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2023

### Syllabus for Writing for the Social Sciences

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*CUNY City College*

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# Eng. 21002: Writing for the Social Sciences

Section EC2 Code: 25133

Spring 2023 Semester—The City College of New York

Tuesdays & Thursdays, 2:00-3:15 pm

**Shepard Hall Room 20**

## **Instructor Details**

- Brenna Crowe: [Bcrowe@ccny.cuny.edu](mailto:Bcrowe@ccny.cuny.edu)
  - I will respond to any emails ASAP during the weekdays up until 6 p.m. and as soon as convenient on evenings and weekends.
  - Office hours will be held Tuesday & Thursday 11a.m. to 12:00 p.m. (or by appointment) both on zoom or in room 6/216A in the NAC & Zoom
    - Zoom: <https://ccny.zoom.us/j/4495813162>
    - Office: NAC 6/216A
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## **Course Description**

Welcome to your class on writing for the social sciences! In this course, we'll explore the connections between writing, reading, scientific rhetoric, and critical thinking. You'll practice writing for different purposes, audiences, and genres related to fields in the social sciences (e.g. sociology, psychology, economics, criminology, business, anthropology, communications, political science, linguistics, etc.). You'll learn to summarize, analyze, synthesize, and evaluate sources for credibility, reliability, and validity. You'll both receive and give substantial comments on your own and others' writing. Learning from each other will be a large part of what we do, and you are expected to be an active participant in the classroom community. For each of the four major assignments, you will reflect on your gains and future opportunities. The course will develop your skills in writing and critical thinking, and prepare you for writing in your professional and academic life in the world of social science.

## **Course Learning Outcomes**

In this course, you will work to

- Acknowledge your and others' range of linguistic differences as resources, and draw on those resources to develop rhetorical sensibility
- Enhance strategies for reading, drafting, revising, editing, and self-assessment
- Negotiate your own writing goals and audience expectations regarding conventions of genre, medium, and rhetorical situations.
- Discover ways in which connecting to certain subjects, to your own experiences or history,

- or to other writers can make writing more meaningful to you
- Develop and engage in the collaborative and social aspects of writing processes
  - Engage in genre analysis and multimodal composing to explore effective writing across disciplinary contexts and beyond to include public audiences
  - Formulate and articulate a stance through and in your writing
  - Practice using various library resources, online databases, and the Internet to locate sources appropriate to your writing projects
  - Strengthen your source use practices (including evaluating, integrating, quoting, paraphrasing, summarizing, synthesizing, analyzing, and citing sources)

## **Learning Format and Requirements**

### *General*

We will meet regularly in-person on Tuesdays and Thursdays as a group during our bi-weekly scheduled meeting times: **Tuesdays & Thursdays 2:00 to 3:15 .p.m in Shepard Hall Room 20**. You will earn attendance credit by being present and active in all class discussions and workshops. In the context of COVID-19, please email me if you're feeling sick and cannot make it to class.

We'll also discuss the elusive role rhetoric might play in any science writing with how we choose to engage our audiences on the level of word, syntax, and organization. We will discuss professional model readings to pull strategies from, as well as engage with some ideas

### *Formal Assignments & Supportive Assignments*

This course is built around four formal assignments that you will develop over the course of the semester. These are: **The Career Builder, The Literature Review, The Public Awareness Campaign, and The Digital Portfolio & Self-Assessment**. These assignments will be detailed in our discussions, and the first three assignments will require a cover letter (a short piece of writing that details your experience) that will culminate into your final self-assessment that documents your experience and progress for the semester. Thorough, considerate, and timely completion of these assignments will largely determine your grade.

You will be expected to write and post quick **reading responses** to BB to at least 10 of our course readings. All readings will be hyperlinked in the syllabus and BB discussion forums. For each post, generally you should share from the reading *a quote* you find meaningful and share *why*, and anything you learned. I'll also ask everyone to *define a new word* that you didn't know before!

