

Writing in the Sciences

RHET 206.01

21364

MW 4:45-6:25 p.m.

Harney Science Center 514

Harriett Jernigan, PhD
Gleeson, 4th Floor
hvjernigan@usfca.edu

Office Hours
By appointment

OBJECTIVES: This course is designed to familiarize you with the discourse modes of the physical and life sciences and to give you the opportunity to develop writing skills for these disciplines, including writing reviews of scholarly articles, writing for the general public and writing a research paper. Through class discussion, group activities, writing, review and revision, you will improve your critical thinking and writing skills and be able to communicate with audiences in a variety of genres.

Our goals include:

- 1) Critical analysis of academic discourse: critically analyze linguistic and rhetorical strategies used in long and complex texts from a variety of genres, subjects, and fields.
- 2) Integrating multiple academic sources: incorporate multiple texts of length and complexity within a unified argumentative essay, addressing connections and differences among them.
- 3) Academic research: develop sophisticated research questions and compose substantial arguments in response to those questions, incorporating extensive independent library research and demonstrating mastery of standard academic documentation modes.
- 4) Style: edit your own prose to achieve a clear and mature writing style in keeping with the conventions of academic and/or professional discourse.
- 5) Revision: develop your own revision strategies for extending and enriching early drafts and for producing polished advanced academic writing.

REQUIRED TEXTS: *A Student's Guide to Writing in the Life Sciences*, on Canvas
Other resources are available on the class site on Canvas.

GRADING: Your grade is calculated as follows:

| | |
|-------------------------|-----|
| Homework : | 15% |
| Peer Reviews: | 10% |
| Genre Analysis: | 15% |
| Article Review: | 15% |
| Article for the Public: | 20% |
| The Research Paper | 25% |

Grade Scale:

| | | | | | |
|----|-----------|----|----------|----|-----------------|
| A | = 94-100% | B | =84-86.7 | C | =74-76.9 |
| A- | = 90-93.9 | B- | =80-83.9 | C- | =70-73.9 |
| B+ | = 87-89.9 | C+ | =77-79.9 | D | =60-69.9 |
| | | | | F | = less than 60% |

ATTENDANCE AND PARTICIPATION: Attendance is a crucial part of this class, as we will be doing a good amount of in-class collaboration, including class discussion, group activities and peer review. In addition, your absence negatively affects group dynamics and class community. Similarly, your presence in body but not in spirit in class has the same effect, so you are expected to participate in class discussions and work, rather than acting as a passive participant/spectator.

Taking the above into consideration, you should be prompt as well. Anyone arriving more than 10 minutes after class has started will be counted absent. Anyone leaving class early without having first asked for permission ahead of time will be counted absent.

I understand that absences are often unavoidable, but I should receive written notice of any absences you know of ahead of time and written explanations for absences that are unplanned. You are allowed three absences, whether they are explained or not. After that, I drop your grade by 3 points per absence.

Exception

When representing the University of San Francisco in intercollegiate competition (e.g., athletics, debate), students shall be excused from classes on the hours or days such competition takes them away from classes. However, such students shall be responsible for advising their professors regarding anticipated absences and for arranging to complete course work for classes, laboratories, and/or examinations missed.

READER'S RESPONSE PAPERS AND HOMEWORK: You will turn in reader's responses to reading assignments on a regular basis. All reading and homework assignments will be posted on Canvas. The directions and due date will be stated for each assignment. Late submissions will not be allowed. All reader's response papers must be at least 200 words and no more than 400 words. Not meeting or exceeding the word-count requirement will result in no credit for the assignment. If there is only a textbox in the homework, you do not have to create a document. If an upload option is available, the homework must be submitted in PDF format. Most often your word processing program will have an option in "Save as" or "print." You can create a copy of the document as a PDF. In Microsoft word, you would go to "Print As..." and then find the option for PDF.

