

University Writing
WRIT 1301, section 40 – Spring 2012
University of Minnesota, Twin Cities
4 credits

Instructor: Andrew Marzoni

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Classroom: Amundson 158

Time: MWF 1:25pm – 2:15pm

Office: 150 Williamson

Office hours: MWF 2:30pm-3:30pm (and by appointment)

Course Description

Writing is no simple task—if it were, it is doubtful that the University of Minnesota would require all undergraduates to pass a class solely dedicated to writing prior to graduation. Regardless of whether your major is in the sciences or the humanities, you will have to communicate clearly in writing in most, if not all, of your college classes (not to mention, “the real world,” whatever that is) and, more often than not, your abilities as a student (also: human, applicant, employee, citizen, etc.) will be primarily judged on the extent to which you do so. While the process and content of the course may not be so simple, our goals are: each student will produce, over the course of the semester, twenty to twenty-five pages of polished academic prose.

It is no secret that many people despise the task of writing, and I suspect that some of those people are here in this classroom right now, reading these very words. That is fine—it is great, actually: my hope is that by the end of the semester, you will come to hate writing less, or at the very least, learn to write more with more clarity, competence, and ease than you were previously able. To those of you that approach the task of writing with less displeasure, or in fact, feelings outright positive: excellent, and I hope this class will give you the tools you need to improve your skills and come to enjoy the writing process even more.

We will cover a lot of topics in this class (proper use of the English language, close reading, essay structure, thesis & argument development, research methods, revision, editing, etc.), and we will be moving at a fast pace. I have chosen many of the course readings fully aware that—in fact, because—they are difficult: this is because in the course of doing research (in this class and beyond) you will be required to demonstrate comprehension of academic writing that is often very difficult because (a) the ideas are sophisticated and/or (b) it is written in some sort of technical or disciplinary language with which you are not acquainted. By reading and discussing texts like this in class, you will be better equipped to approach difficult texts when you are required to read them on your own—which, as I said, you will.

All of this to say: we will still have fun in this course. Quite a bit, I think: we will watch some films/videos, read some texts from popular sources, and spend a good amount of time thinking about contemporary cultural issues that are very significant to all of us (the process of writing and its relation to the media, the Internet, popular culture, politics, “America,” the university-as-institution, etc.). We will have discussions which, I think, will ultimately aid you in developing your voice as a writer. I just do not want to let my casual disposition and generally positive demeanor mislead you into thinking that this will be an “easy” course. It will definitely require some work, as the following pages of this syllabus indicate.

WRIT 1301 Overview

I quote the following from the Department of Writing Studies:

“Through frequent practice and study of writing, WRIT 1301 introduces students to typical university writing practices, including an emphasis on developing well-researched, properly cited papers. WRIT 1301 fulfills the first-year writing requirement.

Activities include but are not limited to: introduction to academic genres of reading and writing; critical reading and analysis of writing for rhetorical principles of audience, purpose, and argumentative strategies; emphasis on performing research with electronic and print library; and sequenced readings and writing, with a researched paper as major assignment.

Members of the class will practice using writing to develop, refine, and communicate ideas in academic contexts. Students should expect to write formally and informally, produce drafts, read and respond to each other’s drafts, and revise, edit, and proofread. In addition students will share their writing with others in the class, receive responses from others, and read and respond carefully to the work of others.

All of this means that the class is structured around writing activities, discussion of reading and writing, and group work of various kinds. Students need to be active participants in this course, and help insure the success of the course for all by making positive contributions to activities, assignments, and discussion.”

Course objectives

Again, from the Department of Writing Studies:

“At the successful conclusion of WRIT 1301, students will learn to:

Develop a process of writing

- control prewriting and planning strategies to arrive at a focused topic
- produce an outline or prospectus for a researched paper
- craft thesis statements that indicate a clear position on a topic and tie the paper together
- develop a topic through clearly structured paragraphs and the whole paper so that ideas are fully explained, assertions are backed up, supporting evidence is sufficient and claims are credible
- through the sequence of assignments, develop a body of knowledge and growing perspective on a topic

Explore diverse contexts and styles of reading and writing

- communicate their ideas and those of others to specific audiences
- write in appropriate academic genres and computer media to communicate with different audiences
- make choices in their own writing and articulate other options

Practice disciplines of research and study

- identify an author’s audience, purpose, argument, and assumptions (i.e., critical reading) in an analysis paper or class discussion

- locate and evaluate relevant scholarly and popular sources on a research topic using library resources
- properly and ethically use MLA or APA documentation format for in-text and external bibliographic citations of scholarly, popular, and electronic sources
- consistently follow standards of written, edited English”

Texts

The following texts are required for the course, and are available for purchase at the University of Minnesota Bookstore in Coffman Union:

Baudrillard, Jean. *America*. Trans. Chris Turner. New York: Verso, 1989. ISBN: 0-860-919781.

