ENGL 60203 Writing for Professions
Fall 2014
Th 2:00-4:40

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Course Description:
Writing for Professions offers students from any specialization and at any stage of their graduate work a chance to study the forms of writing that define the discipline of English. In the course, students will engage in a study of professional academic writing along three trajectories: 1) studying your own process of writing and developing strategies for strengthening that process 2) studying the relationship between rhetorical conventions and the disciplinary values they represent and 3) drafting and revising an academic project of your choosing.

Learning Outcomes:
At the end of the course, students will be able to
1) Theorize the relationship between academic writing and disciplinary formation
2) Analyze their own writing processes and employ strategies for strengthening those processes.
3) Plan, draft, revise, and edit a variety of academic genres in light of rhetorical and stylistic conventions
4) Provide close reading and critique of others’ academic writing including peers’ drafts in progress.
5) Collaborate on researching and creating resources for other academic writers

Required Texts
• Helen Sword, Stylish Academic Writing, Harvard UP, 2012
• Additional readings as assigned, available online or on the course website as pdfs.

Course Requirements
1. Regular attendance. Please come to class having read the assignment (whether published work or student draft) and prepared to participate in discussion. I do not lecture, so the quality of our learning depends on the engagement and participation of everyone in the class. I appreciate knowing in advance if you are unable to attend class. Though it may be necessary to come to class late due to circumstances beyond your control, please do not make it a habit. Frequent tardies can also affect your final grade.
2. Participation: This class is meant to function as a space for shared learning about writing. In that spirit, I would like us to find a way to share that learning with a broader public, perhaps by creating a website where we can post some of our work from the class. Your participation is needed, then, in various ways: through your own contributions during class discussion, your productive engagement with your peers’ ideas, submission of complete drafts on time, thoughtful and substantive response to peer drafts as assigned, and participation in the writing resource we’ll create as a class.

3. Writing Process Journal: One goal of this class is to help you become aware of your own writing habits (both good and bad) and to provide you with strategies for making those habits more productive. Toward this end, you will be asked to keep a journal in which you complete exercises and other informal writing assignments throughout the semester. These may be composed electronically or handwritten but need to be in a form that can be brought to class and submitted in its entirety near the end of the class. Some of these informal writing assignments may be shared in class or submitted for teacher response.

4. Rhetorical Analysis of a Journal Article (about 1000 words): Select an issue of a journal in your field, preferably one published in the last year, then choose a substantive article to analyze. Your rhetorical analysis should address the following questions:

   About the journal-- 1) What does the journal claim as its subject matter? 2) How would you describe the general content of this issue—how many articles? How long? What is the range of topics? Look at the Works Cited page for all the articles—what generalizations can you make? What additional content appears in the journal?

   About the article-- 1) What is the central argument? Is it stated explicitly? If so, where? 2) What is the purpose of the author’s use of scholarly references? Does the use of references change over the course of the article? 3) How is the article structured? Are there discreet sections? If so, what does each section do? What kinds of evidence does the writer use to support his or her argumentative claims? How would you characterize the writer’s style? Consider sentence length and type, use of abstractions and specialized terms. What are the article’s strengths and weaknesses as a piece of academic writing?

5. Interview with a Thesis/Dissertation Writer (or a faculty member, if preferred): To help demystify the process of writing a thesis or dissertation, you’ll interview someone who has recently completed a graduate degree at TCU (or elsewhere, if you have an appropriate contact). In preparation for the interview, you’ll want to access the interviewee’s thesis or dissertation and get a sense of its subject matter, scope, and style. In addition, as a class, we’ll create a shared list of interview questions, though you’re free to add questions that interest you.

   Transcribed interviews with brief introductions will be submitted in class on the date specified below and Insights gleaned from interviews will be shared orally in class.

   OR

6. Review of Book or Resource on Academic Writing (about 1000 words): There are many books and resources available to help academic writers. To give you practice writing reviews, you’ll each review one book or substantive online resource from the perspective of an academic
writer-in-training. Reviews will be submitted on the day specified below with brief reports provided orally to the class.

7. Conference Presentation with Slides: Each of you will compose an oral presentation for a specific conference that you have been accepted to or would like to apply to. Your presentation should meet the page/time limit of the specific conference and be written in a presentation style appropriate to that conference. Conference presentations may be based on prior work (such as a seminar paper) but must be revised into an oral presentation. In addition, your conference presentation should be accompanied by well-designed slides. If you have a lot of experience with conference presentations and would like to try something new, consider creating a pecha-kucha presentation [http://www.pechakucha.org/](http://www.pechakucha.org/). Each of you will deliver about 10 minutes of your presentation for class feedback before submitting a complete draft to me for response. Revised presentations and slides will be submitted in your final portfolio.

