Welcome to the Introduction to the Minor in Writing!

In this course, we invite you to “try on” several different modes genres of writing—from free-writing to reflective to argumentative, from essay to multimedia—in order to explore your writerly interests, commitments, and voices.

You will ultimately create an eportfolio of your work thus far as a Minor in Writing student, which will be your practice ground for the eportfolio you will create in the Capstone course (Writing 420). You will also begin to create an archive of your writing from which to draw for both this eportfolio and the Capstone eportfolio.

Through peer review, our Minor in Writing blog, and other forms of collaboration, we will develop a shared vocabulary for reflecting on our own writing and cultivating a reflective practice that will provide a basis for assessing your growth as a writer throughout the Minor in Writing.

You can see that we have an ambitious agenda, but one that will lay the groundwork for your time in the Minor. I look forward to working with all of you this semester!

---

The philosophy and general approach of this course were developed collaboratively by the members of the Sweetland Minor in Writing Committee. The syllabus was initially designed by Naomi Silver in the Fall of 2011 and adapted by Shelley Manis in the Winter of 2012 and again in Fall 2012, Winter 2014 & Winter 2015.
Course Requirements

• **Attendance & participation** are highly important in this small, collaborative, seminar-style class. If you must be absent because of an emergency or illness, please make every effort to speak with me about it beforehand, if possible, or after the next class. I will excuse such absences with a doctor’s note or other form of official documentation. You must notify me of absences due to religious observance or University sporting events by the third week of the semester. Keep in mind that more than two unexcused absences will begin to affect your final grade, and more than three absences can result in failure of the course. Additionally, two latenesses will count as an absence. *If you do not attend both the first and second class meetings, you may be dropped from the course (and Minor).*

  o Active, thoughtful, and respectful participation in all aspects of the course will make our time together as productive and engaging as possible. I will give you midterm feedback on your participation.

• **Readings**

  o There are two required books for this course:

    ▪ *Writer/Designer*, by Kristin L. Arola, Jennifer Sheppard, and Cheryl E. Ball (which you should keep as it will come in handy for the Capstone course too!)


  o All other course readings will be made available on CTools and in an optional course packet that you can purchase on demand at Dollar Bill Copying.

    ▪ I strongly recommend, as a handbook, *The Everyday Writer*, by Andrea Lunsford. It will serve you well throughout your college career.

  o I expect all students to come to every class prepared to talk about the reading and/or writing assigned for the day. It is perfectly fine to come to class confused by a reading but with questions about what you read; this shows me you are engaging with the text, even if you struggled to make sense of it.

Course Writing Projects

We will be doing a number of different kinds of writing this semester: small writing assignments designed to give you experience writing in a variety of forms and modes; formal, revised essays in print and new media formats; informal reading responses and ideas-testing on our blog; and a variety of types of reflective writing.

• **Your first project** will offer a statement of “Why I Write.” It will be thoughtful and analytical, but also provide a bit of a manifesto for the Minor. It should help you set some goals for this semester and the remaining semesters in the Minor before you take the capstone course (WRITING 420).

• **For the second project**, you’ll each start from a piece of writing you’ve already completed – for some of you it will be an academic essay and for others a popular piece or a blog entry, whatever – your choice of where to begin will depend on how
you hope to stretch yourself in your writing this semester. Questions you will need to answer in order to begin writing include: who is my audience (e.g., where might I publish this piece) and what do I still need to learn about my topic in order to represent it accurately and effectively? As a first step, you will write a brief proposal laying out your topic and audience.

- **The third formal project** will be to remediate your 2nd project to reach a different audience (or to reach the same audience in a different way). To remediate means to recreate the essay in a different medium (e.g., video, podcast, poster, website, etc.). Your argument will remain, but the aim here is to think about how a different medium will affect the essay’s rhetorical effects (how do logos, ethos, pathos change in a new medium?). Why this medium and not another?

- **One final project** will serve as your opening to your ePortfolio. It will offer an orientation to the ePortfolio in the form of an evidence-based argument about your evolution as a writer thus far in the minor, supported with evidence from your own work.

