

ENGL 211C Introduction to Academic Writing
Department of English, Old Dominion University

Course Information

Professor:	Dr. Daniel P. Richards	Semester:	Spring 2021
Email:	dprichar@odu.edu	Class Time:	T/R 9:30am-10:45am
Office:	BAL 5032	Mode:	Zoom, via Blackboard
Office Hours:	T/W/R 11:00am-12:00pm	CRN:	21972

Catalog Description

This course emphasizes critical reading, thinking, and writing. Students are introduced to principles of analysis and argumentation and taught the requisite skills that will allow them properly to paraphrase, summarize, and synthesize research in the common modes of academic writing. The course culminates in the preparation of a fully documented research paper.¹

Learning Objectives & Outcomes

In this course, students will: (1) develop rhetorical knowledge; (2) develop critical thinking, reading, and information literacy skills; (3) develop multiple strategies, or composing processes, to draft texts; and (4) develop knowledge of conventions. The outcomes through which students achieve these objectives are listed in detail in Appendix A.

Attendance & Participation

It is expected that students attend each class. Each class meeting will consist of at least one in-class writing activity that cannot be made up unless the student provides proper documentation (e.g., representation at university sponsored athletic or academic functions, mandatory military training, religious observance, or documented illness). Materials brought to professor-student conferences are included in this policy.

Assignments: Overview

This course is structured around three major writing projects, but also includes a variety of in-class writing activities, a brief presentation, and a final exam to reinforce the learning objectives.

<i>Assignment</i>	<i>Weight</i>	<i>Length</i>	<i>Format</i>	<i>Due Date</i>
In-Class Writing	25%	~1 pg. (x25)	Google Doc	Every Meeting
Grammar Presentation	5%	1 pg.	Infographic	Sign Up
Literacy Narrative	15%	3 pgs.	Word Doc	6 February
Argumentative Essay	20%	4 pgs.	Word Doc	6 March
Research Paper	25%	5 pgs.	Word Doc	24 April
Final Exam	10%	3 pgs.	Word Doc	29 April

All page lengths assume MLA, APA, or Chicago paper formatting with 12-point Times New Roman font, double spacing, and no extra space after paragraphs. Works Cited and References pages do not count towards total. Nor do title pages. Students are responsible for signing up for grammar presentation time slots on Blackboard, operating on a first come first serve basis. Students must select from any of the listed topics and work with a partner.

¹ A student with credit for ENGL 111C cannot receive credit for ENGL 211C. Prerequisites: ENGL 110C with a grade of C or higher.

Assignments: Specifications

Please read closely through the assignment specifications below. Each section details assignment expectations, due dates, revision policies, grading criteria, and submission instructions.

In-Class Writing. By the end of each and every class session, students will have completed an in-class writing assignment (indicated as ICW on the course schedule). These brief assignments can take the form of a written page, a drawing, an annotation, an oral response, a peer review, an assignment draft, or anything in between. “Writing,” then, should be interpreted broadly. The nature of the in-class writing assignments will vary depending on the educational goals of the class session. These brief assignments must be completed in class and will be graded as soon as class ends. Late work or revisions will not be accepted (exceptions noted in the “Attendance & Participation” section of the syllabus). In all, there will be 25 in-class writing assignments completed, with each one counting towards 1% of the final grade. Each assignment will be graded using the following criteria:

0.00: No completion	0.65: Partial completion
0.35: Minimal completion	0.95: Full completion

For clarity, “completion” in this sense means that the student followed carefully and with consideration the instructions given in class. Students will submit each in-class writing assignment through a Google Drive folder shared with the professor. The folder will be titled appropriately (“Last Name, First Name”), as will each assignment within it (e.g., “ICW 2”).

Grammar Presentation. Students will work in partners to create an infographic educating their classmates on a grammatical topic that is of relevance to an academic audience. The infographic itself will be one page (8½” x 11”) and will be designed using a free online infographic tool (e.g., Canva, Piktochart, etc.). These sites provide a wide array of pre-designed templates that may or may not be conducive for direct application. It is expected that students modify the elements of the visualization to fit their rhetorical needs. The infographic should be engaging as well as accurate, using several examples to highlight best practices. Students will present their infographic to the class for a minimum of 10 and maximum of 15 minutes, including discussion and a practice activity pertaining to the topic. The grammar presentation, including the infographic and the presentation components, will be graded using the following criteria (out of 25 points):

Engaging design of infographic for student audience	_/5
Accurate, clear, and cited information in infographic	_/6
Ample and illustrative use of examples	_/4
Effective leading of discussion and activity	_/10
Time of presentation (-2 for each minute above or below)	+/-

Topics must be selected from the list provided under “Grammar Presentations” in Blackboard and can only be covered once. This is also where students will sign up for their preferred time. Infographics will be submitted into the shared Google Drive folder titled “Grammar Presentations.” Presentations cannot be re-done, and infographics cannot be revised.

