

ENG 145
Fall
2010

Writing in the Academic Disciplines

Room: STV 0250 H

Times: Monday/Wednesday/Friday 10:00-10:50am

Instructor: Meghann Meeusen

Contact Information:

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I prefer email as the method to contact me with inquiries regarding class, and check for messages regularly. Please only use my private phone for dire emergencies and keep in mind I am not always available to answer.

Office Hours: Monday/Wednesday 11:00am-12:30pm or by appointment

Course

Text Requirements:

Materials:

1. *Emerging Scholars* (available at the bookstore)
2. Enrollment in CompClass (roughly \$18)
3. USB Drive and Headphones
4. Printing will be required for this class—you will need regular access to a printer or money on your Redbird Card to print in class

COURSE OVERVIEW

Students in ENG 145 will study the relationship between the conventions that govern writing in various broadly defined disciplinary groups; they will learn to recognize distinctions and affinities between groups of disciplines, and they will learn to analyze discourse conventions and use that knowledge in their writing. Building on both their existing knowledge of writing situations and research into specific writing situations and tasks, they will develop techniques for writing flexibly and effectively for different audiences, forums, and purposes. Through research and practice in a range of writing genres and situations they will develop their ability to master the discursive conventions of genres in their discipline.

As students write and revise papers for audiences in various academic disciplines, including their own, they will further develop the skills and strategies they will need when they write papers for other university courses, for purposes of citizenship in a democratic society, and for the profession(s) in which you work in the future. Students will study how language is used and knowledge is generated in various academic disciplines and fields of study, and write in styles suited to various academic disciplines, public forums, and professions in which you will participate in the future.

COURSE OBJECTIVES

- understand the relationship between the contexts of writing and the conventions governing writing in various broadly defined disciplinary groups;
- identify groups of disciplines as distinct from others;
- learn to analyze discourse conventions and use that knowledge in writing and spoken communication;
- create proficient texts according to conventions governing language use within groups of academic disciplines;
- understand the relationship between writing within academic discourse communities and writing within other social contexts, including the public and the professional;
- build on abilities developed in Composition and Critical Inquiry (English 101) and elsewhere, to consider genre conventions in order to create texts flexibly and effectively for different audiences, forums, and purposes;
- develop analytic, critical, and writing skills that will facilitate continuing mastery of discursive conventions or more specialized fields, such as academic majors or professions

COURSE CONTENT: The semester is broken into two major units as follows.

Professional Language and Culture Exploration: In the first half of the semester, students will consider a particular discipline by analyzing and researching the ways individuals in that field communicate with one another in a variety of ways. Students will complete interviews, observations and research into a particular field in order to gain a comprehensive understanding of the rules that govern both its written and verbal communication. The focus here is on identifying the genres of writing and speech that exist in a particular workplace, then consider carefully how these types of communication affect culture in that community in ways similar and different from other careers/fields/disciplines. To present this research and analysis, students will create a text or texts in a genre directly relevant to their individual discipline, producing a realistic example of a text in that genre which relays comprehensive information regarding the genres explicit to the field itself.

Entering Disciplinary Discourse: In the second half of the semester, students will take this examination one step further by analyzing documents published in their particular field, whether they be academic, creative or commercially oriented. Students will again analyze the features, conventions and expectations inherent to genre they have selected, and then produce a text that demonstrates a proficient example of it. Although there is flexibility in selecting the text to create, students must choose a genre that demonstrates the discourse of the field and is intended for publication. In-class discussion will focus on identifying conventions of individual discourses, considering audience for public or published works, developing an area of inquiry, utilizing academic databases, reading critical texts, creation of a thesis statement (when appropriate), techniques of interacting with discourse and research, writing style and genre argument structure. It is important to remember that just like the first semester project, each student will explore a unique genre, as every field and sub-field asks its writers to conform to specific individualized parameters.

FIELD/DISCIPLINE SELECTION

As one of the focuses of this class is to examine and break down the complex genres utilized by specific disciplinary fields, students will be expected to focus their study in a particular field/career for each of the major projects. However, students may choose any field they wish—and such a selection does not indicate any commitment to that field or even the requirement to focalize on a particular discipline for both projects. For example, undeclared majors can select any field which interests them, and if they wish, change to a new field for the second main project. The key in ENG 145 is to examine the **process** of investigating genres in a particular field. Successful students of ENG 145 should be able to apply this process to any field in the future, thus acquiring the skill to become a proficient writer and communicator in any discipline they encounter.

ATTENDANCE

As active participants in the process of writing studies, students must attend class every day. Students are allowed a maximum of three absences before penalization begins. For every absence after the third, irrespective of cause, the final grade will be penalized 3% of the final grade for each additional absence. If students miss more than 20% of class, they will fail the course (10 classes being just slightly more than 20%). To save time, students will take their own attendance via compclass, and are responsible for entering a code during class time to log presence. This code only works during class time, but the instructor still makes final markings and has administrative authority over the attendance tally. Any student caught being dishonest about online attendance tabulation will be penalized an additional 3% for each offense.

If a student must be absent, he/she is responsible for knowledge of all content missed during that class, including turning in assignments on their given due date. Please demonstrate professionalism by arriving to class on time. Any health conditions that prevent students from regular attendance should be discussed with the instructor at the beginning of the semester.

LATE WORK

I do not accept late work. Although I reserve the right to make exceptions to this policy, this is both rare and unlikely, and is only possible after a meeting with me. All assignments must be submitted online unless previous arrangements are made.

