Western
Arts&Humanities

Department of English and Writing Studies

3225G 650: My Name is URL: Writing for the Web

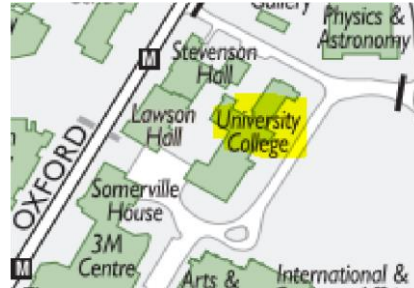**Winter 2020-21 (January 11 – April 12)**

Instructor:

Dr. Christopher Lee

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Office:
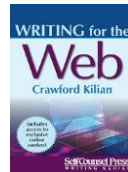
1426 University College

Office hours:

Via email anytime; live chat (Skype) or tele-phone calls possible by appointment

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Course Materials:

Title: *Writing for the Web Reader*
Author: Various
Publisher: UWO Custom coursepack (More info in the Syllabus/Course Info area of the class)

Title: *Writing for the Web*
Author: Kilian
Publisher: SelfCounsel
Edition: First

Course Objectives:

"This course will explore the theory and practice of digital writing technologies. Topics covered include the production, management, and reception of digital texts; web writing style; hypertext and linking; authorship; copyright. Students will evaluate the design and content of web texts and create their own web sites." The focus in this course will be to have you engage in both the production of written texts for the internet and also develop a critical eye for examining the written texts present on the Web, including an understanding of how the relationship between reader and writer is affected by the evolution of technologies.

Assignment	Percentage of Final Mark	Due Date
Discussion Forums x 8; Wikis x 2.	10%	Ongoing
Wikipedia Edits, Evaluation, Peer Review, and Article Contribution	25% total (see individual breakdown later in course outline/ syllabus)	Edits (Feb 7), Evaluate an article (Mar 7), Draft article (Mar 21), Final article (Apr 4 to Apr 12)
Essay with hyperlinks or online article (1000 words or so)	30%	Feb 28
	35%	Apr 12

Personal Website		

Discussion Board Posts and WIki entries (10%)
This is where we have regular weekly conversations in the course for 10 weeks. Details on posting requirements are given on the next pages.

Additionally, you'll be engaging in a collaborative wiki activity. This will be participation for that week. Instructions will be provided.

Wikipedia Edits, Activities, and Article Contribution (25%) Final version due Apr 4 (flexible to the last day of the term, though this date should be a target for you to space out the workload)
For several weeks during the term you will be editing and contributing to Wikipedia. Yes, really. This will involve making 1) small edits to existing articles (5%), evaluating an existing Wikipedia article (5%), drafting an article or substantial contribution in your Sandbox (ungraded), peer reviewing a classmate's entry (5%) and completing your final article (10%). Ultimately, you will be either creating a new article or making substantial contributions to an existing entry in Wikipedia. Details will be provided.

Hypertext essay (30%) Due Feb 28.
Write an essay (with intro, thesis, body, conclusion) on any topic **with a clear connection to the readings and content of the course** and smoothly incorporate hyperlinks to appropriate online content (examples, visuals, articles, etc.). The subject must be in some way related to writing and/or reading (communication) on the Web. Research your subject, provide new insights, explanations, or examples of the issue. The style can be standard academic or more of a "magazine" or blog style. Length will be approximately 4 double-spaced pages (1000 words), though this is a rough guideline. See **Assignments** for detailed instructions.

Website Development (35%) Due Apr 12
Select a topic of interest to develop a website using software such as Dreamweaver or by using a premade template from a site like Wordpress, Webnode, Wix or Weebly (not Tumblr unless you create multiple pages and customize the template a lot!). If you use a pre-made template, you must sufficiently customize it to make it yours.

Add content to that site—you must have at least 5 pages/subpages (see **Assignments** for details). If not using a template site, you can use the free space allocated to you at Western to post your site (see instructions in **Course Information**), host it elsewhere. Very few if any students have taken this route in the past few years; most people use a template site already online. If you are using a Wordpress, Webnode or Wix site, hosting is provided already. You just make it live on the web.