- **Minor in Writing blog**: Over the course of your semesters in the Minor, you will be contributing regularly to our blog, which lives here: [http://writingminor.sweetland.lsa.umich.edu/](http://writingminor.sweetland.lsa.umich.edu/). We will begin using it this semester for reading responses and more. You will receive an email from Wordpress containing only a username and login; follow the link and login, and you will be taken to your “Dashboard” where you can create your first post. You can also click on “Visit the site” at the upper left of your screen to go to the blog main page. We’ll be learning together how to use the blog over the course of the semester.
  - Over the course of the semester we will have “blog groups” that will change periodically. Each week, please read the posts of the members of your group, and comment on at least two of them.
  - You will earn 80% of your grade for the blog simply by posting and responding regularly, according to the schedule indicated in the class syllabus and policies. The remaining 20% will be earned based on the overall thoughtfulness, purposefulness, and interactivity of your posts, comments, and responses to your fellow bloggers.

- **Electronic Portfolio**: Over the course of the semester we will work on developing eportfolios that present your writing and your sense of who you have become as a writer. These will be the first drafts, so to speak, of the eportfolio you will turn in for the Minor in Writing.

- **Archive**: Over the course of the semester, you will begin the practice of archiving your written work for the end-of-term portfolio and your final Minor portfolio. We will orient you to the archive in the first weeks of the class.

In order to have access to this array, you will need to archive your work during your three (or more) semesters in the Minor. Make a habit of archiving anything you
think might be useful to you when you assemble your portfolio: not just papers or presentations, but notes, drafts, email... a broad history of your writing, whether for coursework or for your own purposes. To streamline archiving, we have a location on CTools for you to save your work, as well as a form that accompanies each new item to remind you what it is and why you saved it.

**Grades** for this course will be determined as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Attendance &amp; Participation</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Blog</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low-Stakes Writing (including peer review)</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Why I Write Project</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Re-Purposing an Argument Project</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Re-Mediating an Argument Project</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minor Gateway Portfolio</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Gayle Fund**

If financial need makes it difficult for you to purchase books, a laptop computer, or other classroom materials, the Gayle Fund (established in honor of Gayle Morris Sweetland) can loan you the necessary materials. You can talk to your me about how to apply, or you can get an application form from the receptionist at the Sweetland Center for Writing main office at 1310 North Quad.

**Conferences & email**

I will be available during office hours every week – but I’m also happy to schedule a meeting outside my regular hours. Don’t hesitate to contact me – email is the best choice, usually. I will respond to email messages within 24 hours during the week, and 48 hours on the weekend. We will have two required conferences during the semester, in connection with projects 1 and 3. I’m more than happy to set up an appointment with you, to meet in my office or to skype or gchat. Bottom line? I’m available to you. Don’t pass up that opportunity.

I cannot say this enough: I am here for you. I’m happy to talk with you about any aspect of the course, the minor in writing, or your experience at U of M at any point in your learning process. One of my biggest joys as a teacher is working with students in and out of the classroom.
Teaching Philosophy (My Job)
In my senior year of high school, I had a beloved teacher who started every class session with the words, “hello, all you smart people.” I can still see him, fingers interlaced across his rotund belly, twinkling grin on his Santa Clause-esque face, ever-so-slightly bouncing on the tips of his toes. Nearly twenty years later, Dr. RJ Davis influences my own teaching. You won’t always hear me start class with those exact words (though on some days I do feel the urge to channel Dr. D), but you will always be on the receiving end of my absolute faith that you ARE all smart people who can—and will—achieve what I ask of you and reach the goals you set for yourselves.

For me, teaching is a team sport in which we all have positions to play. I have expertise, and you also have expertise, and we’ll put our various strengths together. I don’t do much lecturing. Instead, I expect that you come to class having read and thought about the material for the day, and we put that material on its feet together, using what you’ve read about so that you learn more deeply. We do a lot of teamwork and collaborate in a variety of ways, both in and out of the classroom.

