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University of Calgary
Faculty of Communication and Culture

ACWR 303 Lec. 01: Academic Writing for Specialized Audiences (Intermediate)
Fall 2007

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An on-line course entirely on the Blackboard system: www.blackboard.ucalgary.ca

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Virtual class meetings (on Blackboard): **Tuesdays 3:30 – 4:15 MST**, Sept.11 to Dec. 4, 2007

Note: Attendance at these chat sessions is recommended but optional. If necessary, another chat time will be added. These class chats provide an opportunity for you to exchange ideas with your fellow students and to get questions answered by the instructor. Class chats will be archived for your later reference.

Instructor: Jo-Anne Andre, M.A.   ☎ 220-7429   Social Sciences 110
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Fax: (403) 282-6716

Course description:

This inquiry-based, on-line writing course is intended to help students in health care and human service professions develop competence and confidence in academic writing. The course will focus on the writing styles, genres, and modes of evidence and reasoning that characterize academic writing in Nursing, Social Work, and in Community Rehabilitation and Disability Studies. Emphasis will be placed on connections between reading, writing, and critical reasoning.

The course is open to all University of Calgary students enrolled in Nursing, Social Work, or Community Rehabilitation and Disability Studies program. Students earning a grade of C+ or better in the course will be deemed to have met the University of Calgary Effective Writing Requirement.

Course objectives:

Through a series of short focused writing tasks and a set of major assignments related to an inquiry-based research project, this course is intended to help students to develop

1. an understanding of the purposes, genres, and conventions of academic writing;

2. a productive writing and research process, with a range of strategies for developing research questions, finding information, exploring and organizing ideas, revising, and editing;

3. skill in the information search (research) process, including competence in using search tools such as specialized online databases to locate relevant materials and skill in assessing the relative value of various kinds of research materials and sources;

4. competence in writing academic papers, including proposals, summaries and critical reviews and analyses, reflective pieces, and research papers.

5. competence in critically analyzing, using, and documenting information from sources using APA format;

6. competence in structuring papers effectively, including skill in formulating an effective thesis, writing an effective introduction and conclusion, developing arguments, and producing well developed, effectively focused, and coherent paragraphs with strong topic sentences;

7. competence in conveying a professional tone while writing with clarity, precision, concision, and an effective style; skill in using the first person appropriately and in using parallel structure, active voice, strong verbs, and other techniques to structure sentences effectively; and

8. ability to edit effectively to eliminate common writing errors.

Required materials & academic support:

All course materials and required readings are available on-line on the course Blackboard site, and students should be able to download and print these materials. Although it is a recommended, not required, textbook, students will find the *APA Manual* (5th Ed.) to be a helpful reference book.

- Library support services for distance students are detailed in Module 3 and at the following webpage: http://library.ucalgary.ca/services/libraryconnection/
- Additional writing support is available through the University Writing Centre. To review resources or to book an appointment, please visit http://efwr.ucalgary.ca   You may also get Writing Centre help by e-mailing wconline@ucalgary.ca

Technical requirements & support:

TO DO: **Before the course begins, please visit the e-learning page**:
http://elearn.ucalgary.ca/help.html   On this page, you will find links to information about

- **obtaining an IT account**
    - o Note: You must have an IT account in order to access BlackBoard. If you already have an *@ucalgary.ca* email address, you have the necessary IT account in place.

- **changing your password** or retrieving a forgotten username or password

- **updating your email address**
    - o Note: it is your responsibility to update your e-mail address in the system if you prefer to use an email address other than your @ucalgary.ca address. If your current e-mail is not in the system, you may miss essential information related to this course.
    - o **To do:** Before the course begins, please go into the Blackboard system and send yourself an e-mail from there; if you don't receive the e-mail, then take the necessary steps to correct your e-mail in the system.

- **e-learning tutorials in the use of Blackboard**
    - o If you are new to BlackBoard, please review the tutorials provided in the e-learning page.

- **checking web browser and plug-in requirements** (see the Web Browser Check-up link)
    - o Note: run the web browser check-up function to ensure that your web browser will work with the BlackBoard system and to check that you have all the necessary plug-ins installed. If you do not have PowerPoint or Microsoft Word on your computer, please download the following:
        PowerPoint Viewer: http://office.microsoft.com/Downloads/2000/Ppview97.aspx

        Word Viewer: http://office.microsoft.com/downloads/2000/wd97vwr32.aspx

If you have technical problems with Blackboard, please contact the IT help desk by emailing itsupport@ucalgary.ca or by phoning 403-220-5555

Assignments & due dates:

Module assignments (12)	24%	Weekly, 2% each. (Due Wednesdays) *(see below)*
Research paper proposal	20%	Wednesday, October 10
Comparative article summary & critique	20%	Wednesday, November 7
Research paper with abstract	36%	Friday, December 7
		• Draft for peer review: Wed., Nov. 28
		• Comments on peer's draft: Mon., Dec. 4

