

WRTG 107.05 – SPRING 2019  
(FIRST-YEAR WRITING) COMPOSITION

*Expository and argumentative prose, and the strategies and techniques  
used by successful academic writers*

Dr. Jonathan W. Wilson  
[REDACTED]

Class: [REDACTED]

Office: [REDACTED]

Online: [REDACTED]

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### HOW THE COURSE WORKS

We will meet in the McDade Center for Literary and Performing Arts (CLP) in [REDACTED], a classroom that has been designed for workshop courses like ours. The format of the course is flexible. In class, we may mix discussions, small group collaboration, and individual writing. Outside of class, you will read, complete informal homework assignments, and work on major formal writing assignments. You are expected to participate very actively in class throughout the semester, and you are likely to enjoy the course much more if you do. Students begin the course at different levels of confidence as writers, so your participation will both encourage other students and allow us to create a course that addresses your unique talents and needs. (The tentative schedule in this syllabus is therefore subject to change as the course evolves.)

### WHAT YOU HAVE TO BUY

You are required to purchase or rent the following books. *They Say/I Say* will be used extensively throughout the course. Please be sure to obtain the correct edition so that we can collaborate successfully. (No online access codes are required, so previously used copies are fine.)

- Gerald Graff, Cathy Birkenstein, and Russel Durst, *They Say/I Say: The Moves That Matter in Academic Writing: With Readings*. 4<sup>th</sup> edition. W. W. Norton, 2018. (ISBN 9780393631685.)
- Patricia T. O’Conner, *Woe Is I: The Grammarphobe’s Guide to Better English in Plain English*. Updated and expanded 3<sup>rd</sup> edition. Riverhead Books, 2010. (ISBN 9781573223317.)



In addition, you are expected to bring a personal laptop to class (as well as pens or pencils and paper) in order to be prepared to write individually or collaboratively as the day’s lesson requires.

### WHAT YOU SHOULD LEARN

Due to a mandate from the Middle States Commission on Higher Education, all syllabi must list student learning outcomes. Student learning outcomes identify what students should be able to do at the end of a course; they do not, however, describe who students *should be* at the end of a course. Your learning should be transformative, meaning who you are as a person and how you process the world and act in it should change through your education. Some of these changes will be “measurable” in terms of outcomes; other changes will not. Listed below are the

measurable outcomes for this course, but know that through this course you will grow as a writer and as a person in other ways, as well.

By the end of First-Year Writing, students should demonstrate a foundational ability to perform the tasks listed in the following three categories:

- Writing as a Process*
- Generate appropriate writing topics and research questions
  - Focus on a purpose
  - Adjust the rhetorical strategy in response to specific writing situations and audiences
  - Develop and support an appropriate thesis statement
  - Draft, revise, and edit as necessary throughout the process
  - Practice critical self-assessment and reflection on the process of writing

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- Using Research*
- Develop effective search strategies for gathering information
  - Gather and evaluate information in terms of both relevance & reliability
  - Express their own ideas in relation to the ideas of others
  - Integrate the ideas of others responsibly in their own writing

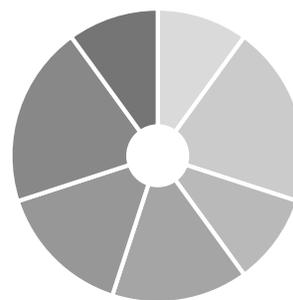
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- Style and Mechanics*
- Attribute sources of information based on disciplinary formatting and style standards
  - Adjust the tone, style, and level of diction in response to specific writing situations
  - Write in standardized written English (SWE)

#### HOW YOUR FINAL GRADE IS DETERMINED

As determined by the First-Year Writing Program, the passing grades you can earn in this course include A (*outstanding*, 95-100%); A- (*excellent*, 90-94%); B+ (*very good*, 87-89%); B (*good*, 83-86%); B- (*good*, 80-82%); C+ (*satisfactory*, 77-79%); and C (*satisfactory*, 73-76%). The non-passing (*below average*) grades you can earn include C- (70-72%); D+ (67-69%); D (60-66%), and F (0-59%). Students **must earn a C or higher** in order to pass this course and fulfill the Eloquencia Perfecta Level 1: Foundational First-Year Writing requirement.

