RESCH-GE 2138 Writing Empirical Research:
Education, Behavioral, Health, Humanities and Social Science Professions
Fall 2013

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Time: Tuesday 4:55-6:35
Location: Bobst Library
Room 737

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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:**

- Class participation: 10%
- Abstract: 15%
- Thesis/Question/Lit: 20%
- Empiric summary: 25%
- Conclusion Essay: 30%

**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 Forum on the due date which will be one week before a workshop. You will be responsible for reading and commenting on your classmate’s. Students are expected to read and post their comments on other papers on the 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 NYU Classes “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 17, Workshop Sept. 24, Final: October 1
   See Abstract exemplars on NYU Classes, Assignment tab “Assignment #1 folder.”
   "Writing the Abstract", "The Abstract” under Assignments tab Assignment #1 folder.
   And, under Assignments tab “Workshopping Papers” folder.

   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 1.

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 22, Work shop: October 29, Final: November 5
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 12, Work shop: November 19, Final: November 26
Required reading: Booth, Craft, p. 213-231.
Suggested reading: http://writingcenter.unc.edu/handouts/figures-and-charts/

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 3; Work shop: December 10, Final: December 17 (Post paper on NYU forum)
Required reading: Booth, Craft, p. 244-247.

CLASS SCHEDULE


Writing competency: The canon of the sentence.
Reading:
1. “Becoming a prolific writer” in Resources Tab, Weekly reading folder.
2. “Editing, reading and writing” in Resources Tab, Weekly reading folder.

Week 2. September 10. Writing to be read. A writing plan.

Writing competency: phrases and clauses.
Syntax: Nouns and pronouns

Reading:
1. Under Assignment Tab, Assignment #1 folder:
   "Abstract exemplars"
   "Writing the Abstract"
   "The Abstract"
2. Under Assignment Tab, Workshopping Papers folder
   “Workshopping Papers”
Week 3. September 17. Writing concise, clear research questions and statements of purpose.

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

Reading:
1. Assignment Tab.
   “Workshopping Papers” subfolder (review) 
2. Dissertation “Assessing the Neighborhood Chapter I,” With Science Chapter in PDF dissertation folder, Resources 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. Post on NYU Classes Forum. Read and comment on the other student’s postings—on NYU Classes.

Week 4. September 24. Work shopping abstracts. Joan Combellick will lead the discussion.

Week 5. October 1. Writing sound, convincing arguments.

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

Reading:
2. Williams Style, Lesson Five “Emphasis” p. 66-78
New York University
The Steinhardt School of Culture, Education and Human Development
Department of Humanities and Social Sciences

Writing assignment #1 due: Abstract Post on NYU Classes Forum
NYU Forum: 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. PDF dissertation folder, Resources tab. First five pages, Middle three pages, last five pages.

Week 7 No Class

Week 8: October 22. 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.

Writing assignment #2: Draft of Thesis/Question and literature review. Post on NYU Classes Forum

Week 9: October 29 Work shopping Thesis/Question and literature review. Kacie Gerhardt and KeeEun Joo will lead the discussion.

Week 10: November 5 Outlining and Revising.
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. PDF dissertation folder, Resources tab. First five pages, Middle three pages, last five pages.

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

**Week 11: November 12 The Ethics of Writing**

2. Williams Style, Lessons Ten “The Ethics of Style” p. 124-143
3. Resources Tab, Weekly readings:
   - “Plagiarism 2011AJPH.pdf”
   - “Plagiarism UNC –The Writing Center.pdf”

Writing assignment #3 due: Draft summary of research findings.

Week 12: November 19th. Work shopping summary of research findings. **Wes Edwards and Stella (Xiaojun) Yu will lead the discussion.**

**Week 13. November 26th. 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. Resources tab. First five pages, Middle three pages, last five pages

Writing assignment #3 due: Summary of research findings

**Week 14. December3.** Individual meetings.

Writing assignment #4 due: Draft of conclusion essay

Week 15. December 10th Work shopping conclusion essay. **Pat Hughes and Matt Giles will lead the discussion.**
Final Assignment Due: December 17th. Post on NYU Classes Forum

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