Note: If you try to submit your work on Canvas on time and have technical difficulties, **copy the screen with the error message, print that out, along with a hard-copy of your assignment**, and submit it to me the following class session. No other late submissions will be accepted. **Do not email me your assignments directly unless I specifically ask you to. They will not be counted as turned in.**

PEER REVIEW: One of the most important parts of the writing process involves engaging our peers in review of our work, asking others for feedback on what we have written, what works well, and what doesn't work so well. With this in mind, we will review each other's papers, three times, in order to develop a better understanding of our own work and how to help others with their work. During the class session before a major paper is due, we will trade rough drafts and, following specific criteria, review them and provide feedback. We will first do a mock peer review to anchor us.

ESSAY FORMATTING: Your papers should be typed, **double-spaced**, with fonts no larger than 12 point. Your margins should be no narrower or wider than 1 inch top and bottom, left and right. We will cover APA formatting for cover pages and running heads. Your essays should have titles as well.

The final drafts of your papers will be submitted in PDF format on Canvas. All major paper assignments will be posted on Canvas, with specifications regarding length, rough draft due dates, content, and other requirements.

LATE WORK: I teach a multitude of classes and am as busy as you are, so I don't take late work. However, **I allow you to turn in one essay late, one class session late, no more**, and I reduce the grade automatically by one letter grade. After that, you are on your own. If you fear that you are not going to make a due date, come talk to me ahead of time.

REVISIONS: Revision is an integral part of the writing process, and definitely beneficial at the beginning of the semester, when students are still familiarizing themselves with their teachers' expectations. Therefore, **you may revise either the first or second paper of the semester** for a better grade. **The revision of a paper will be due two weeks after I give it back to you.** I will announce the due date in class for each revision, so that you know exactly when it's due. The due date for the revision will also be available on Canvas, and you will turn the revision in there. If you receive a "Revise" on a paper instead of a grade, you must come see me during office hours before beginning the revision and ultimately receiving an actual grade. Papers that received a "Revise" but never actually get revised—even if you turn the paper in again—will be recorded as a N/C.

INFORMATION AND TECHNOLOGY: I encourage people to take pictures of any notes that end up on the board. I also encourage you to use the technology available to you to enhance the learning experience. You may use your laptops in class to participate in group projects and to take notes. However, if I catch you surfing the net for entertainment, checking your Facebook page, tweeting, chatting or otherwise using your laptop in ways that do not relate directly to what we are doing in class, I will mark you absent and ban you from using your device for the rest of the semester.

If your cell phone rings or vibrates, I will also mark you absent. Ringing and vibrating cell phones are a huge distraction and disrespectful to everyone trying to pay attention. If you have

some kind of situation that requires you have your cell phone on, let me know at the beginning of class. And then set it on vibrate.

If my phone rings or vibrates during class, you get brownies the next class session. Fair is fair.

TIME MANAGEMENT AND PLANNING: Students are expected to spend 2 hours outside of class in study and preparation of assignments for each hour in class. In a 4 unit class, assignments have been created with the expectation that students will engage in approximately 8 hours of out-of-class work per week; in a 2 unit class, students should expect to spend approximately 4 hours per week outside of class in study and preparation. Intensive classes may count the 2 hours of lab time as part of the out-of-class work.

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

USF Honor Code: As a Jesuit institution committed to *cura personalis*- the care and education of the whole person- USF has an obligation to embody and foster the values of honesty and integrity. USF upholds the standards of honesty and integrity from all members of the academic community. All students are expected to know and adhere to the University's Honor Code. You can find the full text of the code online at www.usfca.edu/fogcutter. As it particularly pertains to the Program in Rhetoric and Composition, the policy covers:

- Plagiarism—intentionally or unintentionally representing the words or ideas of another person as your own; failure to properly cite references; manufacturing references
Working with another person when independent work is required
- Submission of the same paper in more than one course without the specific permission of each instructor
- Submitting a paper written by another person or obtained from the internet.

The penalties for violation of the policy may include a failing grade on the assignment, a failing grade in the course, and/or a referral to the Dean and the Committee on Student Academic Honesty. In addition, a letter will be sent to the Associate Dean for Student Academic Services; the letter will remain in your file for two years after you graduate, after which you may petition for its removal.

STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES: If you are a student with a disability or disabling condition, or if you think you may have a disability, please contact USF Student Disability Services (SDS) at 415 422-2613 within the first week of class, or immediately upon onset of disability, to speak with a disability specialist. If you are determined eligible for reasonable accommodations, please meet with your disability specialist so they can arrange to have your accommodation letter sent to me, and we will discuss your needs for this course. For more information, please visit: <http://www.usfca.edu/sds>

RESOURCES:

The Writing Center is located in 215 Cowell, and they are open 10:00-8:00 Monday through Thursday and until 5:00 on Friday. Please call 422-6713 to make an appointment with a Writing Center Consultant to talk over your paper. They can be extremely helpful in providing additional reader feedback at any stage of your writing process. The Writing Center also has drop-in consultant to help you from 1:00-4:00 Monday through Thursday in Gleeson Library. The Writing Center table is located in the computer room on the main floor, accessible through the Thatcher Art Gallery. Remember, the best time to bring your paper in for feedback is well before it is due. Located in Malloy Hall, Room 106, **The Speaking Center** is available to help all USF students prepare for speeches--such as oral presentations, team presentations, and powerpoint

demonstrations. The coaches are USF students, selected because of their skill and experience (and excellent grades) in public speaking, and they can help you with a variety of aspects of public speaking, including delivery and outlining. Tutors are available on a drop-in basis (hours announced in the second week of the semester) as well as for special appointments; please visit the tutoring center or email speakingcenter@usfca.edu to make an appointment.

Various **Workshops** in Reading and Writing are available to assist students with academic writing, reading, and speaking: See the schedule of classes for times and days for RHET 100, 101, 105, 107.

STUFF HAPPENS: No doubt there will be times during the semester when things become overwhelming, when the unexpected happens, when all the things that can go wrong will go wrong. As long as you communicate with me and keep me apprised of your situation when the going gets tough, I can help you create a plan to get through, and we can find some reasonable compromise. But no communication gets no compassion. Do not skip the majority of class, or perform badly without explaining why, and then ask me at the end of the semester how you can make up 10 weeks' worth of work in order to pass the class. It won't happen. But if you talk to me, early and often, and let me know what's going on with you, I am quite amenable to a number of solutions.

"If you're going through hell, keep going."
-- Winston Churchill

Remember: we are going to have an awesome time in this class!

RHET 206 TENTATIVE SCHEDULE

The schedule below plots out our weekly goals and assignments, but does not by any means serve as an adequate substitute for inquiring about exact assignments and due dates. All that information will be given in class and then posted on Canvas.

| Week | Assignments Due | Goals, Activities | Readings and Assignments Scheduled |
|-------------------|---|--|---|
| Jan. 25-29 | Mon:----- -- Wed: Syllabus Quiz | Introduction to Course; What makes a good lab report? Basic sentence structure, the use of passive and active voice. | Mon: Syllabus quiz on Canvas. Wed: Radiolab Pick 1. Choose listen to a Radiolab episode and summarize it in 150-200 words. Upload on Canvas. |
| Feb. 1-5 | Mon: Response to Videos Wed: <i>A Student's Guide</i> | Writing Lab Reports, In-Class Experiment | Mon: Read: PP 7-16 in <i>A Student's Guide...</i> (ASG) In-text pagination! Wed: Lab Report Assignment posted on Canvas. |
| Feb. 8-12 | Mon: Lab Report Wed: "The Teeming Metropolis of You" | Genre Analysis In-Class genre analysis with Radiolab, Sentence Combining 1: NPAs | Mon: Read "The Teeming Metropolis of You" and summarize in 100 words. Wed: A mini genre analysis of Neil DeGrasse Tyson's, "The Most Astounding Fact" Use the guidelines in the assignment. Submit on Canvas as .doc or PDF. |

