

AP/WRIT 2100 A Studies in Non-Fiction Fall 2023

Meeting Information

Wednesday
10:30AM-11:30AM
Via Zoom

Instructor Information

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Ross Building, S310 (office hours by appt)

Course Description

This course introduces several nonfiction genres, from memoir to travel writing to criticism and commentary. Course credit exclusions: None. PRIOR TO FALL 2009: Course credit exclusion: AS/WRIT 2100 3.00 (2008-2009).

Please note that each year, the specific genres explored may change. Instead of travel writing, we might examine nature writing; instead of investigative journalism, we might examine personal reportage. We will, however, always explore how the works we read and write are created, from the level of the word, the sentence, to the text as a whole.

Lectures provide context for, and rhetorical analysis of, our readings. We will learn about the

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conventional qualities of selected genres, but also consider how and why our authors resist or subvert generic expectations. Readings cover a wide range of topics while showcasing essentials of writing craft. The issues and insights our authors peruse, pursue, or interrogate should engage the reader's interest, promote critical discussion, and inspire written expression. All of our readings are examples of accomplished writing and therefore, even if you are not drawn to a particular text, remember that as an exemplar it has something of value to offer. For each reading, ask yourself, how does this piece work as writing and how is the way the writing works impacting me? The reason

non-fiction is widely read, both in book and periodical forms, is because the content (subjects, themes) speaks to readers across diverse communities and because the writing itself can be just as powerful and inspiring as great fiction.

This is not a "creative" writing course like those offered by Creative Writing (Department of English), but it is a writing course. All writing requires creativity, including non-fiction. Accomplished writing comes into being through the careful choice of words, the thoughtful design of sentences and paragraphs, and the strategic use of structure and genre. Through weekly writing activities, students will gain

considerable “hands-on” writing experience—experience that will enable them to become stronger, more expressive, more provocative writers.

Each week includes three “in-class” hours. One hour is synchronous and meets Wednesdays from 10:30-11:30 via Zoom, and the other two hours are asynchronous. The asynchronous hours will include lecture content, writing activities, and online discussions. Weekly participation in both the synchronous and asynchronous class is required to succeed in this course.

Learning Goals & Outcomes

- Identify and compare key stylistic, thematic, formal and/or generic features of various non-fiction genres
- Recognize how rhetorical strategies and generic conventions and counter-conventions shape the interpretation of texts
- Consciously and creatively use rhetorical strategies and specific rhetorical devices in their own writing
- Recognize how description works to generate tone, elicit responses, and convey meaning and strive to use meaningful description in their own writing
- Make effective decisions in their own writing regarding genre, style, structure, and tone for a variety of audiences and communication purposes
- Advance sentence-level writing craft and editing practices
- Deliver and receive constructive feedback in a productive, collegial manner
- Engage in advanced reflection activities to practice critical and substantive revisions
- Become more cognizant of their own writing strategies and critical expertise
- Work independently as well as collaboratively

Course Organization

This is both an asynchronous and synchronous class. We will meet via Zoom on Wednesdays from 10:30-11:30; attendance is required. The two asynchronous hours will be comprised of lecture content and various activities, such as short writing activities, reading quizzes, and discussion forums.

Each week’s reading and any asynchronous lecture material must be completed *before* our weekly synchronous meeting.

When you log into [eClass](#) via Passport York, once classes begin, you will see the course site. More information about accessing your eClass courses is available on the [eClass help web page](#). Access the Student guide to eClass for information, such as recommended browser settings, how to submit assignments, and how to use Zoom. If you are having any technical issues, going to the [Help Centre](#) or the Student [eClass FAQs](#) page is your first step. Please review the [technology requirements and FAQs for eClass \(includes Moodle\)](#).

Several platforms will be used in this course (e.g., eClass, Zoom, etc.) through which students will interact with the course materials, the course director and one another.

Zoom:

- Zoom is hosted on servers in the U.S. This includes recordings done through Zoom.
- If you have privacy concerns about your data, provide only your first name or a nickname when you join a session.
- The system is configured in a way that all participants are automatically notified when a session is being recorded. In other words, a session cannot be recorded without your knowing about it.

