

ACCCOMM102 Academic Writing and Presenting
Fall 2019



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Classroom:
Class times:

Instructor: Margaret Morris
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Office: E209
Office hours: By Appointment

I. Track information: This course is a graduation requirement and does not count towards a major track.

II. Course description

This course is a first semester requirement. It aims to develop the skills necessary for students to become independent learners, and to support and enhance performance in many other courses at UCR.

The focus of ACCCOMM102 is on academic writing and presenting. Students are expected to do secondary research, critically select and evaluate scholarly sources, learn to cite and reference, develop coherent thesis statements, structure information, and use appropriate academic language and style. Through constant revision of their own writing, peer reviewing other essays, and study of essays in *100 Great Essays*, students will hone their critical thinking skills. Presentation skills are developed through an individual Argumentative Speech and a Research Presentation. In addition, students participate in group discussions and critically reflect on their learning process. Vocabulary activities throughout the semester will reinforce proper academic language and give students ways to express themselves clearly, concisely, and with intelligence.

III. Study Load

This course earns students four credits (equivalent to 7.5 ECTS). The class meets twice a week for two hours. Preparation time is approximately 10 hours per week.

IV. Course materials:

1. Required books and literature:
 - DiYanni, Robert (ed.). *One Hundred Great Essays*. Fifth Edition. Penguin Academics Series, 2013.
 - Hacker, Diana, and Nancy Sommers. *A Writer's Reference*. Eighth Edition. Bedford/St. Martin's, 2015.
 - Weston, Anthony. *A Rulebook for Arguments*. Fifth Edition. Hackett Publishing, 2018.
 2. *Academic Writing for Graduate Students*, Third Edition, Swales & Feak*
 3. Students use the Zeeuwse Library and the Utrecht University Library database system.
 4. Supplemental materials provided by the instructor as needed.
- *Not required for this class, but a good reference for writing academic texts.

V. Course organization and requirements:

This class generally meets twice a week for two hours each. Usually this is in the main classroom assigned to this group. However, sometimes class will take place in classroom 17.

General rules apply that to ACCCOMM102:

1. Students can only pass the course if all major assignments have been completed.
2. **Late Work:** All work that is handed in late will be reduced by one letter grade per 24 hours. Late submission means any time after the stated deadline. Please don't take advantage of "extensions," as I will only grant them in extenuating circumstances and will require the official paperwork (found in "forms" on the UCR website). I may grade an assignment that has been turned in more than one week after the deadline, but it will only be for the benefit of feedback. You will still need to submit late work to Moodle for your Portfolio.
3. **Attendance** is compulsory. **Students who intend to miss class should send an email to me (and copy their tutor) before the class session.** Remember that missing class will have a negative influence on the participation grade, and after 6 absences, students risk automatic failure. Students are responsible for informing themselves about what they missed, and what assignments need to be made up. At my discretion, absences for whatever reason may have to be compensated by an additional assignment.
4. **Phones and other devices:** Please put away mobile phones, laptops, and other electronic devices during class, unless they are being used for in-class small group projects, scheduled writing assignments, or presentations. You will be able to check messages during the break, but **please no texting in class.** Failure to respect these requests will have a negative impact on your participation grade.
5. **Moodle:** Additional instructions will be posted weekly on Moodle. Most assignments will be posted there, with weekly announcements to keep you up to date. You will upload most class work into Moodle. Instructions on where to upload will accompany each assignment.

