REGAN SYLLABUS FALL 2017

**ICS 139W Critical Writing about Technology (on-line)**

**Course Goals**

Writing is pervasive in our personal and professional lives, though as technology specialists we often think of developing these skills last or on an “as needed” basis. In this class we have an opportunity to share ideas and to concentrate on our writing and oral communication skills. The emphasis will be on writing for different audiences and using different approaches.

This course satisfies UC Irvine's School of Information and Computer Sciences upper division writing requirement, as well as the upper division writing requirements in many UC majors[1](#page1).

**Prerequisite**

Satisfaction of the lower division writing requirement is a prerequisite for this course, so we expect every student to be able to write clear, grammatical English at the level expected in UCI’s Writing 39C[2](#page1). Please be sure you can meet this prerequisite comfortably. Your assignments will be graded down if you do not use correct grammar.

**Plagiarism**

Please be advised that plagiarism will not be tolerated. You will automatically receive a grade of F in this class if you submit work that is not your own. A formal letter detailing any offences of this sort will be placed in your academic record.

**Referencing standards**

You are welcome to use whatever referencing system you prefer, so long as you follow its standards carefully. Most students prefer IEEE, APA or MLA but Harvard is fine too.

**Questions & Announcements**

You can usually get a quick response to your course-related questions by posting a question on the eee Canvas Site.

Since this is a writing class – please write in full sentences with proper grammar and punctuation.

**Suggested References**

1. Please check with the appropriate student affairs office on your campus to be sure.
2. http://comp.humanities.uci.edu/courses/wr-39c.php

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(1) The Little Penguin Handbook, by Lester Faigley.

This is an excellent book and the custom UCI edition is used in our lower division writing classes.

1. Writing from A to Z by Sally Barr Ebest, Gerald Alred, Charles T. Brusaw and Walter E. Oliu
2. An English dictionary and thesaurus. On-line versions are fine.

**Course Requirements & Grading**

To satisfy the upper division writing requirement, you must receive a grade of C or better in this course; you may also take this class on a pass/not- pass basis (which also requires work at the C level to pass). The weights of the assignments and participation are given in the table below.

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| --- | --- | --- |
| Assignment 1 | This I Believe Essay | 5% |
|  |  |  |
| Assignment 2 | Personal Introduction and | 5% |
|  | This I believe video |  |
|  |  |  |
| Assignment 2 | Resume and Cover Letter | 5% |
|  |  |  |
| Assignment 4 | Short Essay | 10% |
|  |  |  |
| Assignment 5 | Research Paper | 35% |
|  |  |  |
| Assignment 6 | Presentation of Research | 10% |
|  |  |  |
| Participation | Viewing of personal | 30% |
|  | introductions, peer |  |
|  | editing, discussions, |  |
|  | reflections on readings |  |
|  | and viewing of |  |
|  | presentations of final |  |
|  | papers. |  |
|  |  |  |

**Participation**

A key component of this class is peer editing. Learning to read others’ work carefully and gaining experience with the editing process will help you to improve your own writing; it will also make you indispensable in your future careers.

**Assignment 1 This I Believe**

In one to three pages. Answer the following questions.

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What’s important to you? What do you value? Are there particular words of wisdom by which you live (maybe from one of your relatives, or famous sayings?)

This is a great exercise to have done before job interviews because questions that are variations on this theme are not unusual. Also, it does not hurt to reflect on your values.

**Assignment 2** Personal Introduction and This I Believe Video

In this assignment you will make a short video about yourself and your and then present a version of your “This I believe” essay. These should be 3-5 minutes long. Alternately, you could prepare a few slides in Powerpoint or LaTex (Sharelatex has very nice presentation templates) and present these along with an audio file.

Topics you could address: (These are suggestions, your modified “this I believe” essay might tell us plenty.) Who are you and where are you from? Did you go straight to university? If you had a detour, what did that include? What are you studying and where? How did you pick your university and your major? What are your short term (3-5 years) and long term (10 years) professional goals? What are your primary interests outside of school?

After these are posted you will review the videos of your classmates.

**Assignment 3**

In this assignment you will prepare a professional resume and a cover letter for a job you’d like to apply to, or one you will apply to.

**Assignment 4**

This is a short essay assignment (400-600 words). Topics vary by year.

Examples:

Name a technology you can’t live without and discuss why. Discuss the positive and negative impacts of this technology.

Name a technology that has the potential to improve the lives of people in the developing world. Discuss the potential positive and negative impacts of this technology. Can you imagine any unintended consequences that would arise from large scale adoption of this technology?

Name a technology with positive environmental impacts. Introduce the technology and its use and then discuss the pros, cons and any potential unintended consequences that would arise from large scale adoption of this technology.

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**Assignment 5**

This is the primary “deliverable” of this class. Students will write 3000-5000 words (including references) on a topic chosen from the menu below. Option a) should be viewed as the default option. Option b) is provided for students who are already working on a business plan and who could use some help developing the strongest possible plan. Option c) is provided to help students who may be applying to graduate schools in a year so that they can get a head start on that process.

1. New Developments in the Internet of Things (IoT)

IoT technologies are necessarily new, but they are far more pervasive than in the past. What we might have referred to as ubiquitous or embedded computing have been renamed over the past few years as IoT. A common definition is that the Internet of Things (IoT) is a system of interrelated computing devices, mechanical and digital machines, objects or living things that are provided with unique identifiers and the ability to transfer data over a network. IoT includes sensors in cars, technology enabled home appliances (smart refrigerators, robotic vacuums, air purifiers, thermostats etc.) wearable devices and myriad other applications.

Select a IoT technology and explain its origins, development, adoption and pros and cons. It would be helpful do discuss the costs and cost savings specifically, though there may be many other pros and cons. Are there general IoT security concerns related to this device? If so please explain these in detail. Are there specific security concerns related to this device?

1. Developing a solid business plan for an IT related business or non-[profit3.](#page4) This should be a maximum of fifteen pages (including all appendices) that could be submitted to a business plan competition like the one in the UCI Merage School of Business. It should be considered a draft, with respect to the full development of the technology, but the writing should be polished.
2. Writing a plan for your graduate school applications. This will include 1) your statement of purpose; 2) your personal history; 3) a plan for your graduate school applications including degree goal, time frame, search for an advisor (PhD applicants only), and a plan for financing your next degree. Parts 1) and 2) are generally limited to about 600 words (some are longer and some shorter but 600 is about right). So you’ll need to write a fairly extensive part 3) in order to fulfil the length requirement
3. Non-IT related business plans will be considered if these are discussed in advance with your instructors.

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for this assignment but if you are serious about finding the right graduate school opportunity that should be easy.

**Assignment 6**

In this assignment you will prepare a 4-6 minute presentation of your research paper. You will present this to the class either through a video of the presentation or by preparing a powerpoint, latex or prezi presentation which is accompanied by audio. Part of this assignment will be to view and comment on the presentations of six of your classmates.

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