The **informational interview** will be an opportunity for you to reach out to a professional in your field and ask them questions about their career and writing philosophies.

At the end of each phase, you'll be expected to share your findings with the class by means of organizing a **mini-presentation** (an excerpt of what you wrote, or your most important findings).

You have the option to respond to **journal prompts** on BB. These are meant to be short, casual and fun reflections that may dip in other genres such as poetry and stories that promote the joys of writing and archive your experience and thinking in the course that can earn .5% extra credit.

## **Grading**

Major Assignments:

The Career Builder (15%)  
The Literature Review (15%)  
The Public Awareness Campaign (15%)  
The Self-Assessment & Digital Portfolio (15%)  
Mini-presentations (5%)

Supportive Assignments/Ongoing expectations:

10 BlackBoard Reading Responses (10%)  
The Informational Interview (10%)  
Participation (Attendance, participation, & workshops)—(15%)

\*Each discussion post will earn 1% toward your final grade. There will be more opportunities to post than required, so you have flexibility with which readings you respond to—though you are still expected to read all the readings.

\*\* Each Journal response will earn .5% toward your final grade. There will be 10 opportunities to post, and you are free to pick and choose to respond to the prompts you find most interesting.

Note: Discussion posts & journal responses are where you may earn extra credit if needed after meeting the minimum requirements.

## **Formatting**

Formatting: All assignments should be written in **Times New Roman 12 point font, double spaced, with a clear heading (your full name, my name, date, course title, and page numbers)**. No need for fancy presentation, let the content of your work speak for itself. Please submit word documents or PDFs to Blackboard.

## **Course texts and materials**

**This is a “ZERO Textbook Cost” course. As such, all materials will be accessible on Blackboard and Google Drive.**

## **Required Readings (provided on Black Board & the course Google Drive)**

We will also read a collection of student writing (yours, your peers', and others'). Please either print or have digital access to all course documents and materials for class.

## **Recommended Open Education Resources**

### Writing Resources:

- <https://www.wwnorton.com/college/english/write/fieldguide/index.asp>
- <https://courses.lumenlearning.com/englishcomp1v2xmaster/>
- <https://writingcommons.org/>
- <https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/>
- <https://writingcenter.unc.edu/tips-and-tools/>

### Reading Resources:

- <https://scholar.google.com/>
- <http://www.openculture.com/>
- <https://library.cuny.cuny.edu/az.php>
- <https://www.feedbooks.com/publicdomain>
- <https://z-lib.is/>

Use these additional resources as needed for help with the writing process, editing, and formatting.

## **Online Technology and Software Requirements**

You will need to regularly access

- Blackboard (CCNY's online teaching support system where you'll access and submit materials)
- CUNY Academic Commons (where you'll create a digital portfolio)
- Word-processing software of your choice: Microsoft Office, Office365 (available for free to CCNY students), Google Docs, etc. No matter what you use, please save all documents as .doc or docx files and please no links, PDFs, or Pages files.

I strongly recommend you make an effort to organize our course documents and your work. Create a designated "Writing for the Social Sciences, Spring 2023" folder on your computer and be strategic in how you use subfolders and title documents. You will need to return to assignments at the end of the semester, so the more organized the better. Computers, as you know, are susceptible to crashing and freezing. Save your work frequently and back up your files (in multiple places!).

## **Course Policies**

Respect: All students are expected, first and foremost, to treat each other with respect and dignity. **Hateful speech or ill treatment of others will be met with zero tolerance.** This is a class about sharing ideas and expressing yourself, and it is our collective duty to make

sure we do this safely and respectfully. You also show respect to your fellow classmates by keeping your mask on for the duration of the class and try to maintain social distancing.

Attendance: To be part of the conversation, you need to show up to class on time and prepared to engage in the discussion and workshops. Show up for class and make your required posts every week. Be active, have something to say, and you will do well. **If a student misses more than three classes, the final grade will be dropped by one half letter** (from 90 to 85, for example). **If you miss six, your final grade will be dropped one full letter. If you miss seven, you will not be able to pass the course.** Consistent lateness, early departure, or meandering cell phone use will impact your grade. If you can't participate, let me know ahead of time, except only in cases of serious emergency.

