

Roger Williams University
Feinstein College of Arts & Sciences
Writing Program
Course Guide for Expository Writing

Expository Writing (WTNG 102) is a 3-credit course that fulfills part of the writing requirement of the University Core Curriculum. Successful completion of Introduction to Academic Writing (C- or higher) or placement is prerequisite for this course.

Instructors teaching Expository Writing are expected to follow this course guide to ensure that all Expository Writing sections are delivered in a consistent manner. If an instructor wishes to request a waiver from any of the requirements set forth here, he or she should contact the Writing Program Coordinator.

The Writing Program Coordinator will provide a common syllabus for the course. Instructors should create any addendum they see fit to clarify policies and assignments.

Course Description

This first-year course helps students develop a conceptual map of how writing works by building their rhetorical and writing-process knowledge and by fostering genre and discourse community awareness. Students draft a minimum of four revised essays and complete a course portfolio. Students must submit a satisfactory portfolio and earn a C- or higher in the course in order to enroll in WTNG 200 or 220.

Course Objectives

By the end of the course, the successful student will have developed competencies in the areas listed below. He or she will be able to

Subject Matter Knowledge

- Define rhetorical situation, audience, purpose, stance, genre, discourse community, meta-cognition, ethos, logos, pathos, revision, and editing.

Writing Process Knowledge

- Use common writing practices (e.g., prewriting, drafting, revising, editing) and adapt them to the rhetorical situation
- Use the generative power of writing to increase comprehension and develop ideas
- Solicit reader feedback to improve written work

Rhetorical Knowledge

- Apply rhetorical concepts--e.g., audience, purpose, stance, ethos, logos, pathos--to writing and reading situations

Genre Knowledge

- With support, recognize or infer characteristics of genre (i.e., rhetorical purpose, typical content, structural features, linguistic features)

- Employ genre features as appropriate in response to a given rhetorical situation

Discourse Community Knowledge

- Articulate connections between a discourse community's goals, its typical rhetorical situations, its genres and writing processes, and its expectations for "good" or effective writing
- Contribute to ongoing written conversations by engaging the ideas and texts of others

Meta-cognition

- Engage in ongoing, critical self-assessment of writing processes and products

Grading

Faculty should adhere to common grading standards specific to this course.

Course grades should be weighted as follows: 60% course papers; 15% participation; 25% final portfolio.

C- is the minimum passing grade for the course. A grade of NP (Not Passing) should be assigned to those projects that do not meet course competencies. A grade of F should be assigned when projects are not completed. No D range grade should be assigned as a midterm-warning or final grade.

Writing Placement

Students will write an in-class diagnostic essay during the first week of classes. Instructors may select their own reading and prompt, or they may work with those used in WTNG 100. If the writing sample contains evidence that the placement is inappropriate, the instructor should contact the Writing Program Coordinator before the end of the first full week of classes.

Required Texts

Bullock, Richard and Francine Weinberg. *The Norton Field Guide to Writing with Handbook*. 2nd ed. New York: W.W. Norton, 2009.

Graff, Gerald and Cathy Birkenstein. *"They Say/I Say": The Moves That Matter in Academic Writing*. 2nd ed. New York: W.W. Norton, 2009.

Guidelines to Expository Writing Assignments

Guidelines for Written Assignments

Assignments should advance course objectives and be sequenced so that they are increasingly complex, one building upon the other. Please distribute them in writing to your students.

Guidelines for Grammar and Sentence Structure Instruction

Instruction should be framed so that students see the connection between effective prose, the rhetorical situation, discourse community and genre norms, and the writer's credibility.

Guidelines for the Portfolio

The final portfolio should represent the culmination of the student's learning in the course. Upon completion of the portfolio, the student should demonstrate that he or she has met the course competencies. The portfolio should contain

- An essay arguing that the student's work demonstrates proficiency with regard to course outcomes (either all of them or 3-4 designated by the instructor)
- Supporting documents: selected papers from the instructor's course, as well as other courses the student is enrolled in, that she draws upon as evidence that she has met the designated outcomes; rough drafts, peer review work, etc., may also be included as evidence
- Students may revise materials included as supporting documents to help them make the case that they have met course outcomes, though such revision need not be required
- The focus for the portfolio grade is on the new essay, the one arguing whether the outcomes have been met or not; instructors do not need to read all supporting documentation included in the portfolio.