Hacker, Diana. *A Pocket Style Manual*. 5th edition. Boston: Bedford/St. Martin's, 2010. ISBN: 0-312-66480X.

All additional readings will be posted as PDFs or web links on the course Moodle site. Students should expect to spend some money photocopying or printing drafts and additional readings.

Workload

Students can expect to spend an average of eight hours per week on this course outside of class time. Expect at least 50 pages of reading most weeks, but keep in mind that the reading load will fluctuate from week to week.

Course Schedule

(Course schedule is subject to change. NB: All readings should be completed *before* the class for which they are assigned)

Week 1

Wednesday, January 18

Introductions, discuss syllabus

Friday, January 20

Clarity & Grammar: Read Diana Hacker, *A Pocket Style Manual*, pp. 1-56

Week 2

Monday, January 23

Punctuation & Mechanics: Read Hacker, pp. 57-90

Wednesday, January 25

Assignments & Reading: Read Harvard Writing Center, “How to Read an Assignment,” “Moving from Assignment to Topic,” “How to Do a Close Reading”:

<http://isites.harvard.edu/icb/icb.do?keyword=k33202&pageid=icb.page143936> (link on Moodle)

Discuss Annotated Texts

Friday, January 27

Read selections from Raymond Williams, *Keywords: A Vocabulary of Culture and Society*: Introduction, “Culture,” “Humanity” (PDF on Moodle)

Discuss Assignment #1

Introduce Oxford English Dictionary (online)

*Week 3***Monday, January 30**

Read selections from Williams: “Man,” “Modern,” “Nature,” “Society,” “Work”

Annotated Text #1 due

Wednesday, February 1

MLA Style: Read Hacker, pp. 119-154

Friday, February 3

Editing: Read Harvard Writing Center, “Editing the Essay, Part 1,” “Editing the Essay, Part 2,” and “Tips on Grammar, Punctuation, and Style”

Discuss peer review process, form groups

Rough draft of Assignment #1 due

*Week 4***Monday, February 6**

Peer review

Wednesday, February 8

Read David Foster Wallace, “Authority and American Usage,” pp. 66-99 (PDF on Moodle)

Friday, February 10

Read Wallace, pp. 99-127

Annotated Text #2 due

*Week 5***Monday, February 13**

In-class Activity: Deconstructing Idioms with Flula Borg.

Final draft of Assignment #1 due

Wednesday, February 15

Read Roland Barthes, “Toys” (PDF on Moodle)

Discuss Assignment #2

Annotated Text #3 due

Friday, February 17

The Essay: Read Harvard Writing Center, “Overview of the Academic Essay,” “Essay Structure,” “Developing a Thesis,” “Beginning the Academic Essay”

*Week 6***Monday, February 20**

The Essay: Read Harvard Writing Center, “Outlining,” “Counterargument,” “Summary,” “Topic Sentences and Signposting”

Wednesday, February 22

The Essay: Read Harvard Writing Center, “Transitioning,” “Conclusions,”
“Revising the Draft”

Rough draft of Assignment #2 due

Friday, February 24

Peer review

Schedule conferences

Week 7

Student conferences: No Class

Begin reading Jean Baudrillard, *America*

Revised draft of Assignment #2 due at conferences

Week 8

Monday, March 5

Read Baudrillard, pp. 1-73

Wednesday, March 7

Read Baudrillard, pp. 75-105

Friday, March 9

Read Baudrillard, pp. 107-128

Final draft of Assignment #2 due

Week 9

Spring Break: No class

Week 10

Monday, March 19

Research: Read Hacker, pp. 91-119

Intro to Library Research 1

Discuss Assignment #3

Wednesday, March 21

Intro to Library Research 2

Bring laptops to class today!

Friday, March 23

Workshop proposals

Proposal due

Week 11

Monday, March 26

Research: Read & discuss sample research papers in class

Annotated Bibliography due

Wednesday, March 28

Read W.K. Wimsatt & Monroe C. Beardsley, “The Intentional Fallacy” (link on Moodle)

Friday, March 30

Library research day: No class

Week 12

Monday, April 2

Reading/writing day: No class

Wednesday, April 4

Read Richard Beck, “5.4: Pitchfork, 1995-Present” (PDF on Moodle)

Annotated Text #4 due

Rough draft of Assignment #3 due

Friday, April 6

Peer review

Week 13

Monday, April 9

Read Susan Sontag, “Fascinating Fascism,” pp. 73-98 (PDF on Moodle)

Wednesday, April 11

Read Sontag, pp. 98-105

Schedule presentations

Annotated Text #5 due

Friday, April 13

Student presentations

Week 14

Monday, April 16

Student presentations

Wednesday, April 18

Student presentations

Friday, April 20

Student presentations

Discuss Assignment #4

Final draft of Assignment #3 due

Week 15

Monday, April 23

The Editorial: Read William Deresiewicz, “Generation Sell” (link on Moodle)

Wednesday, April 25

The Editorial: Read & discuss *The Minnesota Daily* in class – please bring a copy of the *Daily* to class!