Participation: I care deeply about students being present and engaged in class, and I'll do my best to make class meetings meaningful and useful. I ask that you come to class on time and prepared with all relevant readings or texts. I understand that everyone has different approaches to participation, so I welcome you to engage in class in a way that best fits you (by quietly but actively listening, writing in the chat for online classes, taking notes, asking questions, and/or offering comments). Everyone is required, however, to collaborate with peers during group work.

Late-Assignments: Assignments are to be handed in on time, as detailed in the class schedule. I cannot emphasize this enough: handing in something is better than not handing anything at all. We have a lot to get through, and want to give ourselves enough space to dig into what matters to us, so staying on task is important. An extension may be granted in urgent circumstances, so please reach out if you find yourself in a situation where you may need more time. You will be held accountable to the new deadline you request. **A late assignment without a request for an extension will drop one half letter grade for each day it is late. After one week the assignment will receive an automatic zero.**

Language: Students are expected to take an active role in developing their writing and language. I recognize that students come from different educational, linguistic, and racial backgrounds and that it takes several years, not a semester, to develop English academic language uses, especially if English is a student's additional (and not first) language. As your instructor, I am committed to adopting approaches deemed most effective by the fields of Second Language Writing and Composition and Rhetoric: I will provide ongoing feedback on your writing to highlight potential areas to revise/develop (including language uses), and I will refrain from penalizing you for your language.

Plagiarism: Plagiarism is unacceptable. There are no exceptions. Evidence of plagiarism will be discovered and may result in failure, or even expulsion. Don't do it! For a more detailed description of the guidelines for adhering to academic integrity, see CCNY's Policy on Academic Integrity on the college website:  
<https://www.cuny.edu/about/administration/offices/legal-affairs/policies-resources/academic-integrity-policy/> As part of this course, we will discuss responsible source use practices.

Don't Go Quietly: Any matters of accessibility or difficulties pertaining to electronic devices or facilities may be discussed with me directly and will be dealt with in confidence. Links to school-wide policies and helpful resources can be found below. Any other questions, concerns, ideas? Don't keep them to yourself. I'm here to help!



[https://www.cuny.edu/it/software\\_stu](https://www.cuny.edu/it/software_stu)



## Phase 1 Calendar

### The Career Builder

During Phase 1, you will be introduced to a variety of texts, genres, ideas, and skills (e.g., rhetorical reading, narrative writing, self-reflection, the social processes of writing, critical thinking, etc.).

Note: you should have access to all readings & all assignments every class (in print or on your laptop/phone). This is because we'll likely reference previous assignments/readings.

Key: \* discussion post/reading response ■ writing for workshop

Week	Date	H.W. Due Before Class	In-Class Topics/ Goals
1	Thurs. 1/26	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Familiarize yourself</b> with Blackboard (BB).</li> <li>* <b>Introduce Yourself</b> to the class in designated BB discussion following the prompt. Please also include a piece of writing or quote you find interesting or important and take this <a href="#">Myers-briggs personality test</a>.</li> </ul>	Introductions Syllabus Review Course Overview
2	Tues. 1/31	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* <b>Read &amp; write</b> a response to “This Year Change Your Mind” by Oliver Sacks (activate NYT sub. <a href="#">here</a>)</li> <li><b>Post</b> draft of Resume to BB</li> </ul>	Job Searches Intro. to phase 1 assignment Job Searches & Resumes
	Thurs. 2/2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* <b>Find</b> three job ads to target and write a page on why you find them interesting or worthwhile and highlight key terms. Please also <b>write</b> about additional experiences or education that would help you in those roles—<b>post</b> reflection the BB.</li> <li><b>Read</b> “How to Write about Biology” by Randy Moore</li> </ul>	Resume workshop Intro. To Coverletters Job Analysis
3	Tues