Course Description/Course Objectives

English 109, first and foremost, is about giving you as the student multiple opportunities to practice and improve your writing. You will practice three main forms of writing in the academic context: “expressive” writing (in the form of short responses to writing prompts as well as a personal essay), “persuasive” or expository writing (in the form of a review, advertisement analysis, or argumentation paper) and “argumentative/research” writing (in the form of a short research paper on a topic of interest to you). As you write, I encourage you to:

1) see me, the instructor, as a resource for you to contact if you need guidance or feedback.
2) consider how you can write from multiple perspectives and blend the three forms of writing that you have practiced.
3) think about your identity and “bias.”
4) think about which conventions you are using.

As we will discuss in the course, “bias” is not necessarily bad or wrong, but it is useful to be aware of and to question our biases. Practicing different styles of writing and thinking about bias may be difficult, but can lead to a more inclusive classroom environment for all, as well as improvement for individual writers.

Reading is also an important element of writing. Another goal of the course is for you to identify the conventions and bias, as well as their potential effects, in others’ writing.

Required Texts


Course Policies

Course Policies (Attendance)

Attendance is important, because participation is important. Consistent attendance (no more than two unexcused absences) and participation in writing, peer review, and/or class discussion will result in full marks (20%) for participation. If you miss more than two classes without documentation, your participation mark will decrease by 2% for each additional absence. If you attend class but do not participate in the practice writing or peer review, your participation mark will be reduced accordingly.

Course Policies (Participation)

Participation does not necessarily mean that you speak publicly in class. Participation means that you complete the majority of the in-class writing activities (since research shows that constant practice in writing improves a person’s writing ability, and also because you will be using some of the writing you complete in class for your portfolio). Participation also means that you contribute to peer review. For peer review to be successful, you must come to class prepared with your completed writing, and you must comment constructively on your peer review team members’ writing. If you have missed a class, you may not receive credit for the participation points you missed. The only exception is if you have missed a peer review session, since peer review sessions count for 5% of each essay mark. To receive credit you must make an appointment at the Writing Centre and provide documentation of your visit. If you have already missed two classes and you want to receive credit for the peer review session, you MUST provide documentation of the reason for your absence, i.e. a doctor’s note.

Course Policies (Contacting the Instructor)

I welcome you to visit me during my office hours and to email me if you have any questions. Please contact me via email or see me after class if you need to make an appointment with me, but my office hours do not fit your schedule. As for email, please expect that it may take me up to two business days to reply. Also, please check both the syllabus and LEARN before you email me – especially if you have missed a class!

Course Policies (Late Assignments)

While I understand that you have other courses and a life outside of your university experience, I do also expect that you will make efforts to turn in assignments on time. There will be no penalty for assignments that you turn in within 24 hours of the due date, provided that you turn in the late assignment via email. After 24 hours, you will be marked down 5%. I WILL NOT accept late assignments more than 72 hours after the due date and time (i.e. an assignment due on a Wednesday must be turned in no later than 8:30 AM on the following Saturday), unless you have made arrangements with me in advance of the due date and provided reasoning for your extension request.
Accessibility/AccessAbility Services

If you have a permanent or temporary disability and would like to make arrangements for accommodation of that disability, please contact AccessAbility Services at the University of Waterloo. The number for AccessAbility Services is (519) 888-4567 ext. 35082. AccessAbility Services is located at Needles Hall 1132. To receive services through AccessAbility Services, you will need to provide professional documentation of your disability.

University Policies

Please familiarize yourself with University of Waterloo Policies 33, 70, 71, and 72, which cover your rights and your responsibilities as a student at the University of Waterloo. Of particular importance are Policies 33 and 70, which govern both academic responsibilities such as academic integrity as well as the procedures which are to be followed if that academic integrity - for instance, if a student plagiarizes - is breached. Plagiarism includes but is not limited to: copying the work of another, using someone’s work without quoting or paraphrasing it properly, and using someone’s work without citing their work. You are expected to understand what plagiarism is and to avoid it. If you have any questions about plagiarism, ask!

Grading/Assignment Values

Assignment 1: Personal Essay 5% Peer review/10% essay 15%
Assignment 2: Argumentative/Persuasive Essay 5% Peer review/10% essay 15%
Assignment 3: Research paper 5% Peer review/10% essay 15%
Assignment 4: Final portfolio 25%
Participation 20%
Five one-minute quizzes on reading 10%

Grading (Bonus Points)

Throughout the term, you will have opportunities to earn up to 2% in bonus points by writing short reviews on departmental, campus, and community events that involve writing. I will notify you of opportunities to attend events. It will then be your responsibility to attend the event, write the review, and submit the review. Each review is worth ½ a percent and you may submit up to four reviews. Please submit your reviews via email as soon as possible after the event.

Another opportunity to earn bonus points is available through your writing of “inspiration papers.” For these papers, I invite you to write on a topic that inspires you suddenly - perhaps you have read or seen something that outraged you or made you happy and you would like to share your experience. The only official guidelines for these papers is that you write no more than two double-spaced pages (approximately 600-800 words), that they are at least one double-spaced page, and that you submit them via email. You are invited to experiment with genre in these papers; for instance, you might write in the form of a poem, a short story, or a play. I will provide comments on your work. You may submit up to two “inspiration papers,” for a bonus point opportunity of up to 1%.
# Course Calendar

## Wednesday

**Wednesday, Sep. 16**

Introductions. In class reading: “Just Walk on By” by Brent Staples. Short, ungraded writing assessment activity.

**Wednesday, Sep. 23**

One minute quiz on “How to Write an Effective Essay.”

