

English 305: Advanced Expository Writing

Foundational Studies Learning Objectives for Composition

- 1. Demonstrate fluency in the writing process: planning, drafting, revising, editing, and preparing final papers:** This course is structured as a writing workshop, where students write multiple drafts of their essays, receiving feedback from the instructor as well as from their peers at every step. This stresses the notion of writing as a process, and secondary assignments range from research proposals to draft outlines and even research notes. By the end of the class, students will fulfill every aspect of this objective.
- 2. Demonstrate competence in the varied elements of writing: thesis, stance, content, organization, sentences, diction, and technical matters:** This is the nature of a writing course; student writing is evaluated on the basis of these categories, as well as the progress they make through the revision process. Simply put, if a student does not meet this objective, they cannot pass the class.
- 3. Demonstrate awareness of rhetorical strategies in various forms of writing, with particular attention to audience:** In addition to the documented papers, students write a series of “rhetorical analyses” which ask them to evaluate scholarly material on the basis of its rhetorical strategies and their efficacy. As a course in academic writing, students must be attuned to questions of audience, as their readings come from a variety of sources and disciplines, and appropriately addressing audience is a key component in evaluation of their writing.
- 4. Assess the usefulness and reliability of sources, including Internet sources:** All essays require students to assess primary sources critically, the text they are writing about, and the two research essays ask them to do the same with secondary sources as well. They are instructed in use of relevant indexes on line and spend time in the library doing guided research to better familiarize them with research strategies and source analysis.
- 5. Synthesize and critique material from a variety of sources with an emphasis on scholarly and professional publications; incorporate sources; document sources properly:** This is essential to the course, and implicit in the description of a course in academic writing.
- 6. Exhibit critical thinking as readers and as writers:** Everything they do in the class works towards this goal, from workshopping their own papers, critiquing their peers’ essays, and responding to feedback from the instructor, to conducting research and participating in class discussion.
- 7. Understand the relevance of writing to real-world situations:** Readings come from a variety of disciplines and cover topics including economics, ethnicity and gender discrimination, and conflict resolution, among others. Students respond to these articles in both writing and discussion, and at all times writing is presented as entering into a wider conversation. Students are encouraged to research topics of their own interest, and in doing so they realize that the skills they develop in the course connect to broader skills they will need in completing their major and in the world outside of the classroom.

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ENG 305
Root A110
MWF 11:00 - 11:50

This Syllabus is also available online, linked through Blackboard.

Advanced Expository Writing: Writing Communities

exAposiAtory (-tôr, -tr) *adj.*:

1. A setting forth of meaning or intent
2. A. A statement or rhetorical discourse intended to give information about or an explanation of difficult material.
B. The art or technique of composing such discourses.

While the term “expository” may not be familiar to you, you have already been doing expository writing throughout your college career in the form of research papers, business memos, or lab reports. This may be the first time, however, that you are taking a class solely dedicated to practicing and developing your writing skills. In the definition above, there are two other terms that you will come to be familiar with as the semester progresses. The term “rhetorical” implies argument, and that is our primary focus. This course aims to help you learn how to craft an argument based on different sources of information, concentrating on a general set of reasoning strategies that you can use to persuade an audience. Since we will be concentrating on argument throughout the semester, this is basically a course in rhetoric. Rhetoric is the art of discovering what to say and using language to share what people know, believe, and value (and if you've read Plato, you know that rhetoric is in no small way bound up with the idea that you use this language to bring your audience to a new position or point of view). Thus, rhetoric provides a way to think about writing as part of a conversation that aims to bring about understanding of various sides of an issue, and perhaps, agreement.¹

The second term to pay attention to in the above definition is “discourse”. Now, you may or may not know this term, but you navigate a number of discourses every day as you move between different classes, as you read, watch television, have conversations with friends, family, or roommates and complete assignments. We'll talk more about “discourse” and what that means throughout the semester, but one understanding of “discourse” is a back and forth communication of thought by words; talk, gestures, conversation, essay, dissertation, treatise, sermon, etc. “Discourse” implies a sharing of ideas. Using the word “discourse” presumes an intellectual component is involved in the interaction. Note here that conversation and interaction are the keys to this term. In this sense, “discourse” is fundamentally tied up with a notion of community, a group of people exchanging thoughts and ideas, and is one key way in which we can understand how a community works. Our readings this semester will explore a variety of discourses as they analyze different communities and present their arguments in academic articles. As we read and discuss, then, our readings will complement our writing as we seek to improve our critical thinking, “discourse-navigating”, and academic writing skills.²

This course is a writing class, which means (surprise, surprise) you will be expected to write regularly. There are six required assignments for grades: (1) a “framed” argument arising out of issues you see in readings from the course reader; (2) an argument based on library research; (3) an analysis of traditional and Rogerian approaches to argument (don't worry, you'll know what this means when we get there); (4) a research proposal for the final paper; (5) an argument incorporating library and original

¹ Fulfills FS objectives 3, 6 and 7.

