

Writing 2101G: Introduction to Expository Writing

Winter 2024

Section: 651

Instructor: Dr. Kathleen Fraser

Course Description and Objectives

“An introduction to the basic principles and techniques of good writing. The course will emphasize practical work and the development of writing skills for a variety of subjects and disciplines.” By “practical work,” this course description from the calendar means to indicate that you will spend much of your time in this course writing, responding to the writing of others, and revising your work in light of the responses you receive to it. Consequently, in this course you will not only produce written texts, but also develop a critical eye for examining the written texts of others, both professionally-written and written by others in your class.

The calendar course description also points to the development of writing skills in “a variety of subjects and disciplines.” While it would simply not be possible to study and write in all the genres that are used across a complex university such as Western, you will be asked to write in more than one genre. When you do so, pay attention to the rules/constraints of that genre and study how those rules give you clues to what is regarded as “good writing” for the genre you are writing in. Try to develop a conscious awareness (metaknowledge) about the rules for writing well and how they shift depending on the context for writing.

More generally, the course aims to contribute to your development of an “ability to communicate information, arguments, and analyses accurately and reliably, orally and in writing, to a range of audiences” (Ontario Council of Academic Vice-Presidents’ statement on ‘University Undergraduate Degree Level Expectations,’ 24 October 2005).

Required Texts and Course Materials

Messenger, William E., Jan de Bruyn, and Judy Brown. *The Canadian Writer’s Handbook*. Third Essentials Edition. Oxford University Press, 2023.

Course Requirements

Quizzes (2 x 2.5%, 1 x 5%)	10%
Essay 1: Rhetorical Analysis	20%
Essay 2: Informative Essay	30%
Essay 3: Researched Argument	40%

Assignment Format

You must submit an electronic version of the final draft of each essay, in a .doc or .docx format. Essays must be double-spaced in a standard serif font (e.g., Times New Roman), and they must follow MLA format; an example of this kind of formatting can be found in *The Canadian Writer's Handbook*. When using sources in an essay, you will be expected to follow MLA standards for documentation, detailed in *The Canadian Writer's Handbook*.

Submitting Assignments/Due dates/late submission penalties etc.

Assignments are due on the date specified on the schedule. Weekly class sessions will run from Monday to Sunday, so writing assignments for a particular week are due by Sunday night at 11:55 p.m. Eastern Standard Time.

Late essays will be penalized 2.5% per day and will not receive comments unless your instructor has emailed you to grant an extension. You must apply for extensions ahead of the due date; they are not automatic.

In this course, you will be required to submit the final version of each of your essays electronically, through OWL, to turnitin.com. I will not grade any essay until I see the report.

Emailed assignments are not acceptable. You must also keep copies of all assignments submitted.

In addition to submitting final drafts on the due date for each assignment, you are required to submit a rough draft of each assignment for the scheduled peer-review sessions. Failure to submit a sufficiently complete (in your instructor's opinion) assignment or to participate in a scheduled peer-review session **will** result in a 10% penalty being applied to the earned grade for that assignment. In other words, an assignment that would have earned a 78, for example, will receive instead a recorded grade of 70. This penalty will be applied in addition to any other penalties incurred (e.g., for late submission). If you review the draft of another student but do not submit your own draft, the deduction is 5%.

Attendance policies

We do not meet formally as a class in a Distance Studies course. Therefore, attendance and participation on the Discussion Board are intertwined. While Distance Studies classes are generally asynchronous, they are not self-paced. You must attend class (defined as logging into our OWL section) and participate by introducing yourself and posting questions and thoughts during the first week, and by posting (by participating in a given week's set discussion topic) in subsequent weeks where a Discussion topic is indicated on this syllabus. During such weeks (a week is defined *for this purpose* as running from Monday to Sunday), you must contribute at least three separate posts, **at least one of which must be a response to another student, and at least one of which must be a new post.** Extended absences, defined as a failure to post into the OWL classroom for more than five consecutive days, must be coordinated with the instructor.

Note that attendance as defined in this section is **mandatory** in this course. Failure to meet the minimum posting requirements as defined above for **any week where there is Discussion** *will* result in your earned final grade in this course being reduced by 3%. That penalty is cumulative to a maximum of five weeks. Failure to meet the minimum posting requirements for **five or more weeks where there is Discussion** *will* result in your earned final grade being reduced by 15%.

Note: a class meeting missed in order to write a test, exam, or other form of ‘make-up class’ in another course *will* count as non-attendance, and *will* attract penalties as defined above if applicable. Instructors at the University of Western Ontario *shall not require* a student to write a make-up test or similar at times which conflict with that student’s other scheduled class times. If you are asked or ‘required’ to do this, you should immediately contact an academic counsellor in your Dean’s office. If you elect to miss a class in order to write such a test, that is *your* choice; your absence will not be excused.