Course Description
This course teaches students the skills they require to write in an acceptable, academic manner. We will address issues of style, argument, and the presentation of information. Above all, the course is designed to teach the practices needed to participate in written discourse in an academic environment. Frequent written exercises and participation in oral discussions will be required. We will be studying the foundations of writing, including issues of grammar, basic sentence construction, and proper citation. We will also be performing more complicated critical thinking processes, such as the assessment and summary of an essay, comparison of contrasting arguments, and original research. In fact, the two are closely related: the foundations of writing require the ability to think critically about what you are writing, and critical thinking is significantly degraded without the ability to present your ideas in a clear and precise manner. There will also be an emphasis on assessing contemporary media artifacts, such as podcasts and Youtube videos. Ideally, this course should be more than fulfilling an English credit; it should be the development of skills essential to both an academic-oriented career and critical discourse in general.

Learning Objectives
By the end of the course, students will have been introduced and be expected to successfully demonstrate some of the following skills:

- To identify and correct errors regarding various rules of grammar, sentence structure, and citation
- To apply these rules in the composition and analysis of structured arguments
- To be able to summarize a given argument for meaning and provide meaningful discussion on its merits and fallacies in class
- To be able to compare and contrast opposing or overlapping views on a given structure
- To assess and describe existing research for a given research topic
- To construct a well-ordered argument concerning a given research topic

Suggested Text

Evaluation
Participation  15%  regular contributions, responses
Summary  10%  2 pages, due Sept 26th
Midterm  20%  In Class (October 10th)
Comparison Essay  20%  5-7 pages (Oct 29—draft Oct 24)
Annotated Bibliography  10%  5 entries (Nov 12)
Schedule

Topics: fear of technology, politics and language, construction of fantasy, food and politics, superheroes, satire, videogames and gender, horror stories, race in Canada, sports

Sept 5  First class. Discussion of the syllabus, introduction/interviews; Politics, Propaganda, Cartoons
Sept 10 Grammar and common spelling errors. The practice of active reading
Sept 17 Paraphrase and the art of summary. All about clauses and other grammatical fine points.
   http://www.orwell.ru/library/essays/politics/english/e_polit/
(Blue Lions: Response #1)
Sept 26 SUMMARIES DUE AT THE START OF CLASS.
   http://www.writingexcuses.com/2015/05/24/writing-excuses-10-21-qa-on-world-building/
(Black Eagles: Response #1)
Oct 1 Thesis statements, introductions, and conclusions.
   Gastropod podcast. https://gastropod.com/ (listen to any one episode)
   "Hungry Planet Family Food Portraits." Menzel, 2013.
   http://menzelphoto.photoshelter.com/gallery/Hungry-Planet-Family-Food-Portraits/G0000zmgWvU6SiKM/C0000k7JgEHhEq0w
(Golden Deer: Response #1)
   http://www.hannahblumenreich.com/spidey-zine/
   Comics Studies Reader Coogan essay.
(Blue Lions: Response #2)
Oct 10  **MIDTERM**
Oct 15/17  No Class (READING WEEK BREAK)
   “Mr Show: More Money Equals Better Than You.”
   https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gbU4VRs2rro
   https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NqOTx13Bsbw

(Black Eagles: Response #2)
Oct 24  Comparison essays workshop (bring a draft of your comparison essay)
Oct 29  **COMPARISON ESSAY DUE AT START OF CLASS**
Conducting Library Research
   “Episode 4: Do you like scary movies?” *Faculty of Horror*, 2013.
   http://www.facultyofhorror.com/2013/04/episode-4-do-you-like-scary-movies/

(Golden Deer: Response #2)
Nov 5  Organizing, outlining, and drafting your ideas.
   https://www.canadalandshow.com/podcast/chapter-3-deathly-low-priority/

(Blue Lions: Response #3)
Nov 12  **ANNOTATED BIBLIOGRAPHY DUE AT THE START OF CLASS**
Paragraphs and thesis statements
   http://builttoplay.ca/podcast/2018/9/27/crisis-of-toxic-nerds?fbclid=IwAR32s18KwB18RvCEyu5fBaulCpYE9ZvX0LEwdSDtPDiNbyReMj-IjwE4Q9o
   http://builttoplay.ca/podcast/2018/10/25/a-legacy-of-harm?fbclid=IwAR13IAVeWLARp4Ic8B456ayUFYv0MHRjs8dv7QQgfGdhkjRgZfNi-w3r7MPM

