

Writing in the Academic Disciplines

Room: STV 0250 H
Times: Monday/Wednesday/Friday 1:00-1:50pm

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/Friday 2pm-3pm. I am also available outside of these times by appointment.

Course *Text Requirements:*

- Materials:**
1. ENG 145 Online Resource Compendium (Free)
 2. USB Drive
 3. 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 English 145 will learn how to research, analyze, and write in their chosen academic disciplines. They will identify the conventions of their discourse communities and use these conventions in their own writing. While students in English 145 will learn the differences and similarities between their disciplines and other academic disciplines, most of the work in this course will be devoted to the study of their own disciplinary groups and chosen fields. Through flexible and rigorous research, students will be able to locate and define various genres of writing in their disciplines and gain the skills necessary to produce them. The overall goal of this course is to enable students to be successful writers and scholars in the academy and to help students produce genres of writing used in their professions.

COURSE CONTENT

Genre Portfolio: 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 collect and create texts in genres directly relevant to their individual discipline.

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.

Synthesis: Students will take all of the research and genre study they have done in the first two units and synthesize it into several comprehensive venues. In this way, by the end of the term, student should be able to articulate their increased understanding of genres in their field as well as how such learning can be applied in the future and shared with other writers.

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 AND LATE WORK

Students are expected to be in class every day, and without this regular attendance, successful production of major class projects is highly unlikely. Exceptional attendance will be rewarded by points added to the posting/participation scores at the midterm and final (two points for perfect attendance, one point for only one missed day, one half point for two missed days).

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.

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 electronically unless previous arrangements are made.

DIGITAL SUBMISSION:

All assignments will be turned in digitally to blackboard. In the case of more than one file being turned in for a single assignment, which is especially important in the genre portfolio, students will have two options in terms of submission:

- 1) a single digital attachment which includes the entire portfolio as ONE file with a table of contents (instead of individual files for each artifact) or
- 2) individual files uploaded to the assignment space on blackboard PLUS a hard copy printout of all files, collected in a small binder or folder

Additionally, digital copies of all major assignments should be saved in preparation for the digital portfolio, turned in the last day of class and worth 5% of the final grade.

GRADING BREAKDOWN

90%-100% A	exceptional, outstanding work
80%-89% B	strong, thoughtful work
70%-79% C	average, complete work
60%-69% D	problematic, sloppy work
59% F	incomplete, careless work

ASSIGNMENT CONTENT

Assignment	Weight
Genre Portfolio	30%
Enter Disciplinary Discourse Project	25%
Synthesis Project	25%
Participation/Discussion Board	20%

Genre Portfolio- 30 Points

The genre portfolio is a collection of documents, many of which are worked on during class, that demonstrate a student's understanding about language use in his/her field. By collecting and analyzing particular genres in a field, students will be more prepared

to enter it as a knowledgeable professional. Furthermore, by learning the tenants of genre analysis, students will be able to unpack future writing situations for continued success in professional writing. This project includes the following artifacts:

- Two Interviews with field professionals
- Professional Organization Handout, Job Posting Analysis
- Resume* and Cover Letter*
- Professional Email* and Response/post to a professional blog/wiki*
- Independent Genre Analysis (five, but more in depth...page each)
- Genre Production* (two examples of field specific genres)
- Language/Culture Report that summarizes/introduces/reflects on above

**For these starred genre productions, students should use margin notes or similar notation to highlight their purposeful genre choices.*

First Half Participation/Posting- 10 points

Students are expected to be active participant in class and to prepare for this participation by posting required smaller assignments and drafts to the class discussion board on assigned days.

- Based on quality and quantity of postings + active participation in class
- Each posting is worth one point, with full, half or no credit award based on thoughtfulness/effort
- Attendance bonus: two points for perfect attendance, one point for only one missed day, one half point for two missed days. For the bonus, the first half ends October 7 (in time for midterm grades).

Please note that the midterm grade, posted October 9, 2011, will include these first 40 points (genre portfolio and midterm participation/posting). October 14 is the last day to withdraw from a full semester course with a withdrawal (WX) grade assigned.

Entering Disciplinary Discourse- 25 Points

The “Entering Disciplinary Discourse” (EDD) project asks students to analyze those professional publications created by members of their chosen discipline. To do so, students will research and collect specific articles of interest on a topic, then comment upon genre conventions used in them and articulate overall article meaning. Then, students will use this information to produce a modified example of an academic article themselves and notate on how their genre production matches those they have analyzed. This project includes:

- **Critical Discourse Genre Analysis**
 - Students will create an in-depth genre analysis report (3-4 pages) on a genre of critical scholarship in their field of study based upon discussion of at least four master text examples.

- Attached to this document, students should include margin notes (or similar notation) on all four master texts, indentifying major genre features, evidence of cultural/historic activity, and the author's main purpose/argument
- **Essay with Margin Notes**

Synthesis Project- 25 Points

The final weeks of the semester will ask students to reflect on what they have learned, synthesize it and demonstrate their knowledge and understanding. This includes creating a text that could be useful to future ENGL 145 students in a future textbook and discussing their findings during a "Professional Day," attended by other students and faculty.

- **Project for the Textbook (15 points):** includes genre analysis and/or margin notes component, wherein students decide how their essay fits the genre of the "145 textbook"
- **Participation in Professional Day (5 points):** include preparation of a visual display and/or handout to aide conversation- 5 points
- **Digital Portfolio (5 points):** all student work from ENG 145 collected and submitted digitally (more information to come)

Second Half Participation/Posting- 10 points

See first half for explanation; the second half begins October 10.

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.

Students engaging in any level of academic dishonesty or plagiarism will have to meet with the instructor outside of class to discuss academic penalty based on the severity of

the offense, which can include a failing grade on the assignment or a failing grade in the entire course.

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, and files may be viewed by other ENG 145 instructors. If you have concerns about sharing your work, please let me know and arrangements can be made.**