The components of your final course grade include:

- Participation 10%
- Homework/Informal Writing 20%
- Paper I: Reflection or Personal Narrative 10%
- Paper II: Analytic Essay 15%
- Paper III: Argumentative Essay 15%
- Paper IV: Research Essay 20%
- Final Reflection 10%



Twenty percent (20%) of the grade for each major formal assignment will consist of the grade for a preliminary version (draft, outline, etc.) submitted in advance.

### HOW THE COURSE FITS INTO A JESUIT UNIVERSITY EDUCATION

The Jesuit or “Ignatian” educational tradition embraced by the University of Scranton says that all learning has an essential unity. It aims to improve and care for the whole person (a principle you have heard called the *cura personalis*) as well as the larger community. To do this, it should engage the imagination as well as the reason in order to enlarge your freedom to act creatively for the greater good.

In more explicitly Catholic terms, the Ignatian educational tradition says education should be “for the greater glory of God” (*ad majorem Dei gloriam*) and we should “find God in everything.” You do not need to be Catholic to embrace the essence of this idea. It means there should be no artificial separation among different branches of knowledge. They are all ways to understand and improve creation, taking the paths that allow each of us to exercise the greatest beneficial influence. Education should leave us not only smarter, but also morally better—and it should help us enlist others in making the world better as well. It is with that goal in mind that this course aims to help you communicate clearly in writing.

### HOW THE COURSE REFLECTS A PHILOSOPHY OF HUMANITY

This course is also grounded in the belief that all humans share a common humanity, which is the basis for all our attempts to communicate. Because we can recognize ourselves in each other, even when we are very different or when we find ourselves in conflict, we can converse together.

Students in this course have a right to be treated with respect by their fellow students as well as the professor. This means they have a right to expect that high standards for learning will be upheld in this course. It implies that hard work will be necessary; that the grading will be both demanding and fair; that different perspectives will be examined when appropriate; and that factual accuracy will be insisted upon. It also means students have a right not to be harassed or treated with contempt in the classroom.

### HOW ACADEMIC FREEDOM PROTECTS THE COURSE

Scholars, including students, must engage in controversial research and critical discussion of ideas. In the United States, a professional right to do this is defined in a statement by the American Association of University Professors (AAUP), which says “the common good depends upon the free search for truth.” At Catholic colleges, this principle of academic freedom is also promised in *Ex Corde Ecclesiae*, an apostolic constitution issued by Pope John Paul II in 1990. It encourages us to engage in the “free search for the whole truth about nature, man and God” in an attitude of “mutual respect, sincere dialogue, and protection of the rights of individuals.” In this spirit, I encourage you to disagree respectfully with each other and with me, whenever it does not disrupt the course, with the goal of advancing our common understanding.

This right protects *all* of us. It does not simply protect our ability to express our own opinions. It means we have a duty to protect the academic freedom (and other rights) of other students and professors, including those who may feel more vulnerable than we do. It means we should work to make others feel welcome to participate. Above all, it implies that we have a responsibility to examine our own beliefs in light of others’ arguments and evidence.

## WHAT POLICIES YOU NEED TO KNOW

**SYLLABUS:** This syllabus is subject to reasonable change during the semester; I may vary the timing and nature of lessons, readings, or assignments as I find necessary to accomplish the course objectives fairly and comply with the policies of the First-Year Writing Program. Any disputes over changes will be settled by the program director.

**ATTENDANCE:** You are allowed to miss one week's worth of class (three class periods) *for any reason* without penalty. Additional absences will result in a reduction of your final course grade by one percentage point each. It is your responsibility to plan ahead and leave yourself room for emergencies, minor illnesses, and conflicting obligations. (If a university commitment, major illness, life crisis, etc., requires you to miss multiple classes, please speak with me about it as early as you can. In such cases, I will confer with the director of First-Year Writing to determine whether any accommodation will be made.)

**LATE WORK:** Major writing assignments submitted late are subject to a grade reduction of ten percentage points per day. Homework, informal writing, or other class-preparation assignments submitted late are subject to a grade reduction of twenty percentage points per day. Please remember that there will be many writing assignments throughout the semester. Falling behind is unwise and will interfere with class participation—both yours and that of other students.

