

Writing, Rhetoric, and Professional Communication

Faculty of Arts and Humanities



THE UNIVERSITY OF WESTERN ONTARIO
 2207F 650: Writing for the Web
 Fall 2013 (September 9—December 6)

Instructor:



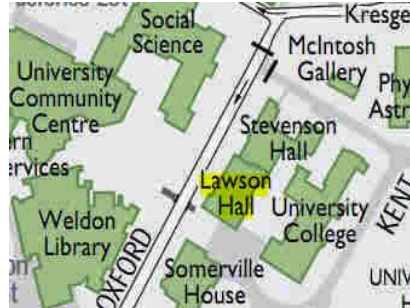
Dr. Christopher Lee
clee222@uwo.ca

Office:

3270 Lawson Hall

Office hours:

Via email anytime; live chat (Skype) possible by appointment



Course Materials:



Title: *Writing for the Web Reader*
 Author: Various
 Publisher: UWO
 Link: <http://www.bookstore.uwo.ca/Ebook/10707>



Title: *Hot Text*
 Author: Price and Price
 Publisher: New Riders
 Edition: First

Course Objectives:



“This course will explore the theory and practice of digital writing technologies. Topics covered include the production, management, and reception of digital texts; web writing style; hypertext and linking; authorship; copyright. Students will evaluate the design and content of web texts and create their own web sites.” The focus in this course will be to have you engage in both the production of written texts for the internet and also develop a critical eye for examining the written texts present on the Web, including an understanding of how the relationship between reader and writer is affected by the evolution of technologies.

Course Requirements

Assignment	Percentage of Final Mark	Due Date
Discussion Forums	10%	Ongoing
Wikis	15%	Ongoing
Essay with Hyperlinks (approximately 1500 words)	20%	October 20
Personal Website	35%	December 6
Final Exam	20%	Final Exam Period (Dec 8-19)

Discussion Board Posts (10%)

This is where we have weekly conversations in the course. Details on posting requirements are given on the next pages.

Wiki Entries (15%)

In addition to discussion postings, for several weeks during the term we will be doing collaborative Wiki articles. Instructions will be provided. We will be doing this first in [Wikispaces](#) and in the second half of the term in Wikipedia itself via the Wikipedia Education Project. More details will be forthcoming.

Wiki contributions will be graded on a number scale from 1-10 over ten weeks for a total of 100% and is separate from the discussion requirement.

Hypertext essay (20%) Due October 20

Essay: Write an essay (with intro, thesis, body, conclusion) on any topic **based on the readings and content of the course** and smoothly incorporate hyperlinks to other readings and/or examples as well as visuals. Research your subject, provide new insights, explanations, or examples of the issue. The style can be standard academic or more of a “magazine” or blog style. Length will be approximately 5-7 double-spaced pages (1500 words). See **Assignments** for details.

Website Development (35%) Due April 9

- Select a topic to develop a website using software such as Dreamweaver or by using a template from a site like Wordpress, Webnode, or Wix (not Tumblr!). If you use a pre-made template, you must sufficiently customize it to make it yours.
- Add content to that site—you must have at least 5 pages (see **Assignments** for details).
- Use the free space allocated to you at Western to post your site (see instructions in **Course Materials**), host it elsewhere, or if you are using a Wordpress, Webnode or Wix site, hosting is provided.

Final Exam (20%)

The two-hour final exam will test your familiarity with the readings of the course and your ability to synthesize information from the readings with your experiences as a writer. It will be an essay exam administered during the regular examination period for the university.



Assignment Format

Your essay is to be typed and double-spaced and submitted as .doc, .docx, or .rtf format. If you submit a .pdf file to retain formatting, also submit a second version in a format that I can edit with comments. Do not use a cover page, as these are particularly unnecessary for online submissions. When using sources in a paper, you will be expected to follow MLA, APA, or Chicago-style citations.



Submitting Assignments

Assignments are due on the dates specified on the schedule. Late essays will be penalized by **2.5% per day** unless I have permitted an extension on the due date. You must speak to me ahead of time for an extension and provide a suitable reason. Weekly class sessions will run from Monday to Sunday, so writing assignments for a particular week are due by Sunday night at 11:59PM, Eastern Time. If they're submitted a little past midnight, say before I wake up the next morning, there won't be any penalty. All this is designed to help last-minute, weekend editors.

You must also submit your final draft of the hyperlink essay to [Turnitin.com](https://www.turnitin.com) for plagiarism checking. This happens automatically when you submit it to the **Assignments** area. Turnitin will generate a report for you, detailing the percentage of your paper that has been taken from sources, which I will also look at. I will not grade any essay until I see the report on Turnitin.com.



You are responsible for keeping copies of all assignments submitted in case we need to discuss your writing and if you want to submit it for the annual Marie Smibert Writing Program Student Achievement Prizes in April.

