

WRI 1100: ACADEMIC INQUIRY AND WRITING SEMINAR

Seattle Pacific University, Spring 2017

MWF 9:30-10:45

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DESCRIPTION

This course continues the academic inquiry and writing skills of WRI 1000 by incorporating the elements and standards of college-level research and writing within a disciplinary context. Students use writing throughout the term as a tool to investigate and communicate information and ideas and to approach and answer complex questions. Key elements include learning to develop good research questions and lines of inquiry; writing in appropriate disciplinary genres; understanding the proper use of primary and secondary sources; evaluating, summarizing, analyzing, and synthesizing research; revising writing so as to develop and deepen ideas; and producing a culminating paper or project.

In this section we'll be thinking broadly about religious humanistic concern and what gets summed up as "culture:" that is, we're going to try to think about sculpture, poetry, essays, short stories, and paintings particularly as those forms are wrestled with by persons of faith, and to do so as though they matter, as though a line in a poem, for instance, might count as evidence in an argument. That will get us thinking about big questions regarding the place of artistic representation in the world and in the church, but also small ones like "how do I cite a sculpture?" You needn't care about the arts generally or about any of these forms in particular to get on well in the class. We assume no prior expertise beyond what you gained in WRI 1000. But an open mind and a desire to become a more thoughtful person and a more careful writer will help tremendously.

OBJECTIVES

If you're here, then you passed WRI 1000. First, congratulations; many didn't. Second, these directives should look acutely, not to say "painfully," familiar to you because the outcomes are the same for both courses. If they are going to be useful to us in this new

context, we need to think about them more deeply than we have before.

If you get lost, or bogged down, or distracted, remember that we're spending this time together primarily to learn to demonstrate an understanding of the relationship between writer, reader, text, culture, and medium in various genres of academic writing; to ask good questions of the texts we read and write, attending especially to relationships between assertion and evidence, to patterns of organization, and to the interplay of verbal and nonverbal elements; to practice flexible strategies for reading, drafting, revising, and editing texts, and to negotiate the conventions of academic writing, including grammar, spelling, and citation, exploring the concerns that motivate each. If that sounds like too many, things, recall that these outcomes are known also by four shortened descriptors: Rhetorical Knowledge, Critical Inquiry, Writing Process, and Conventions.

Whenever you are asked to read something, it's a good idea to bring that thing along to the class wherein it might be discussed. You never know when someone will say "Now open up your bibles and turn with me to..." or some such thing¹.

TECHNOLOGY

I'm kind of old-school about this stuff. There's nothing I loathe more than cell phones and the helpless, infantile addiction most of us have toward them. Basically, we'll need computers for database access, but only on library days. Unless I have a note from your doctor saying you'll die without one, I don't want to see devices in our classroom².

¹ If you're trying to game the system by reading things online (thereby going against literally 100% of the research that says people retain and comprehend less when they read off screens, btw) you'll need to make print-outs to bring to class.

² The research is unanimous: students who take notes on a screen perform worse than students who take notes by hand nearly always. Moreover, if even one laptop is being used in a room, the whole class performs worse on standardized tests. So be neighborly and leave it alone. I don't mean to attack anyone's idols, but you will be fine without them for the hour we meet together.

MANNERS

Have them³.

FAITH INTEGRATION

The ability to write effectively and to read critically is part of the Protestant heritage. Apart from being useful in nearly any career you might enter, the organizational skills this course teaches will also aid in your devotional reading, apologetic practices, and engagement with scripture. Moreover, we take our readings from a journal concerned with issues of faith, so we'll be confronting theological ideas and issues relevant to contemporary christian practice as matters of course. Finally, at heart, expressing oneself clearly is a way of being generous, to which virtue we are called.

COURSE TEXTS

1. *From Inquiry to Academic Writing*
2. *Image* no. 91 (2017)
3. A Composition book⁴

HOW TO SUCCEED

Read the stuff. Speak in class. Do good work.

ASSIGNMENTS

Your grade in the class will be determined by you scores on the following projects, about which more information is, obviously, forthcoming:

1. Research Proposal
2. Composition Book

³ Please do not eat, sleep, read the paper, study for other classes, talk, or make rude noises in class. Wait until the lecture is over and then eat in a place appropriate for eating. No one listening to a lecture wants to smell your food or hear you chew, swallow, and suck your drink. In general, be respectful and courteous to me and to your classmates, as I'm sure your parents taught you to do.

