

ALDS 4403/English 4909 – Writing & Knowledge-Making in the Disciplines

Winter 2017

School of Linguistics & Language Studies

Carleton University

Class time: Wednesday & Friday 8:35 a.m. - 9:55 a.m.
Location: 378 University Centre
Instructor: Professor Graham Smart
Office: 243 Paterson Hall
Office phone: (613) 520-2600 (ext. 2000)
E-mail: gsmart@connect.carleton.ca
Office hours: Wednesday & Friday 10:30 a.m. -11:30 a.m., and by appointment.

Please note: If you would like to meet with me during one of my office hours, please e-mail me in advance so that we can arrange a specific time and you're not kept waiting while I'm meeting with other students.

Welcome to ALDS 4403/ENGL 4909: Writing and Knowledge-Making in the Disciplines. I look forward to working with you this semester as we collaborate in exploring the topic of the course. Below you'll find information on the focus and organization of the course as well as a description of class activities, writing assignments, and course policies. Please read this syllabus over carefully, and if you have any questions or need further information, let me know. We'll be discussing the syllabus in the first class and, in addition, I would be happy to meet with you individually to talk about any aspects of the course.

This course is designed to provide a space for collaborative inquiry into the role that writing and texts play in the knowledge-making activities of different academic disciplines, and more specifically, an inquiry into the twelve questions below:

- How might we define an academic discipline? Or put differently, what are the constituent elements of an academic discipline?
- What's meant by the 'social construction of written knowledge'?
- What are the historical origins of the academic journal article?
- When we consider any particular academic discipline, what aspects of material or social reality does this discipline study? What kinds of questions or problems does the discipline investigate?
- What characterizes the specific types of written knowledge produced within a particular discipline (e.g., in Applied Linguistics, Literary Studies, Communication Studies, Journalism, Biology, Sociology, Physics, or History)?
- How is written knowledge created, circulated, assessed, and validated within a discipline? What kinds of individual and collaborative activities are involved in this process of knowledge-making?
- What is the set of written genres used within a discipline for constructing its knowledge? What are the discourse conventions of these genres?
- How are a discipline's particular goals, values, and assumptions reflected in the discourse of its genres?

- What are disciplinary theories, and what purposes do these theories serve within a discipline's knowledge-making activities?
- What kinds of argumentation—that is, knowledge claims supported by evidence and logical reasoning—are considered to be legitimate and persuasive within a discipline?
- How is the knowledge produced by a discipline communicated to a wider public audience?
- How do undergraduate and graduate students learn to read and write effectively within a specific discipline?

Course work and grading scheme

Your final grade will be derived from your participation in class and from the written work you produce for 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	

Since there will be no final exam in this course, supplemental and grade-raiser exams won't be possible.

The work for the course is described below. Please note that the following practices will definitely work in your favour regarding your final grade for the course: (1) consistently coming to class well-prepared to discuss the readings assigned for that day, and (2) handing in all assigned written work on the due date.

1) Attendance and active participation in discussions of the course readings: 10%

The course functions best for everyone when students attend class regularly, keep current with the readings, and participate actively in class discussions. For this reason, *regular attendance and active participation are required and are a significant factor in evaluation*. Any more than three absences over the term (to allow for colds, flu, medical appointments, snow storms, etc.) will count against your final grade unless there are serious extenuating circumstances. And please note that it's your responsibility to keep track of the number of classes you miss. If you do miss a class, you're responsible for finding out what we did in class that day and what work has been assigned for the next class (the best way to do this would be to send me an e-mail). Please note that repeatedly coming to class late or leaving class early will count as absence.

2) Reading commentaries: 48%

Your reading commentaries will provide you with an opportunity to use the writing process to enhance your understanding of course material and to prompt your own ideas in response. This practice is based on extensive research showing that writing about new concepts can help us to make sense of these concepts and connect them to our prior experience and knowledge.

Every week, from the second class in January until the first part of March, you'll be writing two reading commentaries on the course reading(s) assigned for that week—one out-of-class reading commentary of approximately 350 words that you'll bring to class every Wednesday to hand in; and one in-class reading commentary of 150-200 words that you'll write at the beginning of class every Friday. *Please note: The reading commentaries are due on the specific dates indicated. You'll lose part of the grade for any reading commentary handed in late unless you've forewarned me that you have a problem that will prevent you from submitting the reading commentary on time.* If you miss a class on Friday, you'll be expected to submit a 350-word reading commentary for that day as soon as possible and by the next class at the latest (you can e-mail the reading commentary to me).

