

Program in Writing, Rhetoric, & Professional Communication

Faculty of Arts & Humanities

The University of Western Ontario
London, Ontario



Information For All Students in a Writing Course – Fall/Winter 2011-2012

Term Work

The instructor will provide a full course outline, including an explanation of the nature of the term work in printed form, to students within the first three weeks of the term. Ordinarily, the course outline will be posted to your course/section's WebCT site. Read the full course outline carefully; it contains or refers to important information about instructor, Program, and University policies applicable to the course.

Assignments

In half courses, a minimum of 2,500 words of written work (excluding drafts, quizzes, tests and the final examination mandated by Senate Regulation in Distance Studies) will be required. **Submitting the same material in two different courses requires permission in advance from both instructors. Without such permission, the result will be a zero for the material that is submitted the second time.**

This regulation does not preclude the administration of surprise assignments and quizzes, as long as the approximate number, frequency, and value of such assignments is specified in the course outline.

Students should keep electronic copies of all assignments. Please note that in some Writing courses, electronic copies of assignments must be submitted to turnitin.com through your section's WebCT HomePage. Your instructor will advise you at the beginning of term as to her/his preferences (electronic, paper, or either) for assignment submission for grading purposes.

If submitting a paper copy of an assignment, do not put it under office doors. The drop-box for assignments in writing courses is outside the Program in Writing, Rhetoric, & Professional Communication Office, Room 3270, Lawson Hall.

All assignments must have the course name, section and instructor's name listed on the front of the assignment. FAXED ASSIGNMENTS WILL NOT BE ACCEPTED.

Final Examinations

Unless you are advised otherwise, there will be a final written examination in each Distance Studies online course and the examination will be written in one of the six specified locations—Barrie, London UWO, Ottawa, Sudbury, Toronto and Vancouver. Students will be informed in writing, well in advance, of the format of the final examination.

Attendance

Attendance is mandatory and non-attendance (or insufficient participation in online courses) may result in a significant grade penalty or failure in a course. Please see your course outline for your instructor's specific policies on attendance.

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 counselor 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.

Office Hours

Each instructor must specify office hours (three hours per week, at least two of which must be 'open'); these will be posted on a bulletin board in the Program's main office (Lawson Hall Room 3270). Distance Studies Instructors of online courses will provide an equivalent notice of availability. Students may consult their instructors at other times by appointment. Students who wish specific information about the nature and policies of a course in which they are or will be enrolled are encouraged to consult with either the instructor or the Program in Writing, Rhetoric, & Professional Communication's Undergraduate Program Director, Mr. Brock Eays (see contact info. below).

SPECIAL Examinations, INComplete Standing, Or AEGrotat Standing

All requests **must** be initiated in and with the Office of the Dean of the student's home faculty, using a form provided by that office. Any arrangements will require the eventual approval and signatures of the course instructor and the Director of the Program in Writing, Rhetoric, & Professional Communication. **However, individual instructors do not have discretion to initiate these procedures or grant these requests; consequently, please do not approach your instructor on these matters, as she or he will simply direct you to proceed as outlined above. Arrangements for Special Examinations must be made BEFORE the beginning of the final examination period.**

"Medical Accommodation Policy:

(Note that the following statements appear *verbatim* on all Writing, Rhetoric, & Professional Communications course outlines. These statements constitute Program policy on these matters.)

For UWO Policy on Accommodation For Medical Illness, see:

<http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/handbook/appeals/medical.pdf>

(downloadable Student Medical Certificate (SMC): <https://studentservices.uwo.ca> under the Medical Documentation heading)

Students seeking academic accommodation **on medical or other grounds** for any missed tests, exams, participation components and/or assignments **worth 10% or more of their final grade** must apply to the Academic Counselling office of their home Faculty and provide documentation. Academic accommodation on medical grounds cannot be granted by the instructor or the Program in Writing, Rhetoric, & Professional Communication, and the Program requires students in these circumstances to follow the same procedure when seeking academic accommodation on non-medical (i.e. non-medical compassionate or other) grounds.

Students seeking academic accommodation **on medical grounds** for any missed tests, exams, participation components and/or assignments **worth less than 10% of their final grade** must also apply to the Academic Counselling office of their home Faculty and provide documentation. Where in these circumstances the accommodation is being sought on **non-medical grounds**, students should consult in the first instance with their instructor, who may elect to make a decision on the request directly, or refer the student to the Academic Counselling office of their home Faculty.

Students should also note that individual instructors are not permitted to receive medical documentation directly from a student, whether in support of an application for accommodation on medical grounds, or for other reasons (e.g. to explain an absence from class which may result in a grade penalty under an 'Attendance' policy in the course). **All** medical documentation **must** be submitted to the Academic Counselling office of a student's home Faculty."

Requests For Academic Relief And Complaints (See current U.W.O. Calendar, and <http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/handbook/appeals/appealsundergrad.pdf> for University regulations.)