² Fulfills FS objectives 2, 6 and 7.

research; and (6) three rhetorical analyses (one paragraph writing assignments) to be handed in over the course of the semester. In addition, there may be some (short) informal writing assignments asking for responses to readings, exercises, and questions, etc.³

Course Objectives and Expectations:⁴

In short, this course provides continuous practice in the processes of writing and speaking. This practice will help you hone your critical thinking, reading, and writing skills. This fulfills the Foundational Studies requirement for Composition at the Junior level.

critical reading objectives

- ! *the ability to identify a writer's line of argument as well as the rhetorical techniques (s)he uses to make the argument*
- ! *to evaluate the claims a writer makes in light of the evidence given to support those claims*
- ! *to identify the basic assumptions underlying a writer's argument*
- ! *to examine what a writer has left unsaid*
- ! *to evaluate the implications of an argument*

To develop these critical reading objectives, you will write three (3) rhetorical analyses of selected readings. These will count as a part of your final portfolio grade, graded on a basis of improvement over the year rather than on an individual basis.

writing objectives

- ! *identify an issue amidst different and conflicting points of view in what you read*
- ! *frame and sustain an argument that not only includes both the analysis and exposition of information but establishes what is at stake in accepting your view(s)*
- ! *provide relevant evidence to support a given point of view*
- ! *identify and analyze potential counter-arguments*
- ! *develop an argument that proceeds logically, taking into account the needs of a particular audience*
- ! *learn to identify good questions for research*
- ! *develop more advanced skills for research, including library resources*
- ! *develop and support a clearly stated thesis*
- ! *practice academic writing at an advanced level*

You will be expected to write weekly, preparing multiple drafts of your essays and revising them. In turn, you can expect to get ample feedback from me as well as from your classmates.

This class is designed around the notion that writing is a way to enter into the conversation of the academy. Even if you don't see yourself as becoming an academic, you have spent a significant portion of your life in the academy, and you are now considered an "advanced" member of the community, so learning how to fully join the conversation is imperative. In accordance with this understanding of writing, the course is structured as a writing workshop, which means you will work in permanent groups (or communities) of three to five students. For each portfolio, you should expect to write at least three drafts as you compose your argument. Each successive draft should have **substantial revisions**. When your groups come together to discuss your writing, you should bring photocopies of your work--enough for everyone in your group and one for me as well. An important part of the course entails learning how to respond to drafts in various stages of development; this is one way to develop your critical reading skills. There will be more information on your groups and on what you will be expected to do in your groups in the first few classes.

³ Fulfills FS Objectives 1-7.

⁴ These are my personal objectives for the class; they overlap with and expand on the FS objectives. Rather than highlight everything in this section, I will simply note that FS objectives 1-7 are fully covered here.

Expectations

This is designed to be a rigorous course, with plenty of reading and writing assignments. You will be expected to have all reading completed by the day on which we will be discussing it, and to have all writing completed by the day it is due--that means that drafts are to be completed by the first day they are workshopped, and portfolios are due on the designated day. Portfolios will be penalized one letter grade per day for each day they are late. In turn, I will return your work to you in a timely fashion, with plenty of commentary. Your groups will lead discussion of a reading once during the semester. You should take notes when appropriate, and at all times during class, you are expected to be respectful of your colleagues and me. Of course I am always available to talk during office hours, and I am more than willing to set up individual appointments if you can't make it to my hours. All assignments are to be typed, double-spaced, with 12 point font and 1-inch margins unless otherwise noted.

