

ACADEMIC WRITING FOR HISTORY GRADUATE STUDENTS

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COURSE SYLLABUS

Aims of the Course

The aim of this course is to help students develop as a writer within the English speaking academic community by raising awareness of, practicing, and reflecting upon the conventions of written texts. More specifically it addresses the type of writing found in the department and deals with issues students need to complete graduate level work in English.

During the course, students will:

- become familiar with the genres of and enhance the skills related to critique and research-based writing.
- acquire an awareness of and ability to use effectively the discourse patterns of academic English.
- improve their critical reading skills.
- have the opportunity to develop their writing process through generating ideas, drafting, peer evaluation and individual writing consultations.
- learn to take into consideration the expectations of their readership with regard to academic English discourse conventions.
- learn to incorporate the work of other authors into their own writing within the requirements of English academic practice.
- develop their revising and editing skills.

Learning Outcomes

- By the end of this course, students should be able to:
- identify the typical components and features of various genres in the discipline.
- structure an academic paper at the macro and micro level.
- understand the importance of critical reading.
- think and write more clearly and incisively.
- have a variety of skills and approaches to draw upon when writing academic papers.
- target the various audiences academics write for, and understand the expectations of these audiences.
- properly incorporate the work of other authors into their own writing.
- understand the CEU policy towards plagiarism.
- use the appropriate citation style guidelines.
- edit and refine their own written work.

Evaluation

During the course, students have to complete one piece of writing (a critique) for the Writing Center in the Fall Term. All students must submit this paper and come for at least one consultation on this assignment. As an integral part of the course, you will have two mandatory consultations, one on the critique and one on a departmental paper of your choosing before mid-December. One-year students will have an additional consultation in the Winter semester on their thesis proposal. Two-Year students will have a further mandatory consultation on a thesis chapter in the winter semester of their second year. Consultations on a voluntary basis will be available for subsequent papers. We provide extensive qualitative comments during consultation, which are intended to help students in improving their writing. This academic writing course is a required course, which students need to pass in order to complete their degree, but as it is a support course (to help students with other courses) it will not affect their GPA although it will appear on their transcript.

COURSE OUTLINE

Section A — Critical Reading

Aims of the section:

This section introduces critical reading as a process of evaluating the context and purpose of written texts, and enables the application of the insights gained from this process to the production of a written critique as an example of such a text. It then uses this as a basis to understanding the specific features of the Historiography paper which students need to write throughout the fall semester for the core course on Modern Historiography.

Writing Task: The Critique

1. An Introduction to Academic Writing and Course Requirements
2. Critical Reading I – Identifying Key Ideas
3. Critical Reading II – Evaluating a Text
4. Writing the Critique – Analysis of sample critiques
5. Using Sources I: Voice and Authority — When and How to Use the Work of other Authors
6. Improving your Text – Peer Evaluation Strategies

Section B — Research Based Writing

Aims of the section:

In this part of the course students develop an awareness of features of the genre of research-based academic writing. They become more familiar with the conventions of using the work of other authors in English academic discourse and reflect on how these influence the development of their own voice. Students have the opportunity to apply these skills with the supervision and guidance of their writing instructor to papers that they are writing for their department.

7. Nature of Research
8. Titles and Introductions
9. Using Sources II: Techniques for Incorporating Sources in your Work
10. Using sources III: Literature Review in Research papers
11. Micro-level Argumentation — Paragraphing
12. Conclusions/Abstracts and Feedback

Section C – Thesis Writing (Winter Term for One Year students, in year two for Two Year Students)

Aims of the section:

In this later part of the course students receive a series of sessions that walk them through the process of writing their thesis. These classes will be closely related to their departmental work. Session 18 will look at more career related writing.

1. Thesis Proposal – From Proposal to Introduction
2. Macro Level Argumentation: Outlining and Structuring
3. Metadiscourse
4. Annotated Bibliographies
5. Literature Review
6. Editing the Thesis