chs. 32-34 on Style (pgs. 400-419).  
• How to take a position on a text.  
• Determining what the text’s position is, if you agree with it, | Oct. 8 – Short Writing Assignment #2 due (ethos); read chs. 24, 26-28 (pgs. 360-366, 374-386) – Thesis, Organization, Outlines, Paragraphs.  
• Thesis worksheet – handout; writing effective thesis statements. |
- More work on thesis statements from textbook material (chs. 356-386).  
- Analyse reading for effectiveness.  
- From position paper to argumentative essay.  
- Focusing a thesis statement to your audience. | Oct. 15 – read Engber’s “Glutton Intolerance” (714-718); review ch. 8 – Rhetorical Analyses (pgs. 218-248); read chs. 37-38 – Beginning Research, Finding Sources (pgs. 436-446). In-class Rhetorical Analysis due.  
In-class Rhetorical Analysis to be completed (full class) |
| Week 6 | Oct. 20 – read ch. 40 – Evaluating Sources (pgs. 451-455); - chs. 45-46 - Documenting Sources, MLA Citation (pgs. 470-482).  
- Rhetorical analyses and research skills.  
- Research basics.  
- Shifting genres: rhetorical foundations for reports and more research-based genres.  
- Choosing topics based on assignment requirements and scope. |
| Week 7 | Oct. 27 – read ch. 2 – Reports (pgs. 36-64).  
- The research report as a genre.  
- Constructing more rigorous evidence-based arguments.  
- In-class writing exercise: identify a potential topic from a list I’ll give you, or choose your own report topic | Oct. 29 – read Perlin’s “Down and Out in the Magic Kingdom” (662-673) and Deloria’s “The Cherokee Nation Decision” (675-682).  
- Identifying components and style of effective reports.  
- Reports vs argumentative essays.  
- In-class writing exercise: prompt on either reading. |
<p>| Week 8 | Nov. 3 - read ch. 11 – Annotated Bibliographies (pgs. 266-271); ch. 41 | Nov. 5 – read Graham &amp; de Sabatta’s “Age of Internet Empires” (684-687); ch. |</p>
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<th>Week 9</th>
<th>Nov. 10 – Short Assignment #4 (Annotated bibliography) due.</th>
<th>Nov. 12 – bring first paragraph of your report to class.</th>
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<td>- Writing workshop: work on your report (1st half of class); aim to complete an intro paragraph with thesis statement.</td>
<td>- Peer review exercise: in partners, read each other’s paragraphs and provide constructive feedback (review Peer Editing chapter for guidelines).</td>
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<td>- Peer review guidelines will be given.</td>
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<td>Week 10</td>
<td>Nov. 17 – Report due; “Committing to Extensive Revision” reading (link to be provided); “Using Writing to Clarify Your Own Thinking” reading (link to be provided).</td>
<td>Nov. 19 – read ch. 16, Personal Statements; ch. 17 – Writing Portfolios (pgs. 304-319).</td>
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<td>- Preparing for the writing portfolio.</td>
<td>- Components of an effective writing portfolio.</td>
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<td>- Use and purpose of a writing portfolio.</td>
<td>- What you must include and what you can choose to include as extras.</td>
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<td>- Tailoring your portfolio to your audience.</td>
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<td>Week 11</td>
<td>Nov. 24 – bring an assignment you plan to include in your portfolio for in-class writing workshop; read chs. 33-34 on writing style (pgs. 408-419), “Understanding the Needs of Your Reader” from Explorations of Style blog (link to be provided).</td>
<td>Nov. 26 – Peer Review – you will work in partners to provide feedback for a peer on one of his/her assignments.</td>
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<td>Week 12</td>
<td>Dec. 1 – Writing Workshop and Peer</td>
<td>Dec. 3 – Writing Portfolio due.</td>
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