# ED 434: MASTER’S ACADEMIC WRITING

**Warner Graduate School of Education and Human Development**

**The University of Rochester**

## Summer 2015: May 25-July 26

Instructor: Dr. Hairong Shang-Butler

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Class time: Thursdays, 8:30-9:45 p.m. (synchronous sessions) (U.S. Eastern Daylight Time)

Office hours: Synchronously, by appointment

**Course Description**

EDE 434 Master’s Academic Writing is a 2-credit course designed for students seeking to learn master’s level academic writing. This two-credit online course aims to help students develop their academic writing as they begin their master’s program.

The initial modules of this course will orient students to the library resources available for Warner students, introduce referencing requirements of the American Psychological Association (APA), and learn how to cite and provide credit for outside sources in research to avoid plagiarism. Additional modules will familiarize students with a variety of writing genres, including reflection journal entries, article critique, annotated bibliography, literature review, research proposal, research paper and other genres they will encounter. This course will also discuss academic genres such as critical summary, argumentation, and other aspects of well-reasoned academic writing.

The course is offered fully online, with synchronous sessions taking place on most Thursdays from 8:30-9:50 p.m. (Eastern Daylight Time), using the “Blackboard Collaborate” software.

**Required Texts**

All reading materials are available on Blackboard. Students are also encouraged to purchase the Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association (APA), 6th edition.

**Course Expectations**

This is a graduate level course; therefore, students are expected to do extensive reading and writing of graduate level quality.  Students should budget a minimum of 9 to 12 hours per week to spend on this course, between reading and class participation. This model of instruction requires that students assume responsibility for their learning by taking an active role in the learning process. In this environment, the instructor serves as a facilitator; students are expected to play an active role by completing all assignments on or before the due date, contributing to class discussion and activities, and participating in discussion with a “thinking partner.” When this is done, learning for all class participants (including the instructor) is enhanced. The following points of conduct should be noted:

* Students are expected to check their course website on Blackboard for updates, announcements, and assignments on a regular basis.
* Students are expected to read all assigned materials in advance of the class in which it is assigned. Writing activities and other assignments should be thoroughly prepared for the date assigned.
* Questions and/or comments from students are encouraged and expected. Students are strongly encouraged to share personal insights and experiences related to the course material.
* Students are expected to interact with fellow classmates and work with their “thinking partners” to discuss and complete assigned material.
* Students have different styles and opinions about discussion topics. It is important to respect and validate others’ preferences and opinions even if they do not resemble your own.

For online discussions, you will need to post substantive comments. For our purposes, these add insight, probe deeply, challenge (intellectually), and generally help us learn. It is also helpful to post comments that are "social" in nature. So, while, "I agree" is not a substantive comment, it is a useful response in that it helps us know that we are being heard. But you will need to post substantive comments to get credit for discussions. I also encourage you to edit before you post. This course is a graduate course; it is expected that you will carefully read and edit your work before posting it.

**Use of Blackboard and Blackboard Collaborate**

Blackboard (BB) and Blackboard Collaborate (BBC) will be used during this course. The instructor will post the syllabus as well as all course-related announcements, readings and other content, discussion boards, learning activities, and writing assignments for each learning module on BB. Students will be expected to submit all written assignments via BB within the corresponding learning module. Student must identify an email address to receive and send information and must confirm the address with BB. Additionally, students must have the necessary equipment to be able to participate on BBC (i.e., desktop or laptop computer, Internet connection with sufficient speed, microphone, and preferably webcam) and must configure their equipment prior to the first synchronous session using the process provided by the instructor.

NOTES: Firefox (and Chrome) are the recommended browsers for using BB and BBC. Safari and Internet Explorer do not always interface well with BB and BBC.

If you need technical assistance with BB, contact the Warner School’s Blackboard Coordinator, Kristine Mager, at [kmager@warner.rochester.edu](mailto:kmager@warner.rochester.edu).

If you need technical assistance with BBC, go to the BBC support website below. There are four support options. The last one listed gives you the opportunity to connect directly with someone at BBC to talk you through the technical issue.

<http://www.blackboard.com/Platforms/Collaborate/Support/Support-for-Blackboard-Collaborate.aspx>

**Whole-Class Synchronous Sessions and One-on-One Conferences**

Students are expected to participate in the whole-class synchronous sessions using the Blackboard Collaborate (BBC) platform and the BBC session link provided by the instructor. Attendance and participation in the synchronous sessions are required. Students who are unable to attend a synchronous session for emergency reasons must contact the instructor by phone or e-mail in advance of the session. Students who miss a session will be expected to review the recording of the session and may be required to complete an additional writing assignment based on the session.

Tips for successful synchronous sessions:

1) Make sure that you are in a place with good Internet connection. You want sufficient speed and reliability for two-way audio and video. Dial-up connections or being in a public location that may have a spotty wireless connection are not good.

2) Make sure that you are in a place with minimal background noise. You want to be able to hear whoever is speaking. And you want us to be able to hear you when you are speaking. A quiet room in your home or office space is ideal. Coffee shops are not ideal for synchronous sessions.

3) Make sure that your disruptions will be minimal. If you will be at home, make sure that others in your household know that you are not available. You are "going to class at the Warner School"—you just don't have to drive there!

At two points during the course, students will conference one-on-one with the instructor (by phone or online, to be determined by the instructor and the student). The purpose of these conferences is to provide individualized guidance and instruction regarding the formal writing assignments.