(Black Eagles: Response #3)
Nov 19  Essay workshop (no draft required)
   https://hockeyinsociety.com/2018/10/17/from-kenya-to-canada-some-critiques-of-the-
Weekly Readings
With a few exceptions, every Thursday class will be centered around discussing the weekly texts, two or more videos, podcasts, or readings. As such, students are expected to come to class prepared for discussion, and having read the assigned texts. Students are encouraged to make their own suggestions for possible texts as well; if there is a text that I think is of high enough quality, I may substitute it into the course, or suggest it for the assignments. The purpose of these readings and the subsequent discussions is to develop critical analytical skills. Students are not only to respond to the content of the readings, but also to their structure, and how that structure supports (or fails to support) the larger piece. The readings will cover a wide variety of topics, sometimes controversial; if you feel uncomfortable discussing a particular topic in a classroom setting, please let me know, and we can talk about alternatives. Similarly, while contentious opinions are permitted and to an extent encouraged, students are instructed to remain civil, and to be aware that no hateful or abusive language will be tolerated.

Participation – 15%
Your participation consists of two parts—the submitted responses, and participation in class discussion. Each Thursday (and occasionally Tuesday, to allow extra time for an assignment), we will be critically discussing a work or set of works for their ideas and composition. Three times during the term, prior to class (specifically, by 3:30 pm on the day in question) students are to submit a brief response to the work (2 pages, double-spaced) to the LEARN dropbox, in the appropriate folder. The goal of the response is to describe your personal thoughts on the texts, reflect on the connection between them, and submit one discussion question that you would like to see the room as a whole discuss. I'll use your questions to lead the discussion for that day. (Hence the reason you submit them by 3:30, or earlier—I need time to go through them!)

As for when each paper is due, during the second class of the term, students will sign up into one of three groups, named after the three houses in Nintendo’s recent videogame Fire Emblem: Three Houses, because I really like that game (Group 1: Blue Lions; Group 2: Black Eagles; Group 3: Golden Deer). Starting on the third week, one group's response papers will be due at 3:30. The schedule of response submissions is built into the syllabus. Ex) A hypothetical student, Bernadetta von Varley, is in the Black Eagles group. Her first response is due September 26th, and will be a response to theFantasy topic; her second is due October 22nd, and will be a response to the Satire topic; her third is on November 14th, and will be on the topic of games and gender.

Additionally, there will be a classroom participation component. Occasionally, students will be given be small assignments involving minor exercises and activities that are conducted in class. Students will not be graded on these assignments, but completion will contribute to participation mark. Finally, the participation mark will also be a measure of participation in classroom discussions. If you feel uncomfortable participating in such discussions, that’s fine—not everyone excels under the same conditions, and there are certainly circumstances where I’m not comfortable speaking in groups either. Contact me early in the term, and we’ll talk about some alternatives (more writing, finding alternative sources for the topics, sketching infographs) you could do instead.
**Attendance** -- I will be keeping track of attendance, and using it to gauge leeway when it comes to extensions and other such issues. Further, you can’t participate if you’re not present (unless, again, you’ve made other arrangements). As students, you are under a lot of pressure and will not always be able to attend; I recognize that, and would appreciate a head’s up if you can’t make it class, particularly for multiple absences or a continual lateness.

**Midterm** – 20%. The midterm will focus on what we’ve learned in class up to that point, with a particular emphasis on grammar and summarization.

**Assignments**
Further information regarding each of the four major assignments—the summary, the comparison essay, the annotated bibliography, and the research essay—will be provided on LEARN as the due date for the assignment approaches. In essence, each one has you approach critical arguments in different ways. For the summary, you are showing your ability to accurately represent someone else’s point of view. For the comparison, you are demonstrating that you can show how two arguments differ or build on each other. For the annotated bibliography, you are compiling a set of critical perspectives around a subject. And for the research essay, you are putting all of these skills together to construct your own, unique argument.