Literacy Narrative. A literacy narrative is a well-told story about an author’s own experience with reading and writing. Most often these stories involve specific objects, members of a community, or educational experiences that were vital in either positive or negative ways to the

author's development as writer, reader, or speaker. Literacy narratives offer vivid detail of past events and an indication of the narrative's significance in the author's own development or in the world around them. Some suggested topics include: any early memory about writing, reading, or speaking that you recall vividly; someone who taught you to read or write; a book, video game, recording, or other text that has been significant for you in some way; an event at school that was related to your literacy and that you found interesting, humorous, or embarrassing; a literacy task that you found (or still find) especially difficult or challenging; a memento that represents an important moment in your literacy development; the origins of your current attitudes about writing, reading, or speaking; and learning to text, learning to write email appropriately, creating and maintaining a social media profile.

Good literacy narratives are interesting and compelling for readers. The author's goal is to tell the story as clearly and vividly as they can to convey the meaning the incident, person, or artifact has for the author today. Class time will be spent generating ideas, practicing descriptive language, and organizing a cohesive and well-structured narrative. The audience for the piece is fellow college students; first-person narration should be used throughout. This narrative will be three pages in length, with proper MLA formatting. Examples of literacy narratives can be found at the Digital Archive of Literacy Narratives (thedaln.org). The literacy narrative will be graded using the following criteria (out of 40 points):

Use of descriptive language	_/10
Cohesion in theme relating to reading/writing/speaking	_/10
Structure and organization	_/10
Clarity in statement of importance	_/10

Students who receive a grade of B or below are able to submit a revision for a higher grade within seven days of receiving feedback from the professor. The revision should take into careful consideration professor feedback, rubric scoring, and the assignment description and need only include the text itself. Revised literacy narratives should be sent via email and not re-submitted to Blackboard. The email should include the original submission, the revised submission, and at least 5 detailed points in the email noting where changes were made and why. Any revised submission that does not follow these guidelines will not be considered.

Argumentative Essay. This assignment has students compose an argumentative essay in response to the following question:

“Should internet be a public utility?”

Students will engage in meaningful discussion with classmates, read through a variety of different viewpoints on the topic, and draft argumentative language in class to aid in an effective written response. The goal of the assignment is to see past dualistic “yes/no” or “pro/con” argumentative models by composing an essay that captures nuance, articulates difference, and defines assumptions embedded within (often oversimplified) questions. As such, the final argument made by students need *not* be a clear “yes” or “no” stance.

The essay itself will reflect best practices in academic and not polemic argumentation. The essay will give an overview of the topic at hand, stating clearly what the issue is and what is at stake. From there the essay will acknowledge the validity of various viewpoints, evaluating the data and line of argumentation for all sides critically and with fairness. The essay will culminate with the author's final position on the matter.

This essay will be four pages in length, with proper MLA formatting. The essay can use first person or not and should be written to a public audience. At least three sources must be cited. Sources used in class and provided by the professor can be used. Further research beyond these sources is not required. Essays will be submitted to Blackboard.

Students will be graded on their ability to engage in meaningful deliberation on a contentious topic. The following grading criteria (out of 50 points) will be used:

Appropriate use of academic tone	_/10
Articulation and synthesis of various viewpoints	_/10
Structure and organization	_/10
Clarity in position and of argument	_/10
Effective grammar, punctuation, and diction	_/10

Students who receive a grade of B or below are able to submit a revision for a higher grade within seven days of receiving feedback from the professor. The revision should take into careful consideration professor feedback, rubric scoring, and the assignment description. Revised argumentative essays should be sent via email and not re-submitted to Blackboard. The email should include the original submission, the revised submission, and at least 5 points in the email noting where changes were made and why. Any revised submission that does not follow these guidelines will not be considered.

Research Paper. The final major writing assignment for this course has students compose a research paper that is appropriate for their major or discipline. The paper will explore a current topic or relevant conversation in the field of the student's choosing. In so doing, the student will conduct their own research and provide a literature review of pertinent sources (need to be journal articles, books, and/or essays written on the websites of reputable academic or government entities).

