English 109: Introduction to Academic Writing.
FALL 2012

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COURSE DESCRIPTION:

The purpose of English 109: Introduction to Academic Writing is to develop the interdisciplinary writing and reading skills required for success in an academic environment. The course’s organization is based on the “rhetorical triangle,” which identifies the elements of any communication as writer, reader, and subject (derived from Aristotle’s three-part system of “proofs”: ethos, pathos, logos). All these are present in any communication, but one may be emphasized over the others at different times, giving us three “modes” of writing. Focussing on the writer generates some form of “personal” writing (personal narrative, learning journal/log); focussing on the reader results in “persuasive” writing (position paper, proposal, editorial); focussing on the subject produces “expository” writing (essay, report, review). While most of the writing in university is exposition, students may be asked to produce any of these forms, depending on course, discipline, and instructor. In English 109, assignments are designed to give students an opportunity to explore and develop strategies appropriate to the form, audience, occasion, and purpose of the writing. Thus, the standards and expectations of assignments vary; students must therefore decide which (“rhetorical”) strategy to apply in each writing act.

REQUIRED:


Note: AD = Across the Disciplines; LB = The Little, Brown Handbook.

COURSE POLICIES:

Attendance, Participation: Students are expected to attend, including being on time for, all lectures and tutorials. Students must bring course texts to class and come to class
prepared to take part in discussions of assigned readings, as well as any in-class exercises, group work (including peer editing circles), etc. Note: Writing assignments are closely connected with readings, so knowledge of the readings will increase chances of success in writing in the course. Assignments must be handed in, in person (i.e., not by email) on the due date, unless an extension has been granted by the instructor in advance (in the case of a class missed due to illness, a doctor's note is required). A penalty of 1% per assignment per day (including weekends and holidays) will be applied on late assignments for which no extension has been granted. All complete submissions must be accompanied by the appropriate prewriting exercise (see appendix to this course outline); the prewriting must clearly show the instructor's commentary.

**Academic Integrity:** The Faculty of Arts requires that the following note regarding avoidance of academic offenses be included on all course outlines:

In order to maintain a culture of academic integrity, members of the University of Waterloo are expected to promote honesty, trust, respect, and responsibility.

**Discipline:** A student is expected to know what constitutes academic integrity, to avoid committing academic offenses, and to take responsibility for his/her actions. A student who is unsure whether an action constitutes an offense, or who needs help in learning how to avoid offenses (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, <http://www.adm.uwaterloo.ca/infosec/Policies/policy71.htm>

**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, <http://www.adm.uwaterloo.ca/infosec/Policies/policy70.htm>

**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, <http://www.adm.uwaterloo.ca/infosec/Policies/policy72.htm>

Academic Integrity website (Arts): <http://arts.uwaterloo.ca/arts/ugrad/academic_responsibility.html>

Academic Integrity Office (uWaterloo): <http://uwaterloo.ca/academicintegrity>

**Accommodation for Students with Disabilities:**
Note for Students with Disabilities: The Office for Persons with Disabilities (OPD), located in Needles Hall, Room 1132, 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 OPD at the beginning of each academic term.

ASSIGNMENTS:

Each writing assignment is accompanied by a “prewriting” exercise (see Appendix), to be turned in to the instructor prior to the writing of the final draft. The instructor comments in writing on this exercise and returns it to the student next class. The student thus has an opportunity to reflect on preliminary “feedback” when composing the final paper. The prewriting exercise allows students to build a concrete “data base” (facts, statistics, examples, anecdotes, quotations...) before organizing this into a final presentation. In short, prewriting invites writers to place specifics before generalities. Prewriting encourages students to connect argument with evidence. Prewriting exercises count for 5% of the grade for the overall assignment.

Assignment 1: Personal (prewriting and finished paper) 20%
Assignment 2: Persuasive (prewriting and finished paper) 20%
Assignment 3: Editing/revision 10%
Assignment 4a: Expository: Research Paper (prewriting and finished paper) 20%
Assignment 4b Expository: Review (prewriting and finished paper) 20%
Participation (attendance, participation, in-class exercises, group work) 10%

Note: Assignments 1, 2, 4a, and 4b should be between 750 and 1000 words.

COURSE SCHEDULE:

Week 1.

LECTURE: The Rhetorical Triangle: Ethos, Pathos, Logos.
Problem Solving: A key to academic writing.
The role of the writer “The social construction of identity.”
See AD Ch 7. LB Ch 1, 8.
Prewriting 1. Data gathering: “patterns,” “changes,” “context.”