Attendance

This class is conducted as a seminar, so that students are expected to speak, to listen, and to contribute. Therefore, regular attendance is required. Further, the workshop structure of the course necessitates your active presence and participation to help your fellow classmates with their writing. Because it's hard to plan not to get a flat tire or the flu that everyone in the dorm has had twice, you may miss three classes without penalty, however, each non-workshop class you miss after three absences will deduct 3 points from your final grade. As the workshop experience is the backbone of the class, for each missed workshop session (after your third absence), 6 points will be deducted. You are responsible for missed work due to absence. If you know you are going to have to miss a class, please notify me ahead of time via phone or email. Excused absences will be allowed only in the cases of severe illness, death of an immediate family member, and duties performed for the University (e.g. athletics, ROTC, etc). In these cases, a letter of verification is required, and advance notice is appreciated.

Grading

Since I see writing as a process, I will evaluate your work primarily on the basis of your final portfolio (containing the polished drafts of the three main assignments and all other drafts/assignments). The advantage to this system is that it lets you experiment and take risks with your writing, trying out new styles and ideas that cannot be penalized by a grade. I will assign grades to the first and second portfolios, and if needed at midterm, but you will always have the opportunity to revise your work and so these grades are not set in stone until the final portfolio at the end of the semester⁵.

I understand that this system may make you feel a little uneasy. Rest assured that you will, throughout the course, receive extensive commentary from your peers as well as from me, and you will have a good idea of where you stand and how you can improve your writing. Additionally, we will have regularly scheduled meetings to discuss each paper, and missing a meeting will count as an absence. Of course, I am always willing to answer any questions about your progress in the course or about your writing, and you are always welcome to meet with me to discuss your concerns.

Your final grade will be broken down as follows:

- 60 pts Final Portfolio
- 10 pts Final Presentation
- 20 pts Group work
- 10 pts Group-led discussion of one reading

Class Policy on Violations of Academic Integrity

The Student Handbook, available at <http://www.indstate.edu/st-aff/dean-of-students.html>, clearly states that "students at Indiana State University are expected to accept certain personal responsibilities

⁵ Fulfills FS Objectives 1 and 2.

that constitute the ‘standard’ for behavior in a community of scholars” including upholding the principles of academic integrity and devoting oneself “to the pursuit of truth, learning, and scholarship.” Violations of academic integrity, in any form, are intrinsically opposed to the core values of Indiana State University as spelled out in the Student Handbook, and run counter to the very spirit of the intellectual enterprise. Accordingly, if I suspect plagiarism in a paper, I will ask you to show me the sources you have used in the essay. I understand that learning to use and document sources properly is an on-going process, and in the event that you do not know the conventions of documentation in an early draft, you will have opportunity to revise until the plagiarized material is eliminated. However, plagiarism is considered a breach of academic honesty according to the Student Code of Conduct, and should any portfolio draft contain plagiarized material, the penalty will be failure of the course.⁶ For more on plagiarism, I refer you to the Code of Conduct, found online at <http://www.indstate.edu/sjp/code.html> .

Special Needs Students

If you have a documented physical or learning disability that could affect your work, let me know privately. By federal law you are entitled to and eligible for accommodation through the Student Support Services Program, Gillum Hall, 201E, ext. 7920. Have your contact person there get in touch with me at the beginning of the semester.

Policy on the Use of Electronic Equipment in the Classroom

Technology in the classroom is meant to augment our discussion of the texts and to expedite the delivery of course content (i.e. I put stuff online so you don’t have to pay for it or find it in the library). To that end, and in keeping with the spirit of ISU’s laptop initiative, the use of laptop computers is approved only for accessing the online materials associated with the class. If you have your laptop screen open, be aware that I may ask to see what you’re viewing. Browsing the net, playing games, or doing email during class may result in penalties to your grade.

With regards to other electronic devices, as a common courtesy, please turn off or silence all cell phones prior to the start of class. If your phone should ring, kindly do not answer it in the middle of class. Also, music players (iPods, Zunes, etc) are to be turned off and earphones removed from your ears before class begins. Portable game devices are not to be used at any time. Please do not record class without my express permission. Basically, I ask that you not use any technology which disrupts class or is a distraction to other students or to myself during class.

If you should have special circumstances which require you to use technology during class in ways other than outlined above, come and talk to me.

