

ENG 413, 6-2016
Professor: Michelle Mouton
College Hall 303
Office Hours: by appointment.

ENGLISH SENIOR WORKSHOP

Overview:

This course serves as the second half of the capstone experience for students completing the English major's concentrations in Literary Studies and in Film and Literary Studies. You will work independently to develop a project proposed in ENG 411 into a theoretically informed research thesis of substantial length. The goal is to produce work for public presentation or for publication in an undergraduate journal or comparable venue. The course will also include professional training in advanced techniques in reading and writing for publication, and in the processes of conference and publication submission and review. The Senior Project Workshop will be conducted as a combination of workshop with other course members, independent study, and one-on-one mentoring.

Keep in mind that writing and publishing (or presenting) advanced work in the discipline will probably require you to embrace new creative processes and disciplines. Course texts will prompt us to reflect on our past methods and will challenge us to embrace new ones, if only to give them an open-minded try for awhile. I will encourage you to reflect on your process throughout the course.

Learning Objectives:

- Learn about and practice advanced (graduate-level) research and writing methods in English;
- Develop and explore a series of related questions about a topic of interest;
- Produce and share, for multiple audiences and in multiple formats, new knowledge related to this topic;
- Reflect on personal writing and research patterns to overcome resistances related to research, writing and publication;
- Learn and practice best practices of writing groups that can be used after college.

Educational Goals:

This course contributes to all of the educational goals of the college and emphasizes the following:

Inquiry	respond to the complexities of contemporary and enduring problems using information literacy tools, research skills, creative thinking, and analysis.
Reasoning	evaluate evidence; interpret data; and use logical, mathematical, and statistical problem-solving tools.

Communication	Speak and write clearly, listen and read actively, and engage with others in productive dialogue.
Ethical Behavior	recognize personal, academic, and professional standards and act with integrity.
Well-Being	respect the ways physical, emotional, spiritual, and intellectual well-being may contribute to a balanced life.

Format:

The most challenging part of writing, particularly after college, can be just showing up to do the work, especially when deadlines are self-imposed. To foster good writing habits, we'll meet every morning to write together. We'll hold class sessions in the library in week one. Later writing locations will be determined by the group. You may miss two morning writing sessions without penalty but otherwise are expected to show up each morning, to be settled and ready to write promptly at 9:30. Each session will be sandwiched by a 10-minute warm-up freewrite prompt and a log entry on your progress. In between you'll produce writing on your project.

So, what counts as writing? To be clear, this is *not* a time to check email, texts or Snapchat, to prepare for afternoon class, or any other activity that reasonably counts as a distraction from your project. Most days, this is not even a time to surf the internet and email for new project resources, which can be done in your own time. And this is not a time to ask questions of me or classmates about the class or about your project. (In fact, I'll be writing alongside you throughout the term.)

Writing, in this context, includes all of those activities that move you forward in your project and that produces words on a (physical or digital) page. It includes analyzing and taking notes on an article, reflecting on your research and writing process, producing mini-analyses, freewriting on a question you're puzzling over, reaching out to an expert for information, or drafting and revising document pages, organizing a bibliography, to name some common examples. Writing can be by hand or by computer. If by computer, that all notices, banners, email, etc. must be OFF, and web surfing must be kept at a minimum, used only for point-of-need look-ups of information. In other words, all distractions should be avoided from the start. (See policies below.)

Note that morning sessions are not designed to substitute for, but rather to complement, your homework sessions. You'll still need, of course, to write independently and to prepare for afternoon class sessions. But morning sessions should help to ensure progress on what's sure to be a project both challenging and rewarding.

Each afternoon, students (and I) will provide a research and writing progress report. We'll then problem-solve, discuss readings and reflect on their relevance to our work, and conduct peer-review workshops, in which I'll participate. Twice during the term I'll hold scheduled conferences with each student, and you'll have meetings with Cole's reading and writing consultants, but you should feel free to request additional out-of-class consultations as needed.

