

English 185 - 6

Monday &
Wednesday, 1:00 -
2:15 p.m.

Spring 2019

Oxford College of
Emory University

Murdy Hall Seminar

Critical Reading & Writing



As technologies go, writing has arguably been one of the most transformative for human societies. According to archeologists like Denise Schmandt-Besserat, writing originated in ancient systems of accounting, helping farmers keep track of goods, such as sheep and grain. These early systems of accounting were eventually repurposed for other contexts, such as the legal, religious, medical, and magical, evolving into the complex symbolic systems we recognize as writing. Most of today's social systems would not be possible without writing, which is used in many ways and for many purposes. Today's digital technologies, in fact, run on layers of code and mark-up—all predicated on writing—often for the purpose of conveying and displaying written communication. For most of us, imagining a world without writing is next-to-impossible, since we ourselves are products of the cultures that have developed with and through writing.

In this section of Critical Reading and Writing, our theme will be writing itself, with a primary focus on its role in academic work. Disciplines—like biology, psychology, and literature—are important categories for understanding writing in academic contexts, and so we will engage with how writing works in disciplines, though we will also put this in conversation with other contexts, like the personal and public. Writing is fascinating and complex, in large part because it is and does so many things. It is tool, activity, artifact, and action.

It is inquiry, expression, and persuasion. It is process and product. It has complex relationships with other modes and activities, such as talking and reading. And it has complex relationships with people and situations. Finally, writers can learn to write more effectively, but never actually finish learning, since we can always deepen our understanding and mastery of written language and since we can always learn to better interact with other human beings.

Because most writing is social—it seeks to produce change in other human beings, whether that change is simply a changed understanding of something or a changed course of action—we will ground our inquiry on writing in the study of rhetoric, an art and discipline with roots in ancient Greece and Rome. Modern rhetorician and literary theorist Kenneth Burke defined rhetoric as “the symbolic means of inducing cooperation in beings that by nature respond to symbols,” going on to specify that “wherever there is meaning, there is persuasion, and wherever there is persuasion, there is rhetoric.” The discipline of rhetorical studies will provide us with a vocabulary and conceptual framework for thinking about written communication and academic literacies more precisely and for setting up the continued growth as a reader and writer in your other courses at Oxford College, particularly your three Continuing Writing requirements.

Dr. Gwendolynne Reid
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Office Hours: Wednesdays, 10:00-11:00 a.m. & by appt.

Note: Bear in mind that I check my Emory email on weekdays between 9 a.m. and 5 p.m.—in general, you can expect a response from me within 24 hours.

Inside the Syllabus...

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Learning Goals, or Why We're Here...

A liberal arts education is preparation for full participation in public life, participation that includes being an informed citizen and voter, but also communicating and leading. Cicero and Quintilian, in fact, emphasized the importance of a liberal education for developing a flexible, "copious" style that would allow citizens to respond to diverse rhetorical situations throughout their lives. Oxford College recognizes this, providing you with both a liberal arts education and attention to your development as a communicator, including written communication. English 185 is Oxford's gateway writing course, providing you with preparation for writing in college and beyond, but also preparing you to maximize your ongoing growth as a writer in your three Continuing Writing courses.

Toward these ends, English 185 is designed around the following Student Learning Outcomes:

Critical Reading	Students will develop their ability to read texts closely and critically, focusing first on understanding before moving to evaluation.
Critical Writing	<u>Argument</u> : Students will develop their abilities to compose, organize, and support academic arguments in order to engage in ongoing intellectual conversations.
	<u>Revision Process</u> : Students will understand that good writing is the result of a process of planning, drafting, receiving and giving feedback, and revision.
Research	Students will develop the abilities to find evidence using library and other resources, to incorporate their findings into academic arguments, and to document their sources.
Oral Expression	Students will develop, through informed conversation, the ability to speak clearly and persuasively about the texts they study.

