

Writing 2101G

Introduction to Expository Writing

Winter 2026

Lecture 001 (Wed. 9:30-12:30, SH 3305)

Course Description and Objectives

“An introduction to the basic principles and techniques of good writing. The course will emphasize practical work and the development of writing skills for a variety of subjects and disciplines.” By “practical work,” this course description from the calendar means to indicate that you will spend much of your time in this course writing, responding to the writing of others, and revising your work in light of the responses you receive to it. Consequently, in this course you will not only produce written texts, but also develop a critical eye for examining the written texts of others, both professionally-written and written by others in your class.

The calendar course description also points to the development of writing skills in “a variety of subjects and disciplines.” While it would simply not be possible to study and write in all the genres that are used across a complex university such as Western, you will be asked to write in more than one genre. When you do so, pay attention to the rules/constraints of that genre and study how those rules give you clues to what is regarded as “good writing” for the genre you are writing in. Try to develop a conscious awareness (metaknowledge) about the rules for writing well and how they shift depending on the context for writing.

More generally, the course aims to contribute to your development of an “ability to communicate information, arguments, and analyses accurately and reliably, orally and in writing, to a range of audiences” (Ontario Council of Academic Vice-Presidents’ statement on ‘University Undergraduate Degree Level Expectations,’ 24 October 2005).

Required Texts

Messenger, William E., Jan de Bruyn, Judy Brown, and Ramona Montagnes. *The Canadian Writer’s Handbook*. Third Essentials Edition. Oxford University Press: Don Mills, 2023. [Print book approx. \$47, ebook approx. \$20]

Course Requirements

Multiple-choice Quizzes (2 @ 5% each, 1 @ 10%)	20%
Essay 1: Rhetorical Analysis	35%
Essay 3: Research Argument	45%

Note: Students are responsible for checking the course OWL site (<https://westernu.brightspace.com/>) regularly for news and updates. This is the primary method by which information will be disseminated to all students in the class. If students need assistance with the course OWL site, they can seek support on

the [OWL Brightspace Help](#) page. Alternatively, they can contact the Western Technology Services Helpdesk. They can be contacted by phone at 519-661-3800 or ext. 83800.

Submitting Assignments

Assignments are due on the date specified, uploaded through the relevant “Assignments” link (under “Assessments”) **on our OWL site**. Do not email me any assignments! **Unless you have been granted an extension, late assignments will be penalized a full letter grade at least and may not be accepted at all**. You must talk to me about extensions ahead of the due date; they are not automatic.

Essays must be double-spaced in a standard serif font (e.g., Times New Roman), and they must follow MLA format. When using sources in an essay, you will be expected to follow MLA standards for documentation, detailed in chapter 36a of *The Canadian Writer’s Handbook*. By uploading your assignments to OWL, you will be automatically submitting them to Turnitin for plagiarism checking. Turnitin will generate a report for you, detailing the percentage of your paper that has been drawn from sources; you will be able to see the report. No assignment will be graded until that report is generated and viewed.

In addition to submitting final drafts on the due date for each assignment, you are required to submit a rough draft of each assignment for the scheduled peer-review sessions. Failure to submit a sufficiently complete (in your instructor’s opinion) assignment or to participate in a scheduled peer-review session **will** result in a 10% penalty being applied to the earned grade for that assignment. In other words, an assignment that would have earned a 78, for example, will receive instead a recorded grade of 70. This penalty will be applied in addition to any other penalties incurred (e.g., for late submission). If you review the draft of another student but do not submit your own draft, the deduction is 5%. Adequate participation in the peer-review session involves the thoughtful completion of a form supplied in each peer-review forum.

Attendance and Participation

Attendance at class is required to improve as a writer. Here is the Writing Studies attendance policy in this class:

- You may miss up to three hours (the equivalent of one week of class) of class meetings during the term without explanation: that means that the first three class hours you miss will be recorded as absences but *excused provided you don’t miss any more*.
- However, if you miss a total of four to nine class hours (the equivalent of up to three full weeks of class), your final grade will be reduced by 10% (e.g. an earned final grade of 80% will be reported as a final grade of 70).
- If you miss a total of more than nine hours of class meetings (the equivalent of more than three weeks of class meetings) your final grade will be reduced by 15% (e.g. an earned final grade of 80% will be reported as a final grade of 65).