Statement on Academic Freedom

ISU Follows American Association of University Professors’ guidelines: “Teachers are entitled to freedom in the classroom in discussing their subject, but they should be careful not to introduce into their teaching controversial matter which has no relation to their subject.” For complete guidelines, see <http://www.aaup.org/AAUP/pubsres/policydocs/contents/1940statement.htm>

Required Materials:

By the second class, you will be expected to have the following:

Academic Reading: reading and writing in the disciplines, second edition, ed. Janet Giltrow (Abbreviation: AR)

Access to a photocopy machine or other means of making copies of your drafts

Two folders for keeping and handing in work

⁶ Fulfills FS Objective 5.

An active E-mail account

Course Calendar:⁷

Here is the outline for the structure of the course. **KEEP THIS SCHEDULE**, as it contains all assignments for the semester. I reserve the right to make necessary changes and reschedule readings and activities, but by and large this is how the course will proceed:

1/7 M: Intro to class, Discuss syllabus, Questions about ENG 305, Course Business.

GOALS: Begin to think critically about topics for the course, provide contexts for writing in the course

ASSIGN: 1-2 page short assignment: What constitutes “academic writing”? Please type this

1/9 W: Discuss responses in small groups, then open up discussion to the whole class. Discuss what academic discourse entails. Take care of final course business and syllabus questions.

GOALS: Practice critical reading, begin to think about the theme of the course.

ASSIGN: Read Benedict Anderson’s essay (available on Blackboard)

Unit 1: The Framed Argument

1/11 F: Establish writing groups, schedule group discussions, talk about writing priorities, practice workshop

GOALS: Introduce groups, practice workshopping skills, introduce ideas in writing that will carry through the semester, learn about the Rhetorical Analysis assignment

ASSIGN: Read Chavez in *AR*, write a Rhetorical Analysis, and think about your first draft of the Framed Argument

1/14 M: **Martin Luther King Day; class canceled**

1/16 W: Discuss Anderson

GOALS: practice critical reading, think about framing as a technique

1/18 F: Discuss Chavez

GOALS: practice critical reading, think about framing as a technique

ASSIGN: first draft of the Framed Argument

1/21 M: Workshop Framed Argument

GOALS: for authors--practice selecting and focusing the purpose of the essay; come to the workshop with specific concerns. For readers--practice offering concrete positive response, explaining perception of the author’s purpose/audience, clarifying the frame and raising questions about the essay--opening up possible options for revision.

ASSIGN: Englund in *AR*

1/23 W: Workshop Framed Argument

GOALS: see 1/21

1/25 F: **Paper Meetings**

1/28 M: Discuss Englund, discuss ideas on how (at this point) you might re-think your framed argument in terms of your reading of Englund

GOALS: How do these writers help you w/ your argument? Think about revision

1/30 W: Workshop the 2nd draft of the Framed Argument

⁷ I include goals here to demonstrate to the students that everything they do in the class builds and works towards the successful completion of the final project and the fulfillment of the learning objectives. Thus, each class session meets at least one of the FS Learning Objectives for Composition, and many classes meet more than one objective.

GOALS: for author--to have revised with a purpose and discuss nature of those revisions. for readers--to discuss with author if revisions have helped achieve purpose and generate ideas for future revisions

2/1 F: Workshop 2nd draft
GOALS: see 1/30

2/4 M: Introduce Unit 2, Evaluate Unit 1 Discuss the differences between a Question/Issue/Topic, and revisit the Composition pyramid.
GOALS: How does the class feel about the progression of the course? Re-evaluate objectives, begin to think about possible questions for research. Push into Unit 2, start thinking about research. Focus on specific stages of Comp. Pyramid to develop writing skills, prepare for Unit 2's writing assignment.
ASSIGN: read Amit-Talai in *AR*

Unit 2: The Researched Argument

2/6 W: **PORTFOLIO 1 DUE**

Discuss Amit-Talai

GOALS: Critical Reading and thinking

ASSIGN: Read article by Kabeer in *AR* and write a rhetorical analysis.

2/8 F: Library research – meet in Room 229 on the second floor of the library.
GOALS: Gain library research skills
ASSIGN: Article by Verkuyten, et. al.

2/11 M: Discuss Kabeer
GOALS: Critical reading/thinking, especially with regards to use of evidence and discussion of themes.
ASSIGN: Brent Handout, 1-page response: What is Rogerian Argument? How might it help your argument (or how might it weaken your argument)?

2/13 W: Discuss Verkuyten, et. al.
GOALS: see 2/11

2/15 F: 2 models of argument sequence: Courtroom and Rogerian
GOALS: think about counter-arguments, learn to anticipate and refute counter-arguments. Think about evidence--what role does evidence play in the argument?
ASSIGN: Questions/issues for the second paper.