In addition to these shared outcomes, I have added the following learning outcomes for our section of 185:

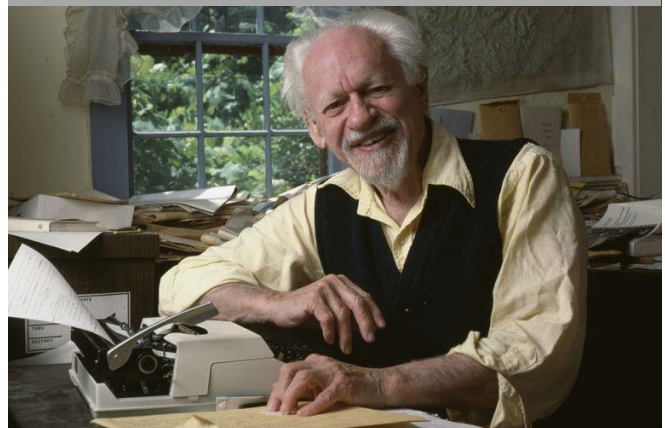
Rhetorical Awareness: Students will develop an awareness of how communication varies according to rhetorical situation and will develop a rhetorical vocabulary to better analyze and adapt to new reading and writing situations.

Disciplinary Awareness: Students will develop an awareness of disciplines as important elements of academic rhetorical situations and of the roles reading and writing play in disciplinary inquiry.

Words are things; and a small drop of ink, falling like dew upon a thought, produces that which makes thousands, perhaps millions, think.

—Byron

Kenneth Burke was an American literary theorist and rhetorician. How is his parlor metaphor useful for thinking about academic writing?



Imagine that you enter a parlor. You come late. When you arrive, others have long preceded you, and they are engaged in a heated discussion, a discussion too heated for them to pause and tell you exactly what it is about. In fact, the discussion had already begun long before any of them got there, so that no one present is qualified to retrace for you all the steps that had gone before. You listen for a while, until you decide that you have caught the tenor of the argument; then you put in your oar. Someone answers; you answer him; another comes to your defense; another aligns himself against you, to either the embarrassment or gratification of your opponent, depending upon the quality of your ally's assistance. However, the discussion is interminable. The hour grows late, you must depart. And you do depart, with the discussion still vigorously in progress.

—Kenneth Burke, *The Philosophy of Literary Form*, pp. 110-111

Course Organization & Assignments

Unit 1: Reading & Writing in the Liberal Arts (Weeks 1-2)

Unit 2: Reading & Writing in the Humanities (Weeks 3-6)

Project 1: Rhetorical Analysis, 15%

Unit 3: Reading & Writing in the Natural Sciences (Weeks 7–11)

Project 2: Analysis of Scientific Accommodation, 20%

Unit 4: Reading & Writing in the Social Sciences (Weeks 11-15)

Project 3: Autoethnography, 20%

Project 4: Symposium on Writing in Academic & Professional Communities (collaborative), 15%

Major Project Course Total: 70%

Communicating-to-Learn Assignments

Reading Discussion Leader (partnered), 10%

Writer's Statements (P1, P2, P3), 10%

Class Contributions (participation, homework, etc.) 10%

Other Course Assignments Total: 30%

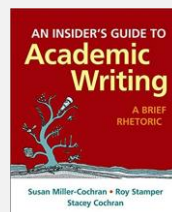
Optional & Extra Credit

P1 or P2 Revision + Revision Statement, average of 2 grades

Visit to Oxford Writing Center, extra A participation grade

Required Texts & Materials

(Texts at Oxford's bookstore or Amazon)



An Insider's Guide to Academic Writing: A Brief Rhetoric & LaunchPad (2015), ISBN: 978-1319020309



The Little Seagull Handbook, 3rd edition (2016), ISBN: 978-0-393-60263-0

At least \$15 of Eagle Dollars for printing (perhaps more if you find paper works well for you).

Optional

They Say I Say: The Moves That Matter in Academic Writing, 4th edition (2018)

Projected Course Schedule

Unless hyperlinked, readings other than our textbooks are available through our [library course reserves](#). If I revise our schedule, I will do so at least twenty-four hours before class and will make a Canvas announcement to let you know.