Attendance/Discussion Board Participation

Obviously, we do not meet formally in a Distance Studies course. Therefore, attendance and participation on the Discussion Board are intertwined. While online classes are generally asynchronous, they are not correspondence or self-paced. You must attend class (defined as logging into our Sakai section and interacting, posting questions and thoughts). I will assign a weekly number grade from 0-8 over twelve weeks based on whether you have fulfilled the posting requirements described in further detail below—1) **quality of posting**, 2) **frequency and number of posts made**, and 3) **number of posts read**. Over twelve weeks, the maximum will thus be 96. I will then add 4 marks to all posts to get a score out of 100, which will be weighed as 10% of your final grade. No participation for a given week will earn a zero. Fewer than the requirement will earn 1-5 marks. Doing the minimum required will earn a 6 (adding up to a "B"). More than the minimum will earn an 7-8 (adding up to an A/A+).



1) Quality of Posting

All posts on the Discussion Board must

- ✓ Contribute something meaningful to the board.
- ✓ Support your opinion with sufficient reasons or evidence.
- ✓ Display good grammar and organization.

Postings should not

- ⊗ Contain disrespectful, insulting, or offensive language.
- ⊗ Be excessively long (more than one screen length) or excessively short.
- ⊗ Be unrelated to the forum topic.
- ⊗ Only say things like "I agree with you" or "Nice comment!" that do not contribute any substance.

2) Frequency and Number of Posts

To earn a 6 or “B” you must post on **three separate days covering both boards**. This means **at least three posts per week**, which is defined as running from Monday to Sunday. At least **one post must be a reply** to another student. Anything more than this puts you in 7-8 or A/A+ territory.

Travel	Christopher Lee	September 16, 2010 10:50 AM
Re:Travel	Shefall	September 17, 2010 11:48 AM
Re:Something Interesting About Me	Daniel	September 13, 2010 11:02 PM
Cars	Christopher Lee	September 16, 2010 10:52 AM
Re:Cars	Daniel	September 18, 2010 1:16 PM
Re:Something Interesting About Me	Daniel	September 13, 2010 11:02 PM
Re:Something Interesting About Me	Lindsay	September 14, 2010 2:21 PM
Arts	Christopher Lee	September 16, 2010 10:53 AM
Re:Something Interesting About Me	Daniel	September 14, 2010 7:40 PM
Motorcycles	Christopher Lee	September 16, 2010 10:54 AM

3) Number of Posts Read

Finally, I may also factor in the number of posts read. For instance, if the class has posted 100 times in total and you read only 10 during the week, your mark will be downgraded.

To give you a sense of my scoring, here is a rubric identifying the combination of criteria that can result in a particular score:

0	No responses or posts read.
1-2	Posting on only one day; posting on two days, but one or more posts may not contribute to the discussion, may not answer a classmate, or may contain poor grammar or unclear expression. Student may read only a few of the posts on the boards.
3-5	Posting on only two days; posting on three days, but one or more posts may not contribute to the discussion, may not answer a classmate, or may contain poor grammar/unclear expression. Student reads less than the average number of posts.
6	Posting relevant and useful content on all three required days including a response to a classmate and using good grammar. Student reads around the average number of posts.
7-8	Posting relevant and useful content on more beyond the required minimum of three posts on three days. Student reads more than the average number of posts.

Extended absences, defined as failure to post into the Sakai classroom for more than five days, must be coordinated with the instructor. Thus, if you plan to be offline for an extended period, please contact me in advance by email or else you will lose participation marks for missing class.

Absence Policy

Attendance is required to do well. If you miss more than two weeks your final grade will be penalized a full letter grade (an earned grade of 80% would be reported as a 70%); if you miss more than 3 weeks you will not be given a passing grade for the course. This policy will only be waived for medical or compassionate reasons as explained in the Medical Accommodation Policy below.



