Course Objectives

We learn to write effectively in much the same way we learn to speak effectively: by listening to others communicate, by communicating to others in turn, and by attending to the feedback we receive of our communication. We are not explicitly taught so much as we are socialized into communication.

This course recreates that socialization process.

The primary objectives in doing so are
1) to develop, through reading, sensitivity and insight into the structure, style, and persuasiveness of effective writing.
2) to develop, through writing, our own experience of writing as a process of engagement and discovery, and to develop our proficiency in making things happen in our readers.

Required Texts


The first edition of this book may also be used, but students should be aware that chapter and page numbers have been shifted, and that some content has been revised. Bring the *Handbook* to all classes.

Course Work

The assignments have been designed so that you can write from the position of an expert: an expert on being a student, an expert on living in the 90s, an expert on you yourself and the people around you. When you borrow the ideas of other "experts," be sure to acknowledge your sources. Plagiarism is a serious academic offense and will automatically result in a grade of 0 for the assignment.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignment</th>
<th>Due Date</th>
<th>Grading</th>
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<tr>
<td>&quot;Spatial Layout&quot;</td>
<td>May 9 / 11</td>
<td>4%</td>
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<tr>
<td>&quot;Cause and Effect&quot;</td>
<td>May 23 / 25</td>
<td>8%</td>
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<tr>
<td>&quot;Analogy&quot;</td>
<td>June 6 / 8</td>
<td>8%</td>
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<tr>
<td>&quot;Classification&quot;</td>
<td>June 20 / 22</td>
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<tr>
<td>&quot;Research&quot;</td>
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<tr>
<td>&quot;Autobiography&quot;</td>
<td>July 18-25 / 28</td>
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<tr>
<td>&quot;Response to Readings&quot;</td>
<td>biweekly</td>
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<tr>
<td>Workshops</td>
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<td>5%</td>
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Note that where two due dates are given, the first is the date of the peer review workshop. Failing to bring in your assignment draft for a peer review workshop and failing to participate in a workshop will result both in a lower grade on that assignment (a reduction of a half grade) and in a lower "Workshops" grade.

All assignments and workshop drafts should be typed and double-spaced.

Late assignments will be penalized by a reduction of a half-grade per day late.

**Course Schedule**

Your schedule of responsibilities is given below. Note that there may be changes to this schedule; these will be announced in class. All readings are in *The Act of Writing* except for those identified as *Handbook*. Readings in *The St. Martin's Handbook for Canadians* are identified by the chapter in the second edition, with the corresponding first edition chapter given in parentheses.

**For . . .**

**You should . . .**

May 4  
Read "Suitcase Lady" (82-85) and "Thanks for Not Killing My Son" (318-321). Read "Purpose and Audience" in *Handbook* Chapter 2 (2a-d in 1st ed.) and "Recognizing Argument" in *Handbook* Section 5a (4a in 1st ed.).

May 9  
Write and hand in the 1st installment of your "Response to Readings" assignment. Bring your "Spatial Layout" draft to class for peer review.

May 11  
Revise and hand in your "Spatial Layout" assignment. Read "The Seven-minute Life of Marc Lepine" (322-326) and "My Body is My Own Business" (118-121).

May 16  
Read "1944: The Year I Learned to Love a German" (142-148) and "Hidden Lessons" (114-117).

May 18  
Write and hand in the 2nd installment (along with the 1st installment) of your "Response to Readings" assignment. Read "Exploring, Planning, Drafting" in *Handbook* Chapter 3 (2e-2n in 1st ed.).
May 23  Complete and bring in your "Cause and Effect" draft for peer review.

May 25  Revise and hand in your "Cause and Effect" assignment.
        Read "A Fable--For the Whaling Fleets" (193-195) and "Modern Cannibals of the Wilds" (200-204).
        Read "Revising and Editing" in Handbook Chapter 4 (3).

May 30  Read "Using Argument" in Handbook Sections 5c-5f (4c-4f).

June 1   Write and hand in the 3rd installment (along with earlier installments) of your "Response to Readings" assignment.
        Read "The 51-Per-Cent Minority" (156-159) and "Canadians: What Do They Want?" (306-311).