Each reading commentary will include two kinds of writing: *a response to a prompt you're given* and some *exploratory writing*. In the former, you'll respond to a specific prompt you've received in the class

agenda regarding the reading. In the *exploratory writing*, which should be at least one-quarter of the reading commentary, you can write more freely—for example, raising any questions you might have about the reading, arguing for or against its claims, recording insights prompted by the reading, making connections with other course readings or with your own experience, exploring ideas for the research project (see below), or anything else relevant that occurs to you as you write. The reading commentaries will be graded for their content, but not for grammar, punctuation, or spelling. (Note: If you wish to have errors of grammar, punctuation, or spelling pointed out in your reading commentaries, for your own information, I'll be happy to do that; please indicate this at the top of each commentary.)

You'll be writing 16 reading commentaries during the term, with each one worth 3% of the overall course grade. If you submit a reading commentary on the day it's due and you've responded appropriately to the prompt you were given and have also included some exploratory writing, you'll receive the 3%. If you're late submitting the reading commentary and/or if you haven't responded appropriately to the prompt and/or you haven't included some exploratory writing, you'll receive 2%, 1%, or zero. I won't accept any reading commentaries not handed in by the class following the class in which it's due. (To give you a chance to become familiar with the genre of the reading commentary, the first two reading commentaries you do, during the second week of the course, will be graded pass/fail.)

3) Research Project: 42%

Beginning in late February and continuing through March and early April you'll be carrying out a research project and writing up your work. The project will involve selecting a particular discipline (your choice) and investigating its written discourse and knowledge-making in the light of our work during the course. We'll be employing a workshop model for the research project: you'll be developing and sharing your ideas and your writing for the research project in stages, as outlined below.

- Informal oral presentation of project proposal (in small group).
- Written project proposal.
- Oral progress report (in small group).
- Peer-reviewing of revised draft of research paper. ***
- In-class work session, with brain-storming on issues related to students' drafts.
- Peer-reviewing of revised draft of research paper. ***
- Final version research paper and related material due.

Note: You'll be receiving detailed guidelines and a schedule for the research project. Please familiarize yourself with following course policies regarding the project:

- *You must participate actively in all stages of the workshop process to receive full credit for the research project.* This means, for example, that for the activities marked with an *** in the schedule above, you must bring a draft of your research paper to class for peer-reviewing. *If you fail to participate in the different stages of the workshop process, you could lose up to 25 of the 50 marks allocated for the research project.*
- You're expected to hand in the research paper by the due date. Extensions will be granted only under serious circumstances, and only if you contact me before the due date.

Course policies

Attendance: As mentioned above, regular attendance in class is required, as is prompt arrival to class. If you need to miss a class for some reason, please send me an e-mail explaining your situation, and I'll send you the agenda for that day. If you're absent from a class, you'll need to submit any assigned work that was due that day as soon as possible, and as well, you'll be expected to be fully prepared for the next class.

Written work: *You must complete all the assigned written work to pass the course.*

Communication between us

I'll be happy to meet with you individually at any point during the winter term to talk about how the course is going for you. My office hours are on Wednesday and Friday from 10:30-11:30 a.m., in 243 Paterson Hall. If this time isn't convenient for you, we can make an appointment for a time that is convenient. As well, feel free to e-mail me (gsmart@connect.carleton.ca) about any questions or concerns you might have during the semester regarding the course. *Please use your Carleton e-mail account when sending me an e-mail* (this is a legal requirement of Ontario's Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act).

Academic integrity

In all written work, students must avoid plagiarism, i.e., presenting the work or ideas of another person as one's own. Forms of plagiarism include the following: copying from the work of another author without proper use of footnotes and quotation marks; using the ideas of others without acknowledging the source; extensive paraphrasing of another person's work without acknowledging the source; submitting the work of another person as one's own; and handing in substantially the same piece of work for academic credit in more than one course without prior written permission of the course instructor. Plagiarism is a serious offence, which will be reported to the Office of the Dean of the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences. You're advised to consult the Undergraduate Calendar for further information on Academic Integrity.

Student services

Writing Services - 4th floor MacOdrum Library.
Student Academic Success Centre - 302 Tory Building

Requests for academic accommodation

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. *Requests made within two weeks will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis.* After requesting accommodation from PMC, meet with me to ensure accommodation arrangements are made.

For religious observance:

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 visit the Equity Services website: <http://www2.carleton.ca/equity/accommodation>. Students who have questions or want to confirm the accommodation eligibility of a religious event or practice may refer to the Equity Services website for a list of holy days and Carleton's Academic Accommodation policies, or they may contact an Equity Services Advisor in the Equity Services Department for assistance.

For pregnancy:

Write to me with a request 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 visit the Equity Services website: <http://www2.carleton.ca/equity/accommodation>.