

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course offers you the opportunity to work on your expository writing and style. In exposition, discourse is used to explain, describe, convey, analyze, or evaluate information. To practice your expository writing, you will generate your own blog focused on a particular subject of interest to you. Among other options, you can choose to create a blog about film, health, popular culture, politics, music, fashion, travel, and lifestyle. You may choose to make your blog public to everyone who has access to the Internet or make it more private, available only to class members. However, either way, you will practice writing for different purposes with a particular audience in mind.

During the first part of the semester, we will develop a strong discourse community and learn about the blog as a genre from a rhetorical perspective. You will write a formal genre analysis to identify and explain what specific niche of blog you will be working in this semester. During the remainder of the course, you will design and craft your own blog. You are expected to generate weekly blog posts in which you will gain experience generating well-researched content, incorporating image and text, and organizing your ideas in different ways to inform, explain, and/or describe. You will work on your writing style, at sentence and paragraph level, as you attempt to write clearly, cohesively, and coherently for your audience in different genres. Yet you will also work on developing an appropriate ethos for your blog and thus adapt your writing style to meet your own blogging goals. In addition, this course is also designed to improve your editing skills; therefore, you will be expected to not only edit your own work but also your peer's.

**Note: This course has been specifically constructed to meet the requirements of a Golden Rule course and the course objectives for an advanced exposition course listed below.

COURSE OBJECTIVES**Genre and Rhetorical Knowledge**

- Develop genre knowledge by applying genre and rhetorical theories to investigate a specific blog niche and generate your own self-authored blog

Exposition

- Design and produce multiple blog posts for a variety of different purposes: to describe, explain, evaluate, inform, and analyze
- Practice blog writing with targeted audience in mind
- Work with constraints of genre and take risks to be inventive in production of blog posts

Style

- Work on clarity, coherence, cohesion, and eloquence at paragraph and sentence level
- Develop appropriate ethos for intended audience
- Experiment with word choice, sentence construction, and arrangement to find distinct and appropriate style for blogging goals

Design

Enhance rhetorical understanding of design by

- adapting genre conventions to meet blogging goals in consideration of audience expectations
- understanding and implementing design principles of format, layout, and presentation
- drafting, researching, testing, and revising visual designs and information architecture

Editing

- Learn and apply strategies for successful copy editing by responding constructively to peers' work by performing light, medium, and heavy copy editing

Delivery

- Learn effective methods for attracting and interacting with a public on your blog

Technology

- Learn to evaluate and use blogging platforms to create and delivery writing

COURSE TEXTS

- *ProBlogger: Secrets for Blogging Your Way to a Six-Figure Income*. 3rd Edition by Darren Rowse and Chris Garrett. John Wiley and Sons, 2012.
- *Style: The Basics of Clarity and Grace*, Fourth Edition by Joseph Williams and Gregory Colomb. This text will be used during the last two-thirds of the semester. Please purchase book by September 30th.
- Course packet from Xerographics. (Corner of 13th Street and 10th Avenue). Please bring this packet to class with you on September 2nd.

COURSE STRUCTURE

This class is highly structured in terms of scaffolding learning needed to create your own blog, develop a strong genre and rhetorical awareness, and enhance your writing style. While much work requires you to work at home on your own accord, you are also expected to participate in class conversations and activities, peer review, and a blogging community. Below you will find my expectations for your participation in these different performance areas.

Active Participation

Work assigned in class and at home scaffolds learning necessary to succeed in crafting a formal genre analysis in which you are asked to explain what a specific genre of blog is all about. During the first part of the course, we will work as a team to enter into conversation with scholars in course readings engaged in the shared inquiry about genre, rhetoric, and blogs. Together, through class discussions, we will collectively produce knowledge as we offer our own insights gained from reading, personal research, and our own genre analyses. Students will also participate in group work throughout the entire unit and in peer review sessions. These collective efforts will help strengthen your critical reading and writing skills.

The success of this collective effort requires your active presence in class discussions. A strong class doesn't just happen by chance: it involves each of us committing to creating a learning community attentive to each other's ideas, writing, and the readings. For this reason, participation and preparation are essential. I expect you to be here on time, with the readings to refer to, having thought about the ideas for the week, ready to speak about things you noticed or thought about as you read, and ready to listen and respond when put in groups. Be an attentive listener, and share when called upon. No matter your experience, confidence level, or background, your thoughts on the readings have an important place in our class dialogue.