Week	Date	Title	Read/Watch/Listen	Do
Unit 1: Reading & Writing in the Liberal Arts				
Week 1	W 1/16	Introductions		
Week 2	M 1/21	MLK Holiday		
	W 1/23	Writing and the liberal arts	The syllabus. Zakaria's "Learning to Think" from <i>In Defense of a Liberal Education</i> . <i>They Say/I Say</i> (TS) Ch. 12, "I take your point." (all readings not in our textbooks or linked on the syllabus are on library reserves)	Bring 2-3 points/questions you would like to discuss with the class. Be ready with page numbers. Informal writing: What is the purpose of writing and what does it mean to write well? What are your principles of writing? (Canvas)
Week 3	M 1/28	Reading and writing in academic disciplines	<i>Insider's Guide</i> (IG) Ch. 5. Hjortshøj's "Reading: How to stay on top of it."	Bring 3-4 readings and writing assignments from college that show the range of disciplines and genres you are encountering.
Unit 2: Reading & Writing in the Humanities				
	W 1/30	Reading and writing rhetorically	Rhetorical analysis assignment sheet (P1). Project 1 writer's statement assignment sheet. <i>Insider's Guide</i> (IG) Ch. 2. Timothy Holzhauser's "Rhetoric of a 1943 war bonds ad" (IG Ch. 3).	Think: How is rhetorical reading related to active reading? What are you thinking about when you write rhetorically?

Week 4	M 2/4	Reading and writing in the humanities	IG Ch.6, "Reading and writing in the humanities" (skim sample texts). "BEAM: Bizup's four types of sources" (handout on Canvas).	P1 Milestone 1: Locate 3+ exhibits that might be interesting to analyze through a rhetorical lens (see Bizup's BEAM). For each one, write a short paragraph about why it is rhetorically interesting and significant.
	W 2/6	Analyzing the genre: student example	Dirk's "Navigating genres." Post's " Obama's speech at Howard: Becoming King ." Read about <i>anaphora</i> in the Silva Rhetoricae .	P1M2: Perform a close reading of your chosen exhibit (either in paragraph form or as a rhetorical analysis matrix) + develop a research question about how your exhibit works rhetorically.
Week 5	M 2/11	Connecting to conversations [Library session]	Lamott's "Shitty first drafts." <i>Little Seagull</i> (LS) "R1: Doing research" and "Integrating Sources."	Bring a list of questions related to your exhibit's context (background) and what other scholars have said about it (argument) that could help deepen your analysis. Bring laptop.
	W 2/13	Developing your analysis	Hjortshøj's "Footstools and furniture." Covino & Joliffe's "Elements of rhetoric" (pp. 10-21). Explore the Silva Rhetoricae for useful rhetorical concepts.	P1M3: "Down" draft of rhetorical analysis (2+ pages; upload + bring 1 paper copy).
Week 6	M 2/18	Peer response workshop	Straub's "Responding—really responding—to other students' writing."	P1M4: "Up" draft of rhetorical analysis, with beginning, middle, and end (bring 2 paper copies).
	W 2/20	Style and correctness workshop	Williams & Colomb's "Actions." Skim LS MLA chapter.	P1M5: "Dental" draft of rhetorical analysis with draft of writer's statement (upload + bring 1 paper copy). Bring <i>Little Seagull</i> .
Unit 3: Reading and Writing in the Natural Sciences				
Week 7	M 2/25	Writing for communities	Assignment sheet for "Writing in academic & professional communities" (P4). Assignment sheet for analysis of scientific accommodation (P2). Ceccarelli's " Defending science: How the art of rhetoric can help "	Submit final draft of rhetorical analysis to Canvas (P1). Locate a reference to scientific findings in the public sphere (bring to class).
	W 2/27	Reading and writing in the natural sciences	IG Ch. 8 (skim sample texts & papers). St. Fleur's " City bees stick to a flower diet rather than slurp up soda ." Skim Penick et al's "The contribution of human foods to honey bee diets in a mid-sized metropolis."	P2M1: Locate 3+ popular science exhibits that might be interesting to analyze (e.g., articles, podcasts, videos). Write 1 short ¶ per exhibit about why it would be interesting to analyze.
Week 8	M 3/4	Genre analysis: professional example	Fahnestock's "Accommodating science: The rhetorical life of scientific facts."	P2M2: Choose your popular science exhibit + its scientific partner & reflect on what is interesting to you about the changes made for the public.

