

Program in Writing and Rhetoric Stony Brook University
Fall 2014 Advanced Writing Courses

Grammar and Style for Writers
WRT 200.02/01

William Marderness/MaryAnn Duffy
TUTH 11:30 AM-12:50 PM/TBA

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.

Rhetorical Traditions
WRT 302.01

Roger Thompson
MWF 2:30 PM-3:23 PM

This course is an introduction to the history of rhetoric that highlights its relationship to reading, writing, and speaking in modern contexts. Emphasis will be placed on defining rhetoric—its traditions, forms, and enduring realms of influence. The course provides a foundation in the principles of classical rhetoric that will be explored in order to understand their application to contemporary circumstances. Students will write and revise a series of short essays focused on the application of rhetorical theory to contemporary culture.

African American Rhetoric
WRT 302.02

Safet Dabovic
MW 7:00 PM-8:20 PM

This course is an overview of African American rhetoric from the Revolutionary War period to the present, exploring important themes, topics, argumentative strategies, and stylistic markers that African Americans developed in response to slavery, prejudice, and discrimination. Students will explore how the development of a public voice helped African Americans claim their right to citizenship and affirm their sense of black collective consciousness, which was rooted in their distinct culture, heritage, and memory. Students will analyze and evaluate various textual readings, including essays, slave narratives, speeches, poetry, and newspaper articles. Readings for this course will include works by David Walker, Frederick Douglass, Sojourner Truth, W.E.B. Du Bois, Booker T. Washington, Langston Hughes, Zora Neale Hurston, Malcolm X, Martin Luther King Jr., and Barack H. Obama.

Autobiography: Theory and Practice
WRT 302.03

Marilyn Zucker
MF 1:00 PM-2:20 PM

The major goal of this course is to give students experience with autobiographical writing. We will read and discuss various autobiographical texts (books, excerpts), read and discuss some aspects of autobiography theory (on, for example, the inter-related roles of memory, identity and writing) and engage in autobiographical practice, writing about our selves. Among the texts under study will be works by Jeanette WInterson, Virginia Woolf, Raymond Carver, Jamaica Kincaid, Roland Barthes and Bob Dylan. Students will write 3-4 short (3-4 page) papers and a collection of autobiographical pieces culminating in a 'collage of self'.

Creative Non-fiction
WRT 302.04

Jennifer Albanese
TUTH 2:30 PM-3:50 PM

In this course we will explore a series of different Creative Non-Fiction sub-genres, including memoir, biography, travel writing, and science writing. In each unit, students will read and explore a series of short essays and excerpts from larger texts in order to analyze and cultivate strategies for their own writing projects. In addition to published work, students will also be exposed to blogs and other Creative Non-Fictional media to consider future opportunities for public writing. Students will be required to write three papers over the course of the semester.

Environmental Writing
WRT 302.05

Cathleen Rowley
TUTH 5:30 PM-6:50 PM

In this course we will examine the different forms that environmental writing can take, whether it be observations of the environment, philosophical inquiries on the relation between society and environment, or persuasive pieces on environmental issues. We will read examples of environmental writing from the past and the present including such authors as Henry David Thoreau, Edward Abbey, Annie Dillard, and Wendell Berry. Writing assignments will include writing about the environment in journals, short essays, and a longer final project.

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The Personal Essay
WRT 303.01

Thomas Tousey
MWF 9:00 AM-9:53 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

Rita Nezami
MWF 11:00 AM-11:53 AM

Our search for personal meaning is precisely what generates our passion and curiosity for the subjects we research and write about,” writes Maria Torgovnik. She captures the essence of the personal essay, a form of creative nonfiction that incorporates fiction’s techniques to tell a story that is factually true. The personal essay often takes its point of departure from writers’ experiences, puzzlements, or conflicts: identity, serious illness, personal discovery, or the complexities of family conflict. The successful personal essay moves easily and with discipline among fact, reflection, analysis, speculation, and memory. Our readings will reveal how writers use their story to find meaning in untidy experience. We will closely examine the work of Jonathan Franzen, Judith Otriz Cofer, David Updike, Cynthia Ozick, David Foster Wallace. 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 303.03

Kristina Lucenko
TUTH 10:00 AM-11:20 AM

We all tell stories about ourselves—in conversations and interviews, visually through portraiture, or in written memoirs, diaries, and blogs. Phillip Lopate writes that “The hallmark of the personal essay is its intimacy. The writer seems to be speaking directly into your ear, confiding everything from gossip to wisdom.” In this writing-intensive course we will read essays on ambition, death, family, home, and love by both men and women, and consider the status of the personal essay as an ambiguous literary genre. We will read works by Michel de Montaigne, Mark Twain, James Baldwin, Joan Didion, and Lynda Barry, among others. In this class students will also be able to prepare a personal statement for their application for graduate or professional school.

The Personal Essay
WRT 303.04

Cynthia Davidson
TUTH 1:00 PM-2:20 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

Kevin Clouther
TUTH 2:30 PM-3:50 PM

In this course we will concentrate on the reading and writing of narrative non-fiction; you will have the opportunity to improve your own craft, discuss your peers’ personal essays, and learn from contemporary masters such as Joan Didion, John Jeremiah Sullivan, and David Foster Wallace. In all of the work, we will examine together what makes a piece of writing worth reading—focusing on issues of voice, structure, and language. You will be expected to participate actively, complete in-class writing assignments, and present your creative writing twice for workshop. You will submit at least twenty pages of writing—you may submit a personal statement for application for graduate school—and thoroughly revise one piece.

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Writing for Your Profession
WRT 304.01

Peter Khost
TUTH 4:00 PM-5:20 PM

Professionals of all kinds consistently attest to the significance of strong writing and communication skills in their field. In fact, a national study shows that about 70% of paid jobs involve writing. This is verified by data from a 2012 survey of over fifty employers of Stony Brook University graduates. So in this course students 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. Students complete the course with practical knowledge and experience in composing business letters, proposals, and various kinds of professional reports. A creative, self-reflexive assignment also contextualizes each individual's professional aspirations within a bigger picture of his/her life and culture.

Writing for the Health Professions
WRT 305.01

Robert Kaplan
MW 4:00 PM-5:20 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 Research Writing
WRT 380.01

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

Good research skills are critical to academic success. Most disciplines require writing based upon research, as arguments and explanations make little impact on audiences without effective supporting evidence, drawn from relevant scholarship on the subject. This involves knowing how to use appropriate databases, source materials, and composing processes, as well as negotiating the values, genres, and languages of the scholarly communities in which one is researching. In this course, students will learn fundamentals of research methods, practice these methods in a series of integrated research and writing assignments, and engage in critical reflection about research and writing. Students will focus on an area of disciplinary interest to them, and practice these essential research and writing skills through a series of projects: library assignments, annotated bibliography, literature review, I-Search composing, and presentation of results.

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

***WRT 302 satisfies the University DEC G requirement