

# ENC 3310: Expository Writing (Online)

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Fall 2014, online  
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Office Hours: M/W 12:30-1:30; F 2-3

## Contacting Me

Canvas messaging is the very best way to contact me. I also love chatting during office hours, so feel free to drop by if you're in or around Tampa. If need be, you can also email me at [cagle@mail.usf.edu](mailto:cagle@mail.usf.edu).

My **guarantee** to you is that I'll answer any messages Monday through Friday within 24 hours. Any messages sent over the weekend, I'll answer the following Monday.

My **request** for you is that you check the syllabus and other course materials for answers to any questions before you email me. Of course, please feel free to email for clarification if you do find the answer, but need more explanation.

## Course Description

Hello and welcome to ENC 3310, Fall 2014.

I am a firm believer that strong writing develops out of careful and strategic reading. Writing is responsive. So one of the first tasks you will do this semester is to develop a non-fiction reading list. This list should contain 3 books on a subject. Additionally, it should contain about 15-20 web sources. These sources can be online essays, regularly updated blogs or forums, other journalistic pieces on the web, or academic articles.

Based on this reading, you will be composing regular submissions for the site [medium.com](http://medium.com). Each submission will be 500-750 words.

The subject of your reading/writing will be up to you. It can be a more traditional, academic subject, or something that would normally fall outside of academia. The only real restrictions are that

1. you are able to compile a collection of *credible* sources on the issue,
  2. you are able to locate people *actively* discussing the topic right now, and
  3. you are interested enough in the topic to read and write about it for the next 15 weeks.
- We will spend the first few class sessions talking about potential topics before you post a draft of your first essay to [medium.com](http://medium.com) on Sunday, Sep. 21.

Our class will operate similarly to a creative writing workshop. Each week, you'll learn about and discuss an important concept germane to writing. These will include stylistic devices, elements of logical argumentation, issues with formatting, grammatical concerns, as well as more theoretical concerns such as *ethos* or *kairos*. The **vast** majority of the class, though, will be focused on your

writing. Each of you will share each of the essays you write for Medium during the semester. You will read this shared work, and we will workshop this material. Workshopping will involve identifying the most effective dimensions of the piece and offering an author concrete advice for how to improve it prior to publication. Everyone is required to share his or her work in this manner.

## Course Materials

Since you are responsible for developing your own projects, there is no common reading list. I will distribute a few required readings in .pdf form, or as links to articles, over the course of the semester. That said, there are some required technologies:

- **Twitter.com**

We will do two things with twitter. 1) Every time you publish something to medium, I expect you to tweet out the title/description of the piece to twitter with the hashtag #enc3310. 2) Each week, you are also assigned to tweet using the hashtag #enc3310. These tweets can be about what you're reading, or other content related to the course. Feel free to tweet at other people in the class (say, if you find something they might want to read) and engage with each other's tweets.

- **Medium.com**

Using your Twitter account, you will create an account with medium.com. This is the site we will use for publishing and sharing our writing.

## Course Requirements

This semester, you are required to complete the following assignments:

1. **Topic Proposal Paper (5%)**

In the first week of class, you will write a topic proposal paper that details what you will write about this semester. The proposals should be 1000-1500 words, and should include preliminary research (i.e., they should list/discuss the books/articles/sites you will read and respond to). This list counts towards the total word count of the proposal.

2. **Amazon.com Reviews (10%)**

You will write a brief (200 word) review of each of your three chosen books to Amazon.com. These reviews are worth a total of 10% of your course grade. You will submit a link of each of your reviews to the Canvas assignment.

3. **Participation & Tweeting (15%)**

Each week, you will have minor assignments, such as quizzes, discussion board participation, and/or tweeting. To earn the full 20%, you will contribute substantively to each of these activities.

4. **Medium (30% total; 10% per post)**

You will draft 3 500-750 word pieces to be published to medium.com over the course of the semester. Each piece needs to be at least 500 words. For each medium.com post, you will first create a draft on medium.com, which 4-5 of your fellow writers and I will

all comment on over the next two weeks. You will then publish that piece to medium.com, so that it's available to a broader public. **Both the initial drafts and the published pieces will be 500-750 words.**

Please don't think of the initial draft as 'rough.' It's not. It's your best shot, it's what you write when you haven't heard the voice of an audience yet. In the same vein, the published piece won't be 'polished.' Rather, it will be responsive, embodying what's left following the alchemical process that is the intermingling of your ideas, your words, other people's gut reactions, their words, and your reactions to their reactions. It's what happens when you've had the chance to think and converse in writing.

When you first submit links to your drafts, you will receive a few participation points. I will grade the Medium posts **after** you have published them (i.e. made them live on the web, so anyone can read them, not just your reviewers). Your published pieces should be revised based on the feedback you received from fellow writers and from me. **If your published piece has not been revised (i.e. it is identical to the draft or does not reflect serious consideration of the feedback you received), you will lose a full letter grade on the final post grade (e.g. an 'A' becomes a 'B').** This may seem draconian, especially since I'm desperate for you to think of yourself as a writer and gain confidence in yourself as a writer. Nonetheless, there's a need for audience awareness that's hard to get at if you haven't at least *tried* in writing to grapple with your audience's responses to your actual pieces. Thus, my grading policy, which is meant to encourage you to write *and* listen.