TUTORIAL:
Read Hoffman, “Lost in Translation” (AD 169-73).
Discuss writerly “agency.”
Thinking in the concrete: images, anecdotes, experiences.
Week 2. LECTURE: Problematics (cont’d).
Discourse as Dialogue.
“Prolepsis”: Anticipating reader reaction.
Thinking in the concrete: facts, stats, arguments, quotations.
See AD Ch 2 (esp. pages 24-38 on “Recursion”). LB Ch 2 (esp. 2f).

TUTORIAL:
Read Rogers, “Finding Words” (AD 161-9).
Discuss: The writer’s “double” role--success as failure?
Prewriting 1 due.

Week 3. LECTURE: Persuasion: Reader-Centred Writing.
Who is the reader? Non-specialized v. Specialized readerships.
Discourse as Dialogue (cont’d).
Sentence Logic 1: “Short is good.” See LB Ch 22-4 (159-67).
Prewriting 2.

TUTORIAL:
Discuss: Culture’s effect(s) on perception and behavior.
Small group work on Prewriting 2 (hand in).
Prewriting 1 returned.

Week 4. LECTURE: Persuasion (cont’d).
Argument-Evidence relationships.
Modes of appeal: reason v. affect (meaning v. value).
Building Concessions. Open endings, proposing action.
Sentence Logic 2: Clauses (independent/dependent; restrictive/non
-restrictive). LB Ch 29, 35-6 (192-7; 226-32).

TUTORIAL:
Read Pittman, Berghoef, “Tackling Plagiarism…” (AD 373-84).
When/how is plagiarism a “crime”? (not a crime?).
Prewriting 2 returned.
Assignment 1 due.

Week 5. LECTURE: Exposition: What is (in) the subject?
Discourse communities. Dialogue as knowledge-building.
Referencing: Getting information from “out there” to “in here.” AD Ch 4; LB Ch 52, 3.
Prewriting 3.

TUTORIAL:
Academic v. “Popular.”
Read: Brandenburg, “The Newest Way…” (AD 386-400).
Discuss: E-Communication--estrangement or community?
Editing/revision assignment (take-home) handed out.
Assignment 2 due.

Week 6. LECTURE: Reading into Writing. Finding the Problem.
Evaluating Sources: Critiques, Reviews. AD Chapter 5.
Sentence Logic 3: Agreement: Subject-Verb; Pronoun-Antecedent. LB Ch 29, 31-2).
Prewriting 4a.

TUTORIAL:
Taking a Position
Editing/revision due.

Week 7. LECTURE: Research papers 1: Introductions.
Setting up the problem. Designing “windows” on the data. AD Chapter 6.
Sentence Logic 4: “A sentence is a story” (run-ons, fragments).

TUTORIAL:
Read: Highway, “Comparing Mythologies” (AD 426-37).
Discuss: When (How? Why?) did/does history become myth
(story/narrative)? Who writes/who listens?
Prewriting 4a due.

Week 8. LECTURE: Research papers (cont’d): Interior (“Body”) paragraphs.
Expanding on the problem. More on windows/perspectives.
Managing change in the discourse. What changes? Why?
LB Ch 50, 1.

TUTORIAL:
Read: Francis, “Your Majesty’s Realm…” (AD 437-46).
Discuss: connections and differences between/within Highway and
Francis.
Prewriting 4a returned.

Week 9. LECTURE: Research papers (conclusion)
Conclusions: Finding solutions/making recommendations.
Documentation: LB Ch 58 (362-403).

TUTORIAL:
Whalen, “Resolution and Canadian Iconography…” (AD 446-60).
Discuss: Geography, History, Imagination—connections/differences.
Assignment 4a due.
Week 10. LECTURE: Literature Review. Setting up the problem. Unpacking “other” sources, seeing points of intersection and departure. AD Chapter 5 (again). Prewriting 4b.

Tutorial:


TUTORIAL:

Week 12. LECTURE: Literature Review (conclusion).

Tutorial:
Prewriting 4b returned.

Week 13. LECTURE: Course Review

TUTORIAL:
Assignment 4b due.
APPENDIX:
A Word on Prewriting Exercises.

Prewriting exercises provide student writers with a chance to assemble concrete information—in effect, to show their research—prior to writing the finished paper. This way, the ideas presented in the finished paper are grounded in appropriate, and the appropriate amount, of detail: facts, examples, statistics, images, anecdotes, quotations from relevant sources (and so on). Prewriting can be in point form, and can run to two pages (or more), depending on the complexity of the task. When collecting information from a larger number of sources, students should record all pertinent detail, from authors' names to page numbers—it's easier to cite when you've already got all the sources in front of you.

