

## Graduate School Writing I

Instructor: Rob Whyte, D570, hours TBA

The purpose of this course is to help students improve their ability to write clear, coherent and interesting passages. The course will roughly be divided into two parts. The first half will focus on learning to write with lessons and activities that help students improve style, organisation, clarity and accuracy.

The second half will focus on writing to learn. That will include practical skills like writing arguments as well as professional documents such as a properly formatted email. By the end of the course you will know how to describe, summarize and evaluate things and ideas with elegance and precision.

### Objectives

By the end of this course, students will be able to:

- Recall the eight parts speech by completing in-class lessons and writing exercises.
- Compose faster by completing fluency exercises and other timed writing assignments.
- Define good writing by learning and applying the 6+1 writing traits in their own work.
- Demonstrate an ability to write and evaluate arguments by learning a specific sentence pattern and completing multiple assignments including rewrites.
- Define inference and hypothesis and use them to create arguments by learning and using basic strategies and sentence patterns.
- Compose short reports and summaries with effective organisation and elements of style by learning to write compelling first sentences as well as specific sentence patterns taught in class.

### Methods

Learning outcomes will be achieved through a mix of methods. Short lectures will be used to introduce key content related to writing coupled with objective-driven tasks. There will be some reading and writing homework. The majority of classroom time will be dedicated to student writing and teacher feedback. This approach is grounded on the belief that the best way to improve writing skills is to write.

### Materials

There is no textbook for this class. Classroom materials will be posted on the teacher's website, [www.eslwriting.org](http://www.eslwriting.org), for the students to read and/or download, or provided by the instructor as handouts.

Students will need a notebook for personal writing and a notepad which will be used for passages given to the instructor. The notepad will preferably be a yellow notepad with lined paper.

### Exams

There will be two written exams, two quizzes and one reading+writing+summary oral presentation.

- attendance 10%
- Mid term exam 25%
- Final exam 25%
- quizzes 20% (2 quizzes, 10% each)
- reading+writing assignment 10%
- oral presentation 10%

### Other Points

The course methods and structure may change depending on student needs and abilities.

At the end of the semester, please do not ask me to change your grade because you have a special situation. If you need a high score, work hard, study hard and come to every class on time ready to learn. Unless I made a calculation error, I will not change your final score.

Every class, you will need four things: a writing tool (e.g. a pencil), two notebooks and a dictionary. Phone dictionaries are okay. Students who do not bring these learning tools to class will be marked absent.

#### Week 1

Course introduction. Syllabus review. Learning to write.

What is good writing? Parts of speech review. Before and after activity.

#### Week 2

Parts of speech review. Show me don't tell me. Descriptive writing - hot air balloon.

#### Week 3

Elements of writing style. Compelling first sentences. Complex sentences. Paraphrase with synonyms as technique to improve self editing.

#### Week 4

Elements of writing style. Learn appositives. Timed writing fluency. Picture prompt for writing assignment. Prepare for Quiz #1.

#### Week 5

Quiz 1. Elements of style. Prepositional phrases. Paragraph editing.

#### Week 6

Elements of style and accuracy. Articles exercise. Elements of cohesion example. Return quiz. Complete final draft for all writing.

#### Week 7

Feedback and exam review. Complete feedback. Review exam questions. Discuss oral presentation-reading-writing assignment.

#### Week 8 - Midterm exam

#### Week 9

Writing to learn. What is an argument? Parallel structure. Picture prompt to write and evaluate the argument.

#### Week 10

What is an inference? Make an argument from an inference. Oral presentations round 1.

#### Week 11

What is a hypothesis? Make an argument from a hypothesis. Summarise and evaluate an argument with video prompt. Oral presentations round 2. Discuss quiz #2.

#### Week 12

Quiz #2. Professional writing. How to write a professional email. Write an argument using data with email format. Oral presentations round 3.

Week 13

Return quiz #2. Professional writing. Oral presentations and submit reports. Learn memo format. Data summary. Draw conclusion from data. Last day for new writing assignments. Oral presentations round 4.

Week 14

Complete writing and feedback. Review and prepare for final exam. Oral presentations round 5.

Week 15 - Reading week

Week 16 - Final exam