Peer review on “How I Became Me.” Discuss rubric on “expressive,” or personal, essay.

Homework: Prewrite for personal essay.

**Wednesday, Sep. 30**

One minute quiz on “Feminist Politics: Where We Stand” and “The Oppositional Gaze: Black Female Spectators.”

Discussion of “Feminist Politics,” “The Oppositional Gaze,” expressive writing, and expository writing.

Peer review of final DRAFT of personal essay.

Hand in: Personal essay with peer review comments from at least two classmates.

Homework: Read “Limit self-criticism in early drafts” from *Writing Tools* (handout). Read excerpt, “Narratives” from *How to Write Anything*.

## Friday

**Friday, Sep. 18**

Syllabus; small group discussions on your beliefs about writing; “How I Became Me” pre-writing and draft writing.

Homework: Read excerpt, “How to Write an Effective Essay: Crash Course” from *Literature for Composition*, ed. Barner et al. (on LEARN) for Wednesday, Sep. 23. Work on an extended version of “How I Became Me” and bring to class on Wednesday, Sep. 23.

**Friday, Sep. 25**

Discussion on Narratives.

Begin/continue draft of personal essay.

Homework: Finish first draft of personal essay.

**Friday, Oct. 2**

In class reading: “To Live in the Borderlands Means You” by Gloria Anzaldúa.

Brief discussion on “To Live in the Borderlands Means You,” genre, expressive writing, argumentative writing, and “inspiration papers.”

Advertisement analysis exercise.

Homework: Read “The Yellow Wallpaper” by Charlotte Perkins Gilman (on LEARN).
**Wednesday, Oct. 7**

In-class reading: “Variations on the Word Sleep” by Margaret Atwood; discuss with small groups.

Continue working on expository essay.

Homework: Read “Speech Sounds” by Octavia E. Butler (on LEARN).

**Wednesday, Oct. 14**

One-minute quiz on “The Reader as Writer.”

Small group discussions of “The Reader as Writer.”

Peer review on FIRST DRAFT of expository essay. Analysis exercise.

Sign up for paper workshopping.

Homework: Read “Reframing Canada’s ‘Drug Problem’” by Bruce K. Alexander (handout).

**Wednesday, Oct. 21**

One-minute quiz on “Reframing Canada’s ‘Drug Problem.’”

Small group discussions on “Reframing Canada’s ‘Drug Problem.’” Essay analysis activity.

Peer review on SECOND DRAFT of expository essay.

Hand in: SECOND DRAFT of expository essay with peer review comments from at least two classmates.

Homework: Bring an example of your writing for peer review practice on Friday, Oct. 23.

**Friday, Oct. 9**


Continue working on argumentative essay.

Homework: Read “The Reader as Writer” from *Literature for Composition*, ed. Barner et al. (handout); finish **FIRST DRAFT** of expository essay and bring to class Wednesday, Oct. 14.

**Friday, Oct. 16**

Individual paper workshopping with instructor.

Homework: Write SECOND DRAFT of expository essay and bring to class Wednesday, Oct. 21.

**Friday, Oct. 23**

In-class reading: “Begin Sentences with Subjects and Verbs” from *Writing Tools* by Roy Peter Clark.

Small group discussions and peer review practice on “Begin Sentences with Subjects and Verbs.”

Discussion on summary, paraphrasing, and citation.

MLA citation practice.

Homework: Using uwaterloo.ca/library, find an article that interests you personally or professionally. Paraphrase a sentence; summarize and cite the article.
**Wednesday, Oct. 28**
One-minute quiz on research and citation.

Small group discussions and practice on research and citation activity.

Discuss rubric for and work on argumentative/research essay.

Hand in: Research and citation exercise.

**Friday, Oct. 30**
Question and answer session on argumentative/research essay.

Work on argumentative/research essay.

Homework: Finish **FIRST DRAFT** of argumentative/research essay and bring to class for peer review on Wednesday, Nov. 4. Read “Take it easy on the –ings” and “Establish a pattern, then give it a twist” from **Writing Tools**.

**Wednesday, Nov. 4**
One-minute quiz on “Take it easy on the –ings” and “Establish a pattern.”

Peer review on FIRST DRAFT of argumentative/research essay. Practice using the advice from “Take it easy on the –ings” and “Establish a pattern” while reviewing your work and others’ work.

**Friday, Nov. 6**
Continue to write argumentative/research essay.

Individual conferences on argumentative/research essay.

Homework: Bring in an example of your writing for peer review practice on Wednesday, Nov. 11.

**Wednesday, Nov. 11**
In-class reading: “Give key words their space” and “Choose the number of elements with a purpose in mind.” Practice using the advice while reviewing your work and others’ work.

**Friday, Nov. 13**
No class Friday, Nov. 13.

Homework: Finish **SECOND DRAFT** of argumentative/research essay and bring to class for peer review on Wednesday, Nov. 18. Read “Vary the lengths of paragraphs” and “Learn the difference between reports and stories” from **Writing Tools**.

**Wednesday, Nov. 18**
Peer review on SECOND DRAFT of argumentative/research essay. Practice using advice from **Writing Tools**.

**Friday, Nov. 20**
Question and answer session on argumentative essay/research paper and portfolios; individual conferences.

**Wednesday, Nov. 25**
Portfolio workshopping.

**Friday, Nov. 27**
Portfolio workshopping.

**Wednesday, Dec. 2**
Individual portfolio meetings with instructor.

**Friday, Dec. 4**
No class Friday, Dec. 4. Portfolios DUE Friday, Dec. 9.