RHET 322
Writing in the Social Sciences

PREREQUISITES: RHET 201 or equivalent.

CATALOG DESCRIPTION
This course focuses on writing in the student's discipline. Particular attention is paid to the conventions of professional writing and citation, as well as a variety of approaches to delivering discipline-specific information to diverse audiences. Also included are advanced research, public writing and public presentations.

COURSE DESCRIPTION
The course aims to help students transfer the writing and critical thinking skills acquired in the 100-level courses to discipline-specific academic and public writing in the humanities and social sciences. The course is theme-based but each student will approach the theme from a perspective appropriate to his/her major discipline, and will be expected to abide by the style and conventions of the particular discipline.

Course readings and discussions may be enhanced by lectures from scholars and students, films or field trips.

Social science students will be familiarized with the rigors and ethics of social research, they will learn to read and appraise professional and public writing, and they will learn to conduct research and present their findings and views, both orally and in written form, with the purposes of exploring social phenomena, adding valuable research to the existing body of knowledge, and stimulating public interest and action.

Humanities students will learn to analyze, critique and produce writing on specific topics related to the course theme in the various genres related to their particular field of major. Students majoring in creative humanities (e.g. art, theater) will be encouraged to explore their subjects from a creative perspective, and where appropriate for the assignment, may submit creative work.

Since an essential part of successful professional communications is receiving feedback and support from colleagues, a key component of the course is formally teaming students and requiring, at minimum, a classroom presentation of projects.
There will be an opportunity for students in the same discipline to work collaboratively.

A service learning requirement aims to develop a sense of social responsibility for disseminating valuable knowledge, raising awareness of a pressing social issue and fostering public activism.

OUTCOMES

To fulfill the requirements of RHET 322, students should demonstrate the ability to:

- Explain how context, audience and purpose interact in the reception and creation of various texts
- Apply the procedures, constraints and conventions of various genres in the humanities and social sciences
- Analyze, review and critique professional writing in the humanities and social sciences
- Develop a range of discipline-specific rhetorical styles and strategies that help in writing audience- and context-appropriate documents
- Conduct academic research using varieties of print and electronic resources; use observation, survey or interview techniques to collect primary data (where appropriate)
- Apply ethical standards in employing human participants, reporting data and writing for public audiences
- Generate an article for potential publication, complete with prospectus, abstract and bibliography
- Employ citation styles appropriate to their disciplines/selected publication
- Function in collaborative team projects
- Deliver a focused and audience-sensitive oral presentation
- Engage in community service (where appropriate) to foster public awareness of a social issue

ASSIGNMENTS

Overview
Course requirements will include a journal article review, a research proposal or prospectus, a complete research paper with abstract and annotated bibliography, an oral presentation and a group project. In addition to these core assignments, students will be required to keep research journals and complete in-class writing tasks. Other assignments, such as abstracts, reviews, peer critiques or other writing tasks will be varied and determined by the instructor as needed for the thematic course focus.
Assignment 1: Analysis of Academic Publications
Objectives:
• Become familiar with the professional print and electronic journals in the field of major
• become acquainted with the mission, layout, conventions, publication style and audience of an academic periodical in a specific field of humanities or social sciences
• determine the rhetorical strategies, style, conventions and requirements of a particular academic genre in a HU/SS field
• understand how writers use genre expectations to make their rhetoric persuasive.

Description:
The students will compile a list of academic periodicals in their field of major, analyze the publication features of a journal issue, and review an article in an academic journal (related to the course theme), examining the writing conventions of the discipline, the research methods, the target audience, as well as message persuasiveness and appeal (2-3 pgs).

Assignment 2: Prospectus or Proposal Writing
Objectives:
• determine goals and feasibility of research topic
• formulate a strategy for performing research
• demonstrate competence and preparation to complete the proposed research
• generate a professional document that contextualizes the research issue, describes the nature of the research, and seeks approval for possible use of human subjects

Description:
As preparatory work for the research paper, students will identify and outline their research goals and methodology. The proposal should include a work plan, a preliminary review of the literature, and a working bibliography. It may also include drafts of surveys, interview questions, or observation notes for original field work.

Assignment 3: Academic Paper (8 sources minimum)
Objectives:
• develop advanced research techniques in the discipline, including field work where appropriate
• enhance self-assessment and seek insightful peer critique
• collect, record and interpret information from various types of primary and secondary sources
• assess methods of enquiry and identify limitations of evidence
• demonstrate skills of analysis, synthesis and evaluation
• generate a paper that follows the conventions of scholarly publications.
Description:
Students are required to write a scholarly paper that explores the course’s theme from an original perspective and is directly related to their field of study.

Students can choose from three possible approaches, a critical/insightful analysis of causes and/or effects of a social phenomenon, a proposed solution for a social problem, or a position paper on a relevant recent issue. Students in humanities also have the option of doing analytical critique from a literary or artistic perspective.