Assignment Format
Your essay is to be typed and double-spaced and submitted as .doc, .docx, or .rtf format. If you submit a .pdf file to retain formatting, also submit a second version in a format that I can edit with comments. Do not use a cover page, as these are particularly unnecessary for online submissions. When using sources in a paper, you will be expected to follow MLA, APA, or Chicago-style citations.

Submitting Assignments
Assignments are due on the dates specified on the schedule. Late essays will be penalized by **3% per day** unless I have permitted an extension on the due date. You must speak to me ahead of time for an extension and provide a suitable reason. Weekly class sessions will run from Monday to Sunday, so writing assignments for a particular week are due by Sunday night at 11:59PM, Eastern Time. If they're submitted a little past midnight, say before I wake up the next morning, there won't be any penalty. All this is designed to help last-minute, weekend editors.

You must also submit your final draft of the hyperlink essay/online article to Turnitin.com for plagiarism checking. This happens automatically when you submit it to the **Assignments** area. Turnitin will generate a report for you, detailing the percentage of your paper that has been taken from sources, which I will also look at. I will not grade any essay until I see the report on Turnitin.com.

You are responsible for keeping copies of all assignments submitted in case we need to discuss your writing and if you want to submit it for the annual Marie Smibert Writing Program Student Achievement Prizes in April.

Attendance/Discussion Board/Wiki Participation

Obviously, we do not meet formally in a Distance Studies course. Therefore, attendance and participation on the Discussion Board (and in our case, Wiki) are intertwined. While online classes are generally asynchronous, they are not correspondence or self-paced. You must attend class (defined as logging into our OWL section and interacting, posting questions and thoughts) **at least once by Thursday** for a total of **two** (or more) separate posts per week (a week is defined as running from Monday to Sunday). **At least one post must be a reply/response to another student and at least one must respond to the main discussion question.** I will assign a weekly number grade from 0-10 based on whether you have fulfilled the posting requirements described in further detail below—1) **quality of posting**, 2) **engagement** (frequency and number of posts made).

1) Quality of Posting
All posts on the Discussion Board must

Contribute something meaningful to the board.
Support your opinion with sufficient reasons or evidence.
Display good grammar and organization.

Postings should not

- Contain disrespectful, insulting, or offensive language.
- Be excessively long (more than one screen length) or excessively short.
- Be unrelated to the forum topic.
- Only say things like "I agree with you" or "Nice comment!" that do not contribute any substance.

The use of racist or any language that works against the values of Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion will not be tolerated.

2) Engagement
Two posts are required. Feel free to post more.

Absence Policies

Attendance in class is required to improve as a writer. For an online class, attendance is considered and measured as your participation in the discussion forum activities. Here is the Writing Studies attendance policy in this class:

Note that 'attendance' as defined in this section is mandatory in this course. Failure to meet the minimum posting requirements for three weeks where there is Discussion will result in your final grade in this course being reduced by 10%. Failure to meet the minimum posting requirements for four or more weeks where there is Discussion will result in your final grade being reduced by 15%.

This policy will be waived only for medical or compassionate reasons. If you have good reasons for waiving an absence of one class meeting (e.g. if you've missed three hours, and need or want to miss another class meeting) discuss these reasons with your instructor within one week of that absence. If your absence is extended and prolonged (over one week of continuous non-attendance), then you should discuss it with your academic advisor in your home faculty, who may require documentation. That advisor may then contact all of your instructors. See also: 'Medical Accommodation Policy' below.

Medical Accommodation Policy

Note: the official Western Accommodation Policy appears below. This is in effect but may be modified temporarily by the university during the academic year as conditions change.

Students with disabilities work with Accessible Education (formerly SSD) which provides recommendations for accommodation based on medical documentation or psychological and cognitive testing. The accommodation policy can be found here: Academic Accommodation for Students with Disabilities.