The draft and publication due dates are as follows:

1. *Medium Post 1*  
Draft: Sunday, Sep. 21  
Published: Sunday, Oct. 12
2. *Medium Post 2*  
Draft: Sunday, Oct. 12  
Published: Sunday, Nov. 2
3. *Medium Post 3*  
Draft: Sunday, Nov. 2  
Published: Sunday, Nov. 23

#### 5. **Workshop Preparation and Contribution (20%)**

Throughout the semester, you will provide feedback on your classmates' material by leaving comments on the drafts they post on medium.com. I expect you to provide meaningful feedback on your classmates' material being workshopped. You will frequently be able to draw from the weekly material on writing concepts related to genre, style, etc. to inspire your commentary.

#### 6. **Final Synthesis (20%)**

At the end of the semester, revise your writing into a longer, more argumentative piece. This will most certainly require additional research. This piece should be 2500-3000 words and will need to be in MLA or APA format (whichever is more common in your

major) OR will be published on medium.com with appropriate links functioning as citations.

NOTE: A grade of “I” for the course will be awarded only in the case of a medical or family emergency and, in conjunction with University policy, only when a small portion of the student’s work is incomplete and only when the student is otherwise earning a passing grade.

ANOTHER NOTE: There is no final exam for this course. Your Final Synthesis will be due during exam week.

## **Course Objectives**

There are many things you might get out of this course, especially given the leeway to pursue a topic of your choice, wherever that might lead you. Here are my objectives for your learning in this course:

- Demonstrate competence in creating clear, concise, and complete non-fiction documents that suit specific genres and publication platforms.
- Demonstrate proficiency in responding to feedback from specific users and readers.
- Demonstrate competence and efficiency in understanding the intellectual dimensions of emerging concepts, media, and vocabulary and applying those discoveries to non-fiction communications projects beyond the your current state of knowledge.
- Demonstrate an ability to read, interview, interpret, and apply the forms of expression and knowledge required to express oneself competently and efficiently in writing.

## **Critical Assignment**

The assignment in which you'll bring everything together is the Final Synthesis. In this assignment, you will revise and synthesize the 1500-2250 words you have already written and revised into a 2500-3000 word argumentative piece. This piece will either be in a traditional academic style or written for the web.

## **Disability Services & Accessibility**

The course content consists mostly of text. There are, however, some visuals, and I may post links to video. I am committed to making all course materials as accessible as possible, so plan to post image descriptions and video transcripts. If I leave out alt-text, or if I can contribute in other ways to making this course as accessible as possible, please let me know. I am happy to take extra steps to ensure accessibility for all students.

Students in need of academic accommodations for a disability may consult with the office of Students with Disabilities Services to arrange appropriate accommodations. Students are required to give reasonable notice prior to requesting an accommodation. Students may request accommodations at any point during the semester. As accommodations are retroactive, any grades earned before a student requests accommodations will stand. Each student must bring a current Memorandum of Accommodations from the Office of Student Disability Services that is prerequisite for receiving accommodations. Accommodated examinations through the Office of

Student Disability Services require two weeks' notice. All course documents are available in alternate format if requested in the students' Memorandum of Accommodations (see [faculty responsibilities](http://www.asasd.usf.edu/faculty.asp) [http://www.asasd.usf.edu/faculty.asp]).

## Turning In Work & Late Policy

All work will be submitted either through Canvas activities (e.g. quizzes and discussion boards) or as links to writing on the web (e.g. Google docs and medium.com). This includes the final research paper (which will nonetheless be prettily formatted in whatever style you choose to follow).

I **will not** accept document attachments in Canvas dropboxes or through Canvas message or email.

I **do not** accept late work without an approved extension. Particularly when you're providing work for your fellow writers to review or when you're reviewing their work, you'll come to appreciate timeliness. If your work isn't in on time, then the writers that you're having a conversation with about writing can't respond in time. And then we're all sad. So please turn your work in on time.

That being said, unusual circumstances such as hospital stays and bereavement do arise. Please be in touch with me as early as possible if you unfortunately encounter such circumstances. If you require an extension, I will discuss it with you. If you do not ask for and receive an extension, however, I **will not** accept late work.

## Getting Feedback on Work

I will provide written feedback on your work either in Canvas or on medium.com.

I will provide all feedback to you within a week of the assignments' due dates. If, for some reason (e.g. hurricanes, raccoons in the house, sentient robots, etc.) I can't get feedback to you within a week, I'll let you know in writing and provide you with a new estimate for when you can expect your grades and feedback. One thing that's guaranteed to **not** speed up my grading and commenting process is for you to email me and ask if/when your work has been/will be graded. Each email along those lines that I read and respond to takes 3-5 minutes that I could have spent grading. Please trust that I want to read your work, that I enjoy reading your work, and that I respect your time and will get your work back to you soon.

