RESCH-GE 2138 Writing Empirical Research: 
Education, Behavioral, Health, Humanities and Social Science Professions 
Fall 2012

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Time: Tuesday 4:55-6:35
Location: Goddard Hall
79 Washington Square E
Room B01

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Co-requisites: E10.2002 (Statistics for the Behavioral and Social Sciences), E10.2132 (Principles of Empirical Research) and E10.2180 (Approaches to Qualitative Inquiry) or equivalent.

COURSE DESCRIPTION:
This course will help students strengthen the writing competencies they need to produce quantitative and qualitative method dissertations that will convey research findings in a clear, objective style. Course content will position students to begin contributing writings in their scholarly communities. Sequenced assignments will address various writing forms and allow students feedback on their work.

COURSE OBJECTIVES:
By the end of the semester, students will:

1. Learn how-to read their writing, as others will.
2. Recognize the importance of editing, rewriting.
3. Compose arguments and articulate ideas at the sentence and paragraph level.
4. Understand why writing often fails to convey research findings.
5. Use effective prose to convey empirical evidence.

COURSE FORMAT:
The course includes discussions, in-class workshops, out-of-class reading and writing assignments. Students are expected to complete all assignments on time and to attend all class sessions.

REQUIRED TEXTS:
A thesaurus and dictionary of your choice.


Two recent Steinhardt dissertations will provide the basis for weekly readings, explications and discussions. They can be found on Blackboard under PDF dissertations.

**RECOMMENDED TEXTS:**


**RECOMMENDED WEBSITES:**

[http://writingcenter.unc.edu/handouts/dissertations/](http://writingcenter.unc.edu/handouts/dissertations/)


[http://andromeda.rutgers.edu/~jlynch/Writing/](http://andromeda.rutgers.edu/~jlynch/Writing/)

[http://owl.english.purdue.edu/](http://owl.english.purdue.edu/)

**GRADING:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Component</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Class participation</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Abstract</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thesis/Question/Lit</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Empiric summary</td>
<td>25%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Conclusion Essay</td>
<td>30%</td>
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**WEEKLY STUDENT LEADERS:**

Each student will be responsible for a 10-minute grammar presentation and leading the class in explicating the weekly dissertation readings. Student leaders need to contact me the Friday before class to let me know how they will organize their presentations. I am available anytime on email to answer questions. Keep this presentation focused on the main issues—don’t get involved in the obscure grammar points.

*Keep it simple and be creative. Keep to the time limit. Make sure you engage the class during your presentation.*
WRITING ASSIGNMENTS:

We will workshop all student papers. These papers are draft assignments that you will rewrite for the following week. You must post your work on the Discussion Forum on the due date. We will split the class into two writing groups and you will meet as often as possible during class time in the semester. You will be responsible for reading and commenting on your group member’s work; if you want to comment on other posted class papers, please do. Students are expected to read and post their comments on other papers on Blackboard Discussion forum. I hope for lively discussions, and for each student to receive a lot of feedback on his/her work. I will read and comment on every paper.

*Double space all assignments.

*See Work shopping Papers on Blackboard (under assignment tab).

* We need line numbers to edit (line 1 line 2 etc).
  1. If you have a MAC: choose "document" in the "format" menu; choose the "layout" tab; click "line numbers"; click the "add line numbering" box
  2. If you use Word: Go to Page Layout and click the line numbers tab.

During the workshops, one student from each writing group will be responsible for leading the discussion on student papers from his/her group.

There are three phases to each assignment: A posted draft, the in-class workshop, and a final copy.

Assignments:
1. Assignment #1 Write a 250 word abstract based on your own research or writing, or re-write an abstract from someone in your field. Be prepared to justify your content and writing.
Draft: Sept 18, Workshop Sept. 25, Final: October 2
Also see Abstract exemplars on Blackboard under the "assignments tab". And two PDF files on Abstracts on Blackboard under the Reading Writing, Editing etc tab.

Required reading: http://writingcenter.unc.edu/handouts/abstracts/
Boothe, Craft, p. 211-212.

Assignment #2a NOT GRADED.Complete the statement of purpose on the Discussion Board. Due October 2.

