

UWRT.150  
Sample Syllabus  
MWF, 50-minute class periods.

**Section 1: Course Policies**

*Required Texts:*

Harris, Joseph. *Rewriting: How to Do Things with Texts*. Logan, UT: Utah State UP, 2006.

Writing Studies articles available in the “Content” section of MyCourses.

*Course Goals and Objectives:*

Writing Seminar is a three-credit course limited to 19 students per section. The course is designed to develop first-year students’ proficiency in analytical and rhetorical reading and writing, and critical thinking. Students will read, understand, and interpret a variety of non-fiction texts representing different cultural perspectives and/or academic disciplines. These texts are designed to challenge students intellectually and to stimulate their writing for a variety of contexts and purposes. Through inquiry-based assignment sequences, students will develop academic research and literacy practices that will be further strengthened throughout their academic careers. Particular attention will be given to the writing process, including an emphasis on teacher-student conferencing, critical self-assessment, class discussion, peer review, formal and informal writing, research, and revision. Small class size promotes frequent student-instructor and student-student interaction. The course also emphasizes the principles of intellectual property and academic integrity for both current academic and future professional writing.

*Grading Policy:*

Graded papers and final course grades are based on RIT’s official 100 point scale. Grades will be posted/updated in the MyCourses “Grades” tab.

	<b>A = 100 – 93</b>	<b>A - = 92.99 - 90</b>
<b>B+ = 89.99 - 87</b>	<b>B = 86.99 - 83</b>	<b>B - = 82.99 - 80</b>
<b>C+ = 79.99 - 77</b>	<b>C = 76.99 - 73</b>	<b>C - = 72.99 - 70</b>
	<b>D = 69.99 - 60</b>	
	<b>F = 59.99 – 0</b>	

*ADA Statement:*

RIT is committed to providing reasonable accommodations to students with disabilities. If you would like to request accommodations such as seating or testing modifications, please contact the

Disability Services Office. It is located in the Student Alumni Union, Room 1150; the Web site is <http://www.rit.edu/dso>. After you receive accommodation approval, speak with the instructor so that you can make arrangements.

*Attendance Policy:*

You are allowed to miss 2 weeks of classes for the semester (6 classes for MWF sections, 4 classes for T/TH sections). Beginning with the next unexcused absence after this limit, your course grade may be lowered 1/2 letter grade for each absence.

As per the University's attendance policy: "Absences, for whatever reason, do not relieve students of their responsibility for fulfilling normal requirements in any course. In particular, it is the student's responsibility to make individual arrangements in advance of missing class due to personal obligations such as religious holidays, job interviews, athletic contests, etc., in order that he or she may meet his or her obligations without penalty for missing class." (RIT Governance Policy D4.0, Section I.B)

*Deadlines:*

Late work will not be accepted, except in extreme circumstances and/or by prior arrangement. This includes discussion posts, rough drafts, final drafts, and presentations.

*Academic Integrity:*

As an institution of higher learning, RIT expects students to behave honestly and ethically at all times, especially when submitting work for evaluation in conjunction with any course or degree requirement. All students are encouraged to become familiar with RIT's [Academic Integrity Policy](#), [Honor Code](#), and [Student Conduct Policy](#)

*Writing Commons Support:*

The UWP Writing Commons provides free writing instruction for all RIT students at any stage of the writing process. Located on the first floor of the Wallace Center, the Writing Commons is staffed by peer and professional writing consultants with diverse backgrounds and from a variety of academic disciplines.

To create an account and schedule an appointment, visit <https://rit.mywconline.com/>

## Section 2: Course Assignments

### Weeks 1-4

#### *Discussion Posts*

For two articles early in the semester, you'll write your response making use of Harris' process (Coming to Terms, Forwarding, and Countering) in one paragraph for each step of the process. Your posts will be the focus of the discussion during the class meeting in which each article is discussed. After the first two posts, our approach to the discussion posts will become more open, but generating ideas and "adding to the conversation" will continue to be the focus of your writing. Grades for these posts will be pass/fail. 300+ words, with images and/or links.