This policy will be waived only for medical or compassionate reasons. If you have good reasons for waiving an absence of one class meeting (e.g. if you’ve missed three hours, and need or want to miss another class meeting) discuss these reasons with your instructor within one week of that absence. If your absence is extended and prolonged (over one week of continuous non-attendance), then you should discuss it with your academic advisor in your home faculty, who may require documentation. That advisor may then contact all of your instructors.

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 Western University **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 counsellor in your Dean's office. If you elect to miss a Writing class in order to write such a test in another class, that is your choice; your absence will not be excused.

Attendance also extends to tardiness. If you are more than 20 minutes late, you will be penalized an hour of attendance. Please make every effort to be on time as late entry can disrupt the flow of discussion in our class. Early departures from class, which have not been previously arranged with the instructor, will also be counted as an absence. If you leave during the break, you will be docked an hour of attendance.

Scholastic Offences, including Plagiarism

All essays and assignments must be written **in your own words**. Whenever you take an idea or a passage of text from another author, you must acknowledge this debt by using quotation marks where appropriate and by proper referencing of all quotation, paraphrase, and summary via in-text citations. **Please note that plagiarism also includes double submission: submitting work from one course for credit in another without written permission from both instructors.** Plagiarism is a major academic offence. Scholastic offences such as plagiarism are taken very seriously and attended by academic penalties that may include expulsion from the program. You may read the appropriate policy on what constitutes a scholastic offence by following this link:

http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/scholastic_discipline_undergrad.pdf

All required papers may be subject to submission for textual similarity review to the commercial plagiarism detection software under license to the University. 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>.

As noted, in this course you will be required to submit an electronic copy of the final version of each of your written assignments to turnitin.com through your tutorial section's OWL homepage.

An Important Note on the Use of AI: In this course, the use of AI (such as automatic translation tools, grammar checkers, ChatGPT...) is prohibited, unless there has been discussion with and agreement by the instructor before beginning an assignment. If AI use is suspected, the instructor will ask for research notes, rough drafts, essay outlines, and/or other materials used in preparing assignments. Students are expected to retain these materials until after final grades have been entered. In the unlikely event of concerns being raised about the authenticity of any assignment, students may be asked to produce these materials; an inability to do so may weigh heavily against them.

Prerequisite Checking

Ensuring you have the correct prerequisite(s) is your responsibility. The following notation articulates the Senate regulation with respect to the student needing to be responsible for ensuring that course prerequisites have been completed successfully or special permission from the Dean obtained:

“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.”

Academic Consideration Policy

University policy on academic considerations is described [here](#). This policy requires that all requests for academic considerations must be accompanied by a self-attestation.

Please note that any academic considerations granted in this course will be determined by the instructor, in consultation with the academic advisors in your Faculty of Registration, in accordance with information presented in this course outline.

For procedures on how to submit Academic Consideration requests through the Student Absence Portal, please see the information posted on the Office of the Registrar's webpage:
https://registrar.uwo.ca/academics/academic_considerations/index.html

All requests for Academic Consideration must be made within 48 hours after the assessment date or submission deadline.

All academic consideration requests must include supporting documentation, which may include a Student Medical Certificate. Recognizing that formal documentation may not be available in some extenuating circumstances, the policy allows students to make one Academic Consideration request **without supporting documentation** in this course. **However, the following assessments are excluded from this, and therefore always require formal supporting documentation:**

- **Quizzes:** Because the three quizzes are written asynchronously online (on your own time) and include flexibility in the form of three-day windows for submission/completion, the instructor reserves the right to deny academic consideration for these missed elements.
- **Essays 1 and 2:** Because the submission deadlines for these assessments already includes flexibility in the form of three-day windows for submission without penalty, the instructor reserves the right to deny academic consideration for assignments which are submitted following the end of the period of flexibility. Students are expected to submit each of these assignments by the deadline listed below. Should extenuating circumstances arise, students do not need to request Academic Consideration as they are permitted to submit their assignment up to 72 hours past the deadline without any late penalty. Should students submit their assessment beyond 72 hours past the listed deadline, a late penalty as described above under "Submitting Assignments" will be applied.

Students with disabilities work with Accessible Education (formerly SSD) which provides recommendations for accommodation based on medical documentation or psychological and cognitive testing. The accommodation policy can be found here:

https://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/Academic%20Accommodation_disabilities.pdf

Religious Accommodation

Students should consult the University's list of recognized religious holidays, and should give reasonable notice in writing (email), prior to the holiday, to the Instructor and an Academic Counsellor if their course requirements will be affected by a religious observance. Additional information is given in the [Western Multicultural Calendar](#).

