

**WRTG 10600**  
**ACADEMIC WRITING I**  
**MWF 3:00-3:50**  
**Williams 314**  
**Spring 2009**

**Instructor**            **Dr. Jack Wang**  
**Office**                **404B Smiddy Hall**  
**Office Phone**        **274-3493**  
**Office Hours**        **MWF 4:00-5:00, T 1:00-3:00 and by appointment**  
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**Course Description**

Academic Writing I is an introduction to the conventions of narrative, expository, argumentative, and research writing in academic contexts. Over the course of the semester, you will write a sequence of essays that progress from personal to public. For each assignment, you will read essays by student and professional writers that will serve as models for your own writing and help you understand the intimate connections between reading, writing, and thinking. To familiarize you with the processes of composition—invention, planning, drafting, and revision—this course will ask you to write multiple drafts of each essay and share those drafts with your peers and your teacher in order to both give and receive feedback. Because reading a lot, writing a lot, and giving and receiving a lot of feedback are the best ways to improve your writing, this course will focus most on these three activities.

The theory behind this course is that all good writing is situational. In other words, there is no one way of writing that is effective under all circumstances. Through the many aspects of this course—readings, writings, classroom discussions, peer review workshops, and individual conferences, among others—you will develop the awareness to negotiate many different writing situations, a skill that will serve you throughout your college career and beyond.

**Required Text**

*Good Reasons With Contemporary Arguments, 4e*  
Lester Faigley and Jack Selzer, eds.

**Coursework**

Narrative Argument (portfolio with at least two drafts)	20%
Annotated Bibliography	20%
Rhetorical Analysis Essay (portfolio with at least two drafts)	15%
Research-based Proposal Argument (portfolio with at least two drafts)	25%
Academic Conference	10%
Final Exam	10%

### *The Essays*

This semester, you will write a sequence of essays on an issue of your choosing. By “issue,” I mean a subject of controversy with both private and public significance. First, you will use narrative to reflect on, analyze, and dramatize your personal connection to the issue. Next, you will broaden the conversation by analyzing the positions and rhetorical strategies of other voices on the subject. Finally, by using both your personal experiences and the voices of others, you will contribute an argument of your own through a researched and documented essay.

### *The Annotated Bibliography*

The annotated bibliography is a list of sources you’ll compile in advance of writing your rhetorical analysis and argumentative essays. The bibliography is “annotated” because each citation will be accompanied by a one-paragraph summary of its contents. This assignment will not only help ensure a diversity of appropriate secondary sources for your research, but also help you understand how to paraphrase and use quotations properly—skills that are indispensable in research-writing.

### *The Peer Review Workshops*

Writing is a process, and part of that process is giving and receiving feedback. Our small group workshops will give you the opportunity to do so with your peers. In workshop, always read your peers’ essays attentively and work in a spirit of collegiality and mutual purpose so that the peer review process is a constructive experience for everyone.

### *Participation*

This is a discussion-based course, so the success of our class depends in large part on your active participation. Contributing to class discussion is an important way to test your ideas, practice and sharpen your rhetorical skills, and shape your own classroom experience, so always come to class prepared to speak.

### *The Academic Conference*

The capstone exercise in this course will be an academic conference. At this conference, you will sit on a panel with others in the class doing similar research and deliver a five-minute version of your argumentative essay, then field questions from the audience. Our conference will be modeled on the kinds of academic conferences which professional scholars attend. Thus, the academic conference serves as an introduction to the culture of academia—its language, practices, and expectations.

## **Course Policies**

### *Enrollment Restrictions*

If you have taken any writing courses at another institution for which you received credit or if you have received AP credit for a writing course, you may be ineligible for Academic Writing I and should speak to me immediately.

### *Online Courseware/WebCT*

Most course materials will be distributed electronically through Blackboard, which can be accessed by going to <http://courses.ithaca.edu> or <https://akron.ithaca.edu:4440/webct/entryPageIns.dowebct> and logging in with your e-mail username and password. Please check regularly for updates and assignments.

