

English 125: Writing and Academic Inquiry

Fall 2014 Section 091

Mon/Wed 11:30AM - 1:00PM

Writing About Writing

Instructor: Aubrey Schiavone

Office Number: Tisch Hall 3023C

Office Hours: Wednesdays 9AM-11AM and by appointment

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Course Description: This class is about writing and academic inquiry. Good arguments stem from good questions, and academic essays allow writers to write their way toward answers, toward figuring out what they think. In this course, students focus on the creation of complex, analytic, well-supported arguments addressing questions that matter in academic contexts. The course also hones students' critical thinking and reading skills. Working closely with their peers and the instructor, students develop their essays through workshops and extensive revision and editing. Readings cover a variety of genres and often serve as models or prompts for assigned essays; but the specific questions students pursue in essays are guided by their own interests.

Our topic for this course will be writing. Through course readings, you will become familiar with existing research and writing about writing. I will ask you to identify topics for research and writing assignments that interest or influence you in your experiences with writing within and without the classroom. A fuller understanding of writing, how it has been studied, and how it influences your daily lives will allow you to develop as writers and to use writing more mindfully throughout your academic careers and beyond.

Student Learning Goals for English 125:

1. To produce complex, analytic, well-supported arguments that matter in academic contexts.
2. To read, summarize, analyze, and synthesize complex texts purposefully in order to generate and support writing.
3. To analyze the genres and rhetorical strategies that writers use in different rhetorical situations.
4. To develop flexible strategies for organizing, revising, editing, and proofreading writing of varying lengths to improve development of ideas and appropriateness of expression.
5. To hone skills at critical self-assessment and reflection on the process of writing.
6. To collaborate with peers and the instructor to define revision strategies for particular pieces of writing, to set goals for improving writing, and to devise effective plans for achieving those goals.

Required Materials: I will provide course texts through our course website.

Grading Policy: I will provide a detailed grading rubric for each major writing assignment listed below. In general, the grade scale for the course follows University of

Michigan's LSA grade scale:

A	93-100%	C+	77-77.9%
A-	90-92.9%	C	73-76.9%
B+	87-89.9%	C-	70-72.9%
B	83-86.9%	D	60-70%
B-	80-82.9%	F	Less than 60%

Grade Breakdown:

Social Significance Argument:	6-8 pages	200 points
Process Blog:	6 entries	100 points
Arguing About Process:	6-8 pages	250 points
Writing About A Genre:	6-8 pages	250 points
Video Composition and Reflection:	2-3 minutes, 2-3 pages	100 points
Reading and Writing Responses:	10 responses	100 points
<i>Total:</i>		<i>1000 points</i>

Although class participation is not formally graded, the course is workshop based and your success in the course relies heavily on your continued attendance and active participation in the course. Your participation and engagement with the course will be reflected in the quality and completion of your major writing assignments.

Peer review is an important part of the drafting and revising process for each major writing assignment. Peer review days will involve small group peer review of each others' writing in progress. I will provide you with detailed handouts to guide your reading and commenting on one another's drafts. Because these peer review sessions are so influential to you and your classmates' development as writers, any absence during a scheduled peer review workshop day will likely result in a letter grade deduction for the major paper being peer reviewed.

Assignment Descriptions:

Social Significance Argument: In this 6-8 page paper you will reflect on an issue of personal importance to you, identify a group or audience that shares your concern for this issue, and then argue why and how this issue is socially significant. 2-3 outside sources will provide evidence to support your argument.

Process Blog: This will be an online blog, shared with your classmates, in which you track your progress throughout the completion of the Social Significance Argument. You will respond to prompts about your writing process and reflect on portions of your writing process that occur outside of class. This process blog will provide evidence for your Arguing About Process writing assignment.

Arguing About Process: In this 6-8 page paper I will ask you to compare course readings about writing processes to your own writing process that you have tracked in your process blog. You will then make an argument about writing processes based on this comparison.

Writing About A Genre: You will choose a genre of writing to study, collect texts from that genre, and interview individuals or groups participating in that genre in order to describe in 6-8 pages how that genre has developed and maintained itself or changed over time.