## Emergency Policy

In the event of an emergency, it may be necessary for USF to suspend normal operations. During this time, USF may opt to continue delivery of instruction through methods that include but are not limited to: Canvas, Elluminate, Skype, and email messaging and/or an alternate schedule. It's your responsibility to monitor Blackboard site for each class for course specific communication, and the main USF, College, and department Web sites, emails, and MoBull messages for important general information.

## **Academic Dishonesty and Disruption of Academic Process**

Students attending USF are awarded degrees in recognition of successful completion of coursework in their chosen fields of study. Each individual is expected to earn his/her degree on the basis of personal effort. Consequently, any form of cheating on examinations or plagiarism on assigned papers constitutes unacceptable deceit and dishonesty. Plagiarism is defined as “literary theft” and consists of the unattributed quotation of the exact words of a published text, or the unattributed borrowing of original ideas by paraphrase from a published text. On written papers for which the student employs information gathered from books, articles, web sites, or oral sources, each direct quotation, as well as ideas and facts that are not generally known to the public at large, or the form, structure, or style of a secondary source must be attributed to its author by means of the appropriate citation procedure. Only widely known facts and first-hand thoughts and observations original to the student do not require citations. Citations may be made in footnotes or within the body of the text. Plagiarism also consists of passing off as one’s own another person’s work in part or in total.

A student who submits a plagiarized assignment will receive an “F” with a numerical value of zero on the assignment, and the “F” shall be used to determine the final course grade. The instructor has the right to assign the student a grade of F or FF (the latter indicating dishonesty) in the course. An “FF” grade assigned to indicate academic dishonesty is reflected only on internal records and prevents the student from repeating the course using the Grade Forgiveness Policy. If a student who has been accused of academic dishonesty drops the course, the student’s registration in the course may be reinstated until the issue is resolved. A student who is suspected of cheating may not drop a course to avoid a penalty.

See <http://www.ugs.usf.edu/pdf/cat1213/o8ACADEMICPOL.pdf> (page 53) for USF’s definitions of plagiarism and its policy on academic honesty. Consult with me if you have any questions about these issues.

## **Academic Grievance Procedures**

If a serious issue or conflict arises, the student should first make an attempt to reach a satisfactory resolution with the course instructor. If the instructor and student are unable to resolve the situation to their mutual satisfaction, the student may, *within three weeks of the incident*, file a letter of notification with Dr. Joyce Karpay, the Assistant to the Chair of the English Department.

## **General Course Information**

This is a 3 credit hour course. It carries no prerequisites. It is offered through the Department of English in the School of Humanities, College of Arts and Sciences. The course meets online (though you’re welcome to visit me in office hours).

ENC 3310: Expository Writing is a Gordon-Rule 6A Communications course. Students in this course will engage in writing as a “process,” which means employing strategies such as pre-writing, co-authoring, document design, peer feedback, revising, and editing. Students will learn how to develop ideas and texts that follow academic/disciplinary conventions for different

contexts, audiences, and purposes. An integral part of writing instruction is the opportunity to revise documents in response to feedback, so students will be required to revise at least some course writing assignments (including one major assignment) after receiving feedback from the instructor. At a minimum, students will write 4500 words for this course. Students must achieve a proficiency level of at least C- in the course in order to receive Gordon Rule Communication credit.

Students enrolled in this course may be asked to participate in the USF General Education Assessment effort. This might involve submitting copies of writing assignments for review, responding to surveys, or participating in other measurements designed to assess the FKL Core Curriculum Learning Outcomes.

## **Reporting of Gender-Based Crimes [Keep in Mind While Writing Content]**

Please be aware that educators must report incidents of gender-based crimes including sexual assault, sexual harassment, stalking, dating violence and domestic violence. If you disclose in class, in papers, or to me personally, I am required by law to report it. The Center for Victim Advocacy and Violence Prevention at USF is a confidential resource where you can talk about such situations and receive assistance in confidence. Additional confidential resources on the Tampa campus are the Counseling Center and Student Health Services.

- Center for Victim Advocacy and Violence Prevention:  
(813 ) 974-5757  
<http://www.sa.usf.edu/ADVOCACY>
- Counseling Center:  
(813) 974-2831  
<http://www.usf.edu/student-affairs/counseling-center/>
- Student Health Services  
(813) 974-2331  
<http://www.usf.edu/student-affairs/student-health-services/>

## **Schedule**

For assignment due dates, please see the schedule below. For a full schedule of readings and assignments, please follow the dated modules under the "Modules" link to the left.

**\*\*Many thanks to Dr. Marc Santos, from whom I adapted many course materials.\*\***

**\*\*Syllabus is subject to change at instructor's discretion.\*\***

**\*\*If I make any changes, I will provide them to you in writing in advance.\*\***