VI. Assessment: Distribution of Grades

Item	% of final grade	Info/criteria
Participation: Divided into class participation and research process (see below)	Total 15%	Attendance Appropriate academic attitudes Preparation for and contribution to sessions, including class discussions and homework.
Portfolio	15%	Grade will be based on ALL work turned into Moodle. Both quality and quantity will be taken into account. Students must complete the portfolio Checklist at the end of the course. See below for rubric.
Argumentative Essay 1	15%	Approx. 600 words on a topic chosen by the student Focused thesis, structure and content, language and style, and MLA or APA conventions. HAND IN TO MOODLE
Discursive Essay 2	25%	Approx. 600 words on a topic chosen by the student Focused thesis, structure and content, language and style, and MLA or APA conventions. HAND IN TO MOODLE
Argumentative Speech	10%	3 minutes (individual)

		Will be an oral presentation of your argumentative essay.
GE Essay Discussions	Port/ Part	30 to 35 min. (in groups of 4) on an essay of choice from the <i>GE 100</i> I'll be looking for critical thinking, depth of information, originality, and audience involvement.
Research Presentation	20%	5 to 7 minute presentation + brief Q&A + abstract + References Academic content, organization, delivery, manner, visual aids, language, academic conventions.

Rubric for Class Participation Grade

The participation grade is divided into two categories: General Class Participation (5%) and Research Process (10%)

General Class Participation (5%)

- **A) Excellent:** Present for EVERY class with NO tardies. Fully engaged and actively involved in class (including no texting, working on other assignments during class time, etc.), enthusiastically participates and adds to small and large group discussions. Student is always prepared for class with completed assignments and necessary materials (textbook, laptop when needed, etc.).
- **B) Engaged:** Absent* for a MAXIMUM OF 1 class. On time, or early for class with NOT MORE THAN 2 tardies. Engaged and involved in class (including no texting, working on other assignments during class time, etc.), and actively participates in small and large group discussions. Student is prepared for class with necessary materials, but may have one or two incomplete homework assignments.
- **C) Generally Engaged:** Absent* for A MAXIMUM OF 2 classes. Student mostly participates in class and generally participates in small and large group discussions without being prompted (no texting or working on assignments for other classes). This student comes prepared for class, but may have a few homework assignments incomplete.
- **D-F) Generally Not Engaged:** Absent* for MORE THAN 2 classes. Student rarely participates in class without prompting, and displays minimal interaction with peers during small and large group discussions, or interaction is often off-topic or not relevant to topic. May have been asked by the instructor multiple times to put phone away, close laptop, or discontinue work on assignments not related to class. Is regularly unprepared for class (often doesn't have textbook or other necessary materials), and some homework assignments are not complete or missing.

Research process (10%)

- **A) Excellent.** Comes to all writing group/consultation sessions, and shows initiative. Gives thoughtful constructive feedback with peer reviews turned in on time. Fully prepared for small group writing discussions and peer reviews, essay plans and drafts, revisions, personal reflections, etc., are thorough and turned in and on time. Demonstrates a desire for continual improvement and always takes initiative to find ways to improve writing, academic vocabulary and tone, etc. Research notes are impeccably organized. Showed leadership and initiative in participation in Great Essays Discussion, and discussion showed impeccable preparedness, originality, and was enthusiastically received by the audience. Both essay revisions have been turned in on time, and show great effort toward improvement.
- **B) Engaged** Comes to all writing group/consultations sessions. Gives useful constructive peer feedback with peer reviews turned in on time. Prepared for consultations, small group writing discussions and peer reviews, essay plans and drafts, revisions, personal reflections are well thought out and finished on time. Shows initiative to improve writing, and a desire to work hard to improve writing skills is demonstrated. Research notes are well organized. Showed initiative in participation of Great Essays Discussion, and discussion was well prepared, with a great deal of originality and active participation of audience. Both essay revisions have been turned in on time, with improvement readily apparent.
- **C) Generally engaged.** Misses no more than one writing group/consultation session. Has essay plans and drafts, personal reflections, revisions etc. turned in (although they might sometimes seem

a bit hastily done, or have been turned in late citing technical problems). Prepared for peer reviews with peer reviews turn in no more than one day late. A desire to work hard to improve writing skills is usually detected. Research notes are mostly organized, but there is room for improvement. Was an active part of the Great Essays Discussion group, and contributed to the overall discussion. Audience was kept engaged and discussion ran smoothly. Both essay revisions have been turned in on time, or at least no more than 24 hours late, and demonstrate improvement.