⁴ A proper composition book is fine, although a Moleskine is a beautiful choice. Shinola makes lovely lined journals as well, but to get one you'd have to take a little trip up the hill to QA Books because our bookstore doesn't stock them.

3. Annotated Bibliography

4. Sentence Outline

5. Research Paper

POLICIES

Late Work: No.

Attendance: Yes⁵.

Plagiarism: No⁶.

⁵ You are expected to be present--physically and intellectually--at every class meeting. The Writing Program does not distinguish between "excused" and "unexcused" absences. You get three, and then your grade drops. Arrive on time. Excessive tardiness can result in an absence in the grade book, as can inappropriate use of technology in class.

⁶ The Writing Program distinguishes between unintentional and intentional plagiarism. Unintentional plagiarism a conventional issue, one that can be addressed through instruction on citation. Remember, you must cite your sources, even when paraphrasing. We will address citation in class, and if you need assistance beyond classroom instruction, please consult a handbook, set up an appointment at the Writing Center, and / or speak with me. Intentional plagiarism, however, is a breach of trust and integrity, a violation of the atmosphere of scholarship we work hard to establish and maintain at the University. If the instructor verifies an act of academic dishonesty has occurred, the Department Chair, Dean, Provost, and Dean of Students will each be notified. Depending on the severity, plagiarism can result in failing an assignment or failing the course.

COURSE CALENDAR

1. Oh, Hi

In general, you should have all the readings for the week done before the our first meeting therein. As this is the first week, and you will likely not have anticipated this requirement, aim to have finished them by Wednesday. This week, we're talking about literary genres and how to read them, we're setting up notebooks as a contest space, and doing our first drills.

Gregory Wolfe, "Listening to Silence"

Mika Seifert, "The Ladder"

Luke Johnson, "Tom as a Series of Declaratives," "Earthquake"

2. Generation

Instead of struggling to find a topic, let's have too many ideas for papers. Let's have the cups running over. Invention exercises, responses, topic choosing.

Torgny Lindgren, "Joshua"

Adélia Prado, "The Girl and the Fruit," "Daughter of the Ancient Law," "The Scar," "Lamentation to Move Jonathan"

Karen L. Mulder, "Presence in a Space: The Flickering Contradictions of Martin Puryear"

3. Materials

This week, we'll only have one class, on Mon10 when you'll turn in your only stand-alone assignment: the explication. On Wed12, we're going to the library to discuss research methods, and on Fri14, we'll have conferences, working on narrowing research topics and crafting compelling theses.

Ewa Elzbieta Nowakowska, "Merton Listens to the Requiem," "Romanian Orthodox Choir," "Merton Recites a Mantra"

Marilyn Abildskov, "The Baptism of Sister Arlene Anderson"

Tadeusz Dabrowski, [I strive to live as if...], "Jam Jars"

4. Sources

This week's emphasis is on data: what counts and what doesn't; where to look. Also on

summarizing and creating Annotated Bibliographies. No class on Mon17, *Happy Easter*. On Wed17, back in the library for work on citations and research time.

Paul Anel, "Gathering the Light: Sean Scully's Montserrat Chapel"

Greg Miller, "Still Life with Fruits and Bread," "Resurrection at Cookham"

5. More Genres

Annotated Bibliography due Fri28.

Gregory Wolfe, "A Conversation with Michael Gruber"

George David Clark, "Twenty-Five Years of Fresh Air"

Mark Wagenaar, "The Trick," "Texas Blues"

6. Systems

The various and sundry benefits of outlining.

Amye Day Ong, "Chest Percussions"

Abdellatif Laâbi, "To My Son Yacine"

7. Structure

Shaping the argument. *Sentence Outline* due Fri12

Stina Kielsmeier-Cook, "The Doubt that Breathes Beside You"

Ricardo Pau-Llosa, "Lazarus," "Needle"

8. Powers

The actual writing. Also, this is the last week for which we're doing outside reading. For the remaining weeks, we focus entirely on your papers. For now, lean into the tape.

Christian Detisch, "Elijah in the Desert," "Tentatively, Religion"

Becca J. R. Lachman, "New Monasticism, Old Homesickness: New Poetry in Review"

Javier Acosta, "Jacob's Ladder"

9. Assembly

Putting together the various components of our research essays, noting especially our use of paragraphing. *Draft* due Wed24.

10. Polish

Attending to conventional matters such as Title pages, bibliographies, pages numbers, but also to sentences, proofing. No class Mon29, *Memorial Day*. Bring copies on Wed31. Final drafts due in office during regularly scheduled exam period.