

Carleton University
Fall 2015
School of Linguistics and Language Studies

ALDS 3401/ENGL 3908: Research and Theory in Academic Writing

Class Times: Monday and Wednesday 8:35 - 9:55 a.m.

Location: Southam Hall (SA) 316 – *Please confirm location on Carleton Central*

Instructor: Christen Rachul

Office: TBA

Phone: TBA

E-mail address: christen.rachul@carleton.ca (preferred)

Office hours: Wednesday 10 a.m. – 11 a.m., or by appointment

Welcome to Research and Theory in Academic Writing. This is a writing-intensive course and we will be looking at the writing that students do in elementary school, secondary school, and university. We will be examining contemporary research and theory on what academic writing entails, how writing fosters learning, and how instruction can help students develop their writing abilities. If you have any questions or need further elaboration about the course or the course outline below, please feel free to ask me during class, send me an e-mail, or visit me during office hours.

NOTE: When contacting me via e-mail, you must use your university e-mail account as per FIPPA regulations.

Course Objectives:

The course has five primary objectives:

- To introduce you to contemporary theories of academic writing and the development of writing abilities that have appeared in the literature from the 1970s to the present, with a focus on more recent research.
- To present you with qualitative empirical research studies of writing in different academic settings: elementary school, secondary school, and university.
- To familiarize you with different methodologies that researchers have used to investigate academic writing.
- To provide you with opportunities to strengthen your abilities as both a reader and a writer of academic texts, and also to develop your skills as a researcher.
- To help you to develop your ability to act as a peer-reviewer of other people's writing.

To accomplish these objectives, our classes will include a combination of mini-lectures, regular group discussions of the course readings and, for the research project, brainstorming and workshop sessions on your writing-in-progress.

Course Readings

All of the readings are available on-line to reduce additional costs. There will be links to these readings provided through cuLearn and ARES.

EVALUATION

Your final grade will be determined by participation in class and from the written work you produce throughout the course, according to the percentages listed below:

A+ = 90-100	B+ = 77-79	C+ = 67-69	D+ = 56-59	F = below 50
A = 85-89	B = 73-76	C = 63-66	D = 53-56	
A- = 80-84	B- = 70-72	C- = 60-62	D- = 50-52	

The work for the course is described below. *Please note: You must complete all assigned written work to pass the course.* This includes reading commentaries and the drafts of the research paper that you will be producing during the workshop process. Note: There will be no final exam.

Standing in a course is determined by the course instructor subject to the approval of the Faculty Dean. This means that grades submitted by the instructor may be subject to revision. No grades are final until they have been approved by the Dean.

1) Attendance and Participation: 20%

The course functions best when students attend class regularly, keep current with the readings, and participate in group discussions, in-class writing activities, and other class activities. For this reason, regular attendance and participation are required and are considered a significant factor in evaluation. **Repeatedly coming to class late will be considered an absence.** If you should miss a class, you are responsible for sending me an e-mail to find out what we did that day and what has been assigned for the next class.

2) Reading Commentaries: 30%

You will produce 10 reading commentaries throughout the term (each worth 3% of final grade) Reading commentaries will be produced each week about ideas related to the course material. Reading commentaries are to be written outside of class and submitted on cuLearn on Wednesday before class (approx. 400 words, typed). Commentaries will be graded out of 10 with a **half point docked for each day late**. On Wednesday of each week we will also have an Inkshedding session on these commentaries (to be explained further in class). Each entry will include: 1) A response to a prompt that I will provide in class regarding the week's readings and; 2) Exploratory writing includes questions you may have about the reading, arguments for or against author(s)' claims, insights you may have, and/or any connections to your own experience. Commentaries will be evaluated for their content, but not for grammar, punctuation, or spelling.

3) Research Project: 50%

The major assignment in this course is a research project. The research project will follow a workshop model: that is, you will be developing and sharing your ideas and writing in stages throughout the term. See course schedule for details. The final research paper will be due on **December 7th**.

You will have two options for the project:

- 1) Theory: you can conduct in-depth research on a theme or concept we have read about or discussed in class, or on one of the theorists whose work we have read about in the course.
- 2) Research: you can conduct a qualitative empirical study of student writing here at Carleton.

Final research projects will be formatted according to **APA or MLA style** guidelines. I will provide

further guidelines later in the term.