Students who are in emotional/mental distress should refer to MentalHealth@Western: <https://www.uwo.ca/health/psych/index.html> for a complete list of options about how to obtain help. Immediate help in the event of a crisis can be had by phoning 519.661.3030 (during class hours) or 519.433.2023 after class hours and on weekends.

Statement on Gender-based Sexual Violence

Western [is committed to reducing incidents of gender-based and sexual violence](#) and providing compassionate support to anyone who has gone through these traumatic events. If you have experienced gender-based or sexual violence (either recently or in the past), you will find information about support

services for survivors, including emergency contacts, [here](#). To connect with a case manager or set up an appointment, please contact support@uwo.ca.

Other Student Support Services

Registrarial Services <http://www.registrar.uwo.ca>

Student Support Services <https://student.uwo.ca/psp/heprdweb/?cmd=login>

Services provided by the USC <http://westernusc.ca/services/>

Academic Support and Engagement <https://academicsupport.uwo.ca/>

Special Requests: Special Examinations, Incomplete Standing, Aegrotat Standing

Please refer to the “Information for All Students in a Writing Course” for more detailed information. Briefly, remember that your instructor does not have the discretion to initiate, consider, or grant (or not) such requests; you must go directly to the Dean’s office of your home faculty.

Intellectual Property and Copyright

All instructor-written materials (e.g. PowerPoints, lecture notes, oral lectures) for this course are created solely for students’ personal use within the course and remain the instructor’s intellectual property. Further reproduction, fixation, distribution, transmission, dissemination, communication, or any other uses, without securing the consent of the copyright owner (the course instructor) may be an infringement of copyright. You may not distribute, email, or otherwise communicate these materials to any other person. These limitations extend to recording, photographing, or sharing lectures (online or in-person) and lecture material without permission. Posting the instructor’s content from this course to online course sharing sites like OneClass or Course Hero without permission is both an infringement of intellectual property law and a violation of academic integrity guidelines. The instructor will pass these cases on to the Western University Ombudsperson or their Department Chair as appropriate.

Lecture, Reading, and Assignment Schedule

Date	Lecture Focus and Assignments	Readings
Jan. 7	Introduction to the course/syllabus	
Jan. 14	Introduction to grammar basics: word classes, sentence elements The Communication Process: Audience, Credibility, and Purpose Essay 1: Rhetorical Analysis (assigned)	The Writing Process: Planning, Writing, Revising Chapter 1a-1g Grammar Review: Chapters 3, 6-13
Jan. 21	The Communication Process (cont.) Paragraph and Sentence Construction Punctuation Quiz 1 (online: opens Wed, closes Friday Jan. 23 at 11:59 pm)	Paragraphs: Chapter 2 Punctuation: Chapters 15-18

Jan. 28	Punctuation (cont.) Critical Reading and Viewing Rhetorical Analysis Draft due for Assignment 1 Peer review workshop	
Feb. 4	Sentence Boundary Errors Variety and Emphasis Assignment 1 final draft due (flexible deadline: Feb. 4-7 by 11:59 pm)	Fragments, Comma Splices, and Run-on Sentences (plus Faulty Parallelism): Chapters 5a-5c, 5h Variety and Emphasis: Chapter 4
Feb. 11	Purpose: Writing to Inform and Writing to Persuade Modifier Problems	Modifier Problems: Chapters 5d-5e
Reading Week		
Feb. 25	Modifier Problems (cont.) Diction Quiz 2 (online: opens Wed, closes Friday Feb. 27 at 11:59 pm)	Diction (Writing to be Inclusive): Chapter 14 Mixed Constructions, Shifts: Chapter 5f-5g
Mar. 4	Writing and Design: Visual Rhetoric Essay 2: Research Argument (assigned)	
Mar. 11	Write and Revise the Research Essay: Incorporating and documenting sources	Acknowledging and Incorporating Sources: Chapters 34-36
Mar. 18	Library/computer lab research session Quiz 3 (online: opens Wed, closes Friday Mar. 20 at 11:59 pm)	The Research Plan: Chapter 32
Mar. 25	Write and Revise the Research Essay: Essay Tips and Strategies Draft due for Essay 2 Peer review workshop	
Apr. 1	Drop-in Essay writing help session	
Apr. 8	Essay 2 final draft due (flexible deadline: Apr. 8-11 by 11:59 pm)	