

Academic Writing From the Ground Up Syllabus

Course Title: Academic Essay Writing

Course Information: Day, time, Classroom 3

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Course Description:

Academic Writing from the Ground Up is a comprehensive high school writing course. All high school students, from proficient writers to those who have never had to tackle more than a paragraph, can use writing practice and skill building.

As the title implies, we will be starting with the workhorse of high school and college essays, the five-paragraph essay. Once those skills are locked down, we'll explore variations on the concept to give students a solid understanding of any type of essay they may encounter during their academic career. From there, we will move on to research papers and annotated bibliographies, with a heavy emphasis on new media and plagiarism avoidance. Finally, our last class stretch will be devoted to reading essays by great writers and creating literary criticism as a way to "learn by example."

Grades will be based on participation (chiefly through in class games and activities), short answer homework assignments, and 2 essays per quarter (8 total).

Required Readings and Resources:

For this course, I will be linking to various online resources, as no single site or book covers the broad spectrum of the course. Homework readings and assignments will be posted after each class, so keep an eye on the Online Learning Center.

Evaluation: Participation: 25%, Homework: 25%, Essays: 50% (8 essays total, 6.25% each)

Grading Scale: 94-100 A, 90-93 A-, 87-89 B+, 84-86 B, 80-83 B-, 77-79 C+, 74-76 C, 70-73 C-, 60-69 D, 59 and below F. Incomplete = I.

Plagiarism: Plagiarism by definition is taking someone else's words or thoughts and claiming that they are yours. The good news is, we will be talking A LOT about that in this course. The bad news is, this means that you should not use the "copy/paste" functions on your computer without understanding how to properly cite your sources. Plagiarism and all other forms of academic dishonesty will result in removal from the course. If you are in doubt about whether something is wrong, just ask!

Course Schedule:

Weeks 1-6 Cover 5 paragraph essay basics.

Week 1: Introduction to essay writing (finding a topic, brainstorming, focus)

Week 2: Bones of the essay: thesis statement, topic sentences, outline

Week 3: Building support I (reasons, facts, examples, descriptions, anecdotes)

Week 4: Building support II (Expert opinions, analysis, quotes from text plus Works Cited page)

Week 5: Introductions and Conclusions

Week 6: Revision, Editing, Proofreading

Weeks 7-10 Cover academic essay styles outside the traditional 5 paragraph essay

Week 7: Comparison/Contrast essays

Week 8: Analysis and Extrapolation essays

Week 9: Storytelling essays

Week 10: Timed essays

Week 11-20 cover Research Papers and Annotated Bibliographies

Week 11: Introduction to Research Papers

Week 12: Finding Quality Source Material: how, where, what

Week 13: Outlining a research paper and organizing research accordingly

Week 14: Drafting a research paper

Week 15: Revision, editing, proofreading review plus Works Cited review

Week 16: Introduction to the Annotated Bibliography

Week 17: Annotated Bib: summarizing sources

Week 18: Annotated Bib: Evaluating sources

Week 19: Annotated Bib: Citation creation

Week 20: Finalizing Research paper and Annotated Bibliography

Weeks 21-30 focus on Great Essays and literary criticism

Week 21: Introduction to literary criticism and great essay writers

Week 22: Composition essays: O'Connor, Shelley, Orwell

Week 23: Edification: Sheen, Bacon

Week 24: Narrative: Dillard, Day

Week 25: Social: Emerson, Thoreau

Week 26: Political: Federalist Papers

Week 27: Apologetic/Persuasive: King, Percy

Week 28: Lyrical: Chesterton, Woolf, White

Week 29: Satire: Swift, Montaigne

Week 30: Conclusion