	W 3/6	Genre analysis: student example	Hoover's " Origins of continental drift theory and the influence of rhetoric ." Zinsser's "Writing about people: The interview."	P2M3: Create a detailed comparison table of the changes made to accommodate public audiences. P4M1: Choose a discipline/profession you will study for P4. Explain why you find its writing interesting, questions you have about its writing, and what strategies you will use to study it. Also explain how you will divide labor and use each other's' strengths (Canvas).
Week 9	3/11-13	Spring break		
Week 10	M 3/18	Refining arguments	Ceccarelli's "Manufactured scientific controversy: Science, rhetoric, and public debate"	P2M4: "Down draft" of analysis of scientific accommodation (2+ pages; upload + bring 2 paper copies).
	W 3/20	P2 peer response & draft conferences [no class]		P2M5: "Up draft" of analysis & writer's statement (upload + bring 1 paper copy to conference) + upload & exchange written peer response before our meeting.
Week 11	M 3/25	Style and correctness workshop	TS Ch. 8 & 10 (connection & metacommentary)	P2M6: "Dental" draft of analysis (upload + bring 1 paper copy). Bring LS. Return to your first informal writing and revise it: How do you think about the purpose of writing now? What new principles of writing have you developed? (Canvas)
Unit 4: Reading and Writing in the Social Sciences				
	W 3/27	P4 work session	Autoethnography assignment sheet (P3). Wang's "Autoethnography: The formation of type A personality" (on Canvas) See <i>Little Seagull</i> W-14 "Annotated Bibliographies" (pp. 74-78).	Submit final draft of analysis of scientific accommodation (P2). P4M2: Develop a list of genres you have discovered are used in your discipline/profession + annotated bibliography of 5+ sources you will use (e.g., analyze).
Week 12	M 4/1	Reading and writing in the social sciences	IG Ch. 7. Hall's "Introduction to autoethnography." Skim Ellis, Adams, and Bochner's " Autoethnography: An overview " (read sections 2 & 3 carefully).	Bring a list of identities or groups you belong to that you'd be interested in writing learning about.
	W 4/3	Connecting experience with research [library session]	Burrell's "From victim to advocate: Finding opportunity in my identity as a victim of social injustice." Watch " Picking Your Topic IS Research "	List some questions and keywords you have related to the identity/group you are thinking of studying for P3. Bring your laptop.
Week 13	M 4/8	Genre analysis: Professional example	Castrodale & Zingaro's " You're such a good friend': A woven autoethnographic narrative "	P3M1: Consult photos, videos, memorabilia, emails, social media, people, etc. to help you access