8. Final Project: The purpose of the final project is to give you the chance to apply what you’ve learned about professional academic writing to produce a text that serves a real academic purpose. Some choices include a proposal/prospectus for an MA thesis or PhD Dissertation, a revision of a seminar paper into an article for a specific journal, a chapter of a thesis, a grant proposal or IRB application, or a new researched essay on writing for the profession. You may also create a text in an alternative format (e.g. a website or video) so long as it is composed for and meets the expectations of an academic audience. The final project should be substantive (at least 15-25 pages or the equivalent) and will be evaluated based on how well it meets audience expectations for the genre. Drafts of final projects will be workshopped in the final week of the class.

**Evaluation**

The following will be graded when submitted:

- Rhetorical Analysis of Journal Article (15%)
- Interview with Thesis/Dissertation Writer or Faculty Member and Report or Review of Book or Writing Resource (15%)
- Writing Process Journal (15%) (based on completeness, insightfulness, and meeting deadlines for entries to be submitted near the end of the semester.)

These assignments will be workshopped as drafts and may be revised for the final portfolio:

- Conference Presentation (20%)
- Final Project (25%)

Also contributing to your final grade:

- Participation (10%)

**Academic Misconduct**

From the Graduate Student Handbook:

“Students may be dismissed from individual courses with a grade of "F" for lack of academic progress or for conduct deemed to be contrary to the professional or ethical standards of a field upon the recommendation of the responsible faculty member and the approval of the appropriate academic dean.

At such times as the student fails to meet acceptable standards of academic performance or has engaged in professional misconduct, at the discretion of the dean of the school/college in which
the student is enrolled, the student may be (1) dismissed or suspended from a program of study and/or (2) expelled from the University.”

Professional ethics requires the careful crediting of others’ contributions to your work—both their words and ideas—and including other students’ contributions. We credit our sources, not only to honor other scholars’ contributions to our thinking, but also to establish for future scholars a chain of references that can be followed. It is considered academic misconduct to submit work as your own that includes the unattributed work of others, whether that work appears in print or online. Please consult with me if you are not sure how to give appropriate credit. It is also considered academic misconduct to resubmit work that you have done for credit in other courses.

**ADA Statement**
TCU complies with the Americans with Disabilities Act and with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 regarding students with disabilities. The University shall provide reasonable accommodations for each eligible student who a) has a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits a major life activity, b) has a record or history of such an impairment, or c) is regarded as having such an impairment. Eligible students should contact the Coordinator for Students with Disabilities as soon as possible in the academic term for which they are seeking accommodations. Each eligible student is responsible for presenting relevant, verifiable, professional documentation and/or assessment reports to the Coordinator for Students with Disabilities. Further information can be obtained from the Center for Academic Services, TCU Box 297710, Fort Worth, TX 76129, or at (817) 257-7486.

**Additional Resources**
We all get by with a little help from our friends. Here are some of your friends:

**Instructor Conferences** Please consider me a resource for help with your writing, reading, and general grad school matters. In addition to my regular office hours, I am available by appointment and check email regularly. Plan to meet with me at least once during the semester so we can talk about your work individually.

The William L. Adams Center for Writing (http://www.wrt.tcu.edu/) offers professional one-to-one consultations for graduate student writers as well as undergraduates. Writing Centers are not just for writers who are struggling. They offer the chance to share your writing with supportive, experienced responders. Visit the website to schedule an appointment.

**Study Groups** I strongly recommend participation in study and/or writing groups as you move through graduate school and beyond. Find a few friends or classmates and agree to share your work on a regular basis. Bring food. Gossip. Then get down to work.

**Tentative Calendar**

| W 1: Th Aug 28 | **Intro to the course. What is academic writing and why do it?** Assign Writing Plan. Share Initial Reflection on Writing; Discuss Shumway and Dionne, Intro to *Disciplining English*. Harris, Intro to *Rewriting* (http://josephharris.me/books/rewriting-2/), Startke- |


Meyerring and Pare, “The Role of Writing in Knowledge Societies” (Intro to Writing in Knowledge Societies, http://wac.colostate.edu/books/winks/) Bruffee, “Collaboration and the ‘Conversation of Mankind’”; Bartholomae, “Inventing the University”


W3: Th Sept 11 Becoming a professional academic writer. Submit Writing Plan Boice. Professors as Writers. Interviews with professors: Choose to read any of the interviews with theorists and critics found here JAC Interviews http://www.jaconlinejournal.com/interviews.html Read Tulley, Intro (pdf on course website). Bring 3 questions for Skype with Christine Tulley.