- **D - F) Generally not engaged.** Has missed 2 or more in-class peer review sessions and/or is often late with submitting essay plans or drafts, peer reviews, personal reflections, etc. or might fail to do it at all. Doesn't always seem to be putting full effort into giving thoughtful peer feedback or applying solid, constructive feedback they've received to help improve their own writing. An overall desire to work hard to improve writing skills is often not detected. Research notes are non-existent or unorganized. Participation in Great Essays Discussion might have been lacking, or discussion seemed ill-prepared or unorganized, with lack of originality or enthusiasm. Difficult to hold the audience's attention. Essay revisions are either late or missing, and/or don't reflect effort in improvement.

Portfolio

This is a digital collection of all assignments are submitted to Moodle. If material is not handed in on time, **it will greatly affect the portfolio grade**. Note that I keep up with the work you've turned in and document it on my grading sheets throughout the semester. A Portfolio Checklist will be available by the end of week 14 so that you can check off all work turned in. **Portfolio Checklists must be turned in by the due date (week 15 B) in order to receive a final Portfolio grade**.**

Rubric for Portfolio Grade

A) Portfolio Checklist shows that you have submitted **all** required work, have uploaded everything on time, and have carefully completed the assignments. Reader Responses in Forum are thorough, thoughtful, and engaged. Portfolios that receive an A grade will demonstrate excellence throughout the entire semester.

B) Portfolio Checklist shows that you have submitted **all** required work. A very small number of assignments may be missing or have been uploaded late. The entries are complete and good, but often workman-like: thus missing the finesse, creativity, and total engagement with the material as evidenced in an A portfolio.

C) Portfolios that receive a C will be less complete. The vast majority of assignments must, however, have been submitted and they must still demonstrate that the student has met the basic requirements of the course. Tasks have generally been uploaded on time, and the quality of the entries is sufficient to average. Portfolio Checklist has been turned in by the due date.

D) Portfolio is incomplete or otherwise unacceptable. Portfolios in this category do not represent honors level work and may share one or more of the following traits: Assignments are missing and have generally been uploaded late, entries are superficial, or at times do not meet the minimum requirements in terms of length and/or language. Portfolio Checklist has been turned in by the due date.

F) Portfolios in this category do not represent honors level work. Many of the entries have been submitted late or not at all, or the entries are constantly superficial and significantly less than the minimum standards expected. Portfolios in this category show that the student has not put forth the needed effort. ****A final grade of F will also be given if the final Portfolio checklist is not turned in by the deadline.**

Essays

The essays written for this course are meant to facilitate the type of work required in other courses. For that reason, students will write one argumentative and one discursive essay.. Students should adhere to the academic conventions regarding style, layout, references and notes according to the MLA (Modern Languages Association) or APA (American Psychological Association) standards (see *A Writer's Reference*, 8th Edition) and extra material on MLA and APA in Moodle.

First and Second Essay

The essays will be written in stages, with in-class peer reviews. Students will be required to discuss their essay plan in class and have available a hard or electronic copy of the draft essay for peer feedback. Students will also be given the opportunity to attend a writing consultation and/or group writing discussion (required for Essay 1, as needed for Essay 2).

The first essay will be argumentative, and the second discursive. Both should be **between 540-660** words in length and will deal with a topic, worthy of academic discussion, chosen by the student. Both essays require use of secondary sources of a scholarly nature (available through UU university website. JSTOR is one example of a good source <https://www-jstor-org.proxy.library.uu.nl/>) and proper referencing according to the MLA or APA format, and the second essay will include an abstract. The word count stipulation is exclusive of quotations and references. Grade points will be docked for essays that are longer or shorter.

I will grade the essays by pointing out structural, argumentative, linguistic, and content errors. An example of the grading sheet to be used for the argumentative essay is included in this syllabus. Grades are based on content, structure, language and style. After receiving the final grade, a revised copy must be turned in and show improvement. If you have written an essay of outstanding quality, you may be invited to do any final revisions and submit your work for publication in [The Serial Comma](#), our class blog.

