

HWG705

Academic Writing in the Humanities & Social Sciences

Recommended Year of Study : Pre PhD Qualifying Examination (QE)
Academic units : 1.5 (Pass/Fail)
Pre-requisite : Nil

CONTENT

In this course, students will evaluate the rhetorical conventions of published academic articles in their field, and practice those rhetorical conventions in their writing. By closely examining how academic papers are worded, argued, and structured, students will add to their "toolbox" of rhetorical strategies for reading and writing. We will discuss and practice how to: approach difficult articles; represent the arguments of other writers; synthesize and put writers in a given field into conversation; develop their own research question based on a gap or intervention in the existing discourse; and coherently develop a thesis or argument through research and analysis. Students will present their research to the class and revise their work based on peer and teacher feedback.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

This course will guide students in recognizing and practicing genre conventions within their field. It is for graduate students who are proficient writers, but would like assistance with generating, composing, and structuring academic essays. As they revise their writing based on feedback from peers and the course lecturer, they will experience writing as a process that requires multiple drafts.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

Upon successful completion of the course, students should be able to:

1. analyze the rhetorical strategies of successful published academic papers;
2. position their own research question or motive for writing within the existing work of published scholars;
3. formulate their thesis or argument and signpost the development of this argument;
4. do research and cite texts ethically and accurately; and
5. value elegance and clarity in academic prose.

COURSE SCHEDULE

Week Syllabus

- 1 After collaboratively close reading published academic articles to evaluate how they present research questions, evidence, analyses, and arguments, students will present an analysis of an article in their field for the class. Students will assess the current state of their field and identify a single path-breaking study published in the last year that is relevant to their research.

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Week Syllabus

- 2 Students will workshop a two-page literature review, which should end with a paragraph that articulates a motivation for writing and a potential argument. Ideally, this assignment will draw on or contribute to the student's independent or course research. Students will review how to represent texts ethically and accurately, as well as discipline-specific formatting. Peer workshoping and teacher feedback will assess the quality of the review and the potential for the proposed argument.
- 3 Building on their literature review, students will share their research notes, revise their research question, and further develop their draft. Using published articles in their field as models, students will consider structure, the shape of a paragraph, and transitions in their own drafting.
- 4 - 7 Students will share a complete draft with the class, and receive detailed feedback for revision. We will focus on making arguments more complex, patterns of errors, and strategies for self-editing.

STUDENT ASSESSMENT

Following components are individually assessed.

Assessment	Weighting
Written assignments	80%
- Literature review	- 30%
- Draft of essay or chapter	- 50%
Class participation	20%
- Peer review and class discussion	

TEXTBOOKS/REFERENCES

Students will work on selected published academic papers in their field.

References will also be made to:

1. Silvia, Paul. *How to Write a Lot*, APA Life Tools, 2009.
2. Goodson, Patricia. *Becoming an Academic Writer*, Sage, 2012.
3. Swales, John M. and Christine B. Feak. *Academic Writing for Graduate Students*, 3rd Edition, University of Michigan Press, 2012.

Tutorial hours:

Semester	Tutorial hours
Semester 1 or 2	6.5 weeks x 3 tutorial hours per week. Total hours: 19.5 hours