

URPA 5394: Writing for Academic and Professional Audiences

Summer 2016 11 weeks, Mondays 6pm-9:50pm; Architecture Building 330

Instructor

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Description of Course Content

This course will provide graduate students with methods to improve their writing and research skills and better communicate their ideas to a variety of audiences in the fields of planning and public affairs. Foundations of writing will be introduced, including style, proper citation of other works, and constructing a strong research argument. Students will also be taught how to link a research argument to an appropriate research methodology. Students will identify and develop key elements of a research paper, including the literature review, methodology, and presentation and analysis of results. In addition to a focus on academic writing, such as thesis/dissertation proposals and journal articles, students will also practice converting their writing for a professional audience, in the form of project reports, policy memos, and conference presentations.

Student Learning Outcomes

- Learn foundations of writing, including style, citation, and constructing a clear argument or position
- Identify and critique elements of a research paper
- Develop elements of your own research paper
- Practice communicating your ideas to academic and professional audiences
- Cultivate an environment of scholarly peer review and support

Required Textbook and Other Course Materials

Turabian, K. (2013). *A Manual for Writers of Research Papers, Theses, and Dissertations, 8th Edition*. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press. ISBN 978-0226816388

Additional required readings will be available on the course Blackboard page.

Recommended Resources:

- Struck, Jr., W, & White, E. B. (2000). *The Elements of Style, 4th Edition*. New York: Longman Publishers. ISBN 978-0205309023.
- Manual for your preferred style (APA, MLA, Chicago)
- Purdue Online Writing Lab: <https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/section/2/>

Description of Major Assignments and Examinations

Grades will reflect class participation, weekly reading and writing exercises, and peer review; a critique of a published research paper; an individual presentation of your research; and a paper on your own research. Students are expected to keep track of their performance throughout the semester and seek guidance from available sources (including the instructor) if their performance drops below satisfactory levels. This is a writing-intensive and fast paced course, and in order to get the most out of the course, students should have a research topic selected and be prepared to do extensive reading and writing on their individual topics.

• Class Participation, Weekly Reading and Writing Exercises, Peer Review (33 points)

Participation is key to the success of this course and your research project. Students are expected to complete the assigned reading and writing exercises before class, attend class, and actively participate in class discussions and activities.

- Class Attendance: In cases of illness or emergency situations, please make every attempt to notify the instructor in advance of an absence.
- Weekly reading and writing exercises: For each class, students are expected to complete the assigned readings and writing exercise.
 - The assigned readings are selected to provide background and guide you toward development of your own research project. The assigned readings are generally fairly short, providing time for you to read the literature on your own research topic and develop the individual research paper.
 - Each writing exercise should demonstrate an understanding of the material provided in the assigned readings, and it should display your synthesis of the literature and research on your topic, as it pertains to the class topic for the week. A brief description of each writing exercise is provided in the Schedule below, and more detailed instructions will be provided in the preceding class each week.
 - Writing exercises should be written in Times New Roman font, size 12 points, and should be 2 to 3 pages double-spaced in length. The writing exercise is due on Blackboard by 11pm on the Sunday prior to each class, and it will be discussed in class each week, as well. There are a total of six writing assignments; each is worth 3 points and will contribute to the individual research paper.
- Class Participation and Peer Review: Please come to class prepared to discuss the assigned readings, actively participate in activities, and contribute to the peer review process.
 - Each class will include a seminar-style discussion of key points from the readings and the process of the writing exercise. Please take notes as you read and be prepared to discuss 2-3 key points from the readings, as well as any questions raised by the readings.
 - In six classes, students will be assigned a group or partner to conduct peer review of each other's writing exercises. This will be a constructive process that helps you refine your ideas and communication of those ideas. More details regarding the peer review process will be provided in class.

• Critique of a Published Research Paper (15 points)

Using techniques discussed in class, each student will select a published research paper from a scholarly source and critically evaluate the content. Specific attention should be paid to how the

paper is organized, its main claims, use of methods and data sources, presentation of findings, and analysis of findings. This paper is due Friday, July 22 via Blackboard. Additional guidelines will be provided in class.