Let me be clear: I expect a LOT from you. This is because in my experience, students rise to the standards set for them—so why would I set the bar low? I care deeply about my students and enjoy their company, I aim to create an atmosphere of civility, inquiry, a dual emphasis on process and product (how we learn/create as well as what we learn/create), collaboration, and fun. AND out of all that I demand rigorous, disciplined work. You are all smart people, and I believe in our ability to do stellar work together.

Active Learning and Metacognition (Your Job)
We learn by doing. Period. In order to succeed in this course, you will be active learners in this classroom—and ideally in all of your work in the minor and at the U of M at large. The Association of American Colleges and Universities calls active learners “intentional learners,” and here’s what they have to say about intentional learning:

In a turbulent and complex world, every college student will need to be purposeful and self-directed in multiple ways. Purpose implies clear goals, an understanding of process, and appropriate action. Further, purpose implies intention in one’s actions. Become such an intentional learner means developing self-awareness about the reason for study, the learning process itself, and how education is used. Intentional learners are integrative thinkers who can see connections in seemingly disparate information and draw on a wide range of knowledge to make decisions. They adapt the skills learned in one situation to problems encountered in another: in a classroom, the workplace, their communities, or their personal lives. As a result, intentional learners succeed even when instability is the only constant. (2002)
In this course, you will do a lot of thinking and writing about your own thinking and writing—what we call metacognition. You will write in multiple genres and multiple media, learning how to analyze, create, and support arguments for a variety of audiences and purposes, and you will reflect along the way on your processes, successes, and challenges. The culmination of your work in this course will be a dynamic, engaging, multi-faceted e-portfolio that includes samples of your work at every stage of your process. (I will also be continuing to build my teaching/professional portfolio alongside you.)

**Title IX Statement**

Title IX makes it clear that violence and harassment based on sex and gender is a Civil Rights offense subject to the same kinds of accountability and the same kinds of support applied to offenses against other protected categories such as race, national origin, etc. If you or someone you know has been harassed or assaulted, you can find the appropriate resources here:

- UM Sexual Assault and Prevention Center (SAPAC) 24-hour confidential crisis line – (734) 936-3333 * http://sapac.umich.edu/
- UM Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS) – (734) 764-8312 * http://caps.umich.edu/
- University of Michigan Police (DPSS) – (734) 763-1131 (or 911 for emergency) * http://www.dpss.umich.edu/

**Plagiarism**

The LSA Office of Academic Affairs defines plagiarism as “representing someone else’s ideas, words, statements or other work as one’s own without proper acknowledgment or citation” (see [http://www.lsa.umich.edu/academicintegrity/examples.html](http://www.lsa.umich.edu/academicintegrity/examples.html)). New writing challenges can tax your writing fluency, and entering new academic discourses can test your abilities to synthesize and take ownership over source texts and concepts. My job as instructor in this course is to help you through these obstacles so that you can find your footing as a writer in new domains. Your job as a student is to keep the faith, so to speak, and work through these new domains until you regain confidence. This work requires patience, planning, and focus.

Most plagiarism occurs as a result of laziness or sloppiness in regard to careful reading, note taking, and citation practices, or from procrastination, and/or panic. Care, timeliness, and communication will eliminate most of the risk. If you have questions about whether or not you should give credit to a source in your work, you may clarify it with me. In general, though, I recommend always the citing sources you have consulted as well as those you borrow from directly. *If you are having difficulty with an essay, contact me right away!* That’s what my email address and office hours are for.

Of course, if I find evidence of deliberate plagiarism in any formal or informal student paper, I will fail that paper and report the incident to the Dean of Academic Affairs.
Students with Disabilities

The Services for Students with Disabilities (http://www.umich.edu/~sswd/) is available to assist university students who need accommodations due to a disability.

Here is the contact information for Services for Students with Disabilities:

- location: G-664 Haven Hall
- phone: (734) 763-3000
- website: http://ssd.umich.edu/

Your success in this class is important to me. If there are circumstances that may affect your performance in this class, please let me know as soon as possible so that we can work together to develop strategies for adapting assignments to meet both your needs and the requirements of the course.

