

RHETORIC 1151: Writing in Your Major

Instructor: Mark Stewart
Office: 85 Classroom Office Building
Office Hours: As scheduled, and, of course, by appointment
Office Phone: (612) 624-6779
E-mail: stew0137@tc.umn.edu

A. Required Texts and Materials: The following are required for this course:

- ?? E. Walzer and A. Kantar. (1994). *Reading and Writing in Agriculture, Natural Resources, and Human Ecology: A Textbook for Rhetoric*.
- ?? A good dictionary and a good thesaurus. (For dictionaries, I suggest a current edition of Webster's or Random House's. For thesauri, I suggest one with a dictionary-style listing, such as Roget's *New Thesaurus*. There are also many good dictionaries and thesauri online.)

B. Course Description: Rhetoric 1151 is the second in a series of writing courses required for students in the colleges of Agricultural, Food, and Environmental Sciences; Natural Resources; and Human Ecology. This course emphasizes academic writing, the kinds of papers and articles produced by most students and instructors, and we will spend considerable time finding, reading, and analyzing the journal literature of a student's particular field of study. Students will report, synthesize, and draw conclusions regarding the significance of what they read and will need to draw upon techniques learned in Rhetoric 1101 about clear, correct prose and about the writing process, i.e. invention, research, organizing, drafting, revision, and editing.

C. Class Policies:

I. Attendance. Any absence, regardless of the reason, will prevent you from getting the full benefit of the class. I expect to hear from you if you are absent for any reason. If you are ill or have another valid excuse, please check with your classmates so that you will be prepared for the next class; otherwise, I will be glad to help you make up the work. For each missed class without valid excuses after two, students will have their final course grade dropped by half a letter grade. Five unexcused absences will result in failure of the course.

II. Participation. Participation, like attendance, is an essential part of the learning process. Participation includes contributing to peer reviews and discussions, and completing in-class and homework assignments. Please come to class prepared to contribute. That means have your work complete and have thoughtful, insightful and conscientious comments or questions on the material.

III. Grading. All work for this course is graded according to the guidelines set forth in the *College of Agriculture Bulletin*:

- ?? **A**—"Represents achievement that is outstanding relative to the level necessary to meet course requirements." *In this course, that means work that is pleasurable to read, with excellent content, logical organization, and proper format, including correct grammar and other mechanical structures. It also reflects outstanding participation in class.*

- ?? **B**—"Represents achievement that is significantly above the level necessary to meet basic course requirements." *In this course, that means, well-written, well-produced papers and a substantial addition by you to the in-class learning process.*
- ?? **C**—"Represents achievement that meets the basic course requirements in every respect."
- ?? **D**—"Represents achievement that is worthy of credit, even though it does not fully meet the requirements in every respect."
- ?? **F**—"Represents achievement that is not worthy of credit."

I use the following grading scale: **A = 90-100%; B = 80-89%; C = 70-79%; D = 60-69%; and F = 59% and below.** More specifically, course grades break down in the following manner, for a total of 1,000 points:

- ?? Introductory paper (25 pts.)
- ?? Introduction to your major (50 pts.)
- ?? Journal analysis (100 pts.)
- ?? Prospectus and annotated bibliography (150 pts.)
- ?? Review of research (275 pts.)
- ?? Abstracts (50 pts.)
- ?? Collaborative paper (300 pts.)
- ?? Attendance/Participation (50 pts.)

As a rule, I will not give a grade of Incomplete. In rare instances, such as medical emergencies, it is possible to arrange for an Incomplete. I will assign an Incomplete only when you have made arrangements for it, and only when I feel that there is a reasonable chance that you will make up the missing work before the end of the following quarter.

IV. Revisions. We will focus on revising drafts during the writing process, rather than revising final products. For that reason, it is essential that you work hard on preliminary drafts and respond conscientiously to other student's drafts when asked to do so.

V. Due Dates; Late Work; Make-Up Work; Excuses. All work is due at the beginning of class on the day listed in the syllabus, unless a change has been made by me and announced in class or via e-mail. Due dates are non-negotiable. Late work will be docked five points per day late, including weekends, until I receive it in hand. In-class assignments **CANNOT** be made up if you are absent. If you do not have a valid excuse, you will receive a zero on the missed assignment.

We are now living in the Computer Age and, therefore, you should all be aware that power failures, hard drive crashes, computer viruses, worn-out printer ribbons or empty toner cartridges, etc., can and do occur. Because computer related excuses are now as cliché as "The dog ate my homework," I will not accept any such excuses. This means that, when working on the computer, you should save your material frequently and make necessary back-ups, or, if your printer fails, print your final copy at any one of the computer labs scattered across campus. In general, I am not keen on excuses. If you have a legitimate excuse, we will come to an equitable solution. All excuses (other than computer-related) will be considered on a case-by-case basis.