			discussion of disability and friendship in higher education.	memories of your chosen group/identity. Describe 3-4 experiences that seem most significant. How would you characterize your experiences?
	W 4/10	Relating experience and research	Graff & Birkenstein's "The art of summarizing."	P3M2: Create an annotated bibliography of 3+ journal articles for your autoethnography. Reflect on what the research does/doesn't help you understand about your experience.
Week 14	M 4/15	Writing narratively about experience	Franklin's "Structure" (94-99). MacGregor's " How to format dialogue. "	P3M3: In lieu of a "down" draft, choose the memory you feel is most important for your autoethnography and write an "active image" that "shows, not tells" (bring 1 paper copy).
	W 4/17	P4 work session	<i>Little Seagull</i> "W6: Giving presentations."	P4M3: Preliminary analysis of 1-2 major genres for your academic or professional community: use SLR + situation + substance. Reflect on why the writing is the way that it is—How does it help members do the work of the field? What values/needs does it reflect?
Week 15	M 4/22	P3 peer response & draft conferences [no class]		P3M4: "Up draft" of autoethnography & writer's statement (upload + bring 1 paper copy to conference) + upload & exchange written peer response before our meeting. **Optional P1/P2 revision due.**
	W 4/24	Style and correctness workshop.	Olson's " Punctuation made simple. " Skim LS APA chapter.	P3M5: "Dental draft" of autoethnography (upload + bring 1 paper copy). Bring <i>Little Seagull</i> . Submit a revised writer's statement on the assignment you grew the most from (Canvas).
	M 4/29	Reflecting on the course + P4 work session		Submit final draft of autoethnography (P3). Revise your principles of writing from 3/25: How would you update it now? What principles will you take with you from the course? (Canvas)
Final Exam	H 5/2, 2 – 5 p.m.	Final presentations		Symposium on writing in academic & professional communities (P4). Submit slides & writer's statement (group). Submit collaboration report (individual).

Where to Get Help

Our Course Website & Syllabus: I've tried hard to think of the questions that might nag you in the wee hours of the night when I'm not available. If a question arises, take a look around our [Canvas site](#) and our syllabus—chances are, I've written out an answer already.

Oxford's Writing Center: The [Oxford Writing Center](#) is another place to grow as a writer. Talking through your writing with an experienced writer can be a helpful way to grow your ideas, plan your writing, or focus your revision. I recommend making full use of this free resource and scheduling visits early and often. Do not think of it as remedial help—many of the strongest student writers are so strong precisely because they are proactive in visiting the center.

Oxford's Library: Oxford's librarians offer [one-on-one research consultations with students](#). These can be early or late in your process (though I recommend early). Because research, reading, and writing are such interrelated processes, research consultations can yield many, many rewards for writers.

Counseling & Career Services: Oxford's [Counseling & Career Services](#) (CCS) provides a range of free services related to your personal and professional development. This can include helping you work through a difficult time, guiding your career/life planning, or even developing résumés and professional letters. These are great people to reach out to for help.

Canvas Help: For technical issues with [Canvas](#), click on the "Help" tab. You'll find many resources, including a 24/7 hotline: 844 765-2516.

AskIT: Many technological problems can be resolved by submitting questions to [Oxford's AskIT](#).

Me!: If you cannot find an answer to your question, ask me! I have weekly office hours and can also make appointments at other times to discuss your writing and progress.

Course Policies

Accessibility: Accessibility is important to me. My goal is to create an accessible, inclusive learning environment in which all students feel they can learn effectively and in which we all learn from each other's diverse perspectives. If you have concerns about your ability to participate in this class, please see me as soon as possible. If you have a disability that may require accommodation, contact the [Office of Accessibility Services](#) (OAS). It is your responsibility to notify me and the OAS of your accommodation needs, but we'll find solutions together (adsroxford@emory.edu).

Attendance & Tardies: I've designed this course to be a cooperative learning experience, which means that absences reduce everyone's potential learning. Plan to attend each class, arrive on time, and have something to contribute every day. If you must be absent, I will treat **up to three absences as automatically excused**, after which your participation grade will be penalized by a quarter-letter grade per absence (.25). Students with no more than one absence will earn an extra quarter-letter grade on their participation grade (.25). Arriving to class late is disruptive and erodes the valuable time we have together. Arrive *before* the official start of class so that we can start on time. **I will treat three tardies or early departures as the equivalent of one absence.**

Class Participation: Creating a positive learning environment is a collective responsibility that requires us all to contribute actively to the course. Reading actively, completing your writer's log entries, coming to class with assignments prepared, and committing to being fully present in mind and body will help you contribute meaningfully. Plan on:

- Coming to class prepared and with something positive to contribute.
- Attending all class sessions (except in the case of unavoidable emergency/obligation).
- Being respectful of all class members (i.e. communicating interest, listening, using names, turn-taking, etc.).
- Minimizing disruptions (i.e. leaving during class, your phone ringing).
- Staying actively focused on the class (i.e. minimizing distractions).

