English 302: No2 & No3
Course Syllabus

Course Description

English 302 is an Advanced Composition course; this section will focus on the writing and research needs of students in the Natural Sciences. Although we will make use of technical formats (such as professional journal articles and literature reviews), the focus will be on conducting secondary research, organizing the results of the research, and presenting your interpretations of your findings to appropriate audiences.

Course Goals

By the end of this course students will be able to

- use writing as a tool for exploration and reflection in addressing advanced problems, as well as for exposition and persuasion
- employ strategies for writing as a recursive process of inventing, investigating, shaping, drafting, revising, and editing to meet a range of advanced academic and professional expectations
- identify, evaluate, and use research sources
- employ a range of appropriate technologies to support researching, reading, writing, and thinking
- apply critical reading strategies that are appropriate to advanced reading in your academic discipline and in possible future workplaces
- recognize how knowledge is constructed in your academic discipline and possible future workplaces
- analyze rhetorical situations – audience, purpose, and context – of texts produced in your academic disciplines and possible future workplaces
- produce writing – including argument proposals – that is appropriate for a range of rhetorical situations within your academic disciplines and possible future workplaces

Prerequisites

Students must have completed or transferred in the equivalent of English 100/101, 45 credit hours, and any required general-education literature course designated by their college or major. Students should take a version of English 302 that connects to their major field. Students in the School of Engineering are very strongly recommended to take English 302N. If you are enrolled in a different version, you should contact your adviser immediately to see what actions to take.
GENERAL EDUCATION

This course is part of the GMU General Education Program, which is designed to help students prepare for advanced work in their major field and for a lifetime of learning. For more information on the mission of the General Education Program, consult the University Catalog or visit http://provost.gmu.edu/gened/

TEXTBOOK AND MATERIALS

There is no required textbook for this class. We will use several online sources, however:

GMU Writing Center Resources
<http://writingcenter.gmu.edu/writing-resources>

Students as Scholars
<http://oscar.gmu.edu>

METHODS OF INSTRUCTION

Sections No2 & No3 are a online courses: the classes will have no face-to-face meetings. I will be available for office hours on Mondays and Wednesday from 10:30 to 11:45 in Robinson A, 407C. I can also be reached via email.

All course assignments will be submitted via Blackboard.

In addition, we will have weekly BlackBoard discussions. I expect everyone to post and comment on other students' posts each week.

An online course requires special attention to submission deadlines, discussion posts, and course announcements. You should check the BlackBoard site at least once per weekday (and once over the weekend as well). The course assignments will be explained on BlackBoard, as will any clarifications and changes to the assignments and course schedule.

STUDENTS AS SCHOLARS

This section of English 302 is participating in GMU’s "Students as Scholars" program. Across campus, students now have increased opportunities to work with faculty on original scholarship, research, and creative activities, through their individual departments and the OSCAR office.

Assignments in English 302 will help prepare you to be contributors to knowledge in your field, not just memorizers of facts. You will

- understand how knowledge is created and transmitted in a field/discipline
- understand key methods and conventions of scholarly research in your field/discipline
- articulate and refine your own question for scholarly inquiry
- situate your investigation in an ongoing context/conversation in your field
- and design a final project that adds new perspectives and/or data to the conversation
ASSIGNMENTS

Weekly Responses (5%)
Discipline Awareness I assignment (5%)
Audience assignment (5%)
Plagiarism Policy Essay (10%)
Research Proposal (5%)
Library Research Assignment (5%)
Summary (5%)
Annotated Bibliography (15%)
Peer Review (5%)
Literature Review (20%)
Wikipedia Edit (5%)
Discipline Awareness II assignment (10%)
Reflective Essay (5%)

At the end of the course, the Office of Institutional Assessment and the Composition Program will collect random samples of student Metacognitive Writing Assignments (Reflection) and Final Research Projects in order to assess the effectiveness of the Students as Scholars Program. Their assessment has no bearing on your grade in the course.