2/18 M: Discuss Questions in groups, then open it to the whole class. Discuss sources for papers.
GOALS: Fruitful research strategies, discuss question/issue/topic differences, establish criteria for revising research questions.
ASSIGN: Revise questions, and think about issues for debate in your groups,

2/20 W: Discuss revisions of questions, prepare for the debate
GOALS: Continue to develop criteria for good research questions, gain experience in preparing an argument and anticipating counter-arguments

2/22 F: Courtroom debate
GOAL: Dramatize 2 distinctly different modes of argument

2/25 M: Rogerian debate
GOAL: Dramatize 2 distinctly different modes of argument
ASSIGN: Debate analysis

2/27 W: Discuss debates in groups, have each group report back to class--what worked, what didn't

GOALS: Think critically about both types of debate, how they may be used to strengthen an argument
ASSIGN: Draft outlines

2/29 F: Discuss draft outlines, stress composition pyramid priorities, finish discussing Unit 2 texts--put them in play with each other, Source analysis.

GOALS: Further push our thinking on the theme of the course. Prepare to workshop drafts

3/3 M: Workshop Researched Argument

GOALS: for authors--defining the issue and what's at stake. Explaining the main path of the argument. Laying out the different voices or positions in tension. For readers--helping authors focus their argument, and use sufficient and appropriate evidence to support points

3/5 W: Workshop framed argument

GOALS: see 3/3

3/7 F: **Paper meetings**

3/10 - 3/14: **Spring Break; class canceled**

3/17 M: Workshop 2nd draft

GOALS: for author--to have revised with a purpose and discuss nature of those revisions. for readers--to discuss with author if revisions have helped achieve purpose and generate ideas for future revisions

3/19 W: Workshop 2nd draft

GOALS: see 3/17

3/21 F: Style Workshops, grammar as needed, good transitions--essentially a "flex" day to address whatever concerns I see in the upper-level areas of the composition pyramid

GOALS: polish the draft, call attention to upper-level points of the pyramid

Unit 3: The Argument from Original Research

3/24 M: **PORTFOLIO 2 DUE**

Discuss research methods for the third essay.

GOALS: Explain how to develop and sequence for interviews and surveys, begin thinking about Unit 3's main assignment.

3/26 W: Introduce research proposals,

GOALS: To begin to plan for the researched argument

ASSIGN: Research proposals

3/28 F: Library research – meet in Room 229 on the second floor of the library.

GOALS: Refine research tools, narrow down topic

ASSIGN: Read article by Cunningham in *AR* (and write a rhetorical analysis on either Cunningham or Levi and Olson).

3/31 M: Discuss Research proposals

GOALS: see 3/28

ASSIGN: Read article by Levi and Olson in *AR* and write a rhetorical analysis (if you didn't for Cunningham)

4/2 W: Discuss Cunningham--how does he enter a conversation with other writers we have read? How does he use research to support his claims?

GOALS: Critical reading/thinking

4/4 F: Discuss Levi and Olson. Put them in dialogue with the other writers we've talked about --same questions as before. Also, what do you make of their rhetorical strategies? What can you say about *how* they write, and how they go about performing research? How do they use research to make their points?
GOALS: Critical reading/thinking

4/7 M: Workshop Argument from Original Research
GOALS: for authors--is the issue clear? Is the organization of the argument appropriate given your objectives? for readers--is there a clear research question that motivates this research?

4/9 W: Workshop Argument from Original Research
GOALS: see 4/7

4/11 F: Discuss analysis and quotation readings, groupwork focusing on incorporation of evidence in unit's readings and drafts--"Flex Day" to continue workshopping as needed, or address other concerns.
GOALS: Develop argument through better use of evidence

4/14 M: Workshop 2nd draft
GOALS: for author--to have revised with a purpose and discuss nature of those revisions. for readers--to discuss with author if revisions have helped achieve purpose and generate ideas for future revisions.

4/16 W: Workshop 2nd draft
GOALS: see 4/14

4/18 F: **Paper Meetings**

4/21 M: Presentations of Original Research

4/23 W: Presentations of Original Research

4/25 F: Presentations of Original Research

5/2 F: FINAL PORTFOLIO DUE AT FINAL EXAM, 10:00 AM in Root A113