Faculty should provide students with written instructions for composing the portfolio.

Course Policies

Attendance

Students in Writing courses are participants in all class activities; they write, discuss writing and readings, share drafts, and give and get feedback on writing. Thus attendance is expected. Absences in excess of three classes for students in sections meeting three times per week and two for students in classes meeting twice a week will negatively affect a student's participation grade as well as the student's semester average.

The Department realizes, though, that extenuating circumstances may prevent a student from attending class. A student should report extended absences due to long term illness, hospitalization, or bereavement to the Student Affairs Office, which will notify the student's instructors and advisor.

The policy regarding make-ups on in-class work and the specific impact of absenteeism on the student's grade will be determined by the section instructor and communicated to the students, in writing, during the first session. **A copy of the policy should be submitted to the Writing Studies Coordinator.**

Late Papers

Final papers will only be accepted if students have completed all parts of the assignment. Late drafts may be accepted but with penalty.

Portfolios will not be accepted if students have not completed the coursework. Late portfolios will also not be accepted, except under extraordinary circumstances.

Participation

A student's participation grade is determined by a number of factors, including the student's level of preparedness for class, engagement in class discussion, performance on in-class individual and group exercises, as well as the quality of the peer review the student conducts. All of these activities are contingent upon attendance. Students who do not show up for class or show up late, who are not prepared, or who do not attend to the day's tasks will earn lower than a "C."

Office Hours

According to the most recent contract, "Part-time faculty shall establish and note in their syllabi periods of at least one hour per week for each three contact hours of instruction during the normal school day during which they will be available to meet with students upon the students' request."

The Writing Center and Tutorials

The Writing Center is located on the 2nd floor of the Library, in the Center for Academic Development. At any point in the writing process, students may work with peer and/or faculty tutors on an assignment. Instructors may incorporate Writing Center visits in the course participation grade. In addition, instructors may require students to attend tutorials at the Writing Center. Students who fail to attend required tutorials risk failing the course.

Support Services Policy

A student with a disability for which he or she wishes to receive academic accommodations must first register with Student Accessibility Services on the second floor of the University Library in the Center for Academic Development. After completing that process, the student is required to submit an Academic Accommodation Authorization form ("yellow sheet") to the instructor. More information can be found on the CAD website at <http://www.rwu.edu/academics/centers/cad/dss/>.

Writing Assessment

To insure quality instruction, the Department of Writing Studies, Rhetoric, and Composition participates in ongoing program assessment. Students' portfolios or papers may be used (anonymously) for program assessment unless a student notifies the instructor in writing. If a student wishes to keep the graded portfolio, the student must submit a self-addressed, stamped envelope at the end of the semester.

Plagiarism Statement

According to the *Roger Williams University Undergraduate Catalog*,

Plagiarism is perhaps best defined as incorporating the words or ideas of another person into a paper or presentation without properly crediting the source from which they came. Plagiarism is a violation of ethical practices. The author who commits plagiarism attempts to claim another person's work as his/her own. Thus, plagiarism is both a form of intellectual theft and intellectual fraud. In its worst form, plagiarism may consist of directly copying large or small portions of either printed works or, as frequently happens in schools and colleges, written papers for a friend. There are, however, more subtle forms of plagiarism as well. Paraphrasing, or changing the words without changing the idea they represent, can also be a form of plagiarism if the source of the idea being paraphrased is not acknowledged, and this form of plagiarism is as bad as direct copying.

Instances of plagiarism will be referred to both the Dean of Arts and Sciences and the Office for Academic Affairs—with serious consequences. See the *Roger Williams University Undergraduate Catalog* for an in-depth explanation of academic integrity and plagiarism as applied to Roger Williams University students.

Faculty should submit all assignments to BOTH the Writing Program Coordinator and the Writing Specialist in the Center for Academic Development.