Having a off day or too off is expected. But if you have a pattern (i.e. consecutive classes) of unpreparedness, or you seem to be relying on others to carry the weight of the work and discussion, the entire team will suffer. Our success as a team, after all, is dependent on everyone's active participation. Therefore, be conscious of what you can do to facilitate class discussion and the overall learning environment of others. I value directness (you can share your honest feelings about our readings), but also generosity to both the scholars we are reading and our classmates. In fact, I advocate affirmative methods of inquiry in which we try to build knowledge from the useful contributions of scholars and colleagues even if we may not always agree with everything they claim.

The success of this collective effort also requires your active presence in peer review sessions and in your blogging community. Throughout the second part of the course, you are expected to participate in a blogging community in which you consistently respond to both your peer's ideas and their writing style. Your grade for editing, in fact, is determined, in part, by your active participation in your blogging community (See EDITING PAGE on Wiki). However, more importantly, it has long been established in Composition Studies that you will learn much about writing in general as well as your own writing by participating in peer review. Throughout much of the semester, then, you will regularly read, assess, and respond to your peer's work in an effort to help improve not only your peers' writing but also your own.

Notetaking/Freewriting

The success of our collective efforts to build knowledge in class about genre, rhetoric, blogs, etc. is dependent on your preparedness for class discussions and activities. During Unit 1, you are required to complete reading assignments and freewrites. While I will not formally assess your reading notes, I highly encourage you to take notes when reading to help you cultivate a productive note taking system that can benefit you in this and future classes as well as in your future career and self-education. Freewrites will be formally assessed (See Freewrite Page on our Wiki) and count toward 10% of your final grade.

The freewrites are intended to not only scaffold your learning for success on final unit assignments but also to direct your attention to the course readings and genres under study. Each week during the first unit, you will have to read, annotate, and complete a freewrite. I have tried to offer guiding questions to facilitate your notetaking, but you also need to take it upon yourself to establish your own productive note taking system. Let's face it, we read a lot, and even read attentively, then lose a precise sense of what we read by the time we step in the classroom. Get into the habit of reserving a space in a notebook or reader to momentarily pause and reflect as you read; when you complete the day's assignments, jot down a few informal ideas to jump start class discussion. This will help your participation and preparation immensely.

You might reserve space for: initial reactions (things to share at check in; broad responses to the week's readings); more in-depth reflection points: these are the things you wish to speak most to in class and to hear others' opinions on; often this will include passages from the readings or arguments from the secondary sources that you wish to devote specific attention and discussion to.) If you take copious notes or mark up your texts a lot, you will benefit from taking the time to "pull out" a few thoughtful ideas for class from the bulk of your scribbles.

Freewrites are opportunities for you to think on the page and develop your ideas without pressure of creating formal structure for

writing. Freewrites thus help you develop more fluency as well as help you prepare for more formal writing assignments. While I require freewrites during Unit 1, I encourage you to freewrite as a pre-writing strategy for your blog posts.

My role during Unit 1 will be to provide background and context for thinking about the readings, then step back, prompting you with questions that help you apply and develop your readings, facilitating the ensuing discussions, and incorporating class ideas into the flow of discussion. My role during Unit 2 will be to guide you in creating in your own blog and facilitate discussions about blog writing and style. I will also guide many peer review sessions in which we look and talk about student writing as an entire class.

Peer Review/Editing

No writer writes in complete isolation. In making this claim, I mean to suggest that every writer counts on feedback from peers, colleagues, editors, etc. to produce and improve their writing. Feedback is solicited at different times throughout the writing process. Some writers discuss their ideas about a book at a cocktail party with a friend before they even begin to write. Some writers shoot a draft of an essay to a colleague when they feel stuck. Some writers wait until they get a final draft of whatever they are writing before getting feedback from an editor. But all writers solicit feedback. Being a good writer is dependent on good feedback.

Learning how to offer useful feedback is not easy. Just as it takes time and practice to hone your writing skills, it also takes time and practice to develop an astute ability to offer constructive feedback. In order to help you develop your feedback skills, a significant amount of time this semester will be spent in peer review and a blogging community in which you are expected to copy edit your peer's writing. In each peer review session, you will perform light, medium, and heavy copy editing as described on the EDITING PAGE on Course Wiki. To assist you with copy editing, we will be learning and working on specific writing strategies to improve our writing style. As you participate in your blogging community, you are expected to draw on this learning, as well as your own knowledge and experience, to copy edit your peer's work. Your grade this semester is dependent, in part, on your participation in peer review and your blogging community (See Assessment Page on Wiki). Thus, realize that just as your goal in this class is to improve your expository writing, it is also to improve your ability to edit others' work and offer constructive feedback.