Rough draft of Assignment #4 due

Friday, April 27

Peer review

Week 16

Monday, April 30

Screening, *F for Fake*, dir. Orson Welles

Wednesday, May 2Screening, *F for Fake*, dir. Orson Welles**Friday, May 4**

Last day of class

We will fill out evaluation forms and party. Bring snacks!!!

Final draft of Assignment #4 due

NB: There is no final exam for this course.

*Course Policies***Assignments and Grades**

Assignment #1 (3-5 pp.)	10%	
Assignment #2 (6-8 pp.)	20%	
Assignment #3 (8-10 pp.)	35%	(includes final draft: 20%, proposal: 5%, annotated bibliography: 5%, presentation: 5%)
Assignment #4 (4-6 pp.)	15%	
Class participation (includes in-class writing)	10%	
Annotated Texts	10%	

NB: Guidelines for written assignments will be distributed over the course of the semester. Please see course calendar for due dates.

- You must turn in all required drafts and revisions. If you do not, you will receive an “F” for that assignment.
- Late assignments will lose one letter grade for every day (i.e. 24 hour period) they are turned in late.
- Keep copies of all your work in a folder dedicated exclusively to this course; back up your work on your computer in case assignments get lost.
- Students can expect assignments returned to them within one week’s time.

The grading policy in this course conforms to CLA guidelines. Therefore a “C” is equivalent to basic fulfillment of requirements; to achieve a grade higher than a “C” a student must perform beyond the basic requirements. Please keep the following scale and criteria in mind:

Grading Scale	A	100 to 93%	A-	92 to 90%	
B+	89 to 87%	B	86 to 83%	B-	82 to 80%
C+	79 to 77%	C	76 to 73%	C-	72 to 70%
D	69 to 60%	F	59 to 0%		

The University utilizes plus and minus grading on a 4.000 cumulative grade point scale in accordance with the following:

- A 4.000 - Represents achievement that is outstanding relative to the level necessary to meet course requirements
- A- 3.667
- B+ 3.333
- B 3.000 - Represents achievement that is significantly above the level necessary to meet course requirements
- B- 2.667
- C+ 2.333
- C 2.000 - Represents achievement that meets the course requirements in every respect
- C- 1.667
- D+ 1.333
- D 1.000 - Represents achievement that is worthy of credit even though it fails to meet fully the course requirements

For additional information, please refer to:

<http://policy.umn.edu/Policies/Education/Education/GRADINGTRANSCRIPTS.html>.

Extra Credit

Does not exist in this class.

Moodle

The course website can be accessed at <https://moodle2.umn.edu> (or, alternately, through the myU homepage, under the “my Courses” tab). I encourage all students to check this website frequently, as additional course readings, handouts, links, and other materials will be posted here.

Attendance Policy

As discussion is an enormous part of this class, attendance at all class meetings and conferences is mandatory. More than three unexcused absences will lower your grade for the course by half a letter (i.e. A- → B+).

Also, don't be late to class.

Use of Personal Electronic Devices in the Classroom

Mobile phones should always be off in class. If it rings, I'll answer it.

Occasionally, I will allow students to use laptops in class. If I decide to allow such a thing, I will notify you well in advance. If I haven't done such a thing, keep it off.

University Policies

Incompletes

A grade of incomplete ("I") is given only in a genuine emergency, and generally only for work which is due during the last two weeks of the course. The student must make arrangements with the instructor for an incomplete before the last day of class.

Student Conduct Code

The University seeks an environment that promotes academic achievement and integrity, that is protective of free inquiry, and that serves the educational mission of the University. Similarly, the University seeks a community that is free from violence, threats, and intimidation; that is respectful of the rights, opportunities, and welfare of students, faculty, staff, and guests of the University; and that does not threaten the physical or mental health or safety of members of the University community.

As a student at the University you are expected adhere to Board of Regents Policy: *Student Conduct Code*. To review the Student Conduct Code, please see:

http://www1.umn.edu/regents/policies/academic/Student_Conduct_Code.html.

Note that the conduct code specifically addresses disruptive classroom conduct, which means "engaging in behavior that substantially or repeatedly interrupts either the instructor's ability to teach or student learning. The classroom extends to any setting where a student is engaged in work toward academic credit or satisfaction of program-based requirements or related activities."