Unlike the argumentative essay, this paper should not include or consider the student's own position on the topic. Rather the goal here is to provide the reader with a well-summarized and well-synthesized review of reputable academic sources centered around a specific topic, conversation, person, author, debate, time period, finding, or social trend. The subject of the papers will vary widely by discipline, but here are some examples: the work of Sylvia Plath; vaccination trials and testing; Uyghur cultural genocide; the cost of higher education; the cultural significance of TikTok; the engineering of the Panama Canal; the increasing cost of lumber; changes in literacy; the future of philosophy; and the psychology of tipping. A successful research paper will have a topic that is broad enough to be of general interest but specific enough to narrow the selection of research sources. These topics are just starting points, then. Students might find their research papers getting increasingly more specific or broad over time.

The paper should be well-structured and include: an introductory statement of the topic at hand; an overview of what will be covered; the methods of research used; concise and accurate summaries of each source that are synthesized together and not disconnected; and a conclusion that offers a clear statement of the state of research and potential for future research in the area.

In terms of formatting, students will compose the paper using the style guidelines expected of their discipline. Tone, writing style, and organization will also be modeled after the student's disciplinary identification. The paper will be five pages in length, not including title pages or references. At least five credible, academic sources must be summarized and synthesized into the paper. The paper will be uploaded to Blackboard. The research paper will be graded by the following criteria (total of 75 points):

Appropriate use of academic tone	_/10
Engaging introduction to the topic	_/10
Effective summarization of sources	_/10
Effective synthesis of sources	_/10
Structure and organization	_/10
Clarity of final statement/conclusion	_/10
Effective grammar, punctuation, and diction	_/10
Appropriate MLA, APA, Chicago, or other style	_/5

Research papers cannot be re-submitted for revision.

Final Exam. The final exam will consist of the following: (1) A three-page response to a prompt asking students to reflect on some aspect of the course; and (2) A link to a Google Drive folder that includes final, clean copies of the three major projects composed this semester (literacy narrative, argumentative essay, and research paper) as well as the exam response. The submission of a writing portfolio is required as part of the general education courses offered by the Department of English. Your work will not be shared publicly, but only with faculty and administrators for the purposes of assessment and only after your name has been redacted.

The three-page essay will be written during class time in the exam slot of Thursday, April 29th, from 9:30am-10:45am. No late work will be accepted. Students can ask for a change of time if this exam conflicts with another exam from a different course but will be asked a different question. The essay should be as specific as possible, referencing readings, assignments, and conversations from the semester.

Grading Scale

Each assignment will be graded using the criteria outlined in the respective assignment descriptions above. The numerical scores will be translated into letter grades:

A	93-100	B	83-86	C	73-76	D	63-66
A-	90-92	B-	80-82	C-	70-72	D-	60-62
B+	87-89	C+	77-79	D+	67-69	F	0-59

Since this a 200-level course, students will receive a progress grade in the fifth week of classes.

Academic Honesty

Writers who use the words or ideas of others are obligated to give credit through proper acknowledgment and documentation. Failure to give credit is plagiarism, a violation of the ODU Honor Code that almost certainly will lead to failing the course. The ODU Catalog defines plagiarism as follows: “A student will have committed plagiarism if he or she reproduces someone else’s work without acknowledging its source; or if a source is cited which the student has not cited or used. Examples of plagiarism include: submitting a research paper obtained from a commercial research service, the Internet, or from another student as if it were original work; making simple changes to borrowed materials while leaving the organization, content, or phraseology intact; or copying material from a source, supplying proper documentation, but leaving out quotation marks. Plagiarism also occurs in a group project if one or more of the members of the group does none of the group’s work and participates in none of the group’s activities but attempts to take credit for the work of the group.” If you have questions about how and when to acknowledge sources, please refer to your textbooks or see the professor for advice.

Readings

Students should be prepared to contribute to classroom discussions and small group activities that address the readings. Texts should be read by class time on the date listed in the schedule. Students must purchase the following book:

Adler, Mortimer J., and Charles Van Doren. *How to Read a Book (Rev.)*. Touchstone, 1972.