Fun

Vigorous, active engagement and participation is required for successful performance in this course. I'm thrilled to be working with you this session, and I intend to have fun. I hope you'll do the same!
Winter 2015 Course Schedule

Week 1: Getting Started with the Course

Thursday, January 9: What have we gotten ourselves into?

- Introduction to Course – Syllabus, course structure & philosophy
- Set up profiles for the Minor Blog at http://writingminor.sweetland.lsa.umich.edu/ (You'll receive your login and password by email if not in class)
- Writing on our feet
- “Tool 40: Draft a Mission Statement for Your Work”
- First blog teams assigned

Week 2: Planning & Thinking

Tuesday, January 13: Why do we write?

Reading due for today:
Pinker’s “Prologue”
George Orwell, “Why I Write” and Joan Didion, “Why I Write,” and

- Project 1 (“How I Write”) Introduced
- Précis writing (Practice with today's readings)
- How to do annotated bibliographies (practice with this week’s readings)

Thursday, January 15: What is multimodal writing?

Reading due for today:
“What are Multimodal Projects”
Sullivan, “Why I Blog”
Lamott “Shitty First Drafts”

- In-class writing/troubleshooting
- “Tool 48: Limit Self-Criticism in Early Drafts”
- Self-reflective comments on drafts
- Revising as Writing

Friday, January 16:
Blog post due—BOTH GROUPS—for this week (by 11:55pm on Wednesday): What in either or all of the Orwell/Didion/Sullivan readings resonates with you? (i.e. What
did you find funny, silly, touching, boring, inspiring, uncomfortable, dismaying, true, etc.) Why/how?

- **Be as specific as you can, referencing and quoting from the texts. Let these questions guide you, but not dictate every sentence you write: use them as a springboard for your own particular, rigorous response.**

- **Don’t forget to respond to two members of your blog group’s posts by Sunday!**

**Week 3: Revision Processes/Strategies/Habits**

**Tuesday, January 20: Peer Review and Archiving**

*Reading due for today:*
“Process for Critical Response”

*Writing due for today:*
Complete rough draft of “How I Write,” *with* self-reflective comments

- “Tool 49: Learn from Your Critics”
- Author’s note
- Full-class workshop of __________ & __________’s drafts
- Small-group workshop of the rest

- Archive Why I Write Draft
- Conduct Why I Write Peer Review
- Archive Why I Write Peer Review

**Thursday, January 22: Reading and/as Writing**

*Reading due for today:*
“Reverse Engineering” from *A Sense of Style*
“Tool 43: Read for Both Form and Content,”
THEN re-read one essay you love for both form and content.
“How to Create a Revision Plan”

*Gathering due for today:*
Bring in one example of writing you would like to emulate and one example of writing you consider to be both excellently written and intellectually/artistically
engaging. (One selection may or may not fill both requirements—your choice.) Be prepared to talk about how they’re engineered!

- Presentation of chosen writing
- In-class writing (Mission Statement, storyboarding)
- Revision plans for “Why I Write”

Friday, January 24: by 11:55pm

**Week 4: Begin Re-Purposing Unit**

**Tuesday, January 27: Re-purposing Project Introduced / In-class mini re-purposing**

*Reading due for today:*

- Re-purposing Prompt & eportfolio prompt;
- “Analyzing Multimodal Projects” (Writer/Designer)

- Thinking about genres, purposes, and audiences
- Practice re-purposing with blog groups
- Intro to eportfolio prompt
- 3C’s “Rhetorical Situation” Poster

**Thursday, January 29: Planning re-purposing project**

*Reading due for today:*

- “Engaging Sources” (Craft of Research)
- “The Curse of Knowledge” (Pinker)

*Gathering due for today’s class:*

- Bring in 2 or 3 pieces of writing you may want to re-purpose for Project 2

- “Making Another Writer’s Decisions” mini-assignment

**Sunday, February 1:** Revised draft of “Why I Write” project (incorporating peer responses) due, with self-reflective comments and author’s note by 11:55PM. Post to class Google Drive folder and archive it.