ASSESSMENT POLICY

Final grades in this course are determined by a student's performance in all course activities. Students are assessed both in terms of their professionalism and production. Students who produce high quality work yet do not meet professional standards outlined below or vice versa should not expect to receive a high grade in this course. High grades in this course are reserved for those students who act professionally in class every day throughout the semester and who are highly productive in their course work.

Grading Policy:

Your final grade for this course will be determined by the grades you receive in three specific areas described below.

Professionalism: (10% of final grade)

To be professional is a rhetorical choice with consequences that reflect that choice. By that, I mean several things. First, when we behave in a professional manner, we choose to be taken seriously by our supervisors and colleagues just as we choose to take them seriously. Second, we choose to acknowledge our own responsibilities in a learning environment and commit to owning and fulfilling those responsibilities. Third, especially in a team-learning environment, we choose to respect our mentors and peers and expect the same of them. Should we choose to take our studies and our peers' seriously and should we choose to take ownership of our responsibilities in all coursework, then we can expect positive consequences in the form of high grades for professionalism.

While I should not have to delineate what it means to be professional, below you will find a list of expected choices that will result in an "A" grade for professionalism:

Completing all assignments and team tasks in efficient and timely manner; being present during team work and class discussions rather than being on computer at inappropriate times or in unrelated ways (checking email, facebook, etc.), "zoning out" or "texting at inappropriate times;" actively participating in team work--listening when others are talking, considering others' perspectives, working cooperatively; contributing to class discussion by responding thoughtfully to others and/or by asking questions that help build useful group understanding; make connections from the readings and/or build productive discussion from class discussion; revising with earnestness; offering constructive feedback to peers (giving praise as well as constructive criticism); abiding by attendance policy; being aware of daily activity expectations and working hard to meet those standards, ie. staying on task, meeting deadlines; and coming to class prepared at all times. Essentially, if this person was not a member of the class, the quality of the discussion and team work would diminish.

You are also expected to meet with me twice outside of class to discuss your writing. These meetings will be set up to meet both our schedules. However, you are expected to attend meetings on time and prepared.

Freewrites: (10% of your grade)

During the first unit, you will complete a number of freewritten homework assignments to help you absorb and think about the course readings as well as help prepare you for class activities. These freewrites (between 250-500 words) will be posted to our

course blog. While you are able to take a casual tone in these freewrites in order to think on the page without concern for style or structure, you are expected to make these freewrites substantial in terms of content. You will be assessed for critical engagement, development of ideas, and level of research (if required). Please see the Freewrite Page on this Wiki for more details on freewrite expectations and assessment.

Genre Analysis: (20% of final grade)

During the first unit, you will develop a theoretical understanding of genre from a rhetorical perspective. You will also develop your analytical skills as well as your ability to craft an astute expository essay. Informal unit assignments will consist of critical reading assignments as well as a variety of analytical assignments including rhetorical analysis and genre analysis. All of this work scaffolds learning needed to excel on the formal writing assignment for this unit. The Genre Analysis Assignment asks you to analyze a genre of blog that you plan to produce during the remainder of the semester. Please see Genre Analysis Page on our Wiki for more details on this assignment and the accompanying rubric to see how you will be assessed.

Blogging: (40% of your grade)

Throughout the semester, you will develop your own individual blog as well as participate in a blogging community. You will work on your expository writing skills and writing style by posting 4500 words on your blog. Each week, you are expected to write on your blog at your own leisure, but you are also expected to complete 6 assigned blog entries, each of which must respond to a formal prompt described on the Blog Assignment Page on our Wiki. You will also participate in significant peer review sessions, in which you are expected to produce thoughtful and thorough feedback to your peer's writing. You are also expected to interact with your peers on their blog by producing comments to your peers' ideas as expressed in their blog posts. Your grade for this unit will be determined both by your productivity in blog writing and community (See Rubric on Blog Assignment Page on our Wiki).