Supplemental readings listed below will be posted on Blackboard in PDF form:

- Bazerman, Charles. *Shaping Written Knowledge: The Genre and Activity of the Experimental Article in Science*. The University of Wisconsin Press, 1988, pp. 18-55.
- Billings, Stephen B., and David C. Phillips. "Why Do Kids Get into Trouble on School Days?" *Regional Science and Urban Economics*, vol. 65, 2017, pp. 16-24.
- Borges, Jorge Luis. "The Gospel According to Mark." *Jorge Luis Borges: Collected Fictions*, translated by Andrew Hurley, Penguin Classics, 1999, pp. 397-402.
- Burke, Kenneth. *The Philosophy of Literary Form*. University of California Press, 1941, pp. 110-111.
- Cobb, Matthew. "Sexism in Science: Did Watson and Crick Really Steal Rosalind Franklin's Data?" *The Guardian (US Edition)*, 23 Jun. 2015.
- Covert, Lisa Pinley. "The GI Bill Abroad: A Postwar Experiment in International Relations." *Diplomatic History*, vol. 40, no. 2, 2016, pp. 244-268.
- Franklin, Rosalind, and Raymond Gosling. "Molecular Configuration in Sodium Thymonucleate." *Nature*, vol. 171, no. 4356, 1953, pp. 740-741.
- Gee, James P. "What Is Literacy?" *Journal of Education*, vol. 171, no. 1, 1989, pp. 18-25.
- Hurston, Zora Neale. "Sweat." *The Oxford Book of American Short Stories*, edited by Joyce Carol Oates, Oxford University Press, 1992, pp. 1019-1030.
- Jackson, C. Kirabo. "Does School Spending Matter? The New Literature on an Old Question." *National Bureau of Economic Research*, December 2018, Working Paper (25368).
- Lakoff, George, and Mark Johnson. *Metaphors We Live By*. The University of Chicago Press, 1980, pp. 3-13, 35-40.
- Ong, Walter J. "Writing is a Technology that Restructures Thought." *The Written Word: Literacy in Transition (Wolfson College Lectures, 1985)*, edited by Gerd Baumann, Clarendon Press, 1986, pp. 23-30.
- Perelman, Chaïm, and Lucie Olbrechts-Tyteca. *The New Rhetoric: A Treatise on Argumentation*, Translated by John Wilkinson and Purcell Weaver, University of Notre Dame Press, 1969, pp. 11-34.
- Watson, James D., & Crick, Francis H. C. "A Structure for Deoxyribose Nucleic Acid." *Nature*, vol. 171, no. 4356, 1953, pp. 737-738.
- West, Cornel. *The Ethical Dimensions of Marxist Thought*. Monthly Review Press, 1991, pp. xi-xxxiv.
- Wilkins, Maurice, Alex Stokes, and Herbert Wilson. "Molecular Structure of Nucleic Acids: Molecular Structure of Deoxypentose Nucleic Acids." *Nature*, vol. 171, no. 4356, 1953, pp. 738-740.

Schedule

Any modifications to the schedule will be announced through Blackboard. Chapters listed in Readings column all refer to Adler and Van Doren's text. Optional readings are marked as "*".

<i>Date</i>	<i>Topic</i>	<i>Readings</i>	<i>Due</i>
19 January	Getting Acquainted	Syllabus	—
21 January	Reading +/- Writing	Chs. 1-3	In-Class Writing 1 (ICW 1)
26 January	Your Literacy Toolkit	Ch. 4; Gee	ICW 2
28 January	Collecting Artifacts	Ong*	ICW 3
2 February	<i>Conferences (no class)</i>	—	ICW 4
4 February	<i>Conferences (no class)</i>	—	—
			Literacy Narrative (6 Feb 11:59pm)
9 February	Argument as War (?)	Ch. 7	ICW 5
11 February	Unending Conversation	—	ICW 6
16 February	A "New" Rhetoric	Ch. 8	ICW 7
18 February	On Listening	Ch. 9	ICW 8
23 February	On Critiquing	Ch. 10	ICW 9
25 February	On Positioning	Ch. 11	ICW 10
2 March	<i>Reading Day (no class)</i>		—
4 March	Gameboard Hints	Bazerman	ICW 11
			Argumentative Essay (6 Mar 11:59pm)
9 March	Reading Literature	Ch. 14; Hurston	ICW 12
11 March	Exercising Judgment	Borges	ICW 13
16 March	Reading History	Ch. 16; Covert	ICW 14
18 March	Summarization	—	ICW 15
23 March	Reading Science	Ch. 17; Watson & Crick	ICW 16
25 March	Paraphrasing	Cobb	ICW 17
30 March	Reading Social Science	Ch. 19; Billings	ICW 18
1 April	Synthesizing	Jackson	ICW 19
6 April	Reading Philosophy	Ch. 18; West	ICW 20
8 April	Our Limitations	—	ICW 21
13 April	<i>Conferences (no class)</i>	—	ICW 22
15 April	<i>Conferences (no class)</i>	—	—
20 April	Syntopical Reading	Ch. 20	ICW 23
22 April	How to Read Projects	—	ICW 24
			Research Paper (April 24, 11:59pm)
27 April	Metacognition	Ch. 21	ICW 25
29 April	Final Exam	—	Reflection and Portfolio Submission

Resources

Below are some resources that are available to all students. Questions about each can be directed to the offices or centers as the language below is from the offices and centers themselves.