Please note: you must participate in all stages of the workshop process to receive full credit for the research project. The final research project will be graded as follows:

- Written proposal – 5%
- Participation in brainstorming sessions, oral presentations and peer review workshops – 5%
- Final draft of research project – 40%

Additional Resources:

I will make active use of our course page on cuLearn. In addition to required readings, I will post further readings on cuLearn if you would like to explore any of the course themes in more detail. You may find these additional readings applicable for your research projects, so please browse the articles while you are conducting your research. I encourage all students to check the course page regularly.

I also encourage students to take steps to ensure that they are properly integrating references into their work. There are a number of resources available to students during the drafting stages of writing:

- Writing Tutorial Services (4th floor MacOdrum Library) – writing tutors are available to consult with you at any stage during your writing process. They can also help with any concerns you may have with referencing and citation.
- Library resources – the library has online resources available to students, including an updated style guide for APA and MLA. A librarian that specializes in ALDS is also available if you require extra assistance with research and finding resources.

UNIVERSITY POLICIES

Plagiarism

The University Senate defines plagiarism as “*presenting, whether intentionally or not, the ideas, expression of ideas or work of others as one’s own.*” This can include:

- reproducing or paraphrasing portions of someone else’s published or unpublished material, regardless of the source, and presenting these as one’s own without proper citation or reference to the original source;
- submitting a take-home examination, essay, laboratory report or other assignment written, in whole or in part, by someone else;
- using ideas or direct, verbatim quotations, or paraphrased material, concepts, or ideas without appropriate acknowledgment in any academic assignment;
- using another’s data or research findings;
- failing to acknowledge sources through the use of proper citations when using another’s works and/or failing to use quotation marks;
- handing in "substantially the same piece of work for academic credit more than once without prior written permission of the course instructor in which the submission occurs."

Plagiarism is a serious offence that cannot be resolved directly with the course’s instructor. The Associate Dean of the Faculty conducts a rigorous investigation, including an interview with the student, when an instructor suspects a piece of work has been plagiarized. Penalties are not trivial. They can include a final grade of "F" for the course. For more information please go to: <http://www2.carleton.ca/studentaffairs/academic-integrity>

Academic Accommodation

You may need special arrangements to meet your academic obligations during the term. For an accommodation request the processes are as follows:

Pregnancy obligation: write to me with any requests for academic accommodation during the first two weeks of class, or as soon as possible after the need for accommodation is known to exist. For more details see the Student Guide

Religious obligation: write to me with any requests for academic accommodation during the first two weeks of class, or as soon as possible after the need for accommodation is known to exist. For more details see the Student Guide

You can visit the Equity Services website to view the policies and to obtain more detailed information on academic accommodation at <http://carleton.ca/equity/accommodation/academic/students/>

Academic Accommodations for Students with Disabilities: The Paul Menton Centre for Students with Disabilities (PMC) provides services to students with Learning Disabilities (LD), psychiatric/mental health disabilities, Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD), Autism Spectrum Disorders (ASD), chronic medical conditions, and impairments in mobility, hearing, and vision. If you have a disability requiring academic accommodations in this course, please contact PMC at 613-520-6608 or pmc@carleton.ca for a formal evaluation. If you are already registered with the PMC, contact your PMC coordinator to send me your Letter of Accommodation at the beginning of the term, and no later than two weeks before the first in-class scheduled test or exam requiring accommodation (if applicable). After requesting accommodation from PMC, meet with me to ensure accommodation arrangements are made. Please consult the PMC website for the deadline to request accommodations for the formally-scheduled exam (if applicable).

TENTATIVE COURSE SCHEDULE

DATE	ACTIVITIES
September 2	Introduction to Research and Theory in Academic Writing
Theoretical Perspectives: From “Writing as Product” to “Writing as Process”	
September 4	<i>Readings</i> Janet Emig, “Writing as a mode of learning” Vivian Zamel, “Recent research on writing pedagogy”
September 9	<i>Readings</i> Peter Elbow, “The process of writing-growing” James Britton, “Writing to learn and learning to write”
Theoretical Perspectives: Social and Cultural Dimensions of Writing	
September 14 & 16	<i>Readings</i>

