DESCRIPTIVE OVERVIEW

This course is designed for any student who wishes to improve his or her writing skills to meet the demands of academic writing across the disciplines and/or the demands of professions that value careful analysis and communication. The course emphasizes analytical writing, both as a means of invention and as a form of persuasion. Course readings and assignments will provide you with opportunities to study and practice rhetorical forms and strategies used in your discipline, while attention to the persuasive nature of analysis will provide you with the rhetorical foundations necessary to adapt your writing to many different situations.

COURSE GOALS

After taking this course, you should be able to:

- investigate, identify, and explain the conventions, purposes, patterns of arrangement, forms of proof, and style appropriate to a particular discipline;
- analyze and conduct research in various forms;
- differentiate various analytical techniques and employ them in order to realize particular rhetorical goals;
- adapt to the demands of various rhetorical contexts in your own discipline and across disciplines;
- identify potential for cross-disciplinary application of rhetorical forms and genres and adapt to the various rhetorical conventions of multiple disciplines;
- compose texts that are incisive, logical, persuasive, informative, and interesting; and
- use an understanding of style, purpose, form, and situation to compose coherent texts.

COURSE MATERIALS

Required Materials
Access to a computer with internet capabilities
SIU email address

Recommended Materials
A portable or desktop file case or an accordion folder
A portable USB storage device
A college-level dictionary

COURSEWORK

Unit Assignments

1) Interview Summary and Issue Analysis: Relevant to readings or other resources addressing a subject related to your major area of study, interview a professor or professional working in that area to learn more about that subject. Then write a two-page summary of the interview and a three-page Issue Analysis. The Issue Analysis involves locating a focused topic originating from
your initial research (including the interview) and examining that topic from multiple perspectives. Since you will be researching this issue all semester, you should select a topic that you find especially interesting.

*Annotated Bibliography*: The Annotated Bibliography will serve as a record of your citations, summaries, and evaluations of sources beginning with those addressed for the Issue Analysis and continuing throughout the semester as your project evolves. This document should include at least ten annotations, each of which should be between 150-250 words and should be double-spaced, and typed. Each entry should summarize the content of the source in question and evaluate it in terms of its usefulness for your project.

2) **Forum Analysis**: Select a reputable peer-reviewed journal in your field of study and read a representative number of articles from it. In your four-to-five-page Forum Analysis, discuss the conventions of the journal that scholars who might wish to publish in that particular venue should observe, including those relevant to form, style, tone, etc. You may also wish to discuss common topics of interest emerging from those articles.

3) **Proposal and Annotated Bibliography**: Review the criteria for the Discipline-Specific Scholarly Article (Unit 5), and write a three-to-four-page Proposal for that project. In this proposal, you will want to indicate your focus; discuss how you became interested in the topic; provide background information or context essential for characterizing it; identify the genre appropriate for the manner in which you will address the topic (Problem/Solution paper, Synthesis/Discovery paper, or Position paper); explain how you will use the sources that you have found so far; and project the kinds of sources you still need to locate. The Annotated Bibliography introduced during Unit 1 should be submitted in finished form with the Unit 3 Proposal.

* Although the Annotated Bibliography is not due until Unit 3, your instructor will likely collect a draft earlier in the course.

4) **Extended Definition of Key Term**: Identify a specialized term or terms that you will be using in the Unit 5 Discipline-Specific Scholarly Article. This three to-five-page assignment requires that you define the term or terms that you have selected in an extended manner, with the goal being to establish a working definition for your Unit 5 paper. In doing so, you should discuss why it is important to use the specific connotation or denotation that you are creating for your research purposes. You might also want to explore how the term is different from words that carry similar meanings, and/or you might want to discuss other meanings typically associated with the term—clarifying, in either instance, how your definition is different and why.

5) **Discipline-Specific Scholarly Article**: Write a twelve-to-fifteen-page article targeted for your discourse community that in some manner addresses the issue that you have been studying all semester. This article, which should be supported by external research (e.g., peer-reviewed journal articles, books, documentaries, interviews), can take any of the following forms:
   (a) **Problem/Solution Paper**: identifies and analyzes a problem in your area of study or future career and offers a solution; or
   (b) **Synthesis/Discovery Paper**: explores the nature of a specific phenomenon and in some way elucidates it or offers a fresh perspective; or
   (c) **Position Paper**: crafts an argument intended to persuade an audience comprised of those in the same discourse community and offers counterarguments that anticipate opposing views or contentions.

**Final Exam**: Design an eight-to-ten-minute presentation of the findings presented in your Unit 5 paper, employing various media to support your purpose. Consider how your findings fit within the larger academic conversation surrounding your topic.
Format of Unit Assignments

All drafts of major essays for the course must be computer generated and submitted as both a hard copy and an electronic copy as directed by your instructor. The first page should be labeled with your name, the course and section number, the date, and the unit number; subsequent pages should be numbered and labeled with your last name. The pages should have one-inch margins. The text should appear in 12-point Times New Roman font. Multiple pages should be connected with a staple or a paper clip.

