

WRI 103A: Writing for Science Undergraduates

3 credits, 3 hour lecture

This course provides intensive writing practice to help students improve their ability to communicate clearly in writing. By studying examples and applying principles of scientific writing to a variety of contexts, students will develop their skills in writing expository, analytical, technical, and persuasive prose. They will also learn to analyze and evaluate argumentation and to apply those skills to their own written and oral presentations.

Prerequisite: ENGL 30-1 or equivalent

Instructor

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Office Hours

Monday	11:00 – 11:50 AM
Tuesday	1:00 – 1:50 PM
Wednesday	11:00 -- 11:50 AM
Thursday	1:00 – 1:50 PM 4:00 – 4:50 PM

Hours of Instruction

Tuesday	2:00 – 3:30 PM
Thursday	2:00 – 3:30 PM

Required Resources

Northey, M., Knight, D., & Draper, D. (2015). *Making sense: A student's guide to research and writing in geography and environmental sciences*. 6th ed. Don Mills, ON: Oxford University Press. ISBN 978-0-19-901022-6

Course pack of readings

Course Outcomes

Upon successful completion of this course, students will be able to:

- Adapt writing to different audiences and genres, with an environmental emphasis.
- Develop a proposal, review scientific literature and write a comprehensive report to demonstrate an understanding of environmental research.
- Plan, draft, review, edit and proofread written work to university standards.
- Apply guidelines to give and receive useful feedback during peer editing sessions in order to facilitate continuous improvement.

Evaluation

<i>Assignment</i>	Percentage	Due Date
Observation (750 words)	10%	October 3
Summary (500 words)	5%	October 12
Interview (750 words)	10%	October 26
Online Assessment (750 words)	10%	November 7
Visual analysis (1500 words)	15%	November 21
Scientific argument proposal (500 words)	5%	November 2
Scientific argument (2000 words)	20%	December 5
In-class writing (variable length)	10%	ongoing
Peer response workshops	15%	ongoing

A grade of C- is required for progression or transfer.

Draft Workshops

Throughout the term, you will participate in a total of five peer response draft workshops. These workshops will give you the opportunity to provide and receive feedback on an upcoming assignment.

For each workshop, you will bring copies of your draft version of the assignment. You will share these copies with your small group, and students will offer feedback according to specified guidelines.

Participation in each peer response draft workshop is worth 3% of your final grade.

In-Class Writing

Throughout the term, a total of 12 in-class writing assignments will be given. These may take the form of paragraph responses, summaries of online research, memo reports, notes, or other styles. In calculating your final grade, I will drop the lowest two. Except under extraordinary circumstances, in-class writing MAY NOT be written outside of class.

Grading System

Descriptor	Alpha Grade	4.0 Scale	Percent	Rubric for Letter Grades
Excellent	A+	4.0	> 92.9	Work shows in-depth and critical analysis, well developed ideas, creativity, excellent writing, clarity and proper format.
	A	4.0	85 – 92.9	
	A-	3.7	80 – 84.9	
Good	B+	3.3	77 – 79.9	Work is generally of high quality, well developed, well written, has clarity, and uses proper format.
	B	3.0	74 – 76.9	
	B-	2.7	70 – 73.9	
Satisfactory Progression	C+	2.3	67 – 69.9	Work has some developed ideas but needs more attention to clarity, style and formatting.
	C	2.0	64 – 66.9	
	C-	1.7	60 – 63.9	
Poor Minimum Pass	D+	1.3	55 – 59.9	Work is completed in a general way with minimal support, or is poorly written or did not use proper format.
	D	1.0	50 – 54.9	
Failure	F	0.0	< 50	Responses fail to demonstrate appropriate understanding or are fundamentally incomplete.

Proposed Schedule of Topics

DATE	TOPIC	READINGS	ASSIGNMENTS	OTHER
Sept. 7	Introduction to course			
Sept. 12-14	Audience and purpose in scientific writing	Chapter 1: pages 1-19	In-class writing 1 Sept. 12	Observation assignment given Sept. 12
Sept. 19-21	Writing the observation	Chapter 11: pages 173-185 Ackerman, Why leaves turn color in the fall (coursepack)	In-class writing 2 Sept. 19	
Sept. 26-28	Writing the observation	Dillard, Living like weasels Doyle, Joyas Volardores (coursepack)	In-class writing 3 Sept. 26	Observation draft workshop Sept. 28
Oct. 3-5	Summary writing	Chapter 4: pages 68-74	In-class writing 4 Oct. 3 Observation due Oct. 3	Summary assignment given October 5
Oct. 10-12	Writing the interview	Quammen, Being Jane Goodall (coursepack)	In-class writing 5 Oct. 10 Summary due Oct. 12	Interview assignment given Oct. 10

