

Program in Writing and Rhetoric Stony Brook University
Spring 2015 Advanced Writing Courses

Grammar and Style for Writers

TBA/William Marderness

WRT 200.01/02

MWF 11:00 AM-11:53 AM/TuTh 11:30 AM-12:50 PM

Students will study the aspects of grammar that are most relevant to punctuation and to clear writing, including nouns, verbs, adjectives, adverbs, conjunctions, phrases, clauses, gerunds, participles, infinitives, and complete sentences. Students will also study prose style as a way of achieving rhetorical effectiveness through arranging and rearranging sentence elements. Students, through frequent writing, will learn to apply principles of clarity, concision, and coherence with more consciousness. Sentence imitation, sentence combining, and sentence invention techniques will be used to help students become more flexible in their syntactic fluidity. Several tests and three short papers.

International Literature: Writing the World

Rita Nezami

WRT 302.01

MW 4:00 PM-5:20 PM

This course invites students to develop their skills as writers by formulating various kinds of responses to literary texts by writers from throughout the world. By not limiting our readings to texts by writers living exclusively in the West and writing in English, we open ourselves to the possibilities of responding to the problem of being human in ways other than those conditioned by first-world assumptions formed by American and European culture, media, and politics. Readings will include Salman Rushdie's *Midnight's Children*; Tahar Ben Jelloun's *Leaving Tangier*; Laila Lalami's *Hope and Other Dangerous Pursuits*; and Arundhati Roy's *God of Small Things*. There will be three major textual analysis writing assignments.

Fiction Writing

Kevin Clouther

WRT 302.02

TuTh 11:30 AM-12:50 PM

In this course we will concentrate on the reading and writing of fiction; you will have the opportunity to improve your own craft, discuss your peers' short stories, and learn from contemporary masters such as Junot Díaz, Deborah Eisenberg, and George Saunders. In all of the work, we will examine together what makes a piece of writing worth reading—focusing on issues of voice, character, structure, conflict, rhythm, and syntax. You will be expected to participate actively, complete in-class writing assignments, and present your creative writing for workshop. Writing and thinking about writing is hard work, what Fitzgerald called "the moving about of great secret trunks." Come to this course ready to move.

Writing and War

Roger Thompson

WRT 302.03

TuTh 2:30 PM-3:50 PM

This course focuses on the complex relationship between language and armed conflict. By discussing recent writing about the Iraq War, with special focus on Iraq War memoirs, we will examine the interaction between rhetoric, war, and cultural concepts like justice, honesty, honor, and patriotism. Students will be required to write 2-3 response papers and a research paper.

Playwriting

Kenneth Weitzman

WRT 302.04

TuTh 10:00 AM-11:20 AM

This course teaches the fundamentals of the craft of playwriting -- structure, dialogue, conflict, dramatic action, and creating a world -- via focused, creative exercises and the writing of several short plays. Get rid of that inner censor, write a lot, and learn how dramatic writing works from the inside out. Our objectives for the semester will be to demonstrate knowledge of the fundamentals of the craft of playwriting, create and revise dramatic writing for the theatre, analyze existing and original dramatic writing, apply a model of constructive feedback, and to enjoy writing.

Writing for the New Media

Cynthia Davidson

WRT 302.05

TUTH 1:00 PM-2:20 PM

In this course we will explore online networked reading and writing practices. We will examine the social, cultural, educational, and ethical dimensions of digital texts. The topics we cover, the readings we do, and the discussions we have should help us to understand digital spaces as deeply rhetorical spaces, become more sophisticated navigators of the information available to us in digital spaces, and become more effective writers and communicators in print and digitally mediated spaces. Digitally mediated spaces to be explored may include, but are not limited to, blogging, YouTube, Facebook, Twitter, Second Life, networked video games, and Neal Stephenson's *Metaverse in Snow Crash*. Students will write reading responses and several shorter essays, and have the opportunity to engage a specific issue in depth through a final project with a multimodal component.

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The Personal Essay
WRT 303.01

Thomas Tousey
MWF 11:00 AM-11:53 AM

The personal essay is a form that has recently come back into fashion. In this class we will engage the form by writing our own personal essays as well as reading and responding to the work of writers who have come to define the genre: examples include Michel de Montaigne, Charles Lamb and E.B. White, as well as more contemporary writers such as Joan Didion and Scott Russell Sanders. We will explore the differences between shaping experience as truth in a personal essay or memoir and as a work of fiction. As a definition of personal essay evolves, we will consider whether personal writing and essay writing (or "essaying") have a place in academic writing. Students in this class will also be able to prepare a personal statement for their application for graduate or professional school.