**ACADEMIC HONESTY:** Learning happens through work. Shortcuts on assignments are short circuits in your education. Therefore, cheating is not only unfair to other students; it also wastes your time and money by depriving you of the true value of a course. Plagiarism or any other form of deliberate cheating will result in a failing grade (of 0%) on the assignment. A second offense will result in a failing grade for the entire course and possible referral to the dean's office for further disciplinary review, subject to discussion with the program director. *Note: This policy is not meant to punish students for an honest misunderstanding!* I am here to help you learn the generally accepted academic rules regarding quotations, citations, and originality. Please feel free to ask questions about how to produce honest work at any point in the writing process.

**DISPUTES:** If you believe that your work has been treated unfairly, you may appeal a grade to the program director, Dr. [REDACTED].

## WHERE TO GET SUPPORT

**DISABILITIES:** To receive appropriate academic accommodations or support services, students should contact the Center for Teaching and Learning Excellence (CTLE) on [REDACTED]. You can get started by emailing [REDACTED] or calling [REDACTED] if you have (or believe you may have) a disability and wish to determine eligibility for any accommodations. For more information, visit [REDACTED].

**COUNSELING:** Life can be complicated for anyone, and most of us find college particularly stressful. You may be dealing with specific issues you already know about, or you may just want to talk with somebody about things you don't understand yet. Licensed professional counselors, psychologists, and social workers (and supervised graduate trainees) are available in the Counseling Center to speak with you confidentially at no charge. You should feel free to approach them for advice or help. They provide many services and can refer you to additional resources.

The Counseling Center is on [REDACTED] and is normally open Monday through Friday, 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., but the staff may be available at other times by appointment. To schedule an appointment, call [REDACTED]. For more information: [REDACTED].

CROSS CULTURAL CENTERS: The Jane Kopas Women’s Center and the Multicultural Center can help you thrive on a diverse and inclusive campus. If you would like to find a welcoming space, develop self-confidence, or learn ways to be an ally to other students, I encourage you to visit and speak with their staff. They are located in [REDACTED]. For more information, visit [REDACTED] or contact the director of the Cross Cultural Centers, [REDACTED], at [REDACTED].

SEXUAL HARASSMENT AND SEXUAL MISCONDUCT: Students who suspect they have been sexually harassed, discriminated against, or subjected to any form of sexual misconduct—including sexual assault, sexual exploitation, domestic or dating violence, or stalking—are strongly encouraged to contact [REDACTED], the Title IX coordinator, at [REDACTED] or [REDACTED]; or [REDACTED], the deputy Title IX coordinator for students, at [REDACTED] or [REDACTED]. You may feel unsure how to understand or respond to something you have experienced, but they have been specially trained to offer help and guidance. The university police department also operates an anonymous online reporting system at [REDACTED]. For more information and other resources, visit [REDACTED].

FACULTY RESPONSIBLE EMPLOYEE NOTICE: For your protection, faculty members are required to report incidents of sexual harassment or other sexual misconduct involving students when we become aware of them. If you tell me about sexual harassment or violence you have experienced, I am required to bring it to the attention of the university’s Title IX coordinator or deputy Title IX coordinator. They will speak with you about the options and support resources that are available to you. If you want to talk confidentially about something that may be related to any form of sexual misconduct, you may consider speaking to the licensed counselors in the Counseling Center ([REDACTED]) instead. Unlike other employees, they are designated “confidential resources” with a professional obligation to maintain complete confidentiality.

*For apart from inquiry, ... individuals cannot be truly human.  
Knowledge emerges only through invention and re-invention, through the  
restless, impatient, continuing, hopeful inquiry human beings pursue  
in the world, with the world, and with each other.*

—Paulo Freire

## TENTATIVE SEMESTER SCHEDULE

*Topics, readings, and assignments are subject to change as the course evolves.  
However, please note the deadlines for all formal writing assignments (in **bold**) and longer reading assignments, so that you can leave yourself time to complete them.*

DATE	TOPIC	READING DUE TSIS: <i>They Say/I Say</i> WII: <i>Woe Is I</i>	WORK DUE
Week 1: Introductions			
1/28	Overview		
1/30	Motivations	Text of your choice	Text choice
2/1	Conversation	TSIS xvii-xxvii, 1-18	Template exercise <i>Last day to add courses</i>