#### *Critical Synthesis*

Using evidence from the first two articles we read for this course, write an argument-based essay in which you bring the texts together in order to make claims of your own. Three types of synthesis will be useful in this project:

- Conceptual – Does a concept from one article relate to or build upon a concept from the other?
- Experiential – Does your experience confirm or challenge claims made in an article?
- Organizational – By bringing the voices of the two authors closer together, what can you add to the conversation?

Be sure to use specific quotes and claims from the two articles; you do not need to summarize the entirety of each article. Forwarding and Countering (Harris), as well as the discussion posts you and your classmates have written, will be very useful as you begin to compose your argument. 1000-1200 words.

#### *Peer Review #1*

Email or otherwise exchange your Critical Synthesis draft with a classmate. Looking at their draft, use the comment function to provide your classmate specific, constructive feedback about their draft. Primary focus areas include:

- Complexity of argument
- Use of sources as evidence
- Clarity of writing
- Structure

While citations, formatting, and grammar are important parts of the revision process, do not put overdue focus on them. If you think your classmate has made an error, point it out, but your main foci are the four categories above. By the beginning of the next class, send your feedback to your classmate and also upload it into the corresponding dropbox folder in myCourses.

### Weeks 5-11

## **IMRaD (Introduction, Methods, Results, and Discussion) Portfolio.**

### *Research Proposal*

In this short assignment, you will outline an area of inquiry within the field of Writing Studies, Education, d/Discourse, and/or another academic discipline. The proposal must include:

- A series of research questions
- Your stake or interest in the topic
- Relevant terminology
- Defined context and scope

In order to help you choose a topic, you might look at this [Glossary of Terms](#) from the University of Nebraska's Writing Center.

Instructor feedback for this assignment will focus on the four categories above, as well as suggestions for resources and articles that might be useful during this research process. You will post this proposal in the corresponding forum in "Discussions" on myCourses, and eventually include it as Addendum #2 in your IMRaD portfolio. 200-300 words.

### *Literature Review (LR Draft)*

Using the RIT Library's databases, you'll find 4 scholarly articles that respond to research questions you have about writing, education, and d/Discourse. In the literature review, you'll bring these sources into conversation much as you did for the Critical Synthesis assignment. This assignment will demonstrate the knowledge you have gained through your research, bringing your audience up to speed on what the existing scholarship can tell us about your research questions.

You are not yet making an argument of your own, but you should end the literature review with the goals of your upcoming primary research, and some hypotheses about what you think you'll find. Eventually, this literature review will be revised into the Introduction section for your IMRaD portfolio. (700–1000 words)

### *Peer Review #2*

Same process as Peer Review #2. In addition, think about Kellogg's ideas about "multiple representations" of text that we as authors must "juggle" (p. 4-5). Because you haven't read the articles your peer is writing about, give them feedback about how well they have represented those texts to you as a reader. What do you suspect is missing from those representations? Does their textual representation of that source, including quote selection, give you a full sense of the source's value within their topic?

### *Primary Research Survey*

Using RIT's Qualtrics survey software, you will construct and distribute a survey to your classmates. The purpose of this primary research is to fill "knowledge gaps" left by your secondary research. What do you still need to know about your topic? What research questions were left partially or unanswered by the articles you read for your literature review?

The survey should take no more than 5 minutes for a respondent to complete. Limit the number of open response questions, or questions that require lengthy response time.

### *Methods and Results (MR Draft)*

In this draft of the Methods and Results sections, you'll discuss your process in constructing the survey and your hypotheses about what you would find in a Methods section. Then, in the Results section, you'll talk about the interesting results of that survey process. You need not report on all the data and responses. Instead, focus on the "stories" that your data is telling you. What trends do you notice in your responses to the survey? What results were expected? Which were surprising? The goal of the Results section is to report, not yet argue or synthesize: That happens in the Discussion section. (400-600 Words)

### *Peer Review #3*

Same process as previous peer reviews. Also, how well did your peer represent their Methods of survey design and distribution? Did they discuss their intention and goals in making this survey? For Results, do they give a series of clear "stories" that their data is telling them? Do you understand why their research is valuable? Provide them feedback that would help you as a reader understand the value of their research.