3. Assignment #2 Construct a working thesis statement or research question followed by a review of four published or unpublished studies-- two supporting and two differing
from your statement or question. Make sure you synthesize this review (do not write Study #1 and summarize it.) 400-600 words
Draft: October 23, Work shop: October 30, Final: November 6

Required reading: Booth, Craft, p. 49-67; 77-80; 87-100.
Suggested reading: [http://writingcenter.unc.edu/handouts/literature-reviews/](http://writingcenter.unc.edu/handouts/literature-reviews/)

3. Assignment #3 Use statistical tables or qualitative data set from your own research or from a dissertation or published article in your field. Tell us the research question/hypothesis (or anything else we need to know to put the data in context) then, write a summary of these research findings. Quantitative summaries need to include the table or chart, qualitative summaries need a table or brief information on the nature of the data. 400-600 words

Draft: November 13, Work shop: November 20, Final: November 27
Required reading: Booth, Craft, p. 213-231.

4. Assignment #4 Write a conclusion essay based on a previous paper(s) you have written during your doctoral coursework. Approximately 1000 words.
Draft: December 4; Work shop: December 11, Final: December 18 (Post paper on Blackboard discussion forum)
Required reading: Booth, Craft, p. 244-247.

**CLASS SCHEDULE**


*Writing competency: The canon of the sentence.*

**Reading:**
1. “Becoming a prolific writer” in Reading, Writing, Editing etc tab (Blackboard)

**Week 2. September 11. Writing to be read. A writing plan.**

*Writing competency: phrases and clauses.*

*Syntax: Nouns and pronouns*

**Reading:**
2. "Writing the Abstract", "The Abstract" and "Common errors in explication" in Reading, Writing, Editing etc tab.
Week 3. September 18. Writing concise, clear research questions and statements of purpose.

Writing competency: proofreading, active and passive voice.
Syntax: Verbs (Tense, agreement).

Reading:
1. “Editing/workshop guidelines” and Editing-reading-writing” in Reading, Writing, Editing etc tab
2. Dissertation “Assessing the Neighborhood Chapter I”, With Science Chapter in dissertation tab. First five pages, Middle three pages, last five pages.
4. Williams, Style, Lesson Four “Cohesion and Coherence” p.35-44.

Writing assignment #1 due: Draft of an abstract.


Week 5. October 2. Writing sound, convincing arguments.

Writing competency: compound, complex sentences.
Syntax: Participles, Conjunctions

Reading:
2. Williams Style, Lesson Six “Emphasis” p. 66-78
3. Dissertation—Assessing the Neighborhood Chapter II, With Science Chapter I

Writing assignment #1 due: Abstract
Blackboard: Complete the statement of purpose posted on the Discussion Board


Writing competency: constructing time and place in a sentence.
Syntax: Commas (comma splices)
Reading:
2. Dissertation With Science Chapter II. Assessing the Neighborhood Chapter IV

Week 7 No Class

Week 8: October 23. Writing: Presenting quantitative/qualitative data

*Writing competency: metaphors, similes.*

*Syntax: Adjectives (use and position in sentence)*

Reading:
2. Williams *Style*, Lessons Six “Concision” p. 57-68.
3. Dissertation: With Science Chapter III, Assessing the Neighborhood, Chapter V.

Writing assignment #2 : Draft of Thesis/Question and literature review.

Week 9: October 30 Work shopping Thesis/Question and literature review.

Week 10: November 6 Outlining and Revising.

*Writing competency: transitions, “opening attack” sentences, Clichés, Idiomatic expressions.*

*Syntax: Adverbs (use and position in sentences)*

Reading:
1. "Revising Your Dissertation” and “Final Draft checklist” in Reading, Writing, Editing etc tab
3. Williams *Style*, Lessons Seven “Shape” p. 69-89. (review)
4. Dissertation With Science Chapters VII and VIII

Writing assignment #2 due: Thesis/Question and literature review

Week 11: November 13 The Ethics of Writing

2. Williams *Style*, Lessons Ten “The Ethics of Style” p. 124-143
Writing assignment #3 due: Draft summary of research findings.

Week 12: November 20th. Work shopping summary of research findings.

Week 13. November 27th. Framing a discussion, summary and conclusion.

Building the sections of a paper: organization, constructing the end of an essay.

Reading:
3. Dissertation With Science Chapters 111-V, pp. 57 -126

Writing assignment #3 due: Summary of research findings


Writing assignment #4 due: Draft of conclusion essay

Week 15. December 11th Work shopping conclusion essay.

Final Assignment Due: December 18th. Post on Blackboard.

9/12: EN