## CONVERSATION I: HIGHER EDUCATION

## Week 2: What Is College For?

2/4	Effective Use of Evidence	TSIS 318-335, 344-364	Reading notes
2/6	Underlying Assumptions	TSIS 336-343, 369-376	Reading notes
2/8	Social Contexts	TSIS 377-389, 390-397, 398-419, 713-729	Reading notes

## Week 3: What Do You Have to Say?

2/11	Finding Your Voice, Planning Your Steps	TSIS 117-130, Mary Karr (online)	Language exercise
2/13	Clarifying and Checking Your Own Assumptions	Articles of your choice	Article search
2/15	Developing a Thesis—So What? Who Cares?	WII 223-235, TSIS 91-100	Clarification exercise Thesis ideas

## Week 4: Conferences

2/18	Individual Conferences		<b>Paper I Thesis and Outline</b>
2/20	Individual Conferences		
2/22	Individual Conferences	WII 1-45 (recommended)	

## CONVERSATION II: SOCIAL DIVISIONS

Week 5: What Do *They* Really Say?

2/25	After-Action Review		<b>Paper I: Reflection or Personal Narrative</b> (1,000 words)
2/27	Summarizing	TSIS 19-42, 176-186	Summary exercise <i>Last day to drop a course</i>
3/1	Quoting	TSIS 43-52	Quotation exercise

## Week 6: What's Up with America?

3/4	Handling Debate	TSIS 162-175	Controversy exercise
3/6	Are Americans Divided? Is That Bad?	TSIS 212-218, 219-229, 296-313	Reading notes
3/8	How Do Race and Class Work?	TSIS 230-250, 251-268, 286-295; Ta-Nehisi Coates (online)	Reading notes

*Spring Break: March 9–17*

## Week 7: Can We Deepen Our Understanding?

3/18	Revising a Draft		<b>Paper II Rough Draft</b>
3/20	How Does Gender Work?	TSIS 534-554, 555-575, 576-582, 605-619	Reading notes
3/22	In-Class Writing	WII 47-127 (recommended)	

## CONVERSATION III: FOOD AND SOCIETY

## Week 8: Are We Arguing Wrong?

3/25	After-Action Review		<b>Paper II: Analytic Essay</b> (1,250 words)
3/27	What Is an Argument?	T.B.A.	T.B.A.
3/29	Entering an Argument	TSIS 53-90	Agreement and disagreement exercises

## Week 9: Is Our Food Failing Us?

4/1	What's at Stake?	TSIS 624-631, 641-646, plus an article of your choice	Reading notes
4/3	What's at Fault?	TSIS 632-640, 647-650, 656-680	Reading notes
4/5	What Should We Do?	TSIS 651-655, 681-712, plus an article of your choice	Reading notes

## Week 10: Can You Say It Better?

4/8	Refining a Thesis	TSIS 131-140	<b>Paper III Rough Draft</b>
4/10	Avoiding Clichés in Thought and Word	WII 197-208, TSIS 33, George Orwell (online)	Reading notes
4/12	In-Class Writing	WII 163-196 (recommended)	<i>Last day to withdraw from a course</i>

## CONVERSATION IV: TECHNOLOGY AND SOCIETY

## Week 11: Are We in A Race Against the Machine?

4/15	After-Action Review		<b>Paper III: Argumentative Essay (1,750 words)</b>
4/17	Library Instruction (Tentative)	Jean Twenge (online)	
<del>4/19</del>	<i>Good Friday (no class)</i>		

## Week 12: Designing a Research Project

<del>4/22</del>	<i>Easter Monday (no class)</i>		
4/24	Research Approaches	T.B.A.	T.B.A.
4/26	Research Approaches	T.B.A.	T.B.A.

## Week 13: Conferences

4/29	Individual Conferences		<b>Paper IV Outline and Annotated Bibliography and Draft Final Reflection</b>
5/1	Individual Conferences		
5/3	Individual Conferences		

## Week 14: Summing Up

5/6	Research Approaches	T.B.A.	T.B.A.
5/8	Final Thoughts	TSIS 141-145	T.B.A.
5/10	In-Class Writing		

## Finals Week:

**Paper IV: Research Essay** (*2,000 words*)

**Final Reflection** (*750-1,000 words*)

*Exact deadlines to be determined.*