| | | | |
|--|---|--|--|
| <p>Feb. 15-19</p> | <p>Mon: DeGrasse-Tyson Genre Analysis</p> <p>Wed:</p> | <p>Genre Analysis, ctd. Outlining</p> <p>The Paper Assignment; Brainstorming—SEE POSSIBLE ARTICLES POSTED ON CANVAS!</p> <p>NPAs, ctd.</p> | <p>Mon: Radiolab 2, Genre Analysis pick.</p> <p>Wed: Mock peer review: Read the papers posted on Canvas and be prepared for class discussion and review.</p> |
| <p>Feb. 22-26</p> | <p>Mon: Presidents' Day —No classes</p> <p>Wed: Mock Peer Review</p> | <p>“to be” verbs</p> <p>Mock peer review</p> | <p>Mon: Prepare for mock peer review</p> <p>Wed: Rough draft of Genre Analysis, 2 copies for peer review</p> |
| <p>Feb. 29-Mar. 4</p> | <p>Mon: Rough draft, genre analysis</p> <p>Fri: Final draft, genre analysis</p> | <p>Peer Review</p> <p>Conventions and Rhetorical Goals for Review Writing.</p> <p>Paragraph focus</p> | <p>Mon: Final draft, genre analysis</p> <p>Wed: ASG PP 35-39;</p> <p>Read the articles posted for in-class review</p> |
| <p>Mar. 7-11</p> | <p>Mon: ASG reading summary, article</p> <p>Wed: Choice of article</p> | <p>In-class review of article</p> <p>Paraphrasing Exercise</p> <p>Brainstorming</p> <p>Verbal Phrases</p> | <p>Mon: Brief statement of what article you'll be reviewing, with citation and basic thesis statement. Turn in on Canvas.</p> <p>Wed: Radiolab 3</p> |
| <p>Mar. 14-18</p> | <p>SPRING BREAK</p> | | |
| <p>Mar. 21-25</p> <p>Easter Holiday Mar 25.</p> | <p>Mon: Radiolab 3</p> <p>Wed: Rough Draft</p> | <p>Outlining</p> <p>Verbal Phrases</p> <p>Peer Review</p> | <p>Mon: Rough Draft, 2 copies</p> <p>Wed: Final Draft, Paper 2 due Sunday, Mar. 20, 11:00 p.m.</p> |

| | | | |
|-----------------------|---|--|---|
| Mar. 28-Apr. 1 | Mon: Wed: ASG reading, Radiolab 4 | Writing for the Public Comparison/Contrast genre analysis Choosing a topic Paraphrasing, Analogies, metaphors and similes. “to be” verbs | Mon: ASG, 39-42. Be prepared to discuss in class. Radiolab 4 Wed: Identify the topic you will be writing about. Upload to Canvas |
| Apr. 4-8 | Mon: Identify topic Wed: | Group work— Historical discoveries Language that is more spoken than written. | Mon: Wed: Outline, article for the public |
| Apr. 11-15 | Mon: Outline, article for the public Wed: Rough Draft, article for the public | Outlining Peer Review | Mon: Rough draft, article for the public Wed: Final Draft Due Sunday, April 17, 11:00 p.m. |
| Apr. 18-22 | Mon: Wed: ASG 53-60; APA website | Introduction to the research paper (Literature Review) Paragraphs Inserting quotes, templates Refining the topic Adjective Clauses | Mon: ASG PP 53-60; Go over the APA website and watch the tutorial, and write 125-150 words about what you discovered on the tutorial and the website. Wed: Identify the topic you might write your review of the literature about. Radiolab 5 |
| April 25-29 | Mon: Topic choice Wed: ASG 61-68; Initial bibliography | Organization of the review of the literature. Research Question 1 Paragraph Focus | Mon: ASG 61-68; Initial bibliography assignment. Provide at least 4 sources, using APA citation; Wed: |

| | | | |
|------------------|---|---------------------------|-----------------------------|
| May 2-6 | Mon: Answers to research question 1 Wed: | Research question 2 | Mon: Radiolab 6 Wed: |
| May 19-13 | Mon: Outline of research question 2 Wed: Bullet points discussion and conclusion | Discussion and conclusion | Mon: |
| May 16-20 | Final Draft Research Paper | | |