Academic Consideration for Student Absence

Students will have up to two (2) opportunities during the regular academic year to use an on-line portal to self-report an absence during the term, provided the following conditions are met: the absence is no more than 48 hours in duration, and the assessment for which consideration is being sought is worth 30% or less of the student's final grade. Students are expected to contact their instructors by email within 24 hours of the end of the period of the self-reported absence. Students are not able to use the self-reporting option in the following circumstances:

· for exams scheduled by the Office of the Registrar (e.g., December and April exams)

· absence of a duration greater than 48 hours,

· assessments worth more than 30% of the student's final grade,

· if a student has already used the self-reporting portal twice during the academic year

If the conditions for a Self-Reported Absence are not met, students will need to provide a Student Medical Certificate if the absence is medical, or provide appropriate documentation if there are compassionate grounds for the absence in question. Students are encouraged to contact their Faculty academic counselling office to obtain more information about the relevant documentation.

Students should also note that individual instructors are not permitted to receive documentation directly from a student, whether in support of an application for consideration on medical grounds, or for other reasons. All documentation required for absences that are not covered by the Self-Reported Absence Policy must be submitted to the Academic Counselling office of a student's Home Faculty.

For Western University policy on Consideration for Student Absence, see Policy on Academic Consideration for Student Absences - Undergraduate Students in First Entry Programs

and for the Student Medical Certificate (SMC), see:
http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/medicalform.pdf.

Students who are in emotional/mental distress should refer to MentalHealth@Western: (https://www.uwo.ca/health/psych/index.html) for a complete list of options about how to obtain help.

Religious Accommodation

Students should consult the University's list of recognized religious holidays, and should give reasonable notice in writing (email), prior to the holiday, to the Instructor and an Academic Counsellor if their course requirements will be affected by a religious observance. Additional information is given in the Western Multicultural Calendar

Special Requests: Special Examinations, Incompletes, Aegrotat Standing

Please refer to the "Information for All Students in a Writing Course" for more detailed information. Briefly, remember that I do not have the discretion to initiate, consider, and grant (or deny) such requests; you must go directly to the Dean's office of your home faculty

Scholastic Offences, including Plagiarism

The University Senate requires the following statements, and Web site references, to appear on course outlines:

"Scholastic offences are taken seriously and students are directed to read the appropriate policy, specifically, the definition of what constitutes a Scholastic Offence, at the following Web site: http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/scholastic_discipline_undergrad.pdf."

Students must write their essays and assignments in their own words. Whenever students take an idea, or a passage of text from another author, they must acknowledge their debt both by using quotation marks where appropriate and by proper referencing such as footnotes or citations. Plagiarism is a major academic offence (see Scholastic Offence Policy as above). Plagiarized work will receive an 'F' (ranging from 0 to 49) and may result in failure in the course as a whole.

"All required papers may be subject to submission for textual similarity review to the commercial plagiarism detection software under license to the University for the detection of plagiarism. All papers submitted for such checking will be included as source documents in the reference database for the purpose of detecting plagiarism of papers subsequently submitted to the system. Use of the service is subject to the licensing agreement currently between The University of Western Ontario and Turnitin.com (http:// www.turnitin.com)."

Prerequisites

"Unless you have either the requisites for this course or written special permission from your Dean to enroll in it, you may be removed from this course and it will be deleted from your record. This decision may not be appealed. You will receive no adjustment to your fees in the event that you are dropped from a course for failing to have the necessary prerequisites." The prerequisite for registration in this course is:

At least 65% in one of Writing 2101F/G, Writing 2125F/G (or the former Writing 2121F/G), Writing 2111F/G, Writing 2130F/G or Writing 2131F/G; or at least 65% in one of Writing 1000F/G, Writing 1030F/G, or Writing 1031F/G; or at least 65% in each of MIT 1020E (or both of MIT 1021F/ G and MIT 1022F/G) and MIT 1025F/G; or permission of the Department (consult the Undergraduate Program Director, Writing).