Video Composition/Literacy Narrative Snapshot: For this assignment, you will compose a 2-3 minute video composition intended for publication on the Web. This video should represent an experience you've had as a reader, writer, or participant in a discourse community. I will provide you with a list of more specific topics/prompts. You can remix and edit the work of others to create the video, you can shoot and edit original footage that you capture with a video camera, or you can do a combination of these. You will also submit a written 2-3 page reflection with your video that makes connections between video composing and your experiences with print-based, textual writing in the course.

Reading And Writing Responses: This will be a series of 1-2 page papers responding to class readings or to class writing assignments. You will complete approximately 10 of these short papers throughout the semester.

Attendance Policy: Again, because the course is workshop based, your success in the course will depend heavily on attendance. You may miss two class sessions without penalty. Each absence after those two will likely result in ½ letter grade deduction on your final grade for the course. Extenuating circumstances such as absences due to medical and family emergencies and to participation in university teams or programs will not count against your final grade; however, you must communicate with me about these absences in a respectful and timely manner.

Any absence during a scheduled peer review workshop day will likely result in a letter grade deduction for the major paper being peer reviewed.

Late Work: I will likely not accept late reading and writing response assignments or late in-class assignments. For late major writing assignments, I will likely deduct a full letter grade for each day they are missing (this is not each *class period* but each *day* that the major assignment is not turned in). Again, extenuating circumstances such as absences due to medical and family emergencies and to participation in university teams or programs will not result in grade deductions, but need to be communicated to me clearly and in a timely manner.

Technology Use: Please turn off all cell phones prior to each class period. If you choose to use a laptop in class to take notes, access course readings, or to access your written work for workshop, please refrain from any extraneous activities such as checking email or Facebook during class. If you are using a laptop for anything other than coursework, I reserve the right to ask you to refrain from using a laptop or to ask you to leave class.

Plagiarism: The University of Michigan defines plagiarism as ‘Submitting a piece of work (for example, an essay, research paper, work of art, assignment, laboratory report) which in part or in whole is not entirely the students’ own work without attributing those same portions to their correct source.’ Plagiarism is when you knowingly (or

unknowingly) submit someone else's ideas or words as your own. Please read through the "Memo to all students taking courses in the English Department" for a fuller definition of plagiarism and its various forms:

<http://www.lsa.umich.edu/english/undergraduate/advising/plagNote.asp>

If you commit an act of academic dishonesty in this course by either plagiarizing someone else's work or allowing your own work to be misused by another, you will fail the assignment and possibly the entire course. In addition, I will report the incident to both the English Department and the LSA Assistant Dean of Student Affairs. Please also note that if you submit work already completed for one course as original work for another course, you are violating university policies and will fail the assignment and possibly the course.

Sweetland Center for Writing: "The Sweetland Center for Writing" supplements formal writing instruction by providing free programs that help students understand assignments, develop ideas, support arguments and claims, integrate new media, cite sources, and revise at the paragraph and sentence level." The Sweetland Center for Writing is located at 1310 North Quad. I encourage all students to seek out the Sweetland Center for Writing and take advantage of their resources for undergraduate writers. Please visit their website for more information or to make an appointment:

<http://www.lsa.umich.edu/sweetland>

Accommodations: In accordance with University of Michigan policy, I am happy to provide accommodations for students with learning disabilities, and I will protect the confidentiality of students' individual learning needs. I will work closely with the Office for Students with Disabilities (SSD), and if you have not already contacted them, I encourage you to do so. The office for students with disabilities is located at G-664 Haven Hall, and can be contacted either by phone: (734) 763-3000 or on their website: <http://ssd.umich.edu/index.html> Please email me by the second week of the term if you would like to show me your letter from SSD describing approved accommodations. I will set up a confidential appointment with you to discuss accommodations.

Religious Observances: If a class session or due date conflicts with your religious holidays, please notify me so we can make alternative arrangements. In most cases, I will ask you to turn in your assignment ahead of your scheduled absence, but, in accordance with U-M policy on Religious/Academic conflicts, your absence will not affect your grade in the course.