- a. **Complaint:** If students have a complaint concerning a course in which they are enrolled, they must discuss the matter with the instructor of the course. If students are not satisfied, they should take the complaint to the Writing, Rhetoric, & Professional Communication Program Office, Lawson Hall, Room 3270.
- b. **Requests for Exemption:** Students who make a **request for exemption** from a University Regulation must address the request in writing to the Office of the Dean of the Faculty in which they are registered.

c. Requests for a Change in Grade: These procedures apply to courses in Writing. Students may request academic relief with respect to grades on essays, tests, or final examinations (if applicable). Unless there is a procedural irregularity, relief cannot be adjudicated for other matters such as participation grades. The first stage is discussion with the instructor of the course; the appeal must be made within three weeks of the date on which the assignment was returned.

A request for relief is to be made in writing to the Program in Writing, Rhetoric, & Professional Communication Office, Lawson Hall, Room 3270 using the form. **A request cannot be lodged without grounds**, which may include questions of fairness or appropriateness of general grading practices.

The Director of Writing, Rhetoric, & Professional Communication will contact the instructor in order to ensure that a full discussion of the matter has taken place at the level of the instructor and the student. The student must discuss the material in some detail with the instructor. The absence of a response from the instructor within two weeks, subject to the reasonable availability of the instructor, will be taken as agreement that jurisdiction in the matter has moved to the Program in Writing, Rhetoric, & Professional Communication Office. Once the Program in Writing, Rhetoric, & Professional Communication Office takes jurisdiction in a request for relief, it cannot return to the instructor.

The Director of Writing, Rhetoric, & Professional Communication will consider the grounds given, and may make a ruling on the request or arrange to have the submission re-read confidentially by another instructor who taught the course during the current year or in recent years, but who is not the student's instructor. The student must submit the original work, but should also submit a clean copy for the second reader. The instructor should provide the original assignment. If the grade assigned by the second reader differs from that given by the student's instructor, the Director of Writing, Rhetoric, & Professional Communication will discuss the grade with both readers. A grade on which any two of these three people (the instructor, the second reader and the Director of Writing, Rhetoric, & Professional Communication) agree will become the final grade for the assignment.

Deadlines for requests for academic relief against a final grade in a course are as follows: January marks: January 31st; April/May marks: June 30th; Intersession marks: July 31st; Summer Evening marks: August 31st; Summer Day marks: September 15th; Spring/Summer Distance Studies courses: October 15th. A request for a change in grade will have one of three results: the grade may stand, or be raised, or be lowered. If students wish to proceed in their request for academic relief beyond this point, they should apply in writing to the Dean of the Faculty of Arts and Humanities, University College, Room 112.

Scholastic Offences (Including Plagiarism)

“Scholastic Offences are taken seriously and students are directed to read the appropriate policy, specifically, the definition of what constitutes a Scholastic Offence, at the following Web Site:
<http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/handbook/appeals/scholoff.pdf>.

All required papers may be subject to submission for textual similarity review to the commercial plagiarism detection software under license to the University for the detection of plagiarism. All papers submitted for such checking will be included as source documents in the reference database for the purpose of detecting plagiarism of papers subsequently submitted to the system. Use of the service is subject to the licensing agreement currently between The University of Western Ontario and Turnitin.com (<http://www.turnitin.com>).”

All students in 2100 level Writing courses will be required to submit copies of all assignments written outside of class hours to turnitin.com. Your section instructor will advise you further on the procedures to be followed.

Plagiarism (the unacknowledged use of another person's work) is one of the most serious academic offences, since it involves fraud and misrepresentation. In plagiarizing, one is in effect claiming another person's words or ideas or data as one's own work, and thus misrepresenting material subject to academic evaluation. It is necessary, therefore, that plagiarism carry appropriate penalties. These are within the discretion of the instructor in consultation with the Director of Writing, Rhetoric, & Professional Communication, but may include a grade of zero on the assignment without the privilege of resubmitting it or failure of the course.

THE SERIOUS OFFENCE OF PLAGIARISM CAN HAVE ADDITIONAL CONSEQUENCES AT THE FACULTY LEVEL. Instructors must report instances of plagiarism to the Director of the Writing, Rhetoric, & Professional Communication, who will report the infraction to the Office of the Dean of Faculty of Arts and Humanities.

Students must acknowledge each printed or electronic source (including study guides such as *Cole's Notes* and Internet materials) by author, title, date and place of publication, and page number if: (a) they quote from it directly; (b) they paraphrase its ideas; (c) they are conscious of any influence its ideas may have had on their own work. Every source (including websites) that students have consulted (whether they refer to it directly or not) must be included in a bibliography (Works Cited). Some instructors may require that students provide copies of material downloaded from the Internet.

It is not always possible to identify the sources of inspiration of one's own ideas with total accuracy. A reasonable and conscientious effort is all that is required. However, it is entirely the student's responsibility to be aware of the nature of plagiarism. If students have any questions about plagiarism, they should ask their instructor. If students have any doubts about the documentation of their own essays, they should see the instructor before the essays are due.

Students found to have submitted the work of another person as their own work will automatically fail the course. Any students who know their own work has been used improperly have a responsibility to inform the Program in Writing, Rhetoric, & Professional Communication Office of that fact; otherwise, they will be considered collaborators.

Contact Information:

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