Contacting Me:

Given our small class size, it's probably most efficient if you simply contact me by email or text when you would like a writing consultation beyond those already scheduled (see below). For ease of communications, I'll share my phone number on the first day of class and request yours; these should not be shared and should be deleted beyond the course period for reasons related to confidentiality.

Required Texts:

We'll begin with *Digital Paper: A Manual for Research and Writing with Library and Internet Materials* and return to it throughout the term as needed. This and other required textbooks are available at the Cornell Bookstore for purchase. Article links will be posted on Moodle.

Assignments:

(10%) I. Daily Research/Writing Log Entries: Dedicate a small notebook, large memo pad, or notebook section to a log your progress at the end of each day. It should include separate and numbered responses to these questions:

- (1) **DONE!** What specific writing tasks did you complete today?
- (2) **WORD COUNT:** How many new words did you produce, whether usable or not?
- (3) **REFLECIONS:** Did you accomplish your daily goals? If not, why not? What were your resistances, if any, and how did you overcome them?
- (4) **WELL DONE!** What are you most proud of accomplishing? (Don't skip this one!)
- (5) **GOALS:** Review your project design: What are your (specific) writing goals for tomorrow, and why are these priorities at this point in your process?

The objectives of this assignment are to help you reflect and make any necessary adjustments to your writing process to avoid procrastination and resistances, enabling you to make good daily progress.

(10%) II. Article Presentation: Analyze and present a scholarly article or book chapter critical to your project. The article should be substantive (at least 15 pages), and it's a good idea to select an article that is provoking for you in some fashion. Perhaps the argument puzzles you, confuses you, or provokes you to argue in opposition. The class can help you to process your questions and responses. You'll analyze the article using "BEAM," a taxonomy we'll go over in class. The presentation must be limited to eight minutes, with four minutes for Q & A. It must be accompanied by a handout to guide readers through your presentation. Your presentation must include—

- (1) A restatement of the article's thesis.
- (2) A summary of why, according to the article, this makes a significant contribution to an ongoing scholarly discussion.

- (3) A breakdown of how the writer constructs the argument: what serves as Background? What serves as Evidence? What is the author's stated or implicit Method?
- (4) Your assessment of the arguments's strengths and limitations, with particular attention to evidence and reasoning.
- (5) An explanation of how the article relates to your project: for example, does it serve as general information, or do you expect to incorporate and cite it in some fashion? Do you expect it will serve as background? As evidence? As a methodological model? Etc.? Why? What questions do you have about the piece?

III. Drafts: Drafts will be submitted and workshopped throughout the course. Specific expectations for the drafts and the workshop process will be distributed as we proceed. Evaluation will be based on the following:

- (5%) *First Draft.* Your first draft will be graded based on your good faith effort in the writing, revision and peer-review process.
- (5%) *Second Draft.* Ditto for your second draft, with emphasis on revision for argument.
- (5%) *Third Draft.* Ditto for your third draft, with emphasis on revision for style.
- (40%) *Final Draft.* Your final draft will be assessed for produce rather than process. The grading rubric will be created together by the class.

An informational aside: if you meet minimum gpa requirements for earning Honrs in English, your final paper will be read by a group of English faculty members who will determine whether it is eligible for an Honors designation; if so, you'll be invited to participate in a public defense of the project with a group of faculty questioners; if, at that point, you agree and the defense is successful, you will earn Honors in English. See the English department website, "Resources for Students," for details.

(5%) **IV. Symposium Abstract, and Cover Letter to Publisher:** In order to engage with the publication process, you'll write an abstract for your paper appropriate as a submission for symposiu. You'll also identify an appropriate scholarly venue for publication, research its submission guidelines, and write a cover letter to the editor requesting review for publication. It is my hope that at least some of you will in fact submit your work for publication or presentation, but everyone, in any case, will practice submitting. Writing abstracts and cover letters can help you to achieve helpful, laser-like focus on your work's most important argument and contribution, which in turn can help with your revision process.