### *Attendance*

Regular attendance is vital to the learning process and your success in this course. Most of our classes will involve discussions, workshops, and in-class writing, all of which is critical to your success as a writer. **All students are allowed two unexcused absences. Thereafter, every unexcused absence will result in a one-third letter grade deduction to your final grade. In keeping with department policy, students who have nine absences (excused or unexcused) will be dropped from the course, and if the last absence occurs after the period of withdrawal, they will receive an F in the course.** Whenever possible, please let me know ahead of time that you won't be in class. In cases of emergencies and school-authorized events, please document your absence, and please remember that you are responsible for anything you've missed, including any changes to the syllabus.

### *Grading*

To receive full credit, essays must be typed, submitted in MLA format, and accompanied by the required supporting materials. I will not grade a final draft unless I have previously read a draft of the essay. **Late work, including late drafts, will be penalized 10% a day. Assignments more than two days late will not be accepted. On weekends, late work can and should be submitted electronically.** Specific requirements for each assignment will vary, but in all cases my evaluation of your work will consider content, organization, expression, mechanics, and maturity of thought. More specific criteria are as follows:

- A An A essay has a well-defined sense of purpose. This purpose is consistently developed and supported throughout the essay and suited to the form of essay assigned (i.e. narrative, analytical, argumentative, etc.). The writer conveys a sense of complexity not just of the topic but of the interaction among purpose, audience, and persona evident in the content, organization, and expression of the text. There are no problems with mechanics or usage which distract the reader, and the style is not just clear but vivid.
- B A B essay also contains a sense of the complexity of the rhetorical situation, but there may be less specificity in addressing the audience's values, beliefs, and assumptions. The writer's purpose is again clearly articulated and supported throughout the essay and is evident in the content and expression, although it may be less developed than it is in an A essay. A B essay fulfills most aspects of the assignment and contains few problems with mechanics or usage.

- C A C essay is a competent essay, one whose content is simple and clear, but which may have less of a sense of the complexity of the rhetorical situation. The writer develops the purpose throughout the essay in ways that are clear and obvious. The writer may still be struggling with some of the interplay of content and expression. A C essay minimally fulfills the assignment.
- D A D essay is weak in one or more of the areas of purpose, audience, and persona, as reflected in the content, organization, expression, and mechanics. The purpose of the essay may be unclear or inconsistent. The author may have chosen an inappropriate audience or may have ignored the question of audience altogether by writing in a style and depth which suggest that only the author will understand the essay.
- F Assigned when the criteria for the assignment have clearly not been met. Also assigned in cases of...

### *Academic Dishonesty*

Some students believe that the word “plagiarism” only describes acts of outright cheating. In fact, plagiarism describes any instance when you take someone else’s language or ideas and present them as your own, including any inadvertent misuse of secondary sources. One of the goals of this course is to teach you how to use other people’s words and ideas responsibly. **Any intentional misuse will not be tolerated. A first offense for plagiarism will result in failure in the course and may require further action by the College.** This course gives you the chance to express your own thoughts and your own voice, so don’t relinquish that opportunity.

### *Students with Disabilities*

Students with disabilities who wish to receive reasonable accommodations, as required by law, should identify themselves to the professor as early in the semester as possible. Please register with and bring documentation to the Office of Academic Support Services for Students with Disabilities and bring documentation to the professor from the ACSSD indicating the need for academic accommodation, preferably during the first week.

### *Humanities and Sciences Effective Writing Program*

If you are enrolled in the School of Humanities and Sciences, you must be certified an effective writer as a requirement for graduation. Effective writing is defined as writing that is clear, focused, and adequately developed in response to an assignment. Such writing is well organized and reasonably correct, according to conventional standards of grammar, punctuation, and usage. As your academic writing professor, I will evaluate your writing for effectiveness at the end of the semester.

## *The Writing Center*

The Writing Center serves Ithaca College students who wish to become better writers, readers, and thinkers. As an integral part of the Department of Writing, the Writing Center has two main goals: to help students from all disciplines develop their basic academic writing skills and to foster advanced writers throughout the College. In a friendly, comfortable atmosphere, writers at all levels may participate in one-on-one conferences to work on effective strategies for all aspects of the writing process.

You may choose to go to the Writing Center on your own. However, those who face particular challenges to their writing may be required by me to make an appointment. Drop in to the Writing Center in 107 Smiddy Hall or call 274-3315. Their hours are as follows:

M-F 9:00am-5:00pm  
Su-Th 7:00-10:00pm

### **Schedule**

#### **Week 1**

W January 21 Introduction to Academic Writing I.