Useful links for computing information, resources and help:

- [Zoom@YorkU Best Practices](#)
- [Zoom@YorkU User Reference Guide](#)
- [Computing for Students Website](#)

[Student Guide to eLearning at York University](#)

Coursework

Assignments and projects are worth a total of 100 points:

- Prompts/Drafts: 50 pts (5 x 10 pts)
- Discussion Questions: 24 pts (6 x 4 pts)
- Final Project: 13 pts
- Attendance/Participation: 13 pts (1 x 13 sessions)

Prompts/Drafts

- Creative writing prompts based upon that week's genre of study
- 1 - 3 pages, single-spaced, 12 pt.
- Submitted on eClass
- Submitted to Google Folder for workshop

Discussion Questions

- Critical responses to that week's assigned readings
- Submitted to eClass discussion forum
- Typically 4 - 6 questions
- Minimum of 8 - 10 sentences

Final Project

- Revision of one of the drafts completed during course
- 3 - 6 pages, single-spaced, 12 pt.
- Submitted on eClass
- Also include summary of notes/feedback from workshop (300 words)
- At least 300 words on how you incorporated feedback from workshop

Required Texts

All assigned and required texts will be provided by instructor via eClass.

Grades and Grading Scheme

Except for courses taken under the pass/fail option, courses in the undergraduate Faculties represented in this publication are graded according to the following scale. The grade point values are used to compute averages. For information regarding the pass/fail option regulations, refer to the grading information available in your Faculty's section of the Undergraduate Calendar.

Note: only courses taken at York University are included in the grade point averages. The percentages indicated are not part of the official grading scheme and are meant only to be used as guidelines. The letter-grade system is the fundamental system of assessment of performance in undergraduate programs at York University.

GRADE	GRADE POINT	PER CENT RANGE	DESCRIPTION
A+	9	90-100	Exceptional
A	8	80-89	Excellent
B+	7	75-79	Very Good
B	6	70-74	Good
C+	5	65-69	Competent
C	4	60-64	Fairly Competent
D+	3	55-59	Passing
D	2	50-54	Marginally Passing
E	1	(marginally below 50%)	Marginally Failing
F	0	(below 50%)	Failing

Late Work

It is expected that assignments will be turned in on time. Failure to do so will result in lower grades. Late assignments will not be accepted and will receive a zero (0) grade. Grade may be given for emergency situation. For any unforeseen circumstance, such as: sickness, accident, death in the family, etc., please contact instructor *prior to any known event or immediately afterward (within 48 hours) with verifiable document or evidence*. You must complete all assignments.

Course Participation

This course is designed to be a participatory learning experience, combining discussions with in-class workshops and other learning activities. As such, it is important that you fully participate in all in-class activities, committing yourself to the learning community consisting of your classmates and myself. What does this class participation look like? Participation can take different forms for different people. However, some participatory behaviors hold true for everyone. First, you cannot participate if you do not attend class or if you regularly show up late or distract from course activities. For these

reasons, course attendance is a necessary prerequisite for participation. Conversely, attending class does not equal participation; it is possible to be in every class meeting without engaging with or contributing to the learning that occurs in class. Second, it will be impossible for you to participate in course learning if you come to class unprepared or leave class with no record of our discussions or activities.

Come to class having already read the weekly reading and prepared to discuss it critically (i.e., remember, you do not have to like the piece to recognize its value – or at least to try to recognize its value). Come to class having thought about the readings; make notes of things you found interesting or important or unclear). Please be prepared to share your insights into both the topic and the how the text works as an instance of writing. Be sure to participate collegially, respecting the voice of others. It is ok if we do not agree with each other's understanding of a text, but be ready to listen with an open mind. When sharing your opinions, ensure that they are based on a careful reading of the text. If working in small discussion groups during the synchronous hour, everyone should have an opportunity to share their thoughts, even if time allows for only one person to communicate the group's collective insights. When taking part in an asynchronous, online discussion forum, be sure to make time to read your peers' contributions and comment in a concrete and meaningful way.

