English 109  Introduction to Academic Writing
Instructor: Mark Rowell Wallin
Time: Monday; 7-10 pm
Room: HH 150
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Office Hours: Monday and Wednesday 1:00-2:30, or by appointment
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Course Description
In this class we will explore various styles of academic composition. We will begin with the assumption that the best way to learn how to write is by practice and imitation. Therefore, we will closely examine significant essays in the fields of science and humanities in order to guide our writing experiments. Along with our regular readings we will practice by creating formal (marked essays) and informal (unmarked journals) texts.

We will critique our readings and exercises through the lens of rhetoric, or the strategies of persuasion that constitute all communication. We'll consider various situations and genres of academic writing to develop a sense of how rhetoric can assist our work so that by the end of the term, we should be equipped with tools to continue growing and developing as writers.

Required Texts

Assignments
3 essays

Analysis essay (15%) — Develop a reasonable thesis that expresses your analysis of one of the essays from the readings in Intersections (possibly drawn from your journal musings). You must use references (via quotation and paraphrase) to support your view. **Min. 800 words.**
Draft due: June 3
Final due: June 17

Synthesis essay (20%) — Develop a position drawing from at least two essays in the Intersections text (that you haven’t used for the analysis essay). You must demonstrate a clear thesis, effective use of quotation, paraphrase and summary and must incorporate at least two viewpoints from the essays you’re addressing. **Min. 1000 words.**
Draft due: June 24
Final due: July 15

Research essay (30%) — Develop a thesis that relates to any of the issues addressed in the Intersections text. The paper must draw upon at least 6 sources for research: at least 1 from Intersections and 2 from academic journals. **This assignment will be peer edited, but not previewed by me. Min. 1500 words.**
6-Entry Bibliography due: July 22
Draft due: July 29
Final due: August 16, by 4:00p.m. in my box (HH229), signed by a secretary.

* Drafts – The analysis and synthesis essays will be read by both me and a peer editor prior to submission. From this initial draft you will edit and compose your final document. These drafts will be a part of the in-class participation. Drafts that are ‘forgotten’ or incomplete will be penalized (10% of the final mark on the assignment) and will not receive a peer or instructor edit. In other words, if you don’t bring your work to class, you’ll be you’re on your own.
Late Submissions – Because peer editing and group work is so important to this class I’ll be taking a dim view of late submissions. But, S**t happens. So in the spirit of this axiom I’ll grant you each one (1) ‘excused’ late submission. You need to clear it with me BEFORE the assignment is due (not the day of). Otherwise, late submissions are 5% per day.

Journal (20%): Every week I expect a journal entry of at least 500 words. The entry will address questions from the discussion sections at the end of your Intersections readings and will be handed in at the end of each class. The journal will be marked on both completion and thought – formal essay style is not required. They will be marked (with a check or a minus) and returned. The complete package will be handed in with the research paper. This is an all or nothing deal: if you keep up and hand in everything (and indicate that you’ve actually read the stuff) it’s an easy 20 marks. Fall behind and you’ll be writing hack entries while you are finishing your research paper. 11 entries total.

Participation and Editing (10%): Part of this mark is based on the in-class discussions that will come out of the readings. You will all have something to say based upon your journal entries and I want to hear it. The other component of this category, peer editing, is extremely important to the smooth progression of the class and I want to make sure that you take it seriously. In large part, you will be responsible for each other’s marks, so you need to be very careful how you respond to your partner’s work. I will be examining your editing comments and assessing this mark based on the thoroughness and helpfulness of your criticism.

Editor’s Review (5%): throughout the term you will have several editors. I want you to keep track of their input and write a review of their editing. Identify the strengths and weaknesses of their comments and assign a mark (out of 5). Your mark on this section will depend partly upon your peer’s estimation of your editing, but also upon the seriousness of your reviews. Minimum 50 words per entry.

Academic Offences (and other unpleasantness): The faculty of arts requires me to politely let you know that

All students registered in the courses of the Faculty of Arts are expected to know what constitutes an academic offense, to avoid committing academic offenses, and to take responsibility for their academic actions. When the commission of an offense is established, disciplinary penalties will be imposed in accord with policy #71 (student academic discipline). For information on categories of offenses and types of penalties, students are directed to consult the summary of Policy #71 which is supplied in the Undergraduate Calendar (p. 1:11). If you need help in learning how to avoid offenses such as plagiarism, cheating, and double submission, or if you need clarification of any aspect of discipline policy, ask your course instructor for guidance. Other resources regarding the discipline policy are your academic advisor and the Undergraduate Associate Dean.

To briefly expand on one point: plagiarism is “the act of presenting ideas, words, or other intellectual property of another as one’s own.” Make everything easy for all of us and remember to cite all your sources.

Schedule (Tentative)

May

6-Welcome, syllabus, course requirements

An Overview of Composition

13- Rhetorical Approaches
   SM: 1-2
   I: Orwell, “Politics and the English Language”; Twain, “Political Economy”
20- Argumentation (appeals and logic)  
SM: 4-5, & 48  
I: Watson and Crick, “Molecular Structure of Nucleic Acids”; Commoner, “Unraveling the DNA Myth” (handout)

27- Citation  
SM: 43-47  

June

Style  
3- The Word  
SM: 26-28  

10- The Sentence  
SM: 19-23  

17- The Paragraph  
SM: 6  
I: Mead, “Why the Deficit is a Godsend”; Zorpette, “How Iraq Reverse-Engineered The Bomb”

Process  
24- Invention  
SM: 3-4  
I: Darwin, Exerpt from The Origin of Species; Selzer, “A Mask on the Face of Death”

July

8- Research  
SM: 40-41  
I: Dolnick, “The Ghost’s Vocabulary”; Goodman “Bred in the Bone?”

15- Arrangement  
SM: 50-51  
I: Mitford, “Behind the Formaldehyde Curtain”; Ruskin, “The English Villa”

22- Persuasion  

29- Persuasion  
I: Davies, “Doomsday”; Winn, “Television and Reading”

Aug

5- Conclusions

August 16: Research Paper Due to my mailbox (HH229) by 4:00PM. They MUST be signed by dated by a staff or faculty member, otherwise I’ll assume them late.