Assignment 4: Oral Presentations
Objectives:
- produce a public presentation that requires research, clear organization and use of multi-media
- effectively reach a general audience who may or may not be specialists in the same field of study

Description:
Students will prepare a presentation on an aspect of their research findings to a public audience (the class or to the public at large). This may take the form of a public speech, lecture, conference, and will use audio/visual multi-media, such as slide shows, PowerPoint presentations, creative performances or exhibits.

Assignment 5: Public Writing
Objectives:
- generate an article for potential publication
- select a mass reader publication suitable for the nature of one’s research
- use strategies of persuasion and appeal appropriate to the publication’s audience
- reach an audience beyond the academic community
- demonstrate responsibility and ethical commitment in disseminating knowledge for a public audience

Description:
Students will be required to rewrite their research paper for a wider, non-specialized audience modifying the organization, style and rhetorical features of their research to suit the genre of public writing. They may rewrite their work as an editorial for a print or online newsletter, newspaper or magazine.

Assignment 6: Group Service-Learning Project
Objectives:
- Understand how knowledge can instigate positive change in a community
- Acquire and demonstrate teamwork strategies
- Organize and launch a group campaign that aims to raise awareness of a social issue
- Take part in and learn to appreciate community service
Description:
Students will be required to put the knowledge they have explored and created throughout the semester to use by engaging in a service learning project. In groups they will organize awareness-raising campaigns that employ various methods of attraction (posters, workshops, flyers, booths, etc) to help educate the community (AUC or beyond) about a social issue.

GRADE DISTRIBUTION

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Journal Analysis</td>
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<tr>
<td>Presentation/article analysis</td>
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<tr>
<td>Proposal/prospectus</td>
<td>10%</td>
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<td>Academic paper</td>
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<td>Oral presentation</td>
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<td>Mass audience article</td>
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<td>Group Service-Learning Project</td>
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<td>Reflection and articulated learning</td>
<td>05%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Various written and oral tasks</td>
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Final grade cumulative.

RESOURCE LIST:

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>DATE</th>
<th>TOPICS</th>
<th>ASSIGNMENTS</th>
<th>READING</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Week 1</td>
<td>Introduction to course and theme. Discussion: How social sciences and humanities are related. How knowledge is constructed in the different disciplines Rhetoric in the disciplines</td>
<td>Syllabus and policies</td>
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<tr>
<td>Week 2</td>
<td>Discussion of theme</td>
<td>A reading on the theme - ch.1</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Finding scholarly journals. (visit to library?)</td>
<td>ch. 2 pp 30-34</td>
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<td>Analysis of Academic Publications</td>
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<td>Week 3</td>
<td>Group Presentations due- assign. #1.1</td>
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<td>Discussion of group findings</td>
<td>Ch. 18—institutional style</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Introduce research project Discussion of course theme from perspective of different disciplines</td>
<td>Ch. 2 p41 and sample paper 325-327</td>
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<td>Week 4</td>
<td>Conducting Research</td>
<td>Comparative Analysis Due – Assign #1.2</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Primary Sources</td>
<td>Ch. 4—interpreting documents</td>
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<td>Field work</td>
<td>Ch. 3—field research</td>
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<td>Week 5</td>
<td>Research Methods and Ethics and Interpretation Planning and organizing research Approval of Semester Research Topic--Conferences</td>
<td>Ch. 9--researching</td>
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<td>Week 6</td>
<td>Interviewing and citation. Proposals &amp; Prospectuses</td>
<td>Ch. 10-proposals</td>
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<td>Week 7</td>
<td>Class discussion of research to date Paraphrasing/notetaking/Abstract writing</td>
<td>Proposal/Prospectus Due – Assign #2</td>
<td>Chs. 5-8 as needed</td>
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<td>Week 8</td>
<td>Documentation styles</td>
<td>Abstract</td>
<td>Chs. 5-8 as needed</td>
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<td>Week 9</td>
<td>Bibliography</td>
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<td>Week 10</td>
<td>Draft Workshops Document Design</td>
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<td>Ch. 15—document design Ch. 16--graphics</td>
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<td>Week 11</td>
<td>Giving oral presentations Discussion of audience, context, purpose</td>
<td>Academic Paper Due – Assign #3</td>
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<td>Week 12</td>
<td>Analysis of General Audience Presentation</td>
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<td>Ch.17--presentations</td>
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<td>Week 13</td>
<td>Analysis of Institution or Organization for Purpose &amp; Context</td>
<td>Presentations due – Assign #4</td>
<td>Ch. 11 pp183-185, 189-190</td>
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<td>Week 14</td>
<td>Writing for Mass Media</td>
<td>Presentations due – Assign #4</td>
<td>Sample papers pp463-472</td>
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<td>Week 15</td>
<td>Discussion of Publication Specific Readings</td>
<td>Public Writing Due – Assign #5</td>
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<td>Week 16</td>
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