Final Response Essay: (20% of your grade)

For this assignment, you will respond to the final chapter in Williams and Colomb's book *Style: The Basics of Clarity and Grace*. In this response, you are expected to draw on course readings and your blogging experience to respond to specific claims made by Williams and Colomb about style, what constitutes good writing, and ethical responsibilities of a writer. This assignment also affords you the opportunity to reflect on what you have learned about rhetoric and expository writing, as you are expected to use examples from your own writing as evidence for your claims. (Please see the Response Essay Page on Wiki for more details about this assignment and how it will be assessed.)

Grading Chart (Letter to Number Conversion):

You'll get a letter grade for participation, formal genre analysis, blogging, and final response essay. This chart is used to convert letter grades to numeric grades on all your work. The parentheses include the range of numbers that apply to the corresponding letter. This chart is also used to determine your final grade in the course:

A+ 98 (97-100)	A 95 (93-96)	A- 92 (90-92)
B+ 88 (87-89)	B 85 (83-86)	B- 82 (80-82)
C+ 78 (77-79)	C 75 (73-76)	C- 72 (70-72)
D+ 68 (66-69)	D 65 (64-67)	D- 62 (61-64)
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For more information on UF Grading policies, see: <http://www.registrar.ufl.edu/catalog/policies/regulationgrades.html>

**In the unlikely event that a student wishes to appeal his or her final grade, the student should consult Prof. Stephanie Smith, Director of Undergraduate Studies. Grade appeals may result in a higher, unchanged, or lower final grade.

COURSE SCHEDULE

Note: This schedule is tentative and may likely be updated throughout the semester. Please see Course Schedule on our Wiki for Daily Homework Assignments and any schedule changes.

Important Due Dates:

First Draft Genre Analysis: SEPTEMBER 28TH at 11:59pm

Final Draft Genre Analysis: October 7th before class.

Blog Series and Blog Assignment #1: October 21 in class.

Blog Assignment #2: October 28 in class.

Blog Assignment #3: November 4 in class.

Blog Assignment #4: November 18 in class.

Blog Assignment #5: November 25 in class.

Blog Assignment #6: December 2 in class.

First Draft of Response Essay: December 9

All revisions to genre analysis and blog assignments due on December 16 at 11:59pm.

Unit 1

T August 26: Course Introduction. Wiki Overview. Create Bios on WIKIPAGE. Freewrite. Student Introductions. Go over Course Trajectory.

T September 2: Introduction to Rhetoric. Discussion-- "What the Heck is Rhetoric?"-- via Herrick. What is the Rhetorical Situation?--via Bitzer and Vatz. In Class Activity #1-Practice Identifying the Rhetorical Situation and Practice Rhetorical Analysis.

T September 9: Discussion--What is Genre from a Rhetorical Perspective?—via Dirk and Dean. In Class Activity #2-Practice Genre/Rhetorical Analysis.

T September 16: Discussion--What is a blog? Lecture on Audience vs. Public--Who do bloggers write for? Why to we Blog?—via Miller and Shepard, Delviche and Henderson, Halavais, and Sullivan. Introduction to Genre Analysis Assignment. In Class Activity #3—Blog Analysis.

T September 23: Discuss Niche Blogging—via Rowse and Garrett and Morrison. In Class Activity #4--Niche Analysis.

T September 30. **NO WHOLE CLASS.** One-On-One Conferencing About First Drafts.

Unit 2

T October 7: Final Draft of Genre Analysis Due. Introduction to Blogging Unit. Discuss Platforms/Wordpress. In class Activity #5-Setting Up Blog. Finding a Blog Name. Set up Blog Roll for Blog Community. Write About Page.

T October 14: **About Page on Blog Due.** Blogging Content, Blogging Style-via Rowse and Garrett and Colomb and Williams. In class Activity #6—Editing and Style. Editing Studio. Work on Blog Design and About Page.

T October 21: **Blog Series and Blogging Assignment 1 Due.** Introduction to Editing. Editing studio—Revise Blog Assignment 1

T October 28: **Blog Assignment 2 Due.** Editing studio--Lessons 2 and 3 via Colomb and Williams. Revise Blog Assignment 2.

T November 4: **Blog Assignment 3 Due.** Building a Blog Community-via Rowse and Garrett. Revise Blog Assignment 3.

T November 11: **NO CLASS. Holiday.**

T November 18: **Blog Assignment 4 Due.** Editing Studio-Lessons 4 And 5 via Columb and Williams. Revise Blog Assignment 4.