The Personal Essay
WRT 303.02

Cathleen Rowley
MW 2:30 AM-3:50 AM

The personal essay has a long literary history and can take many different forms but always tells a story about its author in some way. This course will involve writing personal essays and examining the works of professional writers to use as examples and inspirations. We will read personal essays from the past from writers such as Virginia Woolf and Henry David Thoreau, and more recent examples from writers such as Joan Didion and Richard Rodriguez. We will also consider the new forms the genre of the personal essay has taken in the 21st century. Writing assignments will include journals, short essays, and a longer multimodal final project which will include a digital story. Students in this class will also have the opportunity to prepare a personal statement for their application for graduate or professional school.

The Personal Essay
WRT 303.04

Cynthia Davidson
TUTH 2:30 PM-3:50 PM

What is the role of personal vision in the University and in your life? This course will explore how you express and define yourself through composing processes. Almost every child loves to write, because children feel the power of creating an identity through writing, but many of us lose that feeling in school. In this course, we will explore the composing of ourselves and our stories in a variety of genres and media, including a digital autobiography or argument suitable for sharing on the Internet. Readings and viewings will include powerful pieces by both known and emerging writers and artists, including Tom Bissell, Cynthia Ozick, Joyce Carol Oates, and Zora Neale Hurston. We will try to be eclectic and look beyond the expected resources for inspiration. Assignments will include several essays and a final project including a multimodal presentation.

The Personal Essay
WRT 303.05

Marilyn Zucker
TUTH 5:30 PM-6:50 PM

Most people like to talk about themselves -- about their life experiences, their thinking, their likes and dislikes --to friends, to family and even to strangers. The personal essay gives written voice to those stories. Our course will engage students in the reading of autobiographic pieces by well-know writers and theoretical commentary on this currently popular literary genre. The readings will offer insights and techniques as to how to convey a sense of self in a written piece. We'll then use some of those insights and techniques to generate our own meaningful autobiographic essays. We'll read works by a variety of 20th Century writers, among them, Virginia Woolf, Paule Marshall, James Baldwin, Bob Dylan, Jeanette Winterson, and the Portuguese/American writer, Charles Reis Felix. Assignments will include reading responses, short autobiographic pieces, and a final, longer 'collage of self'. Students will also be able to prepare a personal statement for graduate or professional school applications.

Writing for Your Profession
WRT 304.02

Kevin Clouter
TUTH 1:00 PM-2:20 PM

In this course you will learn about types of documents, rhetorical principles, and composing practices necessary for writing effectively in and about professional contexts. Coursework emphasizes each student's career interests, but lessons also address a variety of general professional issues, including audience awareness, research methods, ethics, collaboration, and verbal and visual communication. You will complete the course with practical knowledge and experience in composing business letters, proposals, and professional reports. A creative, self-reflexive assignment also contextualizes each individual's professional aspirations within a bigger picture of his or her life and culture. You may sign up for a zero-credit addition to this class (WRT 458) to receive credit for fulfilling the "Speaking Effectively Before an Audience" requirement.

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Writing for the Health Professions
WRT 305.01

Robert Kaplan
MW 5:30 PM-6:50 PM

This course will enable students interested in a health care career to strengthen their critical writing skills. While learning to gather information and to apply ethical principles in a logical, persuasive fashion, students will explore and write about various types of evidence concerning the health care needs of different populations: a field research project on a health issue affecting a local target population of their choice, a critique of government documents that contain data on that issue and population, and a review of scholarly research on the same issue as it affects the larger national population represented by that local one. Writing assignments will include drafts and final versions of a research proposal, field research results, data analysis, literature review and a 20-30 page project incorporating all of the previous work conducted about that issue and population. Students will also write a reflective paper which can serve as the basis for a personal statement for medical or other health-related graduate school applications.

Advanced Analytic and Argumentative Writing
WRT 381.01

Robert Kaplan
MW 4:00 PM-5:20 PM

Argumentative writing involves making a claim and supporting it with specific, related points and appropriate evidence—in other words, it is thesis-driven writing. Whenever we don't quite like someone else's idea and we want him or her to come closer to ours, argumentative writing is the most efficient method for such persuasion, in whatever profession you're considering. This class, therefore, will focus on learning how to effectively utilize argumentative and counter-argumentative writing strategies. Students will explore an area of disciplinary interest to them through several stages—proposal, preliminary draft, multiple versions, literature review—culminating in a 20-30 page piece of writing in which they make a claim about a particular subject in that area of interest and support it with scholarly research and extensive elaboration. Also offered as EGL 381.

***All 300 level courses will fulfill the second half of the Writing Pre-Med/Pre-Health prerequisite.

***WRT 302 fulfills the University DEC G or SBC HFA+ requirement