	James Reither, "Writing and knowing: Toward redefining the writing process" Anne Herrington & Charles Moran, "The idea of genre in theory and practice"
September 21 & 23	<i>Readings</i> Amy Devitt, "Generalizing about genre: New conceptions of an old concept" Charles Bazerman "Speech acts, genres and activity systems"
Research Studies in Writing in Academic Settings: Elementary School	
September 28 & 30	<i>Readings</i> Joanne Larson & Maryrita Maier, "Co-authoring classroom texts"
October 5 & 7	<i>Readings</i> Lalitha Vasudevan, Katherine Schultz, & Jennifer Bateman, "Rehinking composing in the digital age: Authoring literate identities through multimodal storytelling"
Research Studies in Writing in Academic Settings: Secondary School	
October 14	<i>Readings</i> Lisa Scherff & Carolyn Piazza, "The more things change, the more they stay the same: A survey of high school students' experiences"
October 19 & 21	<i>Readings</i> Sarah Beck & Jill Jeffery, "Genre and thinking in academic writing tasks."
READING BREAK – October 26 – October 30	
Research Studies in Writing in Academic Settings: University	
November 2 & 4	<i>Readings</i> Artemeva & Fox, "Awareness vs. production: Probing students' antecedent genre knowledge" Reiff & Bawarshi, "Tracing discursive resources: How students use prior genre knowledge to negotiate new writing contexts in First-Year Composition"
November 9 & 11	<i>Readings</i> Anne Beaufort, "Developmental gains of a history major: A case for building a theory of disciplinary writing expertise." - Brainstorming project ideas in small groups (November 9)
November 16 & 18	<i>Readings</i> Michael Carter, Miriam Ferzli, & Eric Wiebe, "Learning to write by learning to write in the disciplines" - Written proposal due (November 16)
November 23 & 25	TBA

	- Oral presentations of progress reports in small groups (November 25)
November 30	Peer conferencing on complete-as-possible draft of research paper, problem-solving and brainstorming
December 2	Peer conferencing on complete-as-possible draft of research paper, problem-solving and brainstorming
December 7	Final drafts of course project due

Required Readings

From “writing as product” to “writing as process”

1. Emig, J. (1977). Writing as a mode of learning. *College Composition and Communication*, 28(2), 122-128.
2. Zamel, V. (1987). Recent research on writing pedagogy. *TESOL Quarterly*, 21(4), 697-715.
3. Elbow, P. (1973). The process of writing—growing. In *Writing without teachers* (pp. 12-42). New York: Oxford University Press.
4. Britton, J. (1982). Writing to learn and learning to write. In G. Pradl (Ed.), *Prospect and retrospect: Selected essays of James Britton* (pp. 94-111). Montclair, NJ: Boynton/Cook.

Social and cultural dimensions of writing

5. Reither, J. (1985). Writing and knowing: Toward redefining the writing process. *College English*, 47, 620-628.
6. Herrington, A. & Moran, C. (2005). The idea of genre in theory and practice: An overview of the work in genre in the fields of composition and rhetoric and new genre studies. In A. Herrington & C. Morgan (Eds.), *Genre across the curriculum*. (pp. 1-13). Logan, UT: Utah State University Press.
7. Devitt, A. (1993). Generalizing about genre: New conceptions of an old concept. *College Composition and Communication*, 44, 573-586.
8. Bazerman, C. (2004). Speech acts, genres and activity systems: How texts organize activity and people. In C. Bazerman & P. Prior (Eds.), *What writing does and how it does it: An introduction to analyzing texts and textual practices* (pp. 309-339). Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.

Elementary School

9. Vasudevan, L., Schultz, K. & Bateman, J. (2010). Rethinking composing in the digital age: Authoring literate identities through multimodal storytelling. *Written Communication*, 27(4), 442-468.
10. Larson, J, & Maier, M. (2000). Co-authoring classroom texts: "Shifting participant roles in writing activity". *Research in the Teaching of English*, 34(4), 468-497.

Secondary School

11. Scherff, L. & Piazza, C. (2005). The more things change, the more they stay the same: A survey of high school students' experiences. *Research in the teaching of English*, 39(3), 271-304.
12. Beck, S.W., & Jeffery, J.V. (2009). Genre and thinking in academic writing tasks. *Journal of Literacy Research*, 41, 228-272.

University

13. Reiff, M.J., & Bawarshi, A. (2011). Tracing discursive resources: How students use prior

- genre knowledge to negotiate new writing contexts in First-Year Composition. *Written Communication*, 28(3), 312-337.
14. Artemeva, N. & Fox, J. (2010). Awareness vs. production: Probing students' antecedent genre knowledge. *Journal of Business and Technical Communication*, 24 (4), 476-515.
 15. Beaufort, A. (2004). Developmental gains of a history major: A case for building a theory of disciplinary writing expertise. *Research in the Teaching of English*, 39(2), 136-185.
 16. Carter, M., Ferzli, M., & Wiebe, E.N. (2007). Writing to learn by learning to write in the disciplines. *Journal of Business and Technical Communication*, 21(3), 278-302.