Other Course Policies

All students are expected to familiarize themselves with the following information:

- [Student Rights & Responsibilities](#)
- [Academic Accommodation for Students with Disabilities](#)

Please also review the following course policies:

Academic Integrity

As a student at York University, you have a responsibility to both understand and uphold the integrity of the academic experience. The Faculty of Liberal Arts & Professional Studies supports the International Center for Academic Integrity's [definition of academic integrity](#). That is, you will be committed to acting in all academic matters, even in the face of adversity, with honesty, trust, fairness, courage, respect, and responsibility. Here is how you can demonstrate academic integrity in the completion of this course:

- Respect the ideas of others: Your course work should represent your own knowledge and ideas. [You should not falsely claim credit for ideas that are not your own, by presenting another's work as yours](#). If you are quoting, paraphrasing, or summarizing another person's work in order to support your own ideas, identify the work and the author through proper citation practices. For more information about how to cite properly, use the [Student Papers and Academic Research Kit](#) (SPARK). You can improve your writing, research, and personal learning abilities through the [Learning Commons](#), or by visiting the [Writing Centre](#) or [ESL Open Learning Centre](#).
- Respect your peers: [Know when you are allowed to collaborate](#). Ask your instructor about what group work entails when it comes to the [sharing of work](#). In test situations

and assignments, don't steal or give answers to your peers, whether in-person or online (e.g., in group chats and/or on [third-party content-sharing websites](#), such as Chegg, Course Hero, etc.). Both cheating and aiding in a breach of academic honesty are violations of York University's academic honesty policy.

- Respect your course instructor(s): Understand what your instructors are asking of you in class, as well as on assignments, tests and/or exams. If you are unsure, ask your professor or teaching assistant. They are committed to making you feel supported and want to assess you fairly and with integrity. Please do not submit the same piece of work for more than one course without your instructor's permission. That can be considered an act of cheating.
- Respect yourself: When you act with integrity, you know that your work is yours and yours alone. You do not allow others to take tests for you. [You do not buy or otherwise obtain term papers or assignments](#). You do the work. As a result, you know that you *earned* the grades that you receive, so you can be proud of your York degree. By acting with integrity in your course work, you are also practising a valuable professional skill that is important in all workplaces.
- Take responsibility: If you have acted in an academically dishonest way, you can demonstrate courage and take responsibility for your mistake. You can admit your mistake to your course instructor as soon as possible.

Students who engage in academic dishonesty can be subject to disciplinary action under the [Senate Policy on Academic Honesty](#). Your lack of familiarity with the Senate Policy does not constitute a defense against its application. Some academic offences can also constitute offences under the [Criminal Code of Canada](#), which means that you may also be subject to criminal charges.

Accessibility

While all individuals are expected to satisfy the requirements of their program of study and to aspire to achieve excellence, the University recognizes that persons with disabilities may require reasonable accommodation to enable them to perform at their best. The University encourages students with disabilities to register with [Student Accessibility Services](#) to discuss their accommodation needs as early as possible in the term to establish the recommended academic accommodations that will be communicated to Course Directors through their Letter of Accommodation (LOA).

Please let your instructor know as early as possible in the term if you anticipate requiring academic accommodation so that we can discuss how to consider your accommodation needs within the context of this course. Sufficient notice is needed so that reasonable steps for accommodation can be discussed. Accommodations for tests/exams normally require three (3) weeks (or 21 days) before the scheduled test/exam to arrange.

Religious Observance Accommodation

York University is committed to respecting the religious beliefs and practices of all members of the community, and making reasonable and appropriate [accommodations to adherents for observances of special significance](#). Should any of the dates specified in this syllabus for course examinations, tests, or deadlines conflict with a date of religious significance, please contact the instructor within the first three (3) weeks of class. If the date falls within the formal examination periods, you must complete and submit a [Religious Accommodation for Examination Form](#) at least three (3) weeks before the start of the exam period.

Intellectual Property

Course materials are designed for use as part of this particular course at York University and are the intellectual property of the instructor unless otherwise stated. Third-party copyrighted materials (such as book chapters, journal articles, music, videos, etc.) have either been licensed for use in this course or fall under an exception or limitation in Canadian copyright law. Students may not publish, post on an Internet site, sell, or otherwise distribute any course materials or work without the instructor's express permission. Course materials should only be used by students enrolled in this course.

Copying this material for distribution (e.g., uploading material to a commercial third-party website) may lead to a charge of misconduct according to York's [Code of Student Rights and Responsibilities](#), the [Senate Policy on Academic Honesty](#), and/or legal consequences for copyright violations.

Student Conduct in the Learning Environment

York University is committed to fostering teaching and learning environments that are free of disruptive and/or harassing behaviour, are physically safe, and conducive to effective teaching and learning. Students and instructors are expected to maintain a professional relationship characterized by courtesy, civility, and mutual respect and to refrain from actions disruptive to such a relationship. Individuals who fail to adhere to such standards and who violate University or public law may be subject to disciplinary action by the University.

