

Writing Your Way Into Grad School

Course Description

This course will instruct students in the genre-specific professional writing and research skills necessary for application and success in graduate programs (emphasis on Humanities and Social Science programs). This course will focus on fundamentals of writing in the disciplines, writing for publication, writing for grants and fellowship, and writing and revising for presentation and public audiences. Additionally, students will begin the processes involved in applying to graduate school as they prepare a dossier portfolio that includes the CV, the personal statement, the diversity statement, and a writing sample (all ass applicable to field-specific standards). Students will identify 3-5 graduate school programs to apply to and will be instructed in best methods to search and apply for graduate school funding, and strategic planning for faculty letters of recommendation. In all, students will develop research, writing, and oral communication skills.

Required Materials

Required Course Book:

none

Additional Course Readings:

Available as PDF files or links to e-books on Canvas

Course Objectives

Learning objectives for this course are broad. Discussions responses on Canvas will be aimed at modeling these objectives and giving students an opportunity to see them in action; discussions, activities, assignments, and papers represent opportunities for students to practice these objectives and receive feedback that will be useful in improving as scholars. These objectives will be framed around the content of this particular course and reflect the contemporary and ongoing conversations concerning an introduction to writing studies and its applications and implications in a multitude of fields and disciplines. The broad objectives are that students will:

1. Demonstrate proficiency in critical and constructive thought
2. Demonstrate proficiency in communicating complex ideas through writing
3. Possess an understanding of writing as a process
4. Understand application of basic rhetorical concepts for framing research and in problem solving

Major Assignments and Grading

Major Assignments

Required Work [Assignment Sheets located on Canvas]

Curriculum Vitae:

This assignment will be due in varying drafts throughout the semester. As a class we will draft and revise this academic resume toward a final and polished version that will be required as part of your end of semester dossier submission. **Value: 15%**

Personal Statement:

This assignment will be due in varying drafts throughout the semester. As a class we will draft and revise this short personal essay toward a final and polished version that will be required as part of your end of semester dossier submission. **Value: 15%**

Diversity Statement:

This assignment will be due in varying drafts throughout the semester. As a class we will draft and revise this one-page statement that specifies and indicates your personal and research specific commitments and contributions to institutional and/or community-oriented diversity. There will be a polished version of this document required as part of your end of semester dossier submission. **Value: 15%**

Writing Sample or Presentation:

At the end of the semester, we will work throughout the semester toward either a writing sample that adheres to field-specific conventions for graduate level and publishable work in your chosen academic field OR you can choose the presentation option that will function as either a creative reading/performance/exhibit, grant or fellowship presentation, a public lecture, etc. More details forthcoming. **Value: 30%**

Final Dossier Portfolio:

Due to **BB** at the conclusion of the semester, you will submit a dossier consisting of final and polished drafts of your CV, Personal Statement, Diversity Statement, Writing Sample (if applicable). **Value: 20%**

Participation:

In-class writing workshops and discussion, Self-Inventories, *Canvas* exercises, Faculty Mentorship Forms, Letter of Recommendation Form, participation, preparedness, and presence. **Value: 5%**

Grade Breakdown

Note: To earn a passing grade, you must complete all major writing assignments.

- 90-100%=A
- 80-89.99%=B
- 70-79.99%=C
- 60-69.99%=D
- 59.99% and less=F

Daily Schedule**Week 1: Informal meet and greet**

Questions on the syllabus

Assign: Self-Inventory, part I

Due: Self-Inventory, part I (Canvas dropbox)

Assign: Martinez “What We Thought We Knew” and discussion prompt on Canvas

Week 2: Becoming a Grad Student, part I

Due: Martinez “What We Thought We Knew” and discussion prompt on Canvas

Assign: Self-Inventory, part II

Due: Self-Inventory, part II (Canvas dropbox)

Assign: “Academic Mentoring How to Give It and How to Get It”

Week 3: Finding a Mentor, Finding Programs and Determining “Fit”

Due: “Academic Mentoring How to Give It and How to Get It” and discussion prompt on Canvas

Panel Presentation: Mentors and Mentorship

Reach out to your assigned mentor and arrange for an initial meeting (Zoom or in person—if possible)

Assign: “Grad Program Search--Narrowing the Scope”

Due: “Grad Program Search--Narrowing the Scope”

Week 4: The Curriculum Vitae, The Academic Resume

CV workshop, part I

Due: CV Draft 1 for workshop, part II

Week 5: Personal Statements

Personal Statement, part I

Due: Personal Statement Draft 1 for workshop, part II

Assign: Questions for the Grad Student panel

Week 6: Becoming a Grad Student, part II

Due: Questions for the Grad Student panel

Panel Presentation: Graduate Students' Stories and Experiences

Assign: Discussion Response—Reach out to your assigned mentor and ask them about professional organizations and conferences in your field, what are their recommendations?

Due: Discussion Response—Reach out to your assigned mentor and ask them about professional organizations and conferences in your field, what are their recommendations?

Professional organizations and conferencing

- In-Class: Drafting conference proposals

Week 7: Identifying Funding for You and Your Work

Assistantships, Fellowships, Grants: Searching for funding matches

- Drafting applications

Guest Speaker Panel: Dana Mordecai, Assistant Director of Graduate Recruitment, UNT Toulouse Graduate School

Week 8: Ethical Research Standards and Practice

CITI Training and Certification

- Complete CITI Training

Guest Speaker Panel: Human Subjects Research Committee

Week 9: Diversity Statements

Diversity Statement, part I

Due: Diversity Statement Draft 1 for workshop, part II

Week 10: Navigating the Institution, Grad Directors, and Requesting Letters of Recommendation

Requesting Letters of Recommendation (see form on course site, assignments section)

Panel Presentation: Graduate Directors

Week 11: Mentor Week

Plan to meet with your mentors during this week to discuss feedback on your most up-to-date drafts of the: CV, Personal Statement, Diversity Statement

Week 12: Mock Admissions Interviews

Mock Interviews, group 1

Mock Interviews, group 2

Week 13: Dossier in Review, Revising Toward Application, and the Writing Sample

In-Class Peer Review: Personal Statement, CV, Diversity Statement

The Writing Sample: Showcasing Your Research Skills

FALL BREAK: NO CLASS

Week 14: Research Showcased: The Writing Sample

In-Class Peer Review: The Writing Sample

Presentations: The Writing Sample

Week 15: Presentations

Presentations: The Writing Sample

Presentations: The Writing Sample

Week 16: Final Dossiers due

Final Dossiers due