Grade Percentages

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Unit</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Unit 1: Interview Summary and Issue Analysis</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unit 2: Forum Analysis</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unit 3: Annotated Bibliography and Proposal</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unit 4: Extended Definition of Key Term</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unit 5: Discipline-Specific Scholarly Article</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Final Exam: Research Presentation</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Informal Exercises</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

COURSE POLICIES

Late Work Policy

• Informal Assignments—Informal assignments that are late for unexcused reasons will not be accepted and cannot be made up. If your reason for missing an exercise is excused (see attendance policy below), you may be allowed to make it up; however, you will be asked to provide documentation of the reason for the absence. Planned excused absences will require prior arrangements with and written approval from your instructor. Unplanned excused absences will require after-the-fact, official documentation of the reason for the absence before you will be allowed to make up missed work.

• Submission of Rough Drafts and Final Drafts—Late submission of rough and final drafts will accrue a 5% deduction for each day that the essay is late. If you know you will not be able to attend class on the day an essay is due, make arrangements in advance with your instructor. If you need to miss class suddenly, email your instructor with the essay in the correct format before the end of class and bring a hard copy of the essay upon your return.

(Never submit an assignment by leaving it on your instructor’s desk, giving it to your instructor’s officemate, or slipping it under your instructor’s door, as your instructor cannot be responsible for receiving such indirect submissions.)

Attendance Policy

Excessive unexcused absences will prevent you from passing this course. One day over three weeks of unexcused absences (consecutive or not) will result in automatic failure of the course. That is up to nine class periods for a MWF schedule and six class periods for a T/TR schedule. Additionally, some substantial negative effects of total unexcused absences under the three-week mark are listed immediately below.

• No in-class work can be made up without providing official documentation of the reason for the absence. Unexcused absences will result in a zero for work that took place during the missed class period.
• Work that comes in after the due date as a result of an unexcused absence will receive a deduction in accordance with the English 290 late work policy.
• Lack of participation in classroom activities will negatively impact your level of preparedness for succeeding on the unit assignments.

If you miss over three weeks of class as a result of excused absences (e.g., those resulting from extended illness), you must obtain official documentation (e.g., a letter from a medical doctor) that establishes (1) the cause of the excessive absence and (2) the necessity for having to miss so many class periods.

If you are absent for an extended period of time as a result of illness or other personal crises, you should seek the assistance of SIUC’s Transitional Services Office at (618) 453-7041. Furthermore, please note that early departures for holidays will not count as excused absences. Excused absences for weddings, funerals, court dates, and other clearly compelling matters must be preapproved by your instructor. Procedures for making up missed work as a result of these absences must be pre-arranged with your instructor.

All absences that you wish to be designated as excused as a result of illness or an emergency must be officially documented. This documentation must be provided to your instructor no later than two weeks after the absence in order for the absence to be excused. If you are not feeling well enough to come to class and wish the absence to be excused, you will need to provide evidence/documentation from a health care professional.

Tardiness

An unexcused tardy or early departure that exceeds ten minutes of class time, as well as chronic instances of tardiness or early departure, will count as disruptive behavior (see below). You will not be allowed to complete in-class assignments missed partially or in full as a result of being tardy or leaving early from class unless the tardiness or early departure is excused and approved by your instructor.

Disruptive Behavior Policy

Behavior that disrupts the educational environment in English 290 and that interferes with others’ learning opportunities will not be tolerated. Disruptive behavior in the English 290 class includes, but may not be limited to
• disrespectful treatment of your instructor or peers,
• patterns of tardiness or early departure,
• violations of the policy for responsible and considerate use of technology.

If it is determined that you are disrupting class, you will be referred to the Writing Studies Office. You will not be allowed to return to class until the behavior has been identified and the consequences of repeating the behavior clarified. This discussion will take place in a meeting with a Writing Studies Assistant and/or the Director of Writing Studies and, in certain cases, the instructor of the class.

If repeated acts of disruptive behavior are observed after this meeting, you will be referred to the Chair of the English Department, the Director of Student Judicial Affairs, and/or the Dean of the College of Liberal Arts. Consequences for repeated disruptive behavior could include suspension or expulsion from the course.

Technology Policy

The considerate use of cell phones and technological devices is expected in the classroom at all times. Although technological devices (i.e., cell phones, headphones, laptops, tablets, etc.) can be distracting and disruptive, they can be used as legitimate educational tools in the composition classroom. Therefore, devices should always be turned off or set to “silent” prior to the start of class. If students are allowed to use headphones during work periods, then the volume should be set low enough to ensure that they are
not disturbing others. If a student is in the midst of some family crisis that requires him/her to keep a cell phone turned on, he/she must keep the ringer set to “silent” and alert the instructor before class about the situation. If students need to take an emergency call, they should quietly leave the classroom and find a place where their conversation will not disturb others. Students should also avoid using their cell phone or other device during class time for anything other than approved educational purposes related to the course content. Being mindful and considerate of other students and the instructor by adhering to these policies will minimize potential disruption to the rest of the class.