COURSE POLICIES

Grading: In grading essays, I use the following general criteria:

A "C" level grade (70–79%) denotes average college-level writing and achievement. The essay is a competent response to the assignment: it meets, to some degree, all the assignment requirements, and demonstrates that the author has put significant time and effort into communicating his/her ideas to his/her targeted audience. It has a thesis, presents some support, and moves from point to point in an orderly fashion; sentence-level errors do not significantly prevent comprehension. Essays that do not meet these criteria will not earn a "C."

A "B" level grade (80–89%) highlights a strong example of college writing and thinking. In addition to meeting the "C" level requirements, such an essay goes further in some way(s): it demonstrates some insight into the "gray areas" of the topic, provides original or very thorough support that is tightly woven into the overall argument, reads smoothly at both the sentence and paragraph levels, and/or exhibits a personal "voice" or style. It has few sentence-level errors.

An "A" level grade (90–100%) marks an essay that engages the reader in a provocative conversation. Even more than in a "B" essay, its author anticipates and responds to possible reader questions, uses a wide range of supporting evidence, engages the reader in a provocative conversation, provides unexpected insights, and/or uses language with care and facility.

"D" and "F" level essays do not meet the basic expectations of the assignment.
I calculate final grades by converting the letter grades to a 100 point scale using the following values:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A+</td>
<td>98–100</td>
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<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>93–97</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A-</td>
<td>90–92</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B+</td>
<td>87–89</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>84–86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B-</td>
<td>80–83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C+</td>
<td>77–79</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>74–76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C-</td>
<td>70–73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>60–69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>0–59</td>
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</tbody>
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A note on final grading: You must earn the grade of "C" or better in this course to receive credit for it and to fulfill this portion of the English composition requirement in General Education. A grade of "C-" or below will not be sufficient to receive credit for this course.
Late Assignments: Unless you make prior arrangements with me, late assignments will lose 5% (1/3 of a letter grade) per day. The grade penalty cannot be made up by revision. **No late assignments will be accepted after Nov 24.**

Revisions: The essays may be revised for a higher grade, but they must be substantially revised. You cannot lose a grade by revising, but a higher grade is not guaranteed. I have found that "B" papers (or higher) are often more difficult to revise, since serious revision requires thoroughly changing the essay's structure, and "B" papers usually have a fairly good structure. "C" papers (or lower) often respond more dramatically to revision, since the major changes they require are often more straightforward. I recommend revising "C" papers or lower only. If you plan to revise a "B" paper, please see me beforehand so we can discuss a revision strategy.

**All revisions must be submitted within 2 weeks of receiving a grade on the assignment.**

No revisions or late assignments will be accepted after Nov 24.

Plagiarism: Plagiarism means using the exact words, opinions, or factual information from another source without giving that source credit. Writers give credit through the use of accepted documentation styles, such as parenthetical citation, footnotes, or end notes; a simple listing of books, articles, and websites is not sufficient.

Writers must include a Works Cited or References list at the end of their essay, providing full bibliographic information for every source cited in their essay.

Instructors in the George Mason Composition Program support the George Mason Honor Code, which requires us to report any suspected instances of plagiarism to the Honor Council. All judgments about plagiarism are made after careful review by the Honor Council, which may issue penalties ranging from grade-deductions to course failure to expulsion from GMU.

Students with disabilities: If you are a student with a disability and you need academic accommodations, please see me and contact the Office of Disability Services (ODS). All academic accommodations must be arranged through the ODS.

GMU Nondiscrimination Policy: George Mason University is committed to providing equal opportunity and an educational and work environment free from any discrimination on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin, sex, disability, veteran status, sexual orientation, or age. GMU shall adhere to all applicable state and federal equal opportunity/affirmative action statutes and regulations.

GMU Email: Students must activate their Mason email account and check it regularly. For privacy reasons, all class-related emails will be sent only to students' official GMU email addresses.

