Writing 350: Excelling in Upper-Level Writing

Course Overview
This one-credit parallel course is designed to practice writing in a supportive environment and aid students who seek to meet the expectations for writing in upper-level courses, and especially courses that meet the LSA’s Upper-Level Writing Requirement. It addresses the writing challenges that students bring to the course, thereby providing immediate and direct assistance to upper-division student writers. Operating on a workshop and discussion format, this course provides an opportunity to identify writing strengths and issues, set personal goals, and practice writing in a collaborative environment. The course uses the writing students are producing in their other classes as the basis for its writing workshops.

The course will help students identify key stages in the writing process from deciphering assignment prompts, planning papers and time schedules to generating ideas and learning the writing expectations for various disciplines. This course will stress the increased significance of revision for success in advanced writing. Our goal is to improve your recognition of practices that will promote your success and effectiveness in writing at the University of Michigan and beyond.

Our class work will include the opportunity to critically annotate one of your previous college papers, contribute and share information on your experience on a course blog, make class presentations, share and workshop your current writing in peer groups, and annotate one of your final upper-level writing assignments. Students will be expected to participate and involve themselves in the community of the class as we build a supportive writing environment.

Course Policies
• Class attendance is required. In case of illness or emergency, please contact me as soon as possible. You are required to make up any work that you miss.
  • I will not accept late assignments unless you have made arrangements with me in advance. In case of illness or emergency, please contact me as soon as possible.
  • Students may be required to bring additional copies of their writing for workshops. Please come to each class with materials ready.
  • Plagiarism will result in immediate failure.

Plagiarism
The LSA Student Bulletin defines plagiarism as “submitting a piece of work (for example an essay, research paper, assignment, laboratory report) which in part or in whole is not entirely the student’s own work without attributing those same portions to their correct sources.” It is often difficult to determine where the line is between being influenced by a text or person and taking words or ideas from that text or person. If you have any questions about whether or not you should give credit to a source in your work, I suggest that you always cite that source to be safe. We will spend time in class on how and when to cite sources.

Some examples of plagiarism include:
• handing in a paper written (even partially) by someone else as your own work
• turning in the same paper for two different classes
• copying and pasting sentences from a website, even if you change some words
• not citing a source—that is, claiming someone else’s ideas, sentences or words (even only a few words!) as your own, even accidentally
• changing a quotation (paraphrasing) without acknowledging the source or by using too
much of the source’s original language

For a more detailed explanation of plagiarism visit the University of Michigan statement on plagiarism at the LS&A website on academic misconduct. The Department of English Language and Literature follows a standard policy for students who plagiarize. Here is the link to the full policy statement: http://www.lsa.umich.edu/english/undergraduate/advising/plagNote.asp

- You will fail the assignment and course.
- Your case will be sent, with an explanatory letter and all pertinent materials, to the Dean for Academic Affairs.
- You will be placed on academic probation (which does register on your transcript). If a student already on probation is caught plagiarizing, he or she is usually asked to leave the University.

Accommodations
The University of Michigan is committed to ensuring the full participation of all students, and I am committed to making learning as accessible as possible for all of my students. In accordance with University of Michigan policy, I am happy to provide accommodations for students with learning disabilities, and I will protect the confidentiality of students’ individual learning needs. We work with Services for Students with Disabilities (SSD), and if you have not already contacted them, I encourage you to do so. Please email me by the second week of the term if you would like to show me your letter from SSD describing approved accommodations. I will set up a confidential appointment with you to discuss accommodations.

If you suspect that you may have a disability and would like to be tested, Services for Students with Disabilities can provide screenings and referrals to low-cost diagnostic services.

Here is the contact information for Services for Students with Disabilities:
G-664 Haven Hall; 734-763-3000; http://ssd.umich.edu/

Religious Observances
If a class session or due date conflicts with your religious holidays, please notify me so we can make alternative arrangements. In accordance with U-M policy on Religious/Academic conflicts, your absence will not affect your grade in the course.