**Learning Modules and Course Goals**

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| **Module** | **Content/Learning objectives** | **Readings and Assignments** |
| **Module 1:** Course Introduction& Gathering Sources & APA  **Week 1: May 25 – May 31** | * to understand the concepts of gathering sources online and in the library * to understand basic APA format in your writing | 1. Bailey. (2010). Chapters 1& 2  2. Education librarian Kathy McGowan guest speaking on finding research sources. |
| **Module 2:** Critical Reading & Foundations of Academic Writing  **Week 2: June 1 – June 7** | * to understand the expectations of academic writing * to summarize and describe foundational concepts and strategies of critical reading and academic writing | 1.     Rottenberg  & Winchell. (2012). pp. 35-39  2.    Bailey. (2010). pp. 1-10 & 20-29. |
| **Module 3: Writing summaries, annotated bibliographies, literature reviews and article critiques**  **Week 3: June 8– June 14** | * to develop and demonstrate a basic understanding of major genres of academic writing | 1. Graff & Birkenstein. (2010). pp. 175-192.  2. Swales & Feak. (2012) pp. 147-149 & 180-214.  **Due: Article Summary due on June 14 at 11:59 p.m. on Blackboard** |
| **Module 4: Avoiding Plagiarism and Social Purposes of Citation**  **Week 4: June 15– June 21** | * to learn how to use citations, incorporate sources and avoid plagiarism in your writing. | 1. Publication Manual. (2010). pp. 169-179 |
| Module 5:Making Arguments: Claims and Evidence **Weeks 5 & 6: June22 – July 5** | * to gain practice in crafting an argument using claims, reasons, evidence, acknowledgements and responses, and warrants. | 1. Feak & Swales. (2012). pp. 43-59.  2.Graff & Birkenstein. (2010). pp.121-128.  **Due: Article Critique due on July 5 at 11:59 p.m. on Blackboard** |
| **Module 6:** Writing Mechanics: Sentences, Paragraphs, Definitions, and Clarity  Abstracts, Introductions and Conclusions  **Weeks 7 & 8: July 6 – July 19** | * to focus on standard writing mechanics, including sentence, paragraph, definition, and clarity. | 1 Williams, J. (2009). Cohesion and coherence, pp. 55-65 + Shape of sentences. Pp.91-113.  2 Swales & Feak. (2012). pp. 1-5. |
| **Module 7: Peer Review**  **Week 9: July 20– July 26** | * to understand the importance and value of peer review in writing, and use it as an effective learning tool in academic writing. | **Peer review** ofAnnotated Bibliography during synchronous session on July 25(please bring an electronic copy for peer review).  **Due: Annotated Bibliography due on July 30 at 11:59 p.m.** |

**Major Assignments**

**1. Weekly Discussion Board:** Each module has a discussion section in which we will share ideas and ask questions to understand the topic and readings under study. Each class member is expected to participate in these discussions by posting an initial response based on the course readings and subsequently replying to the posts of classmates in order to engage in meaningful discourse. Your **MINIMUM** participation is **three posts per module (one initial post and at least two responses to classmates' posts).** I anticipate that you will be compelled to respond much more frequently than this. In addition, your postings to the discussion should be contributed over the duration of the module, not within the same brief session, to receive the maximum score. Your initial post should be made within the first two days of the opening of the module (Due: Wednesday at 11:59 p.m. EDT) and your responses to classmates should be completed before the end of each module (Due: Sunday at 11:59 p.m. EDT).

**2.** **Weekly Reflection Journal:** In each module you will reflect on the readings, the class discussion, and your personal construction of knowledge from the learning activities. You will write a concise description of your reflections in a journal entry at the end of every module. This should be no more than two paragraphs and submitted on the last day of the module (Due: Sunday at 11:59 p.m. EST).

**3. Module Quizzes:** In each module you will take a quiz on the course readings. These quizzes will help you to organize and formalize your understandings of the readings.  The quiz should be completed before the synchronous session of each module (Due: Wednesday at 11:59 p.m.)

**4. Summary:** Students will select a peer-reviewed journal article and write a one-page summary to represent the main ideas of the article accurately (Due: June 14 at 11:59 p.m.)

**5. Article Critique:** Students will select a peer-reviewed journal article and write a 3-5 page article critique using supplied criteria of the written research article (Due: July 5 at 11:59 p.m.).

**6. Annotated bibliography:** Students will write a 3-5 page annotated bibliography 5 articles based on their research interests (Due: July 30 at 11:59 p.m.).

**Evaluation Criteria**

Students will be evaluated through the following activities:

**Class Attendance:** **10%** (synchronous session attendance; missing more thanone synchronous sessions for any reason will lower your final grade by 5%.)

**Participation in Discussion Board - 14%** (2 points for each module, one point for primary post, one point for comments on other posts)

**Module quizzes – 7%**  (1 point each)

**Personal Reflection Journals - 14%** (2 points each)

**Article Summary: 10%**

**Article Critique: 20%**

**Annotated Bibliography: 25%**

**Grade Scale**

95 and above= A

90-94 = A-

85-89 = B+

80-84 = B

69-79 = C

Less than 69 = E

All work should be submitted on time. Points will be deducted for work handed in late.

References

American Psychological Association (APA). (2010). Publication manual (6th ed.). Arlington, VA: APA.

Bailey, S. (2010). Academic writing: A handbook for international students (3rd ed.). London and New York: Routledge.

Graff, G., & Birkenstein, C. (2010). They say, I say: The moves that matter in academic writing (2nd ed.). New York: Norton.

Lester, J. D., & Lester, J. D. (1999). Writing research papers: A complete guide. Longman.

Williams, J.M. (2009). Style: The basics of clarity and grace. Longman Publishing Group.

Rottenberg, A., & Winchell, D.H. (2012). The structure of argument (7th ed). Boston, MA: Bedford/St. Martin’s.

Swales, J. M., & Feak, C. B. (2012). Academic writing for graduate students: Essential tasks and skills (3rd ed.). Ann Arbor, MI: University of Michigan Press.