

CC0001

Inquiry and Communication in an Interdisciplinary World

Academic year : Year 1, Sem 1 and 2

Academic units : 2 AUs

Pre-requisite : Nil

Tutorial hours : 24

COURSE AIMS

Writing is a tool for thinking. Through the process of organising our thoughts into words, we often stumble upon ideas and figure out what we mean. At its best, this process yields new insights. One of the aims of this course is to give you this experience of discovering ideas through the process of writing.

While you will have the opportunity to practise the genre conventions of your discipline later in your studies, this first common communication course is designed to help you form habits of thinking that will serve you across the university and even in the world outside the university. Taken by all first-year undergraduates, this foundational course will develop your written and oral communication skills, as well as your ability to read and analyse texts. It will help you to understand revision as integral to the process of composition, to convey your interpretations and ideas with confidence and clarity, and to consider audience and purpose when you communicate.

COURSE CONTENT

In this course, students will be asked to explore a topic for their own research. The choices are:

1. a place in Singapore;
2. a community within Singapore;
3. their own writing practices.

Students will investigate their chosen topic by close observation, recording their observations, and finding interesting patterns or puzzles in what they observe. In class, students will practice how to come to a question to which they do not have an answer, and, after a review of presentation skills, students will present their discoveries to the class. Eventually, students will be asked to find two sources that can help them compose an argument that responds to their question. The final goal is to draft an op-ed (short for “opposite the editorial page”), a piece of writing usually found in a newspaper or magazine that expresses the author’s argument on a current topic. Students’ op-eds will be peer workshopped and revised substantially over two to three weeks. Students will also consult with their teacher and receive individual feedback on their draft. By the end of the semester, students will consider how to send their op-ed to a newspaper or online platform.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

Upon successful completion of the course, students should be able to:

1. closely observe and analyse texts and phenomena;
2. design questions or puzzles from engagement with a text that can motivate further exploration;
3. summarise, paraphrase, and quote from sources accurately and ethically;

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4. compose complex arguments that build on the ideas of published authors as well as their own analysis and thinking;
5. express their ideas orally through both informal and formal presentations;
6. discover writing as a tool for thinking;
7. use peer and teacher feedback to revise their thinking and communication;
8. recognize audience and rhetorical situation as significant factors in communication.

COURSE SCHEDULE

Week	Tutorial topics	Reading/Activities
1	No tutorial	Read Scudder's "Look at Your Fish" from Unit 1
2	Introduce larger course goals; how to close read a written text and an image.	Watch video, "How to Come Up with Good Ideas"
3	How to gather data and analyse a place, a community, and your personal writing practices.	Choose your topic and conduct your research
4	Moving from observations to analysis to a question or puzzle worth researching	Blog 1 Due: Observations and analysis of your chosen topic
5	How to summarise, paraphrase, and quote ethically; how to analyse and reflect on your sources	
6	How to find reputable sources; thinking outside the box	Assignment 1 Due: Observation to a Question (500 words)
7	Putting texts into conversation and forming an argument Mid-semester Reflection	Blog 2 Due: Summaries of 2 sources and reflection on how they help you respond to your question
8	Student draft critique; three-minute pitch contest	Online Activity: Citation and APA Format
9	Critique of a student essay; peer workshop	First Draft Due Consultations begin
10	*Consultation replaces class tutorial	Consultations
11	How to organise a presentation; develop awareness and control over paralanguage	Consultations Keep revising!
12	6-8 minute in-class presentations with Q&A	Assignment 2 Due: Upload slides before class.

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Week	Tutorial topics	Reading/Activities
13	6-8 minute in-class presentations with Q&A Final Reflection	Assignment 3 Due Week 14 Length: 1200-1350 words

STUDENT ASSESSMENT

There is no end-of-semester examination for this course, students will be assessed by 100% continuous assessment based on the following components:

Assessment	Weighting
Assignment 1 500-word observation and analysis that leads to a question. Students will pick a place, community, or their own writing practices as an object of study and write up their close observations and analysis. This analysis will lead to a question or puzzle that needs to be researched.	20%
Assignment 2 Students perform a 6-8 minute presentation with slides that explains their chosen topic, question, and two sources that help them respond to their question.	25%
Assignment 3 1200–1350-word op-ed that cites from at least 2 sources. Students will build on Assignment 1, explaining their observations and analysis, puzzle or question, and then craft an argument that responds to their question. This argument should be capacious and multifaceted, building on the ideas of cited sources and the student’s analysis and thinking on the topic. Ideally, texts should be put into conversation and connected to shed a new light on the student’s chosen topic.	40%
Class participation Teachers will note the quality of peer workshopping, 2 blogs, three-minute pitch, and weekly class discussion and preparedness.	12%
Reflective exercises	3%

TEXTBOOKS/REFERENCES

A coursebook will be provided through NTULearn Course Site.

References

- Greenstein, G. 2013. "Writing Is Thinking: Using Writing to Teach Science." *Astronomy Education Review*, 12 (1). Retrieved from <http://dx.doi.org/10.3847/AER2012037>
- Klein, P.D., & Boscolo, P. (2016). Trends in research on writing as a learning activity. *Journal of Writing Research*, 7(3), 311–350. doi: 10.17239/jowr-2016.07.03.01
- Menary, R. (2007). Writing as Thinking. *Language Sciences*, 29 (5), 621–632. doi:10.1016/j.langsci.2007.01.005

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4. Miller, R. E., & Jurecic, A. (2016). *Habits of the Creative Mind*. Bedford/St. Martin's.
5. Reis, R. (n.d.). Developing Students' Thinking by Writing [Website]. Retrieved March 30, 2020 from <https://tomprof.stanford.edu/posting/1472>