Late assignments will be deducted 5% per school day. However, I will be generous with extensions, provided they are asked for 24 hours before the assignment is due, and a full draft is brought (when appropriate) to peer review days.

**Course Policies**
Course policies are essentially based on respectful communication and setting clear expectations. If something about the course, be it an assignment or policy, is not clear to you please write me and we will sort the issue. Please take the time to read the syllabus and the assignments carefully and ask me questions if you’re not sure about something. A syllabus functions as a kind of contract between instructor and student, but more importantly it is a resource and connects you to resources both in the classroom and around campus. I want to make this course as useful to you as possible, and that means—as is always the case in technical communication—clearly communicating our expectations of each other and making sure everyone is on the same page.

**Accessibility Statement**
The AccessAbility Services office, located on the first floor of the Needles Hall extension (NH 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**
All of us need a support system. The faculty and staff in Arts encourage students to seek out mental health supports if they are needed.

**On Campus**
- Counselling Services: counselling.services@uwaterloo.ca / 519-888-4567 ext 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

Full details can be found online at the Faculty of ARTS website
Download UWaterloo and regional mental health resources (PDF)
Download the WatSafe app to your phone to quickly access mental health support information

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 10 kilometres on each side of the Grand River.
For more information about the purpose of territorial acknowledgements, please see the CAUT Guide to Acknowledging Traditional Territory (PDF).

Academic freedom at the University of Waterloo
Policy 33, Ethical Behaviour states, as one of its general principles (Section 1), “The University supports academic freedom for all members of the University community. Academic freedom carries with it the duty to use that freedom in a manner consistent with the scholarly obligation to base teaching and research on an honest and ethical quest for knowledge. In the context of this policy, 'academic freedom' refers to academic activities, including teaching and scholarship, as is articulated in the principles set out in the Memorandum of Agreement between the FAUW and the University of Waterloo, 1998 (Article 6). The academic environment which fosters free debate may from time to time include the presentation or discussion of unpopular opinions or controversial material. Such material shall be dealt with as openly, respectfully and sensitively as possible.” This definition is repeated in Policies 70 and 71, and in the Memorandum of Agreement, Section 6.

Emergencies and Absences
In the event of a major campus emergency, course requirements, deadlines and grading percentages are subject to changes that may be necessitated by a revised semester calendar or other circumstances beyond the instructor’s control. Relevant changes to this course will be posted onto the course website or can be obtained by contacting the instructor via email. You are expected to read your @uwaterloo.ca email on a frequent basis. Personal emergencies should be communicated to me as soon as possible, but attend first to you and your family’s well-being. Whatever happens to be your particular situation is not my business and all I need to know is there was a medical emergency. You do not need to provide any details. For extended absences I would like a note from a doctor, but again no details about why you were away ever need to be provided in these notes and you do not need to disclose the reason to me.

Grade Concerns and Incompletes
Should your grades concern you then you must speak with me within the first 3/4 of the term; the last quarter of the term will not provide sufficient time to markedly improve your final grade. Finally, I will not grant an incomplete in the course; if you have concerns about completing your term please write to me as soon as possible.
Academic Honesty
All work in this course should be original. Any material that you paraphrase or quote must be cited according to an accepted style format (MLA, in this course). Over citing will not be penalized and, in fact, I’m always happy to see you’re doing research. If you’re not sure if you should cite something, go ahead and cite it. We can chat about it later, but when in doubt give credit. Remember you want to give credit for words and ideas.

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 Office of 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. Check the Office of Academic Integrity for more information. 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.

Grievances and Appeals
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.

The Writing and Communication Centre
The Writing and Communication Centre works with students as they develop their ideas, draft, and revise. Writing and Communication Specialists offer one-on-one support in planning assignments, synthesizing and citing research, organizing papers and reports, designing presentations and e-portfolios, 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 https://uwaterloo.ca/writing-and-communication-centre/. Group appointments for team-based projects, presentations, and papers are also available.
Please note that communication specialists guide you to see your work as readers would. They can teach you revising skills and strategies, but will not change or correct your work for you. Please bring hard copies of your assignment instructions and any notes or drafts to your appointment.