Scholastic Dishonesty

You are expected to do your own academic work and cite sources as necessary. Failing to do so is scholastic dishonesty. Scholastic dishonesty means plagiarizing; cheating on assignments or examinations; engaging in unauthorized collaboration on academic work; taking, acquiring, or using test materials without faculty permission; submitting false or incomplete records of academic achievement; acting alone or in cooperation with another to falsify records or to obtain dishonestly grades, honors, awards, or professional endorsement; altering, forging, or misusing a University academic record; or fabricating or falsifying data, research procedures, or data analysis. (Student Conduct Code:

http://www1.umn.edu/regents/policies/academic/Student_Conduct_Code.html) If it is determined that a student has cheated, he or she may be given an "F" or an "N" for the course, and may face additional sanctions from the University. For additional information, please see:

<http://policy.umn.edu/Policies/Education/Education/INSTRUCTORRESP.html>.

The Office for Student Conduct and Academic Integrity has compiled a useful list of Frequently Asked Questions pertaining to scholastic dishonesty:

<http://www1.umn.edu/oscai/integrity/student/index.html>.

If you have additional questions, please clarify with your instructor for the course. Your instructor can respond to your specific questions regarding what would constitute scholastic dishonesty in the context of a particular class-e.g., whether collaboration on assignments is permitted, requirements and methods for citing sources, if electronic aids are permitted or prohibited during an exam.

Plagiarism, representing someone else's intellectual work as your own, will result in a grade of F for the assignment, and may result in a grade of F for the course. Plagiarism can include submitting a paper:

- written by means of inappropriate collaboration;
- written by you for another course, submitted without the permission of both instructors;
- purchased, downloaded, or cut and pasted from the Internet;
- or that fails to properly acknowledge its sources through standard citations.

Remember: if you found it on Google, I can too!!!

Appropriate Student Use of Class Notes

Taking notes is a means of recording information but more importantly of personally absorbing and integrating the educational experience. However, broadly disseminating class notes beyond the classroom community or accepting compensation for taking and distributing classroom notes undermines instructor interests in their intellectual work product while not substantially furthering instructor and student interests in effective learning. Such actions violate shared norms and standards of the academic community. For additional information, please see:

<http://policy.umn.edu/Policies/Education/Education/CLASSNOTESSTUDENTS.html>.

Sexual Harassment

“Sexual harassment” means unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and/or other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature. Such conduct has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with an individual's work or academic performance or creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive working or academic environment in any University activity or program. Such behavior is not acceptable in the University setting. For additional information, please consult Board of Regents Policy:

<http://www1.umn.edu/regents/policies/humanresources/SexHarassment.html>.

Equity, Diversity, Equal Opportunity, and Affirmative Action

The University will provide equal access to and opportunity in its programs and facilities, without regard to race, color, creed, religion, national origin, gender, age, marital status, disability, public assistance status, veteran status, sexual orientation, gender identity, or gender expression. For more information, please consult Board of Regents Policy:

http://www1.umn.edu/regents/policies/administrative/Equity_Diversity_EO_AA.html.

Disability Accommodations

The University is committed to providing quality education to all students regardless of ability. Determining appropriate disability accommodations is a collaborative process. You as a student must register with Disability Services and provide documentation of your disability. The course instructor must provide information regarding a course's content, methods, and essential components. The combination of this information will be used by Disability Services to determine appropriate accommodations for a particular student in a particular course. For more information, please reference Disability Services:

<http://ds.umn.edu/Students/index.html>.

Mental Health Services

As a student you may experience a range of issues that can cause barriers to learning, such as strained relationships, increased anxiety, alcohol/drug problems, feeling down, difficulty concentrating and/or lack of motivation. These mental health concerns or stressful events may lead to diminished academic performance and may reduce your ability to participate in daily activities. University of Minnesota services are available to assist you. You can learn more about the broad range of confidential mental health services available on campus via the Student Mental Health Website: <http://www.mentalhealth.umn.edu>.

Academic Freedom and Responsibility

Academic freedom is a cornerstone of the University. Within the scope and content of the course as defined by the instructor, it includes the freedom to discuss relevant matters in the classroom. Along with this freedom comes responsibility. Students are encouraged to develop the capacity for critical judgment and to engage in a sustained and independent search for truth. Students are free to take reasoned exception to the views offered in any course of study and to reserve judgment about matters of opinion, but they are responsible for learning the content of any course of study for which they are enrolled.* Reports of concerns about academic freedom are taken seriously, and there are individuals and offices available for help. Contact the instructor, the Department Chair, your adviser, the associate dean of the college, or the Vice Provost for Faculty and Academic Affairs in the Office of the Provost.

** Language adapted from the American Association of University Professors "Joint Statement on Rights and Freedoms of Students."*

Student Writing Support

Students can get one-to-one-consultations on any course paper or writing project at Student Writing Support. Student Writing Support has several campus locations, including the main location in 15 Nicholson Hall. See <http://writing.umn.edu/sws/index.htm> for details about locations, appointments, and online consultations.