June 6   Complete and bring in your "Analogy" draft for peer review.

June 8   Revise and hand in your "Analogy" assignment.
        Read "Dealer Tricks" (219-224) and "How to Write Fiction" (225-229).

June 13  Read "Constructing Paragraphs" in Handbook Chapter 6 (5).

June 15  Write and hand in the 4th installment (along with earlier installments) of your "Response to Readings" assignment.
        Read "The Roar of the Greasepaint, the Smell of the Caucus" (235-237) and "Bicycles" (230-234).

June 20  Complete and bring in your "Classification" draft for peer review.

June 22  Revise and hand in your "Classification" assignment.
        Read "Capping the Great Cup Debate" (286-291) and "The Shocking Truth About Household Dust" (122-127).

June 27  Read "Using Source Materials" in Handbook Chapter 11 (10) and "Source Materials" in Handbook Section 12d (11d).

June 29  Read "West Must Confront Anonymous Misery of the World's Children" (63-67) and "Making a Difference" (265-271).

July 4   Complete and bring in your "Research" draft for peer review.

July 6   Revise and hand in your "Research" assignment.
        Read "Coming of Age in Putnok" (24-26) and "Growing Up Native" (32-39).

July 11  Read "Never a Cowgirl" (173-178) and "Chicken Hips" (160-164).

July 13  Write and hand in the last installment (along with earlier installments) of your "Response to Readings" assignment.

July 18-25 Meet with instructor to review your "Autobiography" draft.

July 28  Hand in your "Autobiography" assignment.
Spatial Layout

Write a detailed description of the spatial layout of your apartment. If you live in residence, write a description of the overall floor plan of your floor of the building, but give details only of the public spaces (e.g., hallways, washroom) and of your room. If you live in a house, save the details for one floor only.

Imagine that your audience is a team of drafters. Drafters make blueprints. Their work requires information on such features as floor spaces, the locations of doorways, and the like, so give measurements for these features. (Approximations are acceptable, in either feet or meters.) As well, they need to know the location of these features with respect to the building as a whole. They do not need to know about the furnishings and the decor, but they do need to indicate the function of each of the spaces (e.g., washroom, kitchen, etc.).

You may not include a picture, diagram, or sketch with this assignment. One of the challenges of this assignment is to communicate spatial information to your audience by the written word alone. In order to translate your words back into spatial information, your audience needs a description that is well organized, clear, and efficiently presented. The maximum length is 500 words.

On Tuesday May 9, bring in one typed, double-spaced copy of your spatial description for our peer review workshop. Your final draft is due on Thursday May 11.
Response to Readings

For this assignment, imagine that our class has its own review journal, a forum for advancing ideas, experiences, and attitudes that take up from our assigned readings. This review is issued biweekly, and is read in appreciation of its nuggets of thought-provoking and entertaining and moving prose.

Your job for this review is to write five short contributions, each 200-250 words long.

To discover what you have to say in a contribution, examine your own responses to the readings. What grabs your attention? What issues do the readings touch on, either explicitly or indirectly? What is your "rhetorical stance" to these issues? (See pp.13-14 in the Handbook, 2nd edition, for more on "rhetorical stance.") For inspiration, consider the questions listed in "Ideas for Discussion and Writing" that follow each reading in The Act of Writing.

Your purpose, however, is not to show how well you can answer textbook questions, but to make something happen in your readers: to make us think, to make us want to act, to make us laugh, to make us cry.

Do not feel that you must treat only "profound" themes (e.g., the meaning of life) in these 200-250 words. You can do a lot with a single down-to-earth topic manageable in one page. As well, do not feel that you must address the topic of a reading as the author presents it. Pick up the conversation from the author and take your turn at the conversation. Use the reading; don't be used by it.

Your five contributions should develop from five different readings assigned in our reading list. Contributions are due on the following dates:

- May 9
- May 18
- June 1
- June 15
- July 13

With each new instalment, hand in all earlier instalments. Please use a folder or envelope or paper clip to keep things orderly, and please place your latest instalment on top.

As this is an assignment in progress, a final mark will not be assessed until July 13. However, missing the deadline for any instalment will result in a lower final mark. An interim mark will be assessed after the first two instalments are due.