- The final essays must be uploaded in Moodle *by midnight* on the due date (see course schedule for due date).
- If for any reason you are not able to upload your paper, send me an email and attach a copy before midnight on the due date.
- **Please format your paper in Microsoft Word, rather than Adobe (noText Edit!!)**. If you do not have Word on your own laptop, you have free access on all UCR computers, or you might consider purchasing the software at a low cost through UCR.
- Remember, **if essay is not submitted into Moodle** on time, you will incur penalties for late submission as stated above (see general rules).

ACCCOMM102 Essay Grading Rubric

	C (Satisfactory)	B (Good)	A (Excellent)
<i>Unity (Purpose)</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Thesis adequately responds to assignment and reflects author's purpose. Essay's purpose is apparent and rarely veers from the point. Acceptable grasp of material in support of the thesis. At least half of the sources have been cited from academic, peer reviewed journals. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Thesis responds to assignment and reflects author's purpose for the topic. Essay's purpose is clear. Competent use of appropriate material in support of the thesis. The majority of sources come from peer reviewed, academic sources. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Proposition or thesis is "surprising" or "risky" and responds to assignment clearly. Essay's purpose is clear, shows strong plan of development, insight and originality. All material is effective, relevant and on target in support of thesis. All material used is academic and comes from peer reviewed sources.
<i>Support: Do you back up your points?</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Plan of development is supported with evidence and reasoning. Topic sentences adequately reflect paragraph content. Specifics are mostly clear and effective. Research is almost routinely used to support points. Overall, the essay shows objectivity, but the writer should be careful not to allow bias to come through with non-objective language, or show an emotional bent. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Plan of development is supported with clear evidence and sound reasoning. Topic sentences reflect well the paragraph content. Specifics consistently support the topic sentence. Research is evident and is systematically used to support points. Academic tone remains objective and non-emotional throughout. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Plan of development supported through specific evidence and sound, thorough reasoning. Topic sentences are well thought out, and consistently identify paragraph's content. Strong, vivid specifics support the topic sentence. Clear evidence of solid research to back up points is evident throughout. Academic tone come across as professional through skillful use of objective and non-emotional language.
<i>Coherence: Organized and connected</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Overall message of paragraphs is logical, and basic organization is noted (intro, body, conclusion). Quotes are and paraphrasing might be synthesized into text, but sometimes with a loss of general flow. Transitions between paragraphs and connecting words are noted but the flow might a times be a bit stilted or awkward, forcing the reader to reread certain sentences or passages for clarity. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Overall message of paragraphs is logical and effectively organized (intro, body, conclusion) Quotes and paraphrasing are synthesized well with text, with little or no loss of flow. Transitions indicate relationships between paragraphs. Fluid and clear reading in all but a few minor instances. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Overall message of paragraphs is logical and purposeful with a clear method of organization (intro, body, conclusion). Quotes and paraphrasing are synthesized well with text. Transitions and connecting words are skillfully used to tie material together. Sense of flow creates effortless reading and clear comprehension for the throughout the paper.
<i>Sentence skills</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Generally good use of grammatical structure, but there may be sentences or short passages where mechanical errors distract from reading. Would benefit from a bit more revision. Word choice is at a basic, but clear level, might have a few instances of redundant or clichéd language. Sentences show an elemental and burgeoning grasp of academic writing. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Clear evidence of revision, with perhaps a few minor grammatical or mechanical errors. Word choice is specific and purposeful, and considerably varied throughout essay. Sentences consistently demonstrate clarity, and are concise and to the point. Establishes a near proficient use of academic language. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The essay is well-revised, and free from grammatical or mechanical errors. Word choice is explicit, purposeful, dynamic, and significantly varied throughout essay. Excellent command of meaningful vocabulary. Sentences are articulate, clear, concise, and to the point. Demonstrates mastery of academic language

