**English 203: Introduction to Research in Professional Writing**

Spring 2009: Tues/Thurs 7:30-8:45am

Classroom: HEAV 227

Website: http://web.ics.purdue.edu/~jbay/203/

**Instructor Information**

Dr. Jennifer Bay

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Office Hours: Tues/Thurs 9-10am and by appointment

**Course Description**

English 203 serves as an introduction to research approaches and methods useful for professional writers. The course will focus on developing ideas to guide research; collecting print and online information; interviewing, surveying, and conducting observations; and evaluating, summarizing, analyzing, and reporting research. Perhaps most important, the course will focus on developing your writing skills so that you might not only engage in but produce quality professional research.

One textbook that deals with professional writing research lists several characteristics and skills necessary for productive research; these also serve as the general goals of this course:

* *Curiosity*: to learn more, to discover why—or why not, to follow up on questions, to ask new questions, to wonder.
* *Interest in detail*: to document everything, to work methodically, to check facts, and to discern among facts, theories, hypotheses, and opinions.
* *Ability to see trends*: to envision the future, to anticipate needs, and to take the next step.
* *Awareness of audience*: to understand needs and expectations, to empathize, to assist, and to plan what needs to be done next.
* *Critical thinking*: to look as objectively as possible, to verify, to support, to analyze, to criticize, to evaluate, and to think logically.
* *Innovative thinking*: to look as creatively as possible, to try something new, to try something different, and to make connections among ideas.
* *High ethical standards*: to expect logical, honest, and collaborative work from yourself and others; to credit others’ work; and to conduct safe and appropriate research. (Porter and Coggin, *Research Strategies in Technical Communication* 8)

**Required Texts**

Booth, Wayne C., Joseph M. Williams, and Gregory G. Colomb. *The Craft of Research*, *3rd edition*. Chicago: U Chicago Press, 2008. (Vons)

Gibaldi, Joseph. *MLA Style Manual and Guide to Scholarly Publishing*. New York: MLA, 2008. (Vons)

Coursepack (Copymat)

**Evaluation**

I will evaluate your work using a 4.0 scale (+/-) as outlined by the university. Components will be worth the following percentages:

Portfolio—50%

Writing assignments—25%

Participation (in class, online, and group)—25%

**Portfolio (50%)**

This class uses the portfolio method of assessment to evaluate student performance. The portfolio method is a process whereby students extensively develop, revise, and edit a variety of projects during the course. This semester, we have three major projects. Throughout the semester, students submit full drafts of their projects to the instructor and to class peers, who provide constructive feedback, suggestions, and commentary for further revision. Formal grades are not assigned on these drafts. Rather, students have the opportunity to revise their work using those comments and suggestions. At the end of the course, students submit their revised projects in a portfolio that represents their best work. These portfolios are evaluated holistically, meaning that the work is assessed as a whole rather than as individual pieces. The purpose of this method of assessment is to allow students to focus intensely on improving their writing and critical thinking skills without an emphasis on letter grades or rankings. If you are concerned about your standing in the course, please make an appointment to discuss your work with me.

**Writing Assignments (25%)**

There will be several short writing assignments, such as project proposals, annotated bibliographies, summaries of research, response papers, reading notes, and other brief in and out of class assignments. Some of these will concern assigned readings, and some will be part of the deliverables for the portfolio projects. These writing assignments are intended to demonstrate that you have been reading, that your research is going well, that you can summarize or comprehend complex information, etc. I will use a +/- grading scale to evaluate your work in this component.

**Participation (25%)**

Participation includes active and constructive involvement in class discussions, online collaboration, as well as being prepared for class by doing the assigned reading and writing assignments. In order to help assess participation, we may have periodic pop reading quizzes, which will figure into your participation grade. Participation also includes active and constructive involvement in peer groups, peer review sessions, turning in projects to group members for feedback, giving effective feedback on projects, and learning to work diplomatically with others to achieve common goals. Note: there is a lot of reading for this course, some of which may be online; occasionally, some of the very “how-to” material will not be completely covered in discussion. Nevertheless, you are still responsible for that content.

**Late Work**

I do not accept late work. I expect all work to be completed by the beginning of the class period on which it is due.

**Attendance**

For the course to be successful, everyone's participation is necessary. Therefore, attendance is required. You are allowed three absences, no questions asked. For each class absence over three, your final grade will be lowered by one letter grade. More than six absences will result in a failing grade for the course. You are responsible for obtaining all information about missed class meetings from a classmate and for submitting work on time. Excessive tardiness will not be tolerated. Three tardies equals one absence. If you enter the class more than 30 minutes late, you will be counted absent.

**Academic Integrity**

Academic dishonesty is a serious crime. If you are suspected of academic dishonesty, you may be reported to the Office of the Dean of Students to receive disciplinary action. Forms of academic dishonesty include: Collusion - lending your work to another person to submit as his or her own; Fabrication - deliberately creating false information on a works cited page; and Plagiarism - the presentation of another person's work as your own, whether intentional or not. Please read and familiarize yourself with Purdue's student guide to academic integrity: http://www.purdue.edu/ODOS/osrr/dishonesty.htm

**Technology Requirements**

Because much of the exchange of information and materials in this class will be online, familiarity with certain technologies is crucial for participation and success in the course. If you need any assistance now or at any point during the semester, please do not hesitate to ask. Very early in the semester, you will need to make sure that you can meet the following responsibilities:

* Have access to your Career Account.
* Set up your @purdue.edu email address and check your email regularly, especially before class meetings.
* Become proficient with sending, receiving, and opening email attachments, resolving file compatibility issues, and following email decorum.
* Send email messages to the class list, post to online discussions, and use course technologies such as del.icio.us and Google Docs.
* Check the course calendar and webpage before the beginning of each class.
* Become more proficient with unfamiliar computer technologies and applications that are essential to professional writing.
* Maintain back-up copies of all assignments via your home directory, flash drives, and/or email attachments to yourself.