Oct. 17-19	Writing the interview	Library session Oct. 18	In-class writing 6 October 17	Interview draft workshop Oct. 19 Online assessment assignment given Oct. 17
Oct. 24-26	Assessing research resources	Chapter 2: pages 21-57	In-class writing 7 Oct. 24 Interview due Oct. 26	Scientific argument assignment given Oct. 24
Oct. 31-Nov. 2	Analyzing persuasive strategies	Bittman, Cohen, Linker, McWilliams (coursepack)	In-class writing 8 Oct. 31 Scientific argument proposal due Nov. 2	Online assessment draft workshop Nov. 2
Nov. 7-9	Analyzing a visual argument	Chapter 12: pages 186-214	In-class writing 9 Nov. 7 Online assessment due Nov. 7	Visual analysis assignment given Nov. 7
Nov. 14-16	Analyzing a visual argument		In-class writing 10 Nov. 14	Visual analysis draft workshop Nov. 16
Nov. 21-23	Developing a scientific argument	Chapter 2: pages 21-57 Klinkenborg, Our vanishing night (coursepack)	In-class writing 11 Nov. 21 Visual analysis due Nov. 21	
Nov. 28-30	Developing a scientific argument	Burdick, The truth about invasive species (coursepack)	In-class writing 12 Nov. 28	Scientific argument workshop Nov. 30
Dec. 5-7	Developing a scientific argument	Thoreau, Where I lived and what I lived for (coursepack)	Scientific argument due Dec. 5	

Please Note:

Date and time allotted to each topic is subject to change.

Performance Requirements

Student Responsibilities

It is your responsibility as a student to contact the Office of the Registrar to complete the forms for Withdrawal or Change of Registration, and any other forms. Please refer to the list of important dates as noted in the Academic Schedule in the Keyano College credit calendar.

More specific details are found in the Student Rights and Student Code of Conduct section of the Keyano College credit calendar. It is the responsibility of each student to be aware of the guidelines outlined in the Student Rights and Student Code of Conduct Policies.

Student Attendance

Class attendance is useful for two reasons. First, class attendance maximizes a student's learning experience. Second, attending class is a good way to keep informed of matters relating to the administration of the course (e.g., the timing of assignments and exams). Ultimately, you are responsible for your own learning and performance in this course.

It is the responsibility of each student to be prepared for all classes. Students who miss classes are responsible for the material covered in those classes and for ensuring that they are prepared for the next class, including the completion of any assignments and / or notes that may be due.

Academic Misconduct

Students are considered to be responsible adults and should adhere to principles of intellectual integrity. Intellectual dishonesty may take many forms, such as:

- Plagiarism or the submission of another person's work as one's own
- The use of unauthorized aids in assignments or examinations (cheating)
- Collusion or the unauthorized collaboration with others in preparing work
- The deliberate misrepresentation of qualifications
- The willful distortion of results or data
- Substitution in an examination by another person
- Handing in the same unchanged work as submitted for another assignment
- Breach of confidentiality.

The consequences for academic misconduct range from a verbal reprimand to expulsion from the College. More specific descriptions and details are found in the Student Rights and Student Code of Conduct section of the Keyano College credit calendar. It is the responsibility of each student to be aware of the guidelines outlined in the Student Rights and Student Code of Conduct Policies.

Specialized Supports

Counselling and Accessibility Services

Counselling Services provides a wide range of specialized counselling services to prospective and registered students, including personal, career and academic counselling.

SKILL Centre

The SKILL Centre is a learning space in the Clearwater Campus at Keyano College where students can gather to share ideas, collaborate on projects and get new perspectives on learning from our tutorial staff.

The SKILL Centre, through a variety of delivery methods, provides assistance in skill development to Keyano students. Assistance is provided by instructors, staff and student tutors. Individuals wishing to improve their mathematics, writing, grammar, study, or other skills, can take advantage of this unique service.

Authorization

This course outline has been reviewed and approved by the Program Chair.

Jane Jacques, Instructor

Louis Dingley, Chair

Date Authorized

Vincella Thompson, Dean

Date Authorized

Signed copies to be delivered to:

Instructor

Registrar's Office