No registrar-scheduled final

Detailed list of Module Assignments:

- Module 0 – Introduction to ACWR 303   September 19
- Module 1 – Introduction to Academic Writing   September 19
- Module 2 – Writing a Research Paper Proposal   September 26
- Module 3 – Conducting an Information Search   October 3
- Module 4 – Eliminating 12 Common Errors   October 3
- Module 5 – Documenting Sources in APA Style   October 10 (part of proposal)
- Module 6 – Managing the Writing Process   October 17
- Module 7 – Reading and Writing Critically   October 24
- Module 8 – Structuring Papers Effectively   October 31
- Module 9 – Building Good Arguments &
      Using Sources Effectively   November 7
- Module 10 – Writing with Style   November 14
- Module 11 – Providing Constructive Comments   December 4 (comments on peer draft)

NOTE: You are allowed 7 days' grace (with no late penalty) in the submission of module assignments, but you are encouraged to keep to this schedule so that you get helpful feedback before your major assignments.

Important notes: All assignments (including all module assignments) must be completed in order to pass the course. It is the student's responsibility to keep a copy of all assignments submitted. For detailed information on the assignments, see the Assignments area on the Blackboard course site.

Submission of assignments: Please submit all assignments via e-mail to the instructor (andre@ucalgary.ca). Be sure to include ACWR in the subject line. (Do **not** use the digital drop box in Blackboard to submit assignments.)

Due dates & penalties: Assignments are due by 9:00 pm MST (Alberta time) on the due date. Unless the instructor has agreed to accept a late assignment, one grade (e.g., B to B-) will be deducted for each day an assignment is late, not counting weekends. In the case of module assignments, you will be allowed 7 days' grace (i.e., up to 9:00 pm the next Wednesday with no late penalty); however, module assignments submitted after the 7-day grace period will be limited to a maximum grade of C- (C minus).

Revisions: Proposals and comparative summaries earning a grade of B- (B minus) or lower may be revised and resubmitted. The grade on revised assignments may be increased by up to two grade levels, to a maximum of B+. Module assignments and the final paper may not be revised.

Grades:
Work in this course will be assigned a letter grade, which represent the following percentage range equivalents:

A+ (96-100); A (92-95); A- (86-91); B+ (81-85); B (77-80); B- (71-76);
C+ (65-70); C (62-64); C- (59-61); D+ (55-58); D (50-54); F (0-49)

The midpoints of the percentage ranges will be used for calculating final grades.

Writing Skills Statement
Faculty policy directs that all written assignments (including, although to a lesser extent, written exam responses) will be assessed at least partly on writing skills. For details see www.comcul.ucalgary.ca/info Writing skills include not only surface correctness (grammar, punctuation, sentence structure, etc) but also general clarity and organization. Research papers must be properly documented.

If you need help with your writing, you may use the Writing Centre. Visit the website for more details: www.efwr.ucalgary.ca

Plagiarism
Feel free to discuss your ideas with others and to have someone review your written work to point out weaknesses and typos. These practices are common in the workplace and do not constitute plagiarism as long as you do the corrections and the rewriting. All of the following, however, constitute plagiarism:
- passing off the work of others as your own
- submitting work that you have done previously (or that you are now doing for another course) as if it were new work done for this course
- borrowing wording from published material without using quotation marks (or formatting a long quoted passage according to the conventions of the documentation format you are using)
- using wording, ideas, information, or graphics from published material or from the internet without acknowledging the source.

In other words, using any source whatsoever without clearly documenting it is considered plagiarism. **Plagiarism is a serious offence: it can result in failure on an assignment, failure of the course, or even suspension or expulsion from university.** (For details see the *University of Calgary Calendar.*)

Note that you must document not only direct quotations but also paraphrases and *ideas where they appear in your text*. A reference list at the end is insufficient by itself. Readers must be able to tell exactly where your words and ideas end and other people's words and ideas begin. These requirements apply to assignments submitted in non-traditional formats such as Web pages or visual media, and material taken from such formats. Information about the APA documentation styles is included in Module 5 and is also available at http://efwr.ucalgary.ca If you need further guidance about whether or how to document a source, please contact your instructor.

Research Ethics
Whenever you perform research with human participants (i.e. surveys, interviews, observation) as part of your university studies, you are responsible for following university research ethics guidelines. Your instructor must review and approve of your research plans and supervise your research. For more information about your research ethics responsibilities, see the U of C Research Ethics "Information for Applicants," sections 3.0 to 9.0, inclusive:
http://www.ucalgary.ca/UofC/research/html/ethics/info_undergrad.html