GRADING BREAKDOWN

93%-100% A
83%-92% B
73%-82% C
63%-72% D
62% F

ASSIGNMENT BREAKDOWN

Assignment	Weight	Due Date
Midterm Project	40%	October 11
Final Project	40%	November 19
Presentation	20%	December 6-8

ASSIGNMENT CONTENT

Midterm and Final Project Packets- each project packet constitutes 30% of the final grade

The semester will be broken into two units: “professional language and culture” and “entering disciplinary discourse”. For each unit, all assignments will be collected and graded on a singular due date, including homework and in-class assignments, the genre analysis document and the final project. Each major project will be broken down in the following manner:

“Project Lites”: Homework/In-Class Activities/Participation 15% of the final grade for each project packet

- **Requirement:** This section include all assignment completed in preparation for class (homework) and those assignments completed in class as part of an activity. **Expect that on most days, you will be responsible for completing an assignment and bringing it to class.** This category includes, but is not limited to readings, reflections, short essays, materials for class, drafts, proposals, etc.
- **Grading:** Project Lites will be evaluated based on participation, completeness, thoughtfulness and content.
- **Individual Due Dates:** Most homework assignments act as either preparation for a class activity/discussion or a “check in” of components of the major project. Thus, although these assignments are not graded until they are collected as part of the project packet, participation in class is often dependent upon having the daily homework. For this reason, failure to have completed a "project lite" assignment on the individual due day will result in a **10% deduction** from the cumulative project lite grade (which is the equivalent of 1% of the student’s final grade, not to exceed 10% per unit).
- **Submission:** All assignments will be submitted electronically through compclass. However, some assignments will also need to be printed and brought physically to class; thus, students will be required to have printing capabilities/resources.

Genre Analysis Documents (self created assessment tool) 5% of the final grade for each project packet

For each project, students will produce a text in a specific genre and therefore be responsible for researching and analyzing the elements of that genre. To demonstrate this, students will create

an assessment tool/text of their own design which outlines all components necessary to produce a proficient example of the genre they have chosen. Although this document will vary from project to project, in each case students will be expected to demonstrate in-depth understanding of the genre they have selected and be able to articulate what a successful text in that genre would look like. This self-created “rubric” will then be an integral part of assessing the student’s final project. Therefore, although it is worth less than the project itself, **a successful major project is contingent upon a thoughtful and thorough genre analysis document** and failure to meet this criteria will not only be reflected in the genre analysis grade, but in the major project grade as well.

Major Projects—20% of the final grade for each project packet

Final projects will typically involve various parts, including written and non-traditional elements. Please see project handouts for details. All written portions should be turned in electronically (or by hand in the case of some multimodal projects) on the assigned due date.

Professional Poster Presentation—20% of the final grade

After completing the professional language and culture study and discourse/publication projects, students should have a strong idea of a variety of genres present in their disciplinary field. Students will use this information to produce a visually based professional display. There will be a relative amount of freedom about how to approach this assignment, with students able to present as if they were at an academic or professional conference, a job fair, or other related public events in which they use their understanding of genre, text production, and trajectory to share something they have discovered with their colleagues. These posters will be presented in a conference style event, where all students set up and share their displays simultaneously, visited by other students, colleagues and hopefully professionals in their fields to discuss and further their own ideas and discourses. More information on this event and requirements for the project will be forthcoming.

PROJECT PACKET SYSTEM

For each major unit, students will be evaluated by their “project packet,” which includes all materials produced for that project. Although daily assignment and discussion posts may have individual due dates (based on when they will be needed for class activity and discussion), grades will not be given until the entire project packet is completed. The packet and all corresponding parts are submitted electronically through comp class and will include daily assignments (aka, project lites), the major project itself and a genre analysis tool.

Completing “project lites” allows students to demonstrate their understanding of relevant learning goals throughout the unit and receive informal instructor feedback on how well they seem to be “getting” it. In this way, students will be able to revise not only their texts through various means, but also revise their ideas. Students will then showcase their cumulative understanding in their final project and genre analysis document, which together will be

evaluated for how well they demonstrate learning processes related to both producing textual artifacts and understanding how such artifacts are produced.

OTHER PROCEDURAL INFORMATION

Student Conduct: As adults in the academic community, a respectful and appropriate behavior code is expected at all times. However, should this behavior code be broken by a disruptive or disrespectful student, he/she may be asked to remove him/herself from class for the day. Furthermore, if a student is sleeping during class, he/she will be marked absent for the day. For information on specific behavior expectations, please see the ISU Student Conduct Code.

Academic Integrity/Plagiarism: Students are responsible for making themselves aware of and understanding the policies and procedures found in the Student Code of Conduct, including those policies regarding academic dishonesty and plagiarism. Although plagiarism comes in many forms, students are expected above all to produce their own work in an ethical and honest way. Additionally, issues of correct citation and use of resources are crucial to both work as a student and development as a writer, and students are expected to consider carefully these tenets in the production of all class texts. Students should consult with the instructor if they are uncertain about an issue of academic honesty prior to the submission of an assignment or test.

Accommodations: Any student needing to arrange a reasonable accommodation for a documented disability should contact Disability Concerns at 350 Fell Hall, 438-5853 (voice), 438-8620 (TTY).

Computers in the Classroom: Students will be working in a computer lab equipped with the Internet. While students are welcome to check email, Facebook, or browse the Internet before class, once class begins every student should be engaged in class work.

Saving Files: It is the student's responsibility to save files in as many locations as possible. A cheap USB drive is a must for transporting files to and from the computer labs. Students are required to save all work to multiple locations (aka, a USB, home computer, and in compclass where it will be submitted for grades). Lost files are **not an excuse** for not handing in a project. Students are also required to name each file according to directions given either in project calendars or in class. All files must be saved as Word files. Additionally, students should keep in mind that student texts in English 145 are considered public writing, which means that other students in the class will be reading and commenting on them.