- **Individual Research Presentation (15 points)**

Each student will make a presentation in class on their individual research project. Presentations will be held on August 1 and August 8. Depending on student projects and goals, each student will be assigned to make a presentation that focuses on communicating their research to either an academic audience (August 1) or a professional audience (August 8). Additional guidelines will be provided in class.

- **Individual Research Paper (37 points)**

Throughout the entire semester and building on the weekly writing assignments, students are expected to develop an individual research paper on a topic of their choosing. Acceptable papers include a master’s thesis or professional report, a proposal for a doctoral dissertation, and a scholarly journal article. A brief memo describing the planned research paper is due Friday, June 24 via Blackboard. The instructor will work with each student to ensure the goals for their research paper are appropriate and will meet the guidelines for the course. The final research paper is due Monday, August 15 via Blackboard.

Grading

Final grades will be calculated according to the following:

Assignment	Points
Class Participation, Reading & Writing Exercises, Peer Review	33
<i>Attendance</i>	4.5
<i>Participation in Discussions</i>	4.5
<i>Writing Exercises (6 total, 3 points each)</i>	18
<i>Participation in Peer Review (6 total, 1 point each)</i>	6
Critique of a Published Research Paper	15
Individual Research Paper	37
Individual Research Presentation	15
Total	100

Letter grades will be assigned according to the following scale:

A: 90 points and up. Exceptional level of achievement. The student displays a superb command of the subject matter and can creatively apply it at many different levels.

B: 80-89 points. Above average but not outstanding level of achievement. Student demonstrates a good grasp of the material and the ability to apply at several but not all levels.

C: 70-79 points. Average level of achievement. Shows some mastery of the material and a narrow application range. May indicate poor study skills or a lack of motivation or interest.

D: 60-69 points. Little or no understanding of the subject matter and may not be interested in learning any more.

F: 59 or fewer points. A performance below the level of random chance. The student may totally lack interest, motivation, and/or ability.

All due dates on the syllabus are firm and late work will not be accepted. Exceptions may be made based on the discretion of the instructor when students present documentation of an unforeseeable, significant, and unavoidable situation that prevented the completion of the assignment on time. An incomplete grade (I) is not available in this class unless severe illness or documented extenuating circumstances justify it.

Attendance

As the instructor, I have established that class attendance and participation are instrumental to success in this course. Students are expected to attend each class and complete all weekly assignments. In cases of illness or emergency situations, please make every attempt to notify the instructor in advance of an absence.

Academic Integrity

Conducting research, writing, and communicating your research with integrity is fundamental to academic pursuits, and all students in this course are expected to meet and uphold UTA's standards of academic integrity (<http://www.uta.edu/conduct/academic-integrity/index.php>). Academic dishonesty includes cheating on any assignment, plagiarism, and unauthorized collaboration with others on an assignment. Academic dishonesty is prohibited by UTA (<http://grad.pci.uta.edu/about/catalog/current/general/regulations/#dishonesty>), and any students who choose to engage in dishonest practices are subject to disciplinary measures.

In some cases, students commit plagiarism due to a lack of understanding about acceptable citation practices. However, lack of information and lack of intention are not valid excuses. The following are examples of common acts of plagiarism, which will not be permitted in this course:

- Word for word copying of sentences or paragraphs without quotation marks and clear citation of the source
- Closely paraphrasing sentences or paragraphs without clear citation of the source (you must rewrite ideas in your own words and also then cite the source)
- Drawing upon or using another person's ideas, work, data, or research without clear citation of the source

UTA offers a tutorial on plagiarism (<http://library.uta.edu/plagiarism/index.php>), and all students are advised to take the tutorial and educate themselves on any issues they do not understand. The Purdue Online Writing Lab website listed under Recommended Resources for this course also contains helpful information regarding citation practices and avoiding plagiarism.