Registrarial Services https://student.uwo.ca/psp/heprdweb/?cmd=login
Student Support Services https://student.uwo.ca/psp/heprdweb/?cmd=login
Services provided by the USC http://westernusc.ca/services/
Student Development Centre http://www.sdc.uwo.ca/

Term Schedule

Date	Topic + To Do	Readings
Week 1 (Jan 11-17)	What's Different with Web writing? Get your personal web space at UWO if using, or look at web template options like Wix and Weebly. Intro self and what characterizes Web writing in your opinion. This is participation item 1 of 10. Create account on Wikipedia (instructions coming mid-week)	Bolter Chapter 1 "Introduction" from *Writing Space* in the custom reader + additional lecture material. Kilian, Introduction and Chapter 3 on personalization and audience + overview of Web writing
Week 2 (Jan 18-24)	Multimedia Writing Wiki collaborative writing activity— The differences of writing for the Web (instructions given at start of week) This is participation item 2 of 10 Think about a potential subject/ article you might edit in Wikipedia.	Neil Postman "Peekaboo World" in the custom book on the rise of images + lecture material.

Week 3 (Jan 25-31)	<u>eBooks, The Future of Print, New Literatures</u> Discussion (Participation item 3 of 10) on website idea + complete Wikipedia training	Nicholas Carr (from *The Shallows*): "The Deepening Page" and "The Very Image of a Book" in the custom reader.
Week 4 (Feb 1-7)	<u>How Reading on the Web Affects Your Brain</u> Discussion on website organization plan (This is participation item 4 of 10) + **Copyedit Wikipedia (5%) by Feb 7**	Kilian, Chapter 1 on reading Carr: "a digression on the writing of this book" in the course reader. David Levy (from *Scrolling Forward*): "Reading and Attention" in the custom reader.
Week 5 (Feb 8-12) SHORT WEEK	<u>Hyperlinking, Hypertext</u> Wiki collaborative writing activity (How to Hyperlink). This is participation item 5 of 10.	Bolter (from *Writing Space):* "Hypertext and the Remediation of Print" and "Refashioned Dialogues" and " in the custom reader.
Week 6 (Feb 22-28)	<u>Online identity and blogging</u> Discussion posts on thoughts on Discussion on six degrees of Wikipedia (This is participation item 6 of 10) **Hypertext Essay or blog article (30%) due: Feb 28**	Kilian, Chapter 7 on blogs; Naomi Baron (from *Always on*): "Having Your Say" in the custom reader.
Week 7 (Mar 1-7)	<u>Plagiarism, originality, and the Web</u> Wikipedia and Wikis (participation item 7 of 10) **Evaluate a Wikipedia article (5%) by Mar 7**	View "<u>Everything is a Remix</u>" (look at all three parts) Read "<u>The Ecstasy of Influence, A Plagiarism</u>."
Week 8 (Mar 8-14)	<u>Web 2.0 and user participation: eJournalism</u> Discussion posts on Twitter styleThis is participation item 8 of 10 Begin developing pages for website. Recommended: Post main site page for yourself.	Kilian, Chapter 9 on social media Read Clay Shirky (from *Here Comes Everybody):* "Publish then Filter" and "Everybody is a Media Outlet."

Date	Topic <u>+</u> To Do	Readings

Week 9 (Mar 15-21)	Web 2.0: Democratization, Anonymity Discussion Forum posts on good/ bad websites. This is participation item 9 of 10 **Wikipedia Education Project draft of article due (Mar 21) -** also posted to the discussion forum for peer reviewing in Week 10. Recommended: Post 2nd page	Felder, Chapter 10 on rhetorical modes. Read or view Andrew Keen's interview on "The Cult of the Amateur." Read Jaron Lanier's "Beware the Online Collective"
Week 10 (Mar 22-28)	Web design: crash course Recommended: Post 3rd page **Peer review of Wikipedia article in discussions (5%) during the week.** **Review 2 classmates.**	Kilian, Chapter 2 on organizing and structuring a website
Week 11 (Mar 29-Apr 4)	Online identity Discussion posts (submit website rough draft for peer and professor advice). This is participation item 10 of 10. **Final Wikipedia Article due Apr 4 (flexible to the end of the term, but aim for the end of Week 11)** Recommended: Post 4th page	Kilian, Chapter 4 and 5 on writing style for websites
Week 12 (Apr 5-12)	Final Version of Personal Website completed by **Apr 12 (35%).**	