W4: Th Sept 18 Genres of academic writing. Bawarshi, “The Genre Function”; Discuss monographs, edited collections, textbooks, and professional writing (policy statements, etc.) Bring an example of your assigned genre and be prepared to discuss its genre function, using Bawarshi’s proposed scheme. Practice rhetorical analysis of Bawarshi.

W5: Th Sept 25 The publication process. Rhetorical Analysis of journal article due. Discuss article submissions and reader reports. Reviews as a genre.

“Publish Not Perish,” Module 1 Overview, Module 4, From Good to Great http://www.publishnotperish.org/intro/index.htm

http://www.slate.com/articles/life/education/2014/07/the_easy_way_to_fix_peer_review_require_submitters_to_review_first.html

http://scholarlykitchen.sspnet.org/2014/07/24/your-question-for-the-day-what-is-peer-review/

Dave Parry, “Knowledge Rights versus Knowledge Cartels” http://www.enculturation.net/knowledge-cartels

2 sample MS submissions on the course website—Be prepared to recommend whether to publish, revise and resubmit, or reject and why. What, if anything, could make the manuscript publishable?

W6: Th Oct 2 Writing and academic careers. Lynee Gaillet visit. Gaillet, “Introduction.” Interview:
3 sample book reviews (under Reading on course website). Be prepared to identify genre conventions. Some questions you might consider:

1. How does the reviewer establish his or her authority, e.g. his or her right to speak about the book(s)
2. Comment on the ratio of objective summary/description to evaluation. Does the ratio seem right? Would you have liked to see more of one or the other? (Try as best you can to imagine you’re the intended audience for the book)
3. What features of the book does the reviewer describe? (for example, main argument, overall structure, research method, intended audience, tone and style, etc.)
4. What aspects of the book does the reviewer evaluate? What evidence does the reviewer offer in support of his or her evaluation?
5. How much does the reviewer quote from the book and for what purpose?
6. How does the reviewer connect the book to the audience’s professional or disciplinary interests? Who is the implied audience for the review?
7. How would you describe the reviewer’s tone?
8. What do you find most helpful/least helpful about the review (imagine you’re considering buying the book, using it in your research, or using it for a class).

W7: Th Oct 9
Review of books or resources on writing/careers due. Reports from book reviewers. Post reviews to course website (Doc Sharing—share with everyone) Conferences. Discuss conference proposals, conference presentations as a genre, sample conference papers (on doc sharing under course number), presentation design (see http://tcunewmedia.wpengine.com/?page_id=19

W8: Th Oct 16
Watson Conference. Reschedule class for Friday, December 5 at 2pm.

W9: Th Oct 23
Conference presentations and feedback.

W10: Th Oct 30
Conference presentations, cont. Preparing to write a thesis or dissertation. Special guests: Mary McCulley and Michelle Iten. Discuss Foss and Waters, Destination Dissertation. Sample prospectuses (McCulley, Iten, Roe, Jesse) and TCU Grad Handbook pp 17-20 (Sharepoint>Grad students>Departmental Forms>Graduate Handbook>Grad Program Polices revised 6-2014)
Examples of scholarly new media for browsing
Special issue of American Literature:
http://scalar.usc.edu/showcase/new-media-and-american-literature/
http://www.whatjanesaw.org/
http://www.hastac.org/
Patrick Jagoda’s home page (scroll down to digital projects):
http://english.uchicago.edu/faculty/jagoda
Kairos: A Journal of Rhetoric, Technology, and Pedagogy:
http://kairos.technorhetoric.net/

Academic style. NOTE CHANGES Discuss Sword, Stylish Academic Writing; Bring a favorite published academic article that you think is really good and be prepared to discuss how many elements of “stylishness” it exhibits. Also bring a piece of your own academic prose (it could be something you’re working on for the final project or for another class) so we can do some writing exercises in class. Share proposals for final projects.

“Professors, We Need You!”
http://www.nytimes.com/2014/02/16/opinion/sunday/kristof-professors-we-need-you.html?_r=0
“Why Is Academic Writing so Academic?”
http://www.newyorker.com/books/page-turner/why-is-academic-writing-so-academic
“The Case for Academics as Public Intellectuals”
http://www.aaup.org/article/case-academics-public-intellectuals#U_ZA60ie8zx;
Rose, “Writing for the Public”
Hesse, “Grading Writing”
W14: Th Nov 27  Thanksgiving  

W15: Th Dec 4  Last class. **Workshop drafts.** Workshop cont. on Friday, Dec. 5  

Final Portfolio due.  Monday, Dec. 15 by 4 pm. **Portfolio** may be submitted electronically.