- It is of the utmost importance that your paper is consistently formatted in either **MLA or APA style**. **Points will be deducted** each time your paper strays from the style's proper usage.
- Failure to fulfil all or most of the expectations in the Satisfactory range will result in a D or F on the essay.**

Presentations*

a. The Argumentative Speech

The Argumentative Speech on Essay 1 takes 3 minutes and focuses on argument and reasoning and should be designed to make a clear argument based on your argumentative paper topic. Students will be expected to advance formal claims and support them with evidence of research and reasoning. The Argumentative Speech will be followed by peer feedback discussion.

b. The Research Presentation

The Research Presentation (or Conference Talk) takes 6 to 8 minutes and is followed by a brief Q&A period. This will be an oral presentation of Essay 2. We will use the same assessment form as the one used to grade the Argumentative Speech with slight modifications. Students will demonstrate the main points of their discursive essay, and show the audience that they have come up with thoughtful conclusions based on serious research. Visuals for this presentation are required.

c. Student-led discussion of essay from the *100 GE*

Students in groups of 4 will select one of the essays from *100 Great Essays* and lead a 30-35 minute class discussion on it. The choice of essay must be indicated to me at least two weeks before the discussion is due to take place. At least one week* before the scheduled class discussion, an assignment on the essay must be posted in Moodle with questions that elicit response and reflect the essay and the content of the discussion. This will be a reader response, and **all** students will be expected to read the essay, and make appropriate comments on the topic. ***It is extremely important that the groups post their assignment early enough so that students have a reasonable amount of time to read and respond.**

Students leading the discussion should prepare questions to guide the class. They are expected to have done research on the essay and its topic/theme, found relevant critics and prepared responses to possible audience criticisms. The groups are free to use creativity and innovative techniques to facilitate discussion (discussion groups, games, debate...)

There is no separate grade for this assignment, but will be reflected in both the Class Participation and Research Process portion of your Participation grade, and your assignment will be a required part of your Portfolio. I will consider preparation, whether the assignment was uploaded into Workspaces on time, and innovative techniques you might have used to elicit response during the discussion. All students are expected to read the essay and submit a response ahead of the discussion as part of their final Portfolio.

***No cancellations of presentations permitted. Once the scheduled presentations have begun, it is too late to change your day. If you find that you are unwell on the day of your presentation, impress me with your dedication and commitment, and come to class anyway, ready to present. I will allow you to present first, and you will be free to go immediately afterwards without incurring an absence.**

Personal Reflections

Students write 2 Personal Reflections in which they consider their academic skills proficiency, and chart the progress made in this course. These reflections should be well written, and should be at least a page long. Students need to identify weaknesses in their current skills levels, and reflect on ways to remedy those deficiencies. The examples below give an indication of how such self-assessments should be structured.

PR1 Reflect on your presentation skills

PR2 Reflect on your writing skills

Examples

There are two kinds of acceptable models for Personal Reflections. Please choose a model that works best for you.

Model A:

A New Beginning and the Same Problems

It was exciting to come to campus, though I was also a bit nervous. This is an entirely new environment and the teachers expect a lot from the students. I was confident in my writing until I received my recent ACC 130 assignment back. It was full of corrections and was very discouraging. The teacher said that I need to improve paragraph and sentence length. This is hard for me because in my native language sentences can be very long. I thought that was also the case in English. Perhaps I need to spend some more time on thinking about how long a sentence and paragraph should be. The lecturer said that paragraphs should never be longer than $\frac{3}{4}$ of a page and that most of the time they are much shorter than that. I had never really thought about how long a paragraph should be.

I am not very happy about my performance on the presentation. I had hoped for an A but only got a B-. I spent a lot of time preparing but somehow messed things up. I studied a lot, but there have been many social activities lately, and it is difficult to always have enough time to get everything done. I did spend time every day studying, though, and that is what I do not understand. Maybe I should be happy to get a B. I suppose I could try even more. That will limit my ability to go out with friends, though, and I am not happy about that at all.