VI. Academic Dishonesty. Plagiarism and cheating, in any form, have no place in this classroom, or elsewhere in the University. All ideas, words and work of others, therefore, must be given proper credit,

and all work that you hand in must be yours and yours alone. I have scheduled lessons on the proper attribution of sources. If, however, you are still unsure how to give a citation proper credit, consult your style manual or see me. Students who plagiarize, whether intentional or not, will fail the course and be reported to the proper University administrator for further penalties.

VII. Special Needs. It is University policy to provide, on a flexible and individualized basis, reasonable accommodations to students who have disabilities that may affect their ability to participate in course activities or to meet course requirements. Students with disabilities or special needs are encouraged to contact me as soon as possible to discuss their individual needs for accommodation. This information will, of course, be kept confidential.

D. Course Work:

I. Assignments. In this course, you will be responsible for the following:

- ?? **Introductory paper.** Introduce yourself to me in two or three paragraphs. An in-class assignment.
- ?? **Introduction to your major.** In a letter, tell prospective students about your major at the University of Minnesota.
- ?? **Journal analysis.** Compare and contrast two journal articles (one from an academic or research journal, the other from a trade, semi-technical, or popular journal) in terms of rationale, audience, purpose, style tone, evidence, organization, thesis, etc.
- ?? **Prospectus and annotated bibliography.** Write a proposal for your review of research (Assignment #4). Describe your rationale, purpose, audience, sources, etc. Gather at least 10 sources for your literature review. In an attached bibliography, describe briefly (about five sentences) the content of your sources.
- ?? **Review of research (or literature review).** Complete your research and write a paper that reports the current status of an issue or problem for students and faculty in your major.
- ?? **Abstract.** Write a descriptive and an informative abstract of your literature review. An in-class assignment.
- ?? **Collaborative assignment.** Prepare an article addressed to the general public or practitioners on a topic appropriate to your major. The assignment might focus on how to complete a process or convey specific advice. An interview with a professional as well as secondary research will be necessary. You will work with at least one other student in your major or a closely related field.

All papers turned into me shall follow the following format: standard and justified margins (1.25 inches, left and right; 1 inch, top and bottom); serif fonts, no smaller than 10 point and no larger than 12 point; and all sources properly attributed.

NOTE: Any work turned into me that does not follow this format will be handed back to you for the proper corrections, counted as "late" and graded accordingly.

II. In-Class Peer Review and Workdays. Throughout the quarter, I will provide opportunity to critique other students' papers and/or to work on assignments. Be prepared and be conscientious. Please bring your paper (in some form) on a disk, unless we are not in the computer classroom; otherwise, please bring 2 printed copies of your work.

Attendance on peer review days is mandatory because your absence not only hurts yourself but your classmates as well.

E. Class Schedule.

<u>Date:</u>	<u>In-Class/Out-of-Class Assignments:</u>
Day 1	Introduction to course (The Ground Rules) Introductory paper completed in class
Day 2	Discuss audience, purpose, rationale, and situation Reading: Walzer and Kantar, Preface, Standard of Appropriateness, and Chapter 1 Begin work in class on introduction to your major paper
Day 3	Peer critique of introduction to your major paper
Day 4	Introduction to your major paper due at beginning of class Discuss journal analysis Discuss audience, purpose, rationale, and situation, and tone, sentence structure, visual display, research and trade journal conventions Reading: Walzer and Kantar, pp. 15-24; first two articles in Appendix A (hand out)
Day 5	Further discussion of journal analysis Reading: Walzer and Kantar, "Fat, Soy and Carrageenan..." (Appendix A); "Primed for a Big Squeeze" (Appendix C); "Charting Rough Waters" (Appendix E)
Day 6	Peer critique of journal analysis
Day 7	Journal analysis due at beginning of class Discuss prospectus and annotated bibliography Discuss review of research Reading: Walzer and Kantar, Ch. 2 and 3
Day 8	Bring in three articles that you plan to use in your literature review Review of citation styles
Day 9	In-class workday on prospectus and annotated bibliography

Day 10	Peer critique of prospectus and annotated bibliography
Day 11	Prospectus and annotated bibliography due at beginning of class In-class workshop on quotations, summary, and paraphrase
Day 12	Discussion of arrangement or organization patterns, and the value of source material in a review of research
Day 13	In-class workshop (bring in drafts, outlines, copies of articles, notes, etc., of review of research to work on for entire class period) In-class conferences
Day 14	In-class workshop (bring in drafts, outlines, copies of articles, notes, etc., of review of research to work on for entire class period) In-class conferences
Day 15	Peer critique of review of research
Day 16	Review of research due at beginning of class Discuss collaboration Discuss collaborative paper
Day 17	Discuss abstracts Reading: Walzer and Kantar, Ch. 4 Abstracts due at end of class (time given in class to complete)
Day 18	Discuss writing an effective paper based on an interview and secondary research
Day 19	In-class workshop on collaborative paper (Attendance required)
Day 20	In-class workshop for collaborative paper (Attendance not required)
Day 21	Collaborative paper due by 400 pm in my mailbox

NO FINAL!

NOTE: This class schedule is subject to change. Any modifications hereto will be, first and foremost, announced in class and, when appropriate, via e-mail.