Recalling Young, Becker, and Pike in *Rhetoric: Discovery and Change*, we suggest that research involves turning up three types of data—particle, wave, and field. We adapt these terms slightly to accommodate the particular demands of the course and its assignments: patterns, changes, context. The shift in language is (hopefully) not radical, but our terminology seems a bit more accessible.

**Sample Prewriting Exercise.**

**Subject.** State the subject you will be writing about.
Be specific. Make the subject area as narrow, limited, focussed as possible.
Examples: my home; my house; my room; the gateway pipeline; student unrest in Quebec.

**Problem.** Identify two competing ideas arising from this subject.
Examples:

Personal: “I always look forward to going home on holidays. But when I get there I find I’m easily bored, and can’t wait to get back to school.”
Research question: “Why am I simultaneously attracted to yet disappointed in the place I come from?”

Persuasive: “The idea of building a pipeline has supporters in Alberta and the federal government, who claim it benefit the Canadian economy. However, the province of BC, First Nations groups—and others are opposed to this development on the grounds that it poses a serious threat to the environment.” Research question: “Which of these competing values, economy or environment, deserves ultimate support? In the short term? In the long term?”

Expository: “To give names to places, as the first European explorers of North America did (Vancouver, Hudson's Bay) has
obvious historical, political, and cultural benefits. We know a place by its name, as one historian has quaintly pointed out. However, once a place has been named, or better “re”named (“Pile of Bones” was the original name of “Regina, Saskatchewan”), it ceases to belong to the people who were its original occupants.” Research question: “How is the naming of a place both positive (even necessary) and negative at the same time?”

The next stage of the prewriting exercise is to develop the three types, or stages, of information you will need to explore the question you’ve generated. (Eventually, the identification of the subject, and the setting out of the research question, will be the work of your introduction. If you have been trained in thesis-statement-writing, remember that high-quality thesis statements are set up to show a relationship between two seemingly unrelated ideas. Solving the problem of how these ideas are, or have become, connected, and what this connection bodes for the future, gives direction and purpose to your paper.)

Step 1: Patterns.

What is the current state of the subject, or state of knowledge or discussion, of the subject? This stage is like a snapshot: What does the subject look like now (if we were to take a picture of it)? Or, who is saying what on the subject? And why should it be of interest or concern to us at this time?

Step 2: Changes.

The Past: How did the subject get to the stage it is at now, from where it was before? What have been the major changes over a relevant period of time? What are the specific turning points in this evolution? Who was responsible for or contributed to these changes? (This stage traces the history of the problem up to the time of your writing about it. Think of it as like a “moving picture” of the subject.)

Example: Throughout much of the nineteenth century, physicists believed that the medium for the transmission of light was something called the “ether.” In the 1880s, two scientists, Michelson and Morley, tested this notion and laid the groundwork for its demise. The problem of how the speed of light could be the same for every observer was resolved later, in 1905, by Einstein in his first (or “Special”) Theory of Relativity.

The Future: What do you think will or should happen next in the history of this subject? Where might, or should, research go next? Who will the major players in the discussion be? (This “facing the future” in the end suggests that endings are not closed but point to further change. Remember that scientific reports, literature reviews—and traditional chronological business reports—close with “recommendations” for future action. And when you write a cover letter as part of a job application, be sure your last paragraph asks for an interview. Always think of the next step....
Step 3: Context.

Now, finally, is the time to enlarge the domain of your chosen subject by seeing it in relation to another subject that is both similar to and different from it. This is a bit like comparison-contrast, but looser, more flexible. It helps clarify a subject, and the problem we have been addressing, to see it through the lens of something else. Einstein and the psychoanalyst Carl Jung once discussed, over lunch, possible similarities—overlaps—between Einstein’s theories of space, time, motion, and gravity and Jung’s theory of the human mind. (How does it help us understand Relativity to think it can be approached through Jung’s ideas about myth and archetype? And yet, both theories affirm the role of individual perspective in the perception and construction of the “real” world.) Similarly, in the discussion of the benefits and risks of building a pipeline from Alberta to Canada’s Pacific coast, we might ask from which point of view, through which “window” we might look, to see the larger outlines of what is at stake. Is this a cultural problem—of the relationship between First Nations and other Canadians? Is it a political problem of property and ownership? Is it an ethical problem of what to value more highly, economic benefit or the environment and its future? Is it a problem of language, as some suggest when they claim that both words economy and environment, come from the same Greek source? And so on....