Medical Accommodation Policy

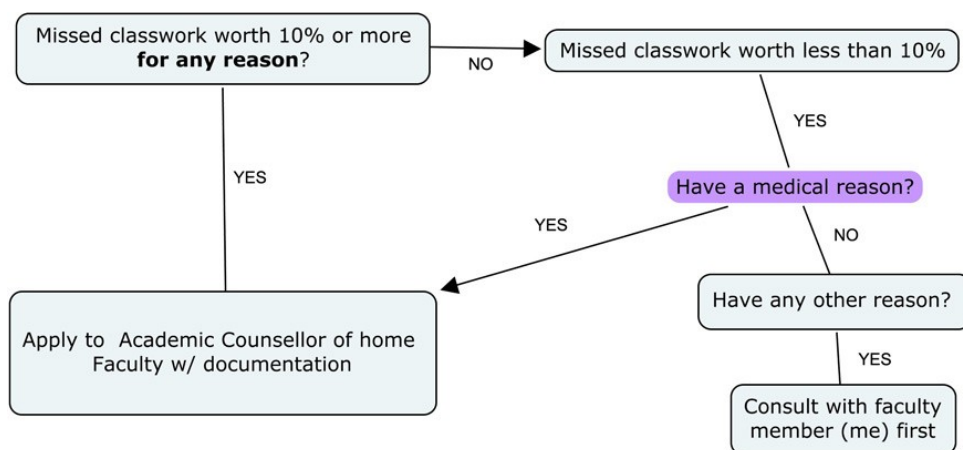
For UWO Policy on Accommodation For Medical Illness, see http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/handbook/appeals/accommodation_medical.pdf. To download a Student Medical Certificate (SMC), go to

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

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, and 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.



Students who are in emotional/mental distress should refer to MentalHealth@Western: <http://www.uwo.ca/uwocom/mentalhealth/> for a complete list of options about how to obtain help.

Special Requests: Special Examinations, Incompletes, Aegrotat Standing



Please refer to the "Information for All Students in a Writing Course" for more detailed information. Briefly, remember that I do not have the discretion to initiate, consider, and grant (or deny) such requests; you must go directly to the Dean's office of your home faculty.



Scholastic Offences, including Plagiarism

The University Senate requires the following statements, and Web site references, to appear on course outlines:

“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/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/scholastic_discipline_undergrad.pdf.”

Students must write their essays and assignments in their own words. Whenever students take an idea, or a passage of text from another author, they must acknowledge their debt both by using quotation marks where appropriate and by proper referencing such as footnotes or citations. Plagiarism is a major academic offence (see Scholastic Offence Policy as above). Plagiarized work will receive an ‘F’ (ranging from 0 to 49) and may result in failure in the course as a whole.

“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>).”

Prerequisites

The University Senate requires the following statement to appear on course outlines:

“Unless you have either the requisites for this course or written special permission from your Dean to enroll in it, you may be removed from this course and it will be deleted from your record. This decision may not be appealed. You will receive no adjustment to your fees in the event that you are dropped from a course for failing to have the necessary prerequisites.”

The prerequisite for registration in this course is a) a final grade of 65 or more in one of Writing 2101, 2121, 2111, or 2131, or b) a final grade of 85 or more in Writing 1000F/G, or c) Special Permission of the Program.

Term Schedule

Date	Topic + To Do	Readings
Sept 9-15	<u>What's Different with Web writing?</u> Get your personal web space at UWO if using, or look at web template options.	Bolter Chapter 1 "Introduction" in the custom book + additional lecture material
Sept 16-22	<u>Writing Technologies</u> Discussion Forum posts + Wiki-space	Prices, Chapter 1 on Personalization and Audience (skim/skip pp. 8-13)
Sept 23-29	Discussion Forum posts + Wiki-space	Prices, Chapter 3 on the nature of Web writing
Sept 30-Oct 6	<u>Our Visual culture</u> Discussion Forum posts + Wiki-space	Neil Postman "Peekaboo World" in the custom book + additional lecture material Prices, Chapter 4 on attention
Oct 7-13	<u>E-Books, Wikipedia, and the Summa</u> Discussion Forum posts + Wiki-space	Prices, Chapter 7 on hyperlinking
Oct 14-20	<u>Plagiarism, originality, and the Web</u> Discussion Forum posts + Wiki-space Hypertext Essay due: Oct 20	Bolter, Chapter 6 on dialogues
Oct 21-27	<u>The future of literature?</u> Discussion Forum posts + Wikipedia Education Project	Bolter, Chapter 7 on hyperfictions Prices, Chapter 11 on genres; Chapter 15 on blogs (kind of); Chapter 16 on online resumes
Oct 28– Nov 3	<u>Web 2.0 and user participation</u> Discussion Forum posts + Wikipedia Education Project Begin developing pages. Post main site page	Bolter, Chapter 8 on literary theory of Web writing Prices, Chapter 5 on shortening text
Nov 4-10	<u>Web design: crash course</u> Discussion Forum posts + Wikipedia Education Project Post 2 nd page	Prices, Chapter 6 on scannable text
Nov 11-17	<u>Web design: crash course</u> Discussion Forum posts + Wikipedia Education Project Post 3 rd page	Prices, Chapter 8 on chunking paragraphs
Nov 18-24	<u>Online identity</u> Discussion Forum posts + Wikipedia Education Project Post 4 th page	Bolter, Chapter 9 on the self Prices, Chapter 9, 10 on scrolling and menus
Nov 25-Dec 6	Discussion Board posts Final Version of Personal Website completed by Dec 6	Bolter, Chapter 10: conclusions