Certain instructors may choose to further restrict the use of devices in their classroom. In these instances, the instructor will provide an addendum to this syllabus that clearly communicates to students their cell phone and/or device policy. The Writing Studies Office will support individual instructor’s decisions regarding technological devices in the classroom.

Lack of compliance with this or the instructor’s policy will be regarded as disruptive behavior.

**Plagiarism**

Plagiarism is the use of another author’s material and/or words in your own text without acknowledging that author’s contribution. In academic environments, plagiarism is an ethical violation that carries serious consequences. Please read the sections on plagiarism in *Academic Writing: Concepts and Connections*. In addition to the standards regarding plagiarism addressed in this book, the instructor will hold you to the standards immediately following:

- First, you are responsible for learning how to write effectively at the college level; therefore, even *unintentional* use of another author’s material will constitute plagiarism. You are responsible for understanding the standards taught in this class and abiding by them. If you are in doubt about a potential plagiarism problem, you should ask your instructor about the material before the assignment is due.
- Second, make no mistake about the fact that presenting even “unpublished” material written by someone else (e.g., a paper written by a friend for English 290 or another course) as if it were your own work is an act of plagiarism.
- Third, the use of texts in this class that you have written in the past or are writing during this semester for another course (the idea being to expand or rework them for submission in English 290) must receive written approval from your instructor. You should submit a copy of the text (or the assignment) to your instructor when you request permission. In the case of an assignment that is being composed in another class during this semester, your instructor will request permission from the other instructor.

As per the Student Conduct Code, violations of plagiarism standards will be referred by the instructor of record to the Office of Students’ Rights and Responsibilities (SRR), the Writing Studies Director, the English Department Chair, and the Dean of Liberal Arts. The student will also be notified when such a referral is made, and he or she will have “five days to respond to the charges.” Depending on the outcome of this exchange, a hearing may be scheduled. If so, “the Dean or designee will contact involved parties to arrange for a mutually convenient meeting time. The results of the hearing will be communicated to the student, instructor, [Writing Studies Director,] Department Chair, and SRR within five days of the date of that hearing.”

Substantiated accusations of plagiarism may result in a failing grade on the assignment; a failing grade for the class; or, for repeated violations, more severe disciplinary action. All cases of plagiarism—intentional or unintentional—once reported to SRR will be placed on file for reference relevant to any future violations of the Student Conduct Code.

Please also note that assisting others in the act of plagiarizing by providing them with your own work to
turn in as their own—and/or submitting your work to online databases from which students can purchase papers to turn in as their own—could be interpreted as an act of academic dishonesty and may be subject to disciplinary action under the Student Conduct Code.

**Disability Support**

Students who require accommodations for physical or learning disabilities should contact the Disability Support Services office (618-453-5738). The Disability Support Services office will provide Accommodations Agreements that students with differing needs may submit to their instructors.

**Policy on Accommodating Religious Observances of Students**

Students absent from classes because of observances of major religious holidays will be excused. Students must notify the instructor at least three regular class periods in advance of an absence from class for a religious holiday and must take the responsibility for making up work missed ahead of time. Students should familiarize themselves with the complete Policy on Accommodating Religious Observances of Students in the Undergraduate Catalog.

**Emergency Procedures**

SIUC is committed to providing a safe and healthy environment for study and work. Because some health and safety circumstances are beyond our control, we ask that you become familiar with the SIUC Emergency Response Plan and Building Emergency Response Team (BERT) program. Emergency response information is available on posters in every building on campus and in the Emergency Response Guideline pamphlet. It is also available on BERT’s website at [www.bert.siu.edu](http://www.bert.siu.edu) and on the Department of Safety’s website [www.dps.siu.edu](http://www.dps.siu.edu).

Instructors will provide guidance and direction to students in the classroom in the event of an emergency affecting their location. It is important that you follow these instructions and stay with your instructor during an evacuation or sheltering emergency. The Building Emergency Response Team will provide assistance to your instructor in evacuating the building or sheltering within the facility.
ENGL 290—Major Essay Due Dates and other Important Dates

- Unit 1: Interview Summary and Issue Analysis
  - Rough Draft for Peer Review 2.3
  - Final Draft 2.5
- Unit 2: Forum Analysis
  - Rough Draft for Peer Review 2.24
  - Final Draft 2.26
- Unit 3: Proposal and Annotated Bibliography
  - Rough Draft for Peer Review 3.23
  - Final Draft 3.25
- Unit 4: Extended Definition of Key Term
  - Rough Draft for Peer Review 4.6
  - Final Draft 4.8
- Unit 5: Discipline-Specific Scholarly Article
  - Rough Draft for Peer Review 5.4
  - Final Draft 5.6
- Final Exam: Monday 5.9 2:45-5:45 in our regular classroom.
- Drop Dates:
  - 1.31 (to be eligible for a refund)
  - 4.3 (ineligible for a refund)