This is not the only class in which I am falling a bit behind. My anthropology teacher wanted the outline for my final project on Monday, but I need some more time for it. Perhaps this is a general problem – not finding enough time. Perhaps I should seriously think about using some weekend time to prepare the presentation. I don't think it is fair that I have to study all week and also on the weekends, but I would rather do that than give up Thursday night discussions with my friends. I wish the teachers knew how little time we have. They say they understand how much work it is but I am not so sure. One thing is for sure though, if I don't find more time somewhere, my studies and my social life are both going to suffer.

Model B:

Observations	Objectives
<p>In my essay certain parts of my language use were poor, especially my tense forms (and aspect). There were many examples that the instructors pointed out. Some of the worst were, e.g. "I was being doing my homework when" and "the peoples are seeing that this is right."</p> <p>I was also graded down for repetition; I frequently used the same word because I could not find a suitable synonym. I have noticed that I need to expand my vocabulary.</p> <p>I made some silly mistakes with respect to referencing and formatting. I forgot that MLA/APA etc. guidelines also apply to the way a paper looks on the page, i.e. indenting paragraphs, alphabetizing the works cited, etc. It might seem like a lot of work, but I now realize that professional looking, consistent formatting and citing helps the person who reads academic articles.</p>	<p>I have always been unsure about my use of the English tense system and now I know that I really need to improve very quickly indeed.</p> <p>During the rest of this course I will spend as much time as possible doing tense and aspect exercises from a variety of English grammar books. I will check my answers against the keys to monitor my progress. This intensive self-study, done in my own time, will hopefully eradicate this grammatical lacuna I have in comparison with my peers.</p> <p>I will endeavor to read more literature as well as academic texts and write down synonyms for words I do not know, for example in my vocabulary notebook. I will start using a thesaurus and ask friends to help me find the right synonym.</p> <p>I will pay closer attention to the information in the <i>Little Brown Handbook</i> on referencing and formatting. Before handing in a paper in this class (and in other classes), I will double-check that I have followed the guidelines.</p>

VII. Learning Outcomes/ Class overview

Period	Activities	Student is able to:
Week 1-3:	Doing research	Locate academically relevant online and library sources.
	Bibliography for discursive essay	Compose a relevant bibliography in line with the MLA or APA style manual
	Citations and plagiarism	Determine when and how to cite sources
	Summary writing, paraphrasing, synthesis	Determine how to incorporate source material in a text
	Basic thesis statements	Formulate a claim worthy of discussion
	Vocabulary development	Improve academic vocabulary based on contact and 100 GE materials
	100 reader responses	Read and critically write on academically relevant topics
	Daily Reflective Writing	Students critically reflect on progress in class, thinking processes, etc.
	Remedial grammar work (if needed)	Independently utilize materials at ZB
Week 4-8:	Argumentative Essay writing	Argue a topic in a straightforward manner using a basic thesis
	Argumentative Presentations	Give a speech, provide and receive constructive feedback
	Vocabulary development	Improve academic vocabulary based on contact and 100 GE materials
	100 GE discussions	Work in teams, delegate tasks, present a compelling presentation
	100 GE discussions and reader responses	Read and critically write on academically relevant topics
	Remedial grammar work (if needed)	Independently utilize materials at ZB
Week 9-12:	Discursive/Argumentative thesis statements and essays	Formulate an academic thesis and functionally apply it in an essay
	100 GE discussions and reader responses	Read and critically write on academically relevant topics
	100 GE discussions	Work in teams, delegate tasks, present a compelling presentation
	Vocabulary development, conciseness, flow, bias in language use	Improve academic vocabulary and language use based on contact and active practice
	Discursive Essay	Apply research, vocabulary, and critical thinking skills to produce a discursive thesis-driven essay.
Week 13-15:	Discuss purpose of the Personal Reflections	Critically reflect on one's learning
	Research Presentations	Present final paper in an academic context