For more information, see the policies on [Disruptive and/or Harassing Behaviour in Academic Situations](#) and [Student Conduct and Responsibilities](#), as well as the [Code of Student Rights & Responsibilities](#).

Netiquette for eClass and Online Learning

Students and instructors have a joint responsibility to create and maintain a welcoming and inclusive learning environment. All students are expected to conduct themselves in accordance with the [Code of Student Rights and Responsibilities](#). Please review and familiarize yourself with

behaviours that support “netiquette” in virtual classrooms by consulting the [Student Guide to eLearning](#).

Student Notice of Recording for Online Teaching and Learning

Activities for this course involve recording, in partial fulfillment of the course learning outcomes. Images, audio, text/chat messaging that have been recorded may be used and/or made available by the University to students enrolled in the course and those supporting the course for the purpose of materials review, for assessment, etc. Recordings will be managed according to the University’s Common Record Schedule and will be securely destroyed when no longer needed by the University. Your personal information is protected in accordance with York University’s [Guidelines on Access to Student Records and Protection of Privacy](#) and the [Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act](#). Access to online materials, including recordings or live meetings, is subject to York University’s [Senate Policy on Computing and Information Technology Facilities](#).

The University will use reasonable means to protect the security and confidentiality of the recorded information, but cannot provide a guarantee of such due to factors beyond the University’s control, such as recordings being forwarded, copied, intercepted, circulated, disclosed, or stored without the University’s knowledge or permission, or the introduction of malware into computer system which could potentially damage or disrupt the computer, networks, and security settings. The University is not responsible for connectivity/technical difficulties or loss of data associated with your hardware, software, or Internet connection.

By engaging in course activities that involve recording, you are consenting to the use of your appearance, image, text/chat messaging, and voice and/or likeness in the manner and under the conditions specified herein. In the case of a live stream recording, if you choose not to have your image or audio recorded, you may disable the audio and video functionality. If you choose to participate using a pseudonym instead of your real name, you must disclose the pseudonym to your instructor in advance to facilitate class participation.

You are not permitted to disclose the link to/URL of an event or an event session recording or copies of recording to anyone, for any reason. Recordings are available only to authorized individuals who have been directly provided the above instructions/link for their use. Recordings for personal use, required to facilitate your learning and preparation of personal course/lecture notes, may not be shared with others without the permission of the instructor or event coordinator, and may not be published, posted, linked to, or otherwise made available online, including on social media feeds, even if those feeds are private.

Student Support and Resources

To help you succeed academically, York University offers a wide range of resources and services. Everything from writing workshops and peer mentorship to wellness support and career guidance is available to fulfill our LA&PS students' needs. Explore the links below to access these on-campus resources:

- [Academic Advising](#) is available to provide students support and guidance in making academic decisions and goals.
- [Student Accessibility Services](#) are available for support and accessibility accommodation when required.
- [Student Counselling, Health & Wellbeing](#) offers workshops, resources, and counselling to support your academic success.
- [Peer-Assisted Study Sessions \(PASS\) Program](#) provides student study sessions for students to collaborate and enhance their understanding of course content in certain courses.
- [Student Numeracy Assistance Centre at Keele \(SNACK\)](#) supports students in courses involving math, stats, and Excel.
- [The Writing Centre](#) provides multiple avenues of writing-based support including drop-in sessions, one-to-one appointments, a Multilingual Studio, and an Accessibility Specialist.
- [ESL Open Learning Centre \(OLC\)](#) supports students with building proficiency in reading, writing, and speaking English.
- [Learning Skills Services](#) provides tips for time management, effective study and learning habits, keeping up with coursework, and other learning-related supports.
- [Learning Commons](#) provides links to supports for time management, writing, study skills, preparing for exams, and other learning-related resources.
- [Roadmap to Student Success](#) provides students with timely and targeted resources to help them achieve academic, personal, and professional success.
- [Office of Student Community Relations \(OSCR\)](#) is responsible for administering the [Code of Student Rights & Responsibilities](#) and provides critical incident support.
- [goSAFE](#) is staffed by York students and can accompany York community members to and from any on-campus location, such as the Village Shuttle pick-up hub, parking lots, bus stops, or residences.

For a full list of academic, wellness, and campus resources visit [Student Support & Resources](#).