Before submitting final assignments for this course, you must run them through the SafeAssign feature of Blackboard for plagiarism detection and review your report. You should examine all matches identified in the report to be sure that your sources are cited properly and quotation marks are included for direct quotes. In order to submit each final assignment, you must achieve a matching score lower than 15%, and you will have the ability to run your assignments through SafeAssign multiple times to achieve this standard.

Schedule

Week	Date	Class Topic	Readings (BB=available on Blackboard)	Assignments
Module 1: Writing Foundations				
1	6/6	Class overview; Elements of writing and research	Turabian Ch. 1	
2	6/13	Reading the literature, identifying gaps, citation practices	Turabian Ch. 3, 4, 14, 15 Cornell University Library: The Annotated Bibliography (BB)	Annotated bibliography (at least 4 sources)
3	6/20	Writing style, research questions, link to methods	Turabian Ch. 2, 5; skim Part 3 Creswell Ch. 5 (BB) Dunlap Ch. 7 (BB)	Description of topic (see Turabian p. 6)
	6/24	Memo on Research Paper Due		
Module 2: Elements of a Research Paper				
4	6/27	Elements of a research paper, Introduction	Turabian Ch. 6, 7 Creswell Ch. 4 (BB)	Introduction draft
5	7/4	No class	Sources relevant to your topic	Work on Introduction and Literature Review drafts
6	7/11	Literature Review	Rudestam & Newton Ch. 4 (BB)	Literature Review draft
7	7/18	Methodology	Creswell Ch. 1 (BB)	Methodology draft
	7/22	Critique of a Published Research Paper Due		
8	7/25	Presentation and analysis of results, Conclusions	Turabian Ch. 8, 10	Outline of findings, expected outcomes, timeline
Module 3: Communicating Research to an Audience				
9	8/1	Academic audiences	Turabian Ch. 12, 13 Journal submission and reviewer guidelines (BB)	Student presentations
10	8/8	Professional audiences	Macris Ch. 1, 2 (BB) Swain & Swain Ch. 9, 10 (BB)	Student presentations
	8/15	Final Research Paper Due		

**As the instructor for this course, I reserve the right to adjust this schedule and change readings or assignments in order to best serve the educational needs of the students enrolled in this course. –Ann W. Foss*

Other General Notes

Drop Policy: Students may drop or swap (adding and dropping a class concurrently) classes through self-service in MyMav from the beginning of the registration period through the late registration period. After the late registration period, students must see their academic advisor to drop a class or withdraw. Undeclared students must see an advisor in the University Advising Center. Drops can continue through a point two-thirds of the way through the term or session. It is the student's responsibility to officially withdraw if they do not plan to attend after registering. **Students will not be automatically dropped for non-attendance.** Repayment of certain types of financial aid administered through the University may be

required as the result of dropping classes or withdrawing. For more information, contact the Office of Financial Aid and Scholarships (<http://wweb.uta.edu/aaofaof/>).

Disability Accommodations: UT Arlington is on record as being committed to both the spirit and letter of all federal equal opportunity legislation, including *The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)*, *The Americans with Disabilities Amendments Act (ADAAA)*, and *Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act*. All instructors at UT Arlington are required by law to provide “reasonable accommodations” to students with disabilities, so as not to discriminate on the basis of disability. Students are responsible for providing the instructor with official notification in the form of a letter certified by the **Office for Students with Disabilities (OSD)**. Students experiencing a range of conditions (Physical, Learning, Chronic Health, Mental Health, and Sensory) that may cause diminished academic performance or other barriers to learning may seek services and/or accommodations by contacting:

The Office for Students with Disabilities, (OSD) www.uta.edu/disability or calling 817-272-3364.
Counseling and Psychological Services, (CAPS) www.uta.edu/caps/ or calling 817-272-3671.

Only those students who have officially documented a need for an accommodation will have their request honored. Information regarding diagnostic criteria and policies for obtaining disability-based academic accommodations can be found at www.uta.edu/disability or by calling the Office for Students with Disabilities at (817) 272-3364.