(5%) **V. Academic Blog Entry:** In the past, publishers did the heavy lifting of advertising book and journal publication. This still occurs but social media has meant that authors are expected to get the word out and generate interest too—which helps to find appropriate readers, and to build a solid scholarly reputation, not to mention royalties in the case of books. (Scholars are not paid for scholarly articles—knowledge for its own sake and all that.) Blogs are one way to do this, and some scholarly book publishers (as well as non-scholarly book publishers) require authors to create entries.

You'll write at least one blog entry aimed at generating interest in your project. This will force you to reflect on why your project might be interesting and for whom. Blogs are usually topical, about something going on in the contemporary world, so you'll be forced to think about how your work is not only appropriate for a group of folks in library carrels pouring over dusty manuscripts (great readers to be sure) but also how it is useful for thinking about contemporary issues. We'll look at models and generate ideas and parameters for the blog entries together. It is my hope that at least some of you will consider submitting these to a Cornell publication, either a web publication or the Cornelian. In any event, it will give you a new perspective on your project as you near the end.

(10%) VI. 15-minute Powerpoint or Prezzi Presentation

You'll present your findings not only in the form of a scholarly article but also as a presentation appropriate for Cornell's Student Symposium. It is my hope that you know where I'm going with this one, right? Meanwhile, you'll present and get feedback from your classmates. The objective of this assignment will be to gain practice in formal, oral presentations and to write for multiple audiences.

(5%) VII. Preparation and Participation

We'll develop guidelines and an evaluation rubric together.

College Policies:

Academic Honesty: See

<http://www.cornellcollege.edu/registrar/pdf/Academic%20Honesty.pdf>.

Accessibility: Cornell College is committed to providing equal educational opportunities to all students. If you have a documented learning disability and will need any accommodation in this course, you **must** request the accommodation(s) from [the instructor of the course] as early as possible and no later than the third day of the term. Additional information about the policies and procedures for accommodation of learning disabilities is available through the Disabilities Services section of Cornell's website.

Additional Class Policies:

- All assignments must be completed in good faith and submitted when due to pass the course;
- Students who plagiarize or cheat will fail the course and be reported to the registrar;
- Two morning writing sessions may be missed without penalty; absences beyond these will result in a ½ letter grade from your final course grade;
- Extensions/exceptions will not be granted except in cases of true emergencies (e.g., hospitalization)—turn in whatever you have when assignments are due, even if they're not perfect;
- Chronic tardiness will not be tolerated; be ready to start class on time.
- Participation-related policies will be generated and approved by the group.

- You may bring laptops/tablets to class. Technology uses during classtime not directly related to coursework will result in loss of technology privileges—no more warning necessary.
- As, if something seems to be missing from this list!

Class Meeting and Writing Assignment Schedule:

9:30-11:00—writing sessions (feel free to arrive and begin earlier). Meet in the Library, quiet floor, unless otherwise instructed.

1:00-2:30—Discussion, progress reports, and workshops. Meet in College Hall 303 unless otherwise instructed.

NOTE: The full reading schedule will be distributed later in week one, once I have a better sense of your writing and research goals.

Week 1	Morning Class	Afternoon Class
Monday	Introductions.	Meet in Cole 108 for presentation on writing tools by Brooke Bergantzel. Bring laptops.
Tuesday		Discussion: Lammott (Moodle); Abbott, Chs 1, 4.
Wednesday		
Thursday		
Friday		Article Presentations
Week 2		
Monday		Draft 1
Tuesday		
Wednesday		
Thursday		
Friday		Symposium Abstract
Week 3		
Monday		Draft 2
Tuesday		

Wednesday		
Thursday		
Friday		Draft 3, with Cover Letter
Week 4		
Monday		Blog Entry; Final Draft
Tuesday		
Wednesday	Presentations	