### *Discussion Presentation*

Before you create a written draft of your Discussion section, you'll create a PowerPoint (or other software) that begins to synthesize your secondary research from the Literature Review and your primary research from the Methods and Results section. The purpose of this presentation is to articulate claims you can make as a researcher based on what you've discovered through this inquiry process that started with the research proposal. There is an example presentation posted in myCourses as well as a rubric, but be creative in your approach to this assignment. (5 minutes, plus 2 minutes for Q&A)

### *Discussion Draft (D Draft)*

Building from your Discussion presentation feedback, write a draft of your Discussion section which synthesizes the secondary and primary research you have completed during this inquiry process. In this section, you're making an argument based on the evidence you've found. Does your primary research confirm or challenge your secondary research? How so, and why do you think that is? What can you say about the topic you've researched which "adds to the conversation?" (500-750 words).

### *Peer Review #4*

Same process as previous peer reviews. Consider how well the secondary and primary research have been synthesized in your peer's Discussion section. Are the "stories" they telling clear? Is there a good balance of quantitative and qualitative data presented?

### **Weeks 12-16**

#### *Rhetorical Self-Analysis*

The goal of this assignment is to determine which of the frames below is more or less dominant in your approach to writing through analyzing the rhetorical choices you have made during the ongoing IMRaD Portfolio.

The four frames you'll be using -- **Structural, Human Resources, Political, and Symbolic** – are adapted from Bolman and Deal's (2013) theory about leadership qualities in business and education. In the chart below, there are some questions related to each of the four frames which you can ask yourself while you're looking at your text and research process.

Take this free online quiz <http://bit.ly/Bolman> to find your primary "orientation," the frame(s) in which you tend to focus more strongly. In this assignment, write about all four frames, including why some frame(s) didn't show up, or how you can incorporate it in the final draft of the Inquiry Project, and how. 1000-1200 words.

### *Peer Review #5*

Same process as previous peer reviews. Respond to your classmate's draft by offering suggestions about how they can better incorporate the four frames in the Inquiry Project. Tell them a little about your own challenges and successes in the Inquiry Project as a way to give them extra perspective they can use in revising their own.

#### *Revision Plan*

Building on the observations made in your Rhetorical Self-Analysis, indicate 3-5 goals for the revision of your Inquiry Project. These goals can include revisions in:

- Argument
- Use of Sources
- Use of Personal Experience/Knowledge
- Tone, Language
- Frames (Structural, HR, Political, Symbolic)
- Context and Scope

You'll post this revision plan in the corresponding "Discussions" forum in myCourses. 100-200 words. We will discuss this revision plan, as well as your rhetorical self-analysis, during our one-on-one meetings.

### *IMRaD Project (final portfolio)*

You have designed, distributed/conducted, and collected primary research. In addition, you analyzed how your “frames” guided your writing and researching choices and made a revision plan.

Structurally, you will revise this project to fit the IMRaD format, a common genre in many disciplines. The Literature Review becomes the Introduction, Methods and Results stay mostly the same, and the Discussion section is a synthesis of the first three sections.

The final submission of this project will be in a single .doc or .pdf and the distinct parts will be in this order:

- Title Page (APA format)
- Abstract (50-100 words)
- Final Draft of Research Project (IMRaD format, 1500+ words)
- References Page (APA format)
- Addendum #1 Research Proposal
- Addendum #2 Primary Research Documentation (Surveys, Data, Interviews, etc.)
- Addendum #3 Final Reflection (100-200 words)

**Due Dates and Grade Distribution:**

Pass/Fail (30% Total Course Grade, 2% per item)