Title IX: *The University of Texas at Arlington does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, religion, age, gender, sexual orientation, disabilities, genetic information, and/or veteran status in its educational programs or activities it operates. For more information, visit uta.edu/eos. For information regarding Title IX, visit www.uta.edu/titleIX.*

Academic Integrity: Students enrolled all UT Arlington courses are expected to adhere to the UT Arlington Honor Code:

*I pledge, on my honor, to uphold UT Arlington’s tradition of academic integrity, a tradition that values hard work and honest effort in the pursuit of academic excellence.
I promise that I will submit only work that I personally create or contribute to group collaborations, and I will appropriately reference any work from other sources. I will follow the highest standards of integrity and uphold the spirit of the Honor Code.*

UT Arlington faculty members may employ the Honor Code as they see fit in their courses, including (but not limited to) having students acknowledge the honor code as part of an examination or requiring students to incorporate the honor code into any work submitted. Per UT System *Regents’ Rule* 50101, §2.2, suspected violations of university’s standards for academic integrity (including the Honor Code) will be referred to the Office of Student Conduct. Violators will be disciplined in accordance with University policy, which may result in the student’s suspension or expulsion from the University.

Electronic Communication: UT Arlington has adopted MavMail as its official means to communicate with students about important deadlines and events, as well as to transact university-related business regarding financial aid, tuition, grades, graduation, etc. All students are assigned a MavMail account and are responsible for checking the inbox regularly. There is no additional charge to students for using this account, which remains active even after graduation. Information about activating and using MavMail is available at <http://www.uta.edu/oit/cs/email/mavmail.php>.

Student Feedback Survey: At the end of each term, students enrolled in classes categorized as “lecture,” “seminar,” or “laboratory” shall be directed to complete an online Student Feedback Survey (SFS). Instructions on how to access the SFS for this course will be sent directly to each student through

MavMail approximately 10 days before the end of the term. Each student's feedback enters the SFS database anonymously and is aggregated with that of other students enrolled in the course. UT Arlington's effort to solicit, gather, tabulate, and publish student feedback is required by state law; students are strongly urged to participate. For more information, visit <http://www.uta.edu/sfs>.

Final Review Week: A period of five class days prior to the first day of final examinations in the long sessions shall be designated as Final Review Week. The purpose of this week is to allow students sufficient time to prepare for final examinations. During this week, there shall be no scheduled activities such as required field trips or performances; and no instructor shall assign any themes, research problems or exercises of similar scope that have a completion date during or following this week *unless specified in the class syllabus*. During Final Review Week, an instructor shall not give any examinations constituting 10% or more of the final grade, except makeup tests and laboratory examinations. In addition, no instructor shall give any portion of the final examination during Final Review Week. During this week, classes are held as scheduled. In addition, instructors are not required to limit content to topics that have been previously covered; they may introduce new concepts as appropriate.

Emergency Exit Procedures: Should we experience an emergency event that requires us to vacate the building, students should exit the room and move toward the nearest exit, which is located down the stairs to the right of the classroom. When exiting the building during an emergency, one should never take an elevator but should use the stairwells. Faculty members and instructional staff will assist students in selecting the safest route for evacuation and will make arrangements to assist individuals with disabilities.

Student Support Services: UT Arlington provides a variety of resources and programs designed to help students develop academic skills, deal with personal situations, and better understand concepts and information related to their courses. Resources include tutoring, major-based learning centers, developmental education, advising and mentoring, personal counseling, and federally funded programs. For individualized referrals, students may visit the reception desk at University College (Ransom Hall), call the Maverick Resource Hotline at 817-272-6107, send a message to resources@uta.edu, or view the information at <http://www.uta.edu/universitycollege/resources/index.php>

<p>Emergency Phone Numbers: In case of an on-campus emergency, call the UT Arlington Police Department at 817-272-3003 (non-campus phone), 2-3003 (campus phone). You may also dial 911. Non-emergency number is 817-272-3381.</p>