#### **The Narrative Argument**

F January 23 “Introduction” (1-5), “1 Why Argue?” (9-21) and “3 Finding Arguments” (30-36).  
*Introduction to the Writing Project and the Narrative Argument.*

#### **Week 2**

M January 26 “11 Narrative Arguments” (177-87, 90-91).

W January 28 “A Hanging” by George Orwell (handout).

F January 30 “My Landlady’s Yard” (187-89) and “Berkeley Blues” (handout).

#### **Week 3**

M February 2 “A False Wikipedia ‘Biography’” (579-82).

W February 4 **First draft of the Narrative Argument due.**  
**Bring copies for peer review. Sign up for individual conferences.**  
“Respond to the Writing of Others” (62-65).

F February 6 Peer review workshop.

#### **Week 4**

M February 9 “4 Drafting and Revising Arguments” (52-62).

W February 11 Common Writing Problems.  
F February 13 **No Class.**

### **The Annotated Bibliography**

#### **Week 5**

M February 16 **Final draft and portfolio of the Narrative Argument due.**  
*Introduction to the Annotated Bibliography.*  
Introduction to library research.  
“16 Planning Research” (247-53).

W February 18 Introduction to library research.  
“17 Finding Sources” (254-62) and “18 Evaluating and Recording Sources” (263-69).  
**Chitra Divakaruni Reading, 7:30 p.m., Clark Lounge, Egbert Hall.**

F February 20 Library research session. Meet in the library.

#### **Week 6**

M February 23 Library research session. Meet in the library.

W February 25 Library research session. Meet in the library.

F February 27 Review of MLA documentation.  
Consult “MLA Works-Cited List” (287-96).

#### **Week 7**

M March 2 **First draft of the Annotated Bibliography due.**  
**Bring a copy to class.**

W March 4 **Final draft and portfolio of the Annotated Bibliography due.**  
*Introduction to the Rhetorical Analysis Essay.*

F March 6 **No class.**

#### **Week 8**

March 7-15 **Spring Break.**

### **The Rhetorical Analysis Essay**

#### **Week 9**

M March 16 “5 Analyzing Written Arguments” (69-89).

**T March 17 Jean Valentine Reading, 7:30 pm, Emerson Suite A, Phillips Hall.**

W March 18 “Vanity, Thy Name Is Metrosexual” (396-99).

F March 20 “A Trail of DNA and Data” (502-5).

**Week 10**

M March 23

**First draft of Rhetorical Analysis Essay due.  
Bring copies for peer review.**

W March 25

Peer review workshop.

F March 27

“Those Extra Pounds—Are They Government’s Business?” (554-56).

**The Research-based Proposal Argument**

**Week 11**

M March 30

**Final draft and portfolio of the Rhetorical Analysis Essay due.**  
*Introduction to the Research-based Proposal Argument.*  
“7 Putting Good Reasons Into Action” (109-112).  
“13 Proposal Arguments” (209-17).

W April 1

“Let’s Make It a Real Melting Pot with Presidential Hopes for All”  
(218-25).

F April 3

“Need a Cure for Tribe Fever? How About a Dip in the Lake?”  
(297-303).

**Week 12**

M April 6

“19 Writing the Research Paper” (270-79).

W April 8

“Letter from Birmingham Jail” by Martin Luther King (handout).

F April 10

“20 Documenting Sources in MLA Style” (280-87).

**Week 13**

M April 13

**First draft of the Research-based Proposal Argument due.  
Bring copies for peer review. Sign up for individual conferences.**

W April 15

Peer review workshop.

F April 17

Preparation for the Academic Conference.

**Week 14**

M April 20

Preparation for the Academic Conference.

W April 22

Academic Conference. Panel #1.

F April 24

Academic Conference. Panel #2.

**Week 15**

M April 27

Academic Conference. Panel #3.

W April 29

Academic Conference. Panel #4.

F May 1

Discussion of Academic Conference/Proposal Argument.

**Week 16**  
M May 4

**Final draft and portfolio of the Research-based Proposal  
Argument due.**

Preparation for the final exam.

Th May 7

Final Exam, 10:30am-1:00pm