Your participation grade will include drafts, peer response, conferences, random participation grades, and other informal assignments.

Conferences & Peer Response: Learning to write effectively includes learning to seek, give, and use feedback. Towards this end, you will engage in peer response for each major project and will also have a group conference with me on two projects, which will count toward your participation. We will discuss effective participation together. At a minimum, however, effective participation means being prepared on time and with required materials ready for use (e.g., printed drafts).

Grading Scales: I use the [GPA scale](#) to convert letter grades for calculation. I have two additional scales I use for homework and participation that I convert to the GPA scale: (1) the completion scale (credit = 4, partial credit = 2, no credit = 0); (2) the contribution scale (outstanding = 4, active = 3, passive = 2, unengaged = 1, unacceptable = 0). Because Canvas can only grade on the 100-point scale, I have disabled the automatically-calculated course grade. You will see assignment grades, but no course grade.

Course Policies, continued

Honor Code & Plagiarism: Plagiarism and cheating undermine our work as learners and scholars. We cannot build new knowledge together if our contributions are not our own. As a writing course, we will actively learn about the conventions for attribution and source handling. That said, you are expected to abide by our [Honor Code](#) from the very beginning and should be proactive in seeking help if you are unsure of how to integrate source material. Bear in mind that the honor code states that submitting work to me declares that work to be your own without unauthorized help. The [Purdue OWL](#) is a useful resource on plagiarism.

Homework: Unless otherwise noted, homework should be submitted in Canvas as Word files. These should be available for use in class activities (i.e. printed or electronic, depending on what is marked on the schedule). Homework will generally be graded using the completion scale or contributions scale—this is the place to take risks and be creative. Fully engaged, thoughtful, developed responses matter more than correctness on homework.

Late Work: Late projects will be deducted one +/- per calendar day late (i.e. a third of a letter grade). Because these will often no longer be useful for the work of the course, late homework submissions will generally not be accepted unless arrangements have been previously made.

Major Projects: Major projects will be submitted through Canvas as .doc or .docx files. We will practice adapting to different academic style guides (e.g. MLA and APA); please follow the document formatting conventions of the style we are practicing for a given project.

Note on Student Work: Student work submitted as part of this course may be reviewed by Oxford and Emory faculty/staff for the purposes of improving instruction and enhancing Emory education.

Optional Revision: Because writing and learning are processes and adapting to college writing takes time, I will allow revision of either Project 1 or Project 2 any time before April 22nd. **To be eligible to revise, you need to have earned a grade below an A- on the original project.** When you submit, you will need to include (1) a revised draft that includes tracked changes and (2) a 2-3-page revision statement directly before it (same document). Your revision statement should describe your revision goals and the changes you made to accomplish them. Your statement should be specific, potentially integrating textual evidence. This might include targeted quotes from your original draft, feedback you received, assignment sheets, writing guides, textbooks, etc. **Your new grade will be an average of your original grade and your revision grade.** Your grade will remain unchanged if your revision would result in a lower grade.

Technology: I see learning to use writing technologies effectively as part of learning to write, and so we will make regular use of laptops and devices. That said, we will practice using them mindfully in ways that do not distract you or disrupt the class. For example, if you have one, please bring your laptop to every class, but only pull it out when I ask you to (e.g., for a research activity). During class discussions, put laptop lids down so that we can make eye contact and communicate active presence with each other. Similarly, phones should be silenced and in your bag so that we can be fully present with each other. Notifications and distracting software/platforms (e.g., social media) should be closed on laptops when in use (consider airplane mode while taking notes). Our goal will be to use technology in ways that enhance our collective learning and minimize distraction and disrespect. Let's be mindful of our valuable time together—our class is a privilege and gift many do not have the opportunity to benefit from. Please let me know if you have ideas for how to improve the integration of technology in our classroom.