**IMPORTANT DATES**
<table>
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<tr>
<th>Event</th>
<th>Date</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>First day of classes; last day to submit Domicile Reclassification Application; Payment Due Date; full semester waitlists removed</td>
<td>Aug 31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Labor day, University closed</td>
<td>Sept 7</td>
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<tr>
<td>Last day to add classes—all individualized section forms due</td>
<td>Sept 8</td>
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<tr>
<td>Last day to drop with no tuition penalty</td>
<td>Sept 15</td>
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<tr>
<td>Last day to drop with a 33% tuition penalty</td>
<td>Oct 2</td>
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<tr>
<td>Final Drop Deadline (67% tuition penalty)</td>
<td>Oct 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Selective Withdrawal Period (undergraduate students only)</td>
<td>Oct 5 – Oct 30</td>
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<tr>
<td>Columbus Day Recess: (Monday classes/labs meet Tuesday. Tuesday classes do not meet this week)</td>
<td>Oct 12</td>
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<tr>
<td>Thanksgiving Recess</td>
<td>Nov 25 – 29</td>
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<tr>
<td>Last day of classes</td>
<td>Dec 12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exam Period</td>
<td>Dec 14 – Dec 21</td>
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Dr. Dean Taciuch  
George Mason University  
Fall 2015

English 302: No2 & No3  
Course Schedule

**Week 1 (Aug 31 – Sept 4): Academic and Scholarly Audiences**
Students as Scholars program  
Discussion Post 1: Introductions  
**Discipline Awareness I Assignment** due Sept 6

**Week 2 (Sept 7 – 11): Consensus and Controversy**
Discussion Post 2: Scholarly Controversies and Arguments  
Readings: Daniel Dennett: "Show Me the Science"  
Lisa Randall: "Dangling Particles"  
**Audience Assignment** due Sept 13

**Week 3 (Sept 14 – 18): Evaluating Sources**
Discussion Post 3: Wikipedia Sources

**Week 4 (Sept 21 – 25): Plagiarism and Use of Sources**
Discussion Post 4: Plagiarism Policies  
**Plagiarism Policy Essay** due Sept 27

**Week 5 (Sept 28 – Oct 2): Finding a Topic**
Discussion Post 5: Research Questions  
**Research Proposal** due Oct 4

**Week 6 (Oct 5 – 9): Research Methods**
Using the Library and Databases  
Discussion Post 6  
**Library Research Assignment** due Oct 11

**Week 7 (Oct 12 – 16): Columbus Day Recess.**
**Monday Classes meet Tuesday**  
Summary, Paraphrase, Quotation, and Synthesis  
Discussion Post 7: Paraphrase practice  
**Summary Assignment** due Oct 18

**Week 8 (Oct 19 – 23): Evaluation and Documentation**
Discussion Post 8  
**Annotated Bibliography** due Oct 25

**Week 9 (Oct 26 – 30): Literature Reviews**
UNC Lit Review Handout  
Discussion Post 9

**Week 10 (Nov 2 – 6): Synthesis and Analysis**
Discussion Post 10: Lit Review Thesis  
**Literature Review draft** due Nov 6  
**Peer Review Assignment** due Nov 8

**Week 11 (Nov 9 – 13): Conclusions and Arguments**
Discussion Post 11

Literature Review due Nov 15

Week 12 (Nov 16 – 19): Revising, Editing, Proofreading
Discussion Post 12

Wikipedia Edit due Nov 22

Week 13 (Nov 23 – 24): Review
all current revisions due by Nov 24
Nov 25 – 29 Thanksgiving Break

Week 14 (Nov 30 – Dec 4): Next Steps
Discussion Post 13

Discipline Awareness II assignment due Dec 6

Week 15 (Dec 7 – 11): Reflection
SaS Reflection due Dec 12 (final day of classes)

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