9/4	Sommers and Saltz "The Novice as Expert" ( <i>Post</i> )
9/9	Kellogg's "Training Writing Skills" ( <i>Post</i> )
9/16	Critical Synthesis Rough Draft
9/18	Peer Review #1
9/25	Research Proposal ( <i>Post</i> )
10/2	Literature Review Draft
10/4	Peer Review #2
10/18	MR Draft
10/21	Peer Review #3
11/6	D Draft
11/8	Peer Review #4
11/13	Rhetorical Self-Analysis Draft
11/15	Peer Review #5
11/18-22	One-on-One Meetings
11/25	Revision Plans

Graded (70% Total Course Grade)

9/23	Critical Synthesis Final Draft (10%)
10/7	Literature Review (15%)
10/28-11/4	Discussion Presentation (10%)
11/25	Rhetorical Self-Analysis Final Draft (10%)
12/9	IMRaD Final Portfolio (25%)

### Section 3: Course Schedule

#### Week One

8/26 – Welcome!

8/28 – Syllabus – Two Truths and a Lie

8/30 – LECTURE: Harris’ Methodology – Writing Commons – In-class Writing/Reading Time

#### Week Two

9/2 – NO CLASSES, Labor Day (Fall) or MLK Day (Spring)

9/4 – DISCUSS POSTS: Sommers and Saltz’s “The Novice as Expert”

9/6 – Sommers & Saltz Continued – In-class Writing/Reading Time

#### Week Three

9/9 – DISCUSS POSTS: Kellogg’s “Training Writing Skills”

9/11 – Kellogg Continued – Introduce Assignment #1: Critical Synthesis

9/13 – In-Class Reading/Writing Time

#### Week Four

9/16 – DUE: Critical Synthesis Rough Draft – Peer Review #1

9/18 – DUE: Peer Review #1 – In-class Revising/Writing Time

9/20 – In-class Revising/Writing Time

#### Week Five

9/23 – DUE: Critical Synthesis Final Draft – Intro Research Proposal, IMRaD Portfolio – [Glossary of Terms](#)

9/25 – DUE: Research Proposal –LECTURE: Secondary Research – [Proquest database](#)

9/27 – Introduce Literature Review – In-class Research Time

## Week Six

9/30 – In-class Research/Writing Time

10/2 – DUE: Literature Review Draft – Peer Review #2

10/4 – DUE: Peer Review #2 – In-class Research/Writing Time

## Week Seven

10/7 – DUE: Literature Review – Primary Research – [Qualtrics](#)

10/9 – In-class Survey Designing and Distribution

10/11 – Primary Results Analysis

## Week Eight

10/14 – NO CLASS, FALL BREAK

10/16 – Introduce MR Draft – In-class Writing Time

10/18 – DUE: MR Draft – Peer Review #3

## Week Nine

10/21 – DUE: Peer Review #3 – In-class Writing Time

10/23 – Introduce Discussion Presentations, **and** Discussion (D Draft)

10/25 – NO CLASS

## Week Ten

10/28 – Presentations Day 1

10/30 – Presentations Day 2

11/1 – Presentations Day 3

## Week Eleven

11/4 – Presentations Day 4

11/6 – DUE: D Draft -- Peer Review #4

11/8 – DUE: Peer Review #4 – Introduce Rhetorical Self-Analysis

## Week Twelve

11/11 – In-class Writing Rhetorical Self-Analysis

11/13 – DUE: Rhetorical Self-Analysis Draft – Peer Review #5

11/15 – DUE: Peer Review #5 – In-Class Revising Time – One-on-One Sign Up

## Week Thirteen

11/18 – NO CLASS (One-on-One Meetings)

11/20 – NO CLASS (One-on-One Meetings)

11/22 – NO CLASS (One-on-One Meetings)

## Week Fourteen

11/25 – DUE: Rhetorical Self-Analysis Final – DUE: Revision Plans

11/27 – NO CLASS

11/29 – NO CLASS

## Week Fifteen

12/2 – In-class writing for IMRaD Portfolio

12/4 – Abstracts and Reflections

12/6 – In-class writing for IMRaD Portfolio

Week Sixteen

12/9 – DUE: IMRaD Final Portfolio – TBD

Time of the Final will be posted in myCourses.