T November 25: **Blog Assignment 5 Due.** Editing Studio--Lessons 6 And 7 via Colomb and Williams. Revise Blog Assignment 5.

T December 2: **Blog assignment 6 Due.** Editing Studio--Lessons 8 And 9 via Colomb and Williams. Final Editing Studio. Introduction To Response Essay. In Class Activity #7-Responding To Authors.

T December 9: **First Draft of RESPONSE ESSAY Due.** In-Class Peer Review. Course Evaluations.

December 16: Final Draft of Genre Analysis, Blog, and Response Essay Due.

COURSE POLICIES

Attendance

is not only expected but necessary to excel in this course. Because professionalism/hivemind participation counts toward a significant part of your grade, students are expected to show up every day in class, on time, ready to actively engage, and contribute to course work. I do realize that sometimes absences cannot be avoided. Thus, one unexcused absences is tolerated and left unquestioned even though students should take responsibility for all homework and obtaining class notes from a peer *and* even though those absences will negatively alter your grade. Two unexcused absences automatically results in minus 5 points from your overall final grade. Three unexcused absences automatically results in minus 10 points from your overall grade. As evident on the assessment page, such absences would significantly hurt your overall grade for this course; therefore, please come to class. (See ASSESSMENT PAGE on Wiki for more details).

I take roll at the beginning of class every day. Habitual tardiness (i.e. arriving late in class **or** departing class early) is not acceptable because late arrivals and early departures are disruptive. Beyond any excused tardies, your final hivemind grade will be affected by your tardiness (3 tardies = 1 absence). Speak to me in conference if you are facing unusual circumstances that affect your ability to abide by these attendance expectations (See ASSESSMENT PAGE Course Wiki for more details).

If you miss a class, you are responsible for coming prepared to the next class. Therefore, you should consult the course schedule and/or another student (not me!) before the next class meeting and make arrangements to pick up missed handouts, key announcements, or assignments. (Get notes from a fellow student.)

*If you participate in a university-sponsored event (music, theater, field trip, or athletics), you must provide me with documentation from an appropriate authority.

Accommodations

are available; I am happy to do what I can to make this course as productive for you as possible. For this course, that may mean making our facilities available to you outside of class. Simply let me know if you'd like me to do so. Also realize, if disabilities are at play, appropriate documentation regarding a student's disability is necessary to obtain any reasonable accommodation or support service. See the statement on Student Disability Services below.

Participation

is necessary and expected on multiple levels (See COURSE STRUCTURE PAGE on Course Wiki). I do not structure my courses as lectures; instead collaboration is integral to learning. Also, I try to incorporate material that is new to me so that we have a chance to work through it together, but that places responsibility on each of us to contribute. It should go without saying that I place a high value on constructive participation—as stated clearly on the ASSESSMENT PAGE on Course Wiki, all students are expected to actively engage in classroom discussions, archive knowledge on Course Wiki, and contribute to the eZine.

Privacy

is an increasingly important issue, and I'm mindful that you may not wish to place unfinished work online. The Course Wiki is therefore private--only members are allowed to see it, much less edit it. I may occasionally invite other people to take a look (and you should feel free to do the same), but the work you place there will not be publicly available. Similarly, while I may not make these options explicit in every case, it is easily possible to submit assignments and to complete this course without doing anything that will compromise your privacy. If you are concerned about this, I encourage you to speak with me.

Relevant University Policies

Writing Requirement (WR)

This course can satisfy the UF requirement for Writing. For more information, see:
<http://www.registrar.ufl.edu/catalog/policies/advisinggordon.html>

Statement on Student Disability Services

The Disability Resource Center in the Dean of Students Office provides students and faculty with information and support regarding accommodations for students with disabilities in the classroom. For more information, see:
<http://www.dso.ufl.edu/drc/>

Statement on Harassment

UF provides an educational and working environment for its students, faculty, and staff that is free from sex discrimination and sexual harassment. For more about UF policies regarding harassment, see:
<http://www.dso.ufl.edu/studentguide/studentconductcode.php#s4041>

Statement on Academic Dishonesty

All students are required to abide by the Student Honor Code. For more information about academic honesty, including definitions of plagiarism and unauthorized collaboration, see:
<http://www.dso.ufl.edu/sccr/honorcodes/honorcode.php>