**Week 5: Re-Purposing Proposals**
Tuesday, February 3: Elements of Effective Proposals

Reading due for today:
“Choosing a Genre and Pitching Your Project” (Writer/Designer)

• “Writing a Pitch Letter” mini assignment
• Creating a production plan

Thursday, February 5: Proposals

Re-purposing proposal and rough draft of annotated bibliography due by the end of class – Class time will be a work session, but you should come with a rough draft so you have something to build on.

Writing due for today:
Proposal & Annotated Bib in process for Project 2 (for workshop)

Writing due for today:
Blog Post

Blog Prompt (THIS TIME IT'S DUE BY CLASS to help you prepare for your re-purposing proposal): Post a reflection on the discussions you’ve had with your peers and with me as you've deliberated about which of your previous pieces of writing to re-purpose. Talk, too, about the one you've chosen to go with. What genre and/or mode is the original piece you're working with, and how do you plan to repurpose it? (Alternatively, or perhaps additionally, depending on where your post takes you: What would you have done with the other piece(s) that you considered re-purposing for this project?)

• Don’t forget to respond to two members your blog group’s posts by Sunday

Week 6: Analyzing Models & Looking Ahead

Tuesday, February 10: Re-Purposing Work

Reading due for today:
THREE models in the genre of your re-purposing project

Writing due for today:
“write/design” assignment on p.39 of Writer/Designer for your models
• Presenting your models
• Writing precis’ for models

**Wednesday, February 9:**

*Blog post due—BOTH GROUPS—by 11:55pm:* Write a post in which you think through some of the questions on the Eportfolio prompt. There are many—chose one or two that seem particularly helpful for *you*, or particularly challenging. If you cringe at a question, maybe you should take it on. Who knows what you'll discover! **OR,** blog about your re-purposing proposal/project in process. Inspiration, ideas for implementing your vision, roadblocks you're struggling to work around, etc.
  - *Be as specific as you can.*
  - *Don’t forget to respond to two members your blog group’s posts by Friday!*

**Thursday, February 12: ePort Planning**

*Reading for today:*
Sample ePortfolios TBA

• Reverse-engineering samples
• Responding to samples as readers
• What do you learn about your hopes & dreams for your own?

**Week 7: Re-Purposing Workshops/Labs**

**Tuesday, February 17: Re-Purposing Lab & Annotated Bib Workshop**

*Reading due for today:*
“Working with Multimodal Sources” (*Writer/Designer*)

*Writing/Gathering due for today:*
Re-Purposing project in-process
(Have all materials you need to draft handy)
Drafts of all précis you've written so far
Full bibliographic information on each source

• Project drafting/troubleshooting
• Annotated bib workshop
**Wednesday, February 18:** By noon, post complete rough draft of re-purposing project, with self-reflective comments and author’s note, to class Google Drive folder.
- Read and take notes on your blog group members’ projects—you’ll use those notes in the in-class workshop on Tuesday.

**Thursday, February 19: Re-Purposing Workshop**

- Reading due for today:
  - ‘s draft & ‘s draft

- Full class workshop of &
- Small group workshops of the rest (likely will happen out of class)
- CRLT in for mid-term evaluations

**Week 8: Begin Re-Mediation Projects**

**Tuesday, February 24: Re-Mediation Project Introduced**

- Reading due today:
  - Re-Mediation Project Prompt
  - Revisit “Choosing a Genre and Pitching Your Project” (*Writer/Designer*)

- Writing due for today:
  - write/design assignment on p.45 of *Writer/Designer*

- What is Re-Mediation?
- Explore possibilities for upcoming project
- Discuss findings
- Re-mediation planning

**Thursday, February 26: Re-Mediation Pre-Writing**

- Reading due for today:
  - Revisit “Choosing a Genre & Pitching Your Project” (*Writer/Designer*)

- Writing due for today:
  - write/design assignment on p.51 of *Writer/Designer*

- Share findings
- Nail down project decisions
- Discuss rhetorical situations of projects
- Pitches previewed
Week 8: WINTER RECESS

Tuesday, March 3
Thursday, March 5

Week 9: Re-Mediation Focus

**Monday, March 10 (suggested):** Revised draft (incorporating peer response) of Project 2 (re-purposing) with Annotated bibliography due to class Google Drive folder by 11:55pm—date negotiable

Tuesday, March 10: Re-Mediation Pitches

*Writing/preparation due for today:*
“write/design” exercise on p.56 of *Writer/Designer*

- Pitch presentations and feedback

Thursday, March 12: Moving Toward Design

*Reading due for today:*
“Designing Your Project” (*Writer/Designer*)

- Discuss practicalities
- Create production plans
- Prepare lists of needed assets

Week 10: Re-Mediation Drafting

Tuesday, March 17: Open Lab

- Time to order assets & assess what’s still needed
- Time to begin mock-ups / storyboards
- Time to troubleshoot with group members

**Wednesday, March 18: By noon,** post complete mock-up or storyboard for Re-Mediation Project, with self-reflective comments and author’s note, to class Google Drive folder.
  - Read and take notes on your blog group members’ projects—you’ll use those notes in the in-class workshop on Tuesday.

Thursday, March 19: Mock-Up/Storyboard Workshops
Reading due for today:
______________ & ____________’s Mock-Up/Storyboard
Group members’ mock-ups/storyboards

• Full-class workshop of __________ & __________’s mock-ups/storyboards
• Small-group workshop of the rest

Week 11: Rough Cuts

Tuesday, March 24: Rough Cut Lab

Reading due for today:
“Drafting & Revising Your Project”

• Time to work on rough cuts & prep for workshops
• **Tuesday, March 24:** By 11:55pm, post complete rough cut of re-mediation project, with self-reflective comments and author’s note, to class Google Drive folder.
  • Read and take notes on your blog group members’ projects—you’ll use those notes in the in-class workshop on Tuesday.

Thursday, March 26: Rough Cut Workshops

Reading due for today:
______________ & ____________’s rough cuts
Group members’ rough cuts

• Full-class workshop of __________ & __________’s rough cuts
• Small-group workshop of the rest

Week 12: ePortfolio Planning

Tuesday, March 31: The ePortfolio as a Composition

Reading due for today:
“Reflective Texts, Reflective Writers” (Yancey)
“Arcs of Coherence” (Pinker)
ePortfolio Introduction Prompt

• Establishing ethos through coherence
• What coherent picture do you want to show?

Thursday, April 2: ePortfolio Mapping

Reading due for today:
Sample eportfolios (TBA),
w/ attention to navigation & reflective material

Sunday, April 5: Submit complete draft of ePortfolio introduction to class Google Drive folder by 11:55pm.
  • Read and take notes on your blog group members’ projects—you’ll use those notes in the in-class workshop on Tuesday.

Week 13: ePortfolio Central

Tuesday, April 7: ePortfolio Intro Workshops

Reading due for today:
_________ & ________’s introductions
Group members’ intros

• Full-class workshop of _________ & __________’s intros
• Small-group workshop of the rest

Thursday, April 9: Revision & ePortfolio Lab

Reading due for today:
Revisit “How to Create a Revision Plan”
Effective reflection reading TBA
Sample ePortfolios TBA

• Create revision plans for ePortfolio introductions
• Time to work on ePortfolio navigation & reflection

Sunday, April 12: By 11:55pm, post an author’s note with a link to your ePortfolio to the class Google Drive folder.
  • Read and take notes on your group members’ ePortfolios in-process (and on those scheduled for workshop this Tuesday), as you’ll use them in the workshop.

Week 14: ePortfolio Workshops
Tuesday, April 14: Landing Page & Navigation Workshops

Reading due for today:
____________ & _________’s landing page & navigation
Group members’ landing page & navigation

- Full-class workshop of _________ & _________’s ePorts
- Small-group workshop of the rest

Thursday, April 16: ePorts in Progress – Reflective Material

Reading due for today:
____________’s & _________’s reflective material
Group members’ reflective material

- Full-class workshop of _________ & _________’s reflective material
- Small-group workshop of the rest

Week 15: Farewell (sniff, tear…)

Tuesday, April 21: ePort Showcase? TBD