**General Course Policies**

Come to class prepared to engage with the assigned readings, course concepts, class peers, and instructor. This can best be accomplished by completing your assignments before the beginning of class.

Please respect your peers and your instructor by actively listening and paying attention. This means that unless we are using the computers during a class activity, students should be facing the instructor, other students, or whoever has the floor and is speaking.

Please do not talk or type while others (students or instructor) are speaking to the class. This especially includes when other students ask questions of the instructor.

Printing while one of your peers or your instructor is speaking is not allowed.

Please do not sit in the back of the room. You will not be able to hear your instructor or peers.

Because of the new printing policies for the university, I will be unable to print copies of your papers.

Remember to bring your texts to class with you and remember to print copies of all documents (drafts, electronic and online readings, etc.) before class begins.

You must complete all of the projects in a timely manner in order to pass this course.

In the event of a major campus emergency, course requirements, deadlines and grading percentages are subject to changes that may be necessitated by a revised semester calendar or other circumstances. Information about changes in this course can be obtained through email: jbay@purdue.edu.

If you have a university-recognized disability that requires an accommodation, please make an appointment with me to discuss your needs.

**Note:** There is no final exam in this course.

## English 203 Course Calendar

This calendar may be periodically adjusted to meet the needs of the class. See course website for more complete daily information and updates.

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| **Date** | **Class Meeting** | **For Next Class Meeting** |
| T | Jan | 13 | Introductions and overview of courseComplete student information sheet | Read Brandt (CP)  |
| Th | Jan | 15 | Types of research in Professional WritingOverview of Project #1 | Read *The Craft of Research,* pp. 3-67 and pp. 273-76 |
| T | Jan | 20 | Finding and discovering research questionsWriting proposals | Read *The Craft of Research*, pp. 68-101; *MLA Style Manual* pp. 1-31 |
| Th | Jan | 22 | Information gathering and retrieval | Read Schiff (CP) and Willinsky (CP)Write summary/response paper on one of readings |
| T | Jan | 27 | Information credibility**Summary/response paper due on either Schiff or Willinsky** | Read *MLA Style Manual*, pp. 33-69Finish draft of research proposal |
| Th | Jan | 29 | Copyright**Research proposal due** | Read *MLA Style Manual* pp. 163-239 and Kroski (CP) |
| T | Feb | 3 | Organizing your researchDocumentation I: Works Cited  | Read *The Craft of Research*, pp. 187-202; *MLA Style Manual* pp. 240-259Finish draft of annotated bibliography |
| Th | Feb | 5 | Documentation II: In text citations**Annotated bibliography due** | Read *The Craft of Research*, pp. 103-127 |
| T | Feb | 10 | Making claims | Read *The Craft of Research*, pp. 130-169 |
| Th | Feb | 12 | Understanding and using evidence**Summary/response paper due on one article from your research** | Read *The Craft of Research*, pp. 249-269; *MLA Style Manual*, pp.79-141 |
| T | Feb | 17 | Style | Read *The Craft of Research*, pp. 232-248 |
| Th | Feb | 19 | Introductions and conclusions**Summary/response paper due on another article from your research** | Complete draft of research report  |
| T | Feb | 24 | Peer workshop on research report | Revise draft of reportRead Hicks (CP) |
| Th | Feb | 26 | Project #1 due; overview of Project #2Discuss ethics of research with human subjects | Read Interviewing and Conducting Group Interviews (CP) |
| T | Mar | 3 | Discuss interviews and focus groups | Read Planning Surveys, Identifying the Population, Developing Questionnaires, and Administering Surveys (CP) and Schafer (CP) |
| Th | Mar | 5 | Discuss surveys  | Read Usability Testing (CP) |
| T | Mar | 10 | Discuss usability testing | Work on project #2 |
| Th | Mar | 12 | No class-instructor at professional conference | Continue work on project #2 |
| T | Mar | 17 | **No class-Spring Break** | Continue work on project #2 |
| Th | Mar | 19 | No class-Spring Break | Complete draft of Project #2 |
| T | Mar | 24 | Peer Workshop—Project #2 | Revise Project #2 |
| Th | Mar | 26 | Project #2 dueOverview of Project #3 | Read Lessig (CP) |
| T | Mar | 31 | Discuss new media and remix culture**Summary/response paper due on Lessig** | Read Graham and Whalen (CP)Finish proposal for project #3 |
| Th | Apr | 2 | **Proposal for Project #3 due** | Read *The Craft of Research*, pp. 213-231 |
| T | Apr | 7 | Communicating evidence visually | Read *The Craft of Research*, pp. 203-212 |
| Th | Apr | 9 | Revision | Complete draft of Project #3 |
| T | Apr | 14 | Peer Workshop—Project #3 | Revise Project #3 |
| Th | Apr | 16 | Project #3 dueDiscuss portfolio | Revise for the portfolio |
| T | Apr | 21 | Workshop for Portfolio | Revise for the portfolio |
| Th | Apr | 23 | Workshop for Portfolio | Revise for the portfolio |
| T | Apr | 28 | Workshop for Portfolio | Revise for the portfolio |
| Th | Apr | 30 | Portfolio due by end of class! |  |