

EN-140 Rhetoric and Critical Thinking

Catalog Description (including prerequisites)

Focus on effective written expression in the context of a liberal education; emphasis upon critical thinking and the research paper. Prerequisite: EN-100 or advanced placement. (3)

Course Content

In addition to instruction in and practice of the elements of composition, selected essays will be read and analyzed as a basis for the development of the student's own writing skills and as the springboard to discussions and assignments addressing the nine objectives of the University Studies program.

Nature of Course

Primarily a workshop class, this course will involve writing and reading essays. Students will be expected to share their work in pairs and small groups and to edit classmates' papers and to participate actively and regularly in the class's work. A major component is techniques of research; a research paper is required. As appropriate, the writing assignments will call on students to relate the materials in the assigned essays to themselves and their world (the nine objectives).

Student Expectations

Satisfactory performance in in-class workshops and on exercises and informal writings, on a minimum of five essays (plus revisions), at least one research paper, and the final examination (WP-002).

EN-190 Writing and the Environment

Catalog Description (including prerequisites)

A course in writing with particular emphasis on environmental issues. All students must complete a group project. Fulfills same degree requirements as EN-140. Prerequisite: EN-100 or advanced placement. (3)

Course Content

This course builds on the skills developed in EN-100. Students will read essays related to environmental issues. They will also study principles of argumentation. Together, these will serve as the basis for several of the writing projects they will complete. A portion of the course will be devoted to techniques of research writing. The group project will also serve as the basis for writing and speaking assignments.

Nature of Course

This course has three major elements: writing from reading, argumentation, and the group project. The first involves reading and discussing a variety of writing related to environmental issues and using that reading and discussion as a basis for writing. Environmental issues tend to be multi-faceted, and many of the course activities, including the research project, will be devoted to using reading as a basis for writing. Class activities will include group work related to the writing projects. The writing will also involve study and practice in the principles of argumentation. The group project, will require students to investigate and report on a local environmental issue. This activity specifically addresses University Studies objective 9: demonstrate the ability to function responsibly in one's natural, social, and political environment.

Student Expectations

1. Participate in all class activities, including
 - a. Discussions
 - b. Group work
2. Complete a group project, including
 - a. Written report
 - b. An oral presentation to the class
 - c. A log recording work on the project
3. Complete all written work, including
 - a. Quizzes
 - b. Essay assignments
 - c. A research report
 - d. The final examination (WP002)

PL-115 Philosophical Writing

Catalog Description (including prerequisites)

A writing intensive study of doing philosophy emphasizing the clarification, development, criticism, and defense of philosophical ideas. Honors only. Prerequisites: Honors student plus a score of 27 or higher on ACT Verbal. (3)

Course Content

1. Composition: Some Basics (Three Weeks)
 - a. Writing as Communication: Writer, Audience, Message, Purpose
 - b. Characteristics of Good Writing
 - c. Writing as Process: Pre-Writing, Drafting, Revising, Editing
 - d. Writing on Demand: Coping with Limitations in Time and Topic (WP002)
 - e. Writing with a Word Processor
2. Composing, Analyzing, and Critiquing Arguments (Eight Weeks)
 - a. Giving Reasons
 - b. Components of an Argument: Premises and Conclusions; Claim and Warrant
 - c. Strategic and Tactical Function of Arguments: Argument, Counter-Argument, Objection, Reply
 - d. Techniques of Argument Development: Example, Evidence, Deduction, Analogy, etc.
 - e. Modes of Philosophical Writing: Structuring Extended Arguments
3. Referential Writing and the Issue-Analysis Paper (Five Weeks)
 - a. Taking Notes and Writing Summaries
 - b. The Structure of Issues
 - c. Forms of the Issue-Analysis Paper
 - d. Finding Sources
 - e. Incorporating Sources into Your Writing

Nature of Course

Philosophy is an activity, not a fixed body of knowledge or set of ideas. It is a dialogical activity involving the presentation, analysis, clarification, development, criticism and defense of ideas. Accordingly, communication skills, particularly written communication skills, are essential to the activity of philosophy. Students in this course will develop skills in the activity of doing philosophy--they will not write about philosophy, rather they will do philosophy. Various types of philosophical activity directly relate to different writing skills that are developed in the course.

Student Expectations

Students will be evaluated on the basis of performance in the following areas.

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| 1. | Five short essays (letter, argument analysis, dialogue, issue analysis, argument summary) | 50% |
| 2. | Finished philosophical research essay, developed from a short assignment | 20% |
| 3. | Midterm exam, essay type | 10% |
| 4. | Final exam, essay type | 10% |
| 5. | WP002 | 10% |