Accommodations. Students are encouraged to self-disclose disabilities that have been verified by the Office of Educational Accessibility by providing Accommodation Letters to their instructors early in the semester in order to start receiving accommodations. Accommodations will not be made until the Accommodation Letters are provided to instructors each semester. Old Dominion University is committed to ensuring equal access to all qualified students with disabilities in accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act. The Office of Educational Accessibility (OEA) is the campus office that works with students who have disabilities to provide and/or arrange reasonable accommodations. If you experience a disability that will impact your ability to access any aspect of this course, please present the professor with an accommodation letter from OEA to ensure that appropriate accommodations are available. If you feel that you will experience barriers to your ability to learn and/or testing in my class but do not have an accommodation letter, please consider scheduling an appointment with OEA to determine if academic accommodations are necessary. The Office of Educational Accessibility is located at 1021 Student Success Center and their phone number is (757)683-4655. Additional information is available at the OEA website: <http://www.odu.edu/educationalaccessibility/>.

The Writing Center. The Old Dominion University Writing Center (WC) offers free appointments and walk-in writing consultations to all currently enrolled students on campus. Students may seek help with their writing projects for a variety of courses and meet with a consultant to discuss anything from brainstorming to learning how to proofread their own work. The WC offers supplemental instruction to help students improve their writing strategies. The WC offer writing consulting sessions that assist students in learning to proofread their own work, in getting projects started, and in developing the writing process for a paper. Appointments are approximately 45-minutes (shorter for walk-ins after 20 minutes past the top of the hour). WC graduate student consultants work with individual students or groups. Most tutoring sessions are by appointment; walk-in appointments are provided when tutors are not in a scheduled session. For distance students, we use WOnline. The WC is located in the library, room 1208, and is open Monday through Friday. To make an appointment call 757-683-4013 during open hours or book an appointment online at odu.mywconline.com.

Student Success Center. The Student Success Center can assist students in finding resources and developing an academic success plan for the semester (757-683-3699, advisor@odu.edu).

Code of Conduct. The primary responsibility for managing the classroom environment rests with the faculty. Students who engage in any prohibited acts that result in disruption of a class may be directed by the faculty member to leave the class for the remainder of the class period. Longer separations from a class must be preceded by a conduct conference or hearing as outlined in Section XII.C. A student dismissed from class may be required to meet with a Department Chair, Program Director, the faculty member, or the Director of Student Conduct and Academic Integrity, or designee, before the student is permitted to return to the class from which the student was directed to leave (odu.edu/about/policiesandprocedures/bov/bov1500/1530).

Appendix A: Course Objectives & Outcomes

In this course, you will:

- Develop rhetorical knowledge by:
 - Analyzing and drafting a variety of compositions or genres shaped by readers' and writers' practices,
 - Transitioning between situations and contexts by adjusting structure, content, diction, and tone,
 - Matching the capacities of different technologies to a range of audiences and rhetorical situations, and
 - Understanding that rhetorical situations differ across communities and disciplines.
- Develop critical thinking, reading, and information literacy skills by:
 - Using writing as a tool for critical thinking and reflection,
 - Reading and writing several genres that utilize analysis, reflection, narrative, critique, and argument skills,
 - Locating primary and secondary research materials among library resources and evaluating them for credibility, sufficiency, accuracy, timeliness, and bias,
 - Using strategies to compose texts that integrate the writer's ideas with those from appropriate sources, and
 - Understanding that thinking, reading, and literacy skills differ across communities and disciplines.
- Develop multiple strategies, or composing processes, to draft texts by:
 - Working through multiple drafts of a writing project and reflecting on composing practices,
 - Exploring strategies for the writing process and adapting them for a variety of technologies and modalities,
 - Learning to give and to act on productive feedback to works in progress, and
 - Understanding that composing strategies and processes differ across communities and disciplines.
- Develop knowledge of conventions by:
 - Refining the understanding of linguistic structures, including grammar, punctuation, and spelling,
 - Practicing genre conventions for structure, paragraphing, tone, and mechanics,
 - Demonstrating a clear understanding of intellectual property rights and applying citation styles systematically, according to disciplinary conventions, and
 - Understanding that conventions differ across communities and disciplines.