Cell Phones, Electronic Devices, and Laptops
Please be sure to turn off your cell phone and close laptops before class begins. Most days I will ask you to refrain from using your laptop in class. I will announce when laptops will be permitted.

Grades
This course is graded on a Credit / No Credit basis. To earn credit for this course, students must attend class, attend scheduled meetings with the instructor, participate in peer group work, and complete coursework, which will include an annotated reflection of a previous college paper, several contributions to a course blog, class presentations, and a final, annotated current course paper with reflective analysis.

*** If financial need makes it difficult for you to purchase necessary classroom materials such as books or a laptop, you may be eligible to apply to the Gayle Fund (established in honor of Gayle Morris Sweetland) to borrow those items from the Sweetland Center for Writing. You can talk with me about how to apply for materials for your Sweetland writing classes, or you can get an application form from the receptionist at the Sweetland office at 1310 North Quad.

Tentative Schedule

September 9 What We Talk About When We Talk About Writing
Introductions and questions; course syllabus; course blog; ULWR

16 Reading Like A Writer
Rethinking reading strategies
Read “How to Read Like a Writer” by Mike Bunn on ctools

**Project 1** - assign annotation of previous college paper; practice paper annotation.
**Insider Report - Blog post due Monday 9/14 at 10pm**

23

**I See Exactly What You Mean**
Reading strategies in the disciplines; connecting reading and writing strategies
Read “The Science of Scientific Writing” by Gopen and Swan on ctools

**Project 1 Due** - annotation of previous paper; set individual meetings
**Insider Report - Blog post due Monday 9/21 at 10pm**

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**What Do You Expect?**
Engaging and working with Faculty and GSIs; Learning and navigating disciplinary expectations; planning a writing calendar;
**Synthesis Day I** – What are we learning about good writing at Michigan? What remains consistent with our previous notions? What changes? What did you know before you came, but now realize is important?
**Insider Report - Blog post due Monday 9/28 at 10pm**

**October 7**

**Reading into Assignment Prompts**
Share and workshop on student paper prompts; 3-4 volunteers
Peer group work on prompts.
**Insider Report - Blog post due Monday 10/5 at 10pm**

14

**Topics Within Topics Within Topics**
Generating and narrowing in on your good ideas; Invention; Shitty First Drafting;
Peer group work on topics.
**Insider Report – Blog post due Monday 10/12 at 10pm**

21

**Field Trip! Exploring UM resources hands-on**
Library resource visit with Doreen Bradley; using databases, and tour.
Meet in Graduate Library Lobby at 11:00am
**Insider Report – Blog post due Monday 10/19 at 10pm**

28

**Getting the Most from Peer Review**
Becoming active agents in effective peer workshop strategies; in-class and out-of-class peer group work. Writing in your discipline.
**Insider Report - Blog post due Monday 10/26 at 10pm**

**November 4**

**The Thing about Introductions**
Sample introductions from several disciplines; peer group work on introductions
**Insider Report - Blog post due Monday 11/2 at 10pm**

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**Effective Evidence**
Working with research and evidence in the disciplines; strategies for quoting, paraphrasing, and using citation.
Synthesis Day II – What are we learning about good writing at Michigan? What remains consistent with our previous notions? What changes? What did you know before you came, but now realize is important?

18 Engaging Critique and Re-considering Revision
How to make best use of faculty feedback and other support to talk about writing. What is revision and why so critical; enhanced strategies for revision; considering structure and shape.
Insider Report - Blog post due Monday 11/16 at 10pm

25 What Works in Peer Groups and Why
Reports from Peer Groups - sharing practices on what works, what doesn’t, and what we can learn from the exchange as writers.
Final Project: Annotate and reflect on current U-L writing sample

December 2 In conclusion: How to end papers and influence graders
Assignment Prompts revisited in peer group workshop
Insider Report - Blog post due Monday 11/30 at 10pm

9 Where Are We Now? What Do We Take With Us?
Synthesis Day III – What are we learning about good writing at Michigan? What remains consistent with our previous notions? What changes? What did you know before you came, but now realize is important?

Final Project Due on or before Wednesday, December 16th at 1pm in my Sweetland office mailbox.