ENGL 109: Intro. To Academic Writing

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Course description:

The course will explore a variety of issues in academic writing such as style, argument, and the presentation of information. We are going to be writing, like, frequently and nearly constantly. Let me say that again: you will be writing in class every day, and some of what you write, you will hand in, or use to work on later for something else to hand in.

This course is focused around the themes of truth, facts, evidence, argument, point of view, and persuasion. So we’re going to do a lot of reading about these things, particularly about how truth claims are made, evidence is used, and arguments are supported online. Maybe we’ll read /pol. Or David Avocado Wolfe. Or SciBabe. It’s almost guaranteed this course will be 20% cooler than your others.

Course learning outcomes:

The design of the content and schedule of the course is determined by our goals of considering how writing creates or obscures “truth,” and of becoming stronger academic writers in a university setting. More formally, the course aims:

- To help you to think critically and 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 help you give and receive useful feedback on writing for the purposes of revision
- To learn and practice communicating to a variety of academic audiences

This course is **reading intensive, writing intensive, and participation intensive**: I expect you to do the readings, show up, and take part.
Course meeting times

The course meets twice weekly, Tuesdays and Thursdays from 4:00-5:20, in Hagey Hall 138.

Please feel free to contact me with any concerns or questions you have about the class, the readings, or the assignments. I will be in my office during the hours noted, and I’m always very happy to have you drop by during these times, or by appointment at other times. Beyond office hours, contact is probably best initiated via email.

Note for Students with Disabilities: The AccessAbility Services office (AS), located in Needles Hall, Room 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.

Technology Policies

Email policy: Email is fast, but it is not instant. I will read your emails within 1 business day, and I will respond within 2 business days. I’m trying to limit email so I have more moral authority to kick my 11-year-old off her iPad. We all need boundaries! I do not address major questions of substance (“Can you explain why I got that grade on my paper, because my mom thinks I’m a genius?”) in emails, but will use it to make appointments with you (“Can you meet with me on Wednesday to discuss your feedback on my paper?”).

Email policy, part 2: Email is a professional communication medium. Be professional in your communications: use your university email, or at least not one called “pornstar69@hotmail.com” because a) REALLY?? And b) it’ll probably get stuck in my spam filter. Make sure your address includes your name. Write respectfully.

Device policy: Mostly, we talk and write about stuff. With each other. In real time and face to face. There is almost no lecturing in this course, but lots of in-class exercises, group work, and thinking-out-loud. Bring your laptop: we write online, alone and in groups, and sometimes collectively. We have lids-up time (use the computer), but also lids-down time (no computer). We have a definite no farting-around-during-class policy.
Required and Recommended texts

The following text is required for the course. Bring it to class. It is available for purchase at the University Bookstore in South Campus Hall.


We have a course website: it is available through Learn. You must access this site regularly: this is where links to readings not in the textbooks are located, as well as copies of all the handouts. Group work will go here. Grades live here.

Assignments and Mark Distribution

The following are the graded components of the course:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignment</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th>Due Date</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Participation</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>(ongoing)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Internet Narrative</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>October 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fact-Check Report</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>October 24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evidence-Based Argument</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>November 14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self-Evaluation</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>December 4</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Detailed handouts describe what is expected of you from each assignment; please read these carefully (they’re also online!) and refer to them as you complete the assignments.

Each assignment has a series of due dates associated with it: here, we engage in process-based writing, and each stage of the process, being essential, to the production of good writing, counts.

Participation, Absence, and Late Policy

Attendance is vital to your success in this course. If you choose not to attend, you will be missing in-class exercises upon which some of your grades will depend. Participation is 20% of your course grade! And it’s the easiest grade to get! And class is at 4pm, so like, why not? There are no ‘makeups’ for this work.

Participation grades are assessed according to the following criteria: attends; stays awake during class; does not engage in online shopping / shitposting / meme generation / software development during class; participates fully in group and class discussion; collaborates meaningfully in the production of shared documents and resources for class; shows evidence of having read assigned material; listens and speaks respectfully to others; shows evidence of strong engagement in MLP fandom.
Assignments are due as noted on the assignment sheets and on the Learn calendar; **unless prior arrangements are made** late assignments will lose 10% per day late, counting weekends. Assignments more than three days late will not be accepted without documentation or explanation.

**Rights and Responsibilities**

Every member of this class— instructor as well as students—has rights and responsibilities to ensure a pleasant and productive experience for all. Here are some more specific expectations for this course:

**You will:**
- know the university policies that govern your behaviour
- attend all scheduled classes
- arrive prepared: with assigned reading and writing completed, and with appropriate materials in hand
- participate actively in your own learning, while respecting the rights of others to learn as well: this means active *listening* as well as active *speaking*
- give thoughtful consideration to instructor feedback on written and oral work

**I will:**
- adhere to the university policies that govern my behaviour
- attend all scheduled classes
- make myself available for consultation in person and over email
- return assignments within 2 weeks
- provide helpful and respectful feedback on your work

**On academic dishonesty:** it is a serious offense to appropriate the intellectual labour of another to yourself. Plagiarism consists of using someone else’s words or ideas without proper attribution. I expect that the work you submit in this course will be the product of your own labour, and that your research sources will be scrupulously documented. If you have any concerns or questions about appropriate practice, you are sincerely encouraged to come discuss this with me—I would really like to help.

**On academic dishonesty and intellectual property:** be aware that this course contains the intellectual property of the instructor—me. Intellectual property includes items such as:
- Lecture content, spoken and written (and any audio/video recording thereof);
- Lecture handouts, presentations, and other materials prepared for the course (e.g., PowerPoint slides);
- Work protected by copyright (e.g., any work authored by the instructor or TA or used by the instructor or TA with permission of the copyright owner).
Course materials are used to enhance your educational experience. However, sharing this intellectual property without permission is a violation of intellectual property rights. Like Princess Luna you risk a 1000 year banishment to the moon. Don’t do this. Also, please alert me if you become aware of intellectual property belonging to others (past or present) circulating, particularly online.

**Academic Integrity**
- In order to maintain a culture of academic integrity, members of the University of Waterloo community are expected to promote honesty, trust, fairness, respect and responsibility. See the [UWaterloo Academic Integrity Webpage](https://uwaterloo.ca/academic-integrity/) and the [Arts Academic Integrity Office Webpage](http://arts.uwaterloo.ca/current-undergraduates/academic-responsibility) for more information.

**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 ([https://uwaterloo.ca/secretariat/policies-procedures-guidelines/policy-70](https://uwaterloo.ca/secretariat/policies-procedures-guidelines/policy-70)). When in doubt please be certain to contact the department’s administrative assistant who will provide further assistance.

**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. For information on categories of offenses and types of penalties, students should refer to Policy 71, Student Discipline ([http://www.adm.uwaterloo.ca/infosec/Policies/policy71.htm](http://www.adm.uwaterloo.ca/infosec/Policies/policy71.htm)). For typical penalties check [Guidelines for the Assessment of Penalties](http://www.adm.uwaterloo.ca/infosec/guidelines/penaltyguidelines.htm).

**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 ([http://www.adm.uwaterloo.ca/infosec/Policies/policy72.htm](http://www.adm.uwaterloo.ca/infosec/Policies/policy72.htm)).
Schedule

Note: Listed below are the textbook readings and all the assignment due dates. There will be readings, also, that are only available on LEARN—these are updated weekly, so you will need to check the website very regularly to make sure you are reading all the assigned primary materials (basically, the stuff we are going to fight about in class.)

7 September:
- **Read**: Ch 13: E-mails
- **Homework**: Read the syllabus. Make a meme out of one or another point. Endear yourself to me by making a good meme, that is clever, funny, and uses the format correctly. Send it as an email, that briefly introduces you, and explains your meme. Email it to me through LEARN by Monday, Sept 11, 8am.

12 September:
- **Read**: Ch 1, pp 4-12
- **Process writing**: What I read online, and how it makes me who I am

14 September:
- **Read**: Ch 1, pp 13-20

19 September:
- **Read**: Ch 35: Revising your own work
- **Due**: One page of Internet Literacy Narrative, for discussion

21 September:
- **Read**: Ch 32: High, Middle, and Low Style; Ch 33: Vigorous, Clear, Economical Prose

26 September:
- **Read**: Ch 36: Peer Editing
- **Due**: Full draft of Internet Literacy Narrative, for workshopping

28 September:
- **Read**: Ch 33 Inclusive Style

3 October:
- **Read**: Ch 37 Beginning Your Research; Ch 38 Finding Print and Online Resources
- **Due**: Final copy of Internet Literacy Narrative, to hand in

5 October:
- **Read**: Ch 2, pp 37-49
- **Process writing**: Choose an issue for Fact-Check Report
12 October:
  - **Read**: Ch 2, pp 49-52; Ch 11: Annotated Bibliographies
  - **Due**: Annotated list of 8 sources for Fact-Check Report

17 October:
  - **Read**: Ch 44: Incorporating Sources; Ch 2, pp 52-57
  - **Process work**: Interview classmates about your topic

19 October:
  - **Read**: Ch 45: Documenting Sources; Ch 2, pp 57-59
  - **Due**: Full draft of Fact-Check Report, *for workshopping*

24 October:
  - **Read**: Ch 3, pp 67-78
  - **Due**: Final copy of Fact-Check Report, *to hand in*

26 October:
  - **Read**: Ch 3, pp 80-85

31 October:
  - **Read**: (online material only)
  - **Process writing**: Topic for and response to argument that needs evidence

2 November:
  - **Read**: Ch 64, selections

7 November:
  - **Read**: Ch 24: Thesis; Ch 25: Strategies; Ch 26: Organizing
  - **Due**: Annotated list of 8 sources for Evidence-Based Argument, *for workshopping*

9 November:
  - **Read**: Ch 28: Paragraphs; Ch 39: Transitions
  - **Due**: Full draft of Evidence-Based Argument, *for workshopping*

14 November:
  - **Read**: Ch 30: Introductions and Conclusions; Ch 31: Titles
  - **Due**: Final copy of Evidence-Based Argument, *to hand in*

16 November:
  - **Read**: Ch 65, selections
21 November:
- **Read:** Ch 4, pp 100-109
- **Process writing:** Brainstorm for Self-Evaluation

23 November:
- **Read:** Ch 4, pp 109-118
- **Due:** Draft of introduction to Self-Evaluation, *for workshopping*

28 November:
- **Process writing:** work period on Self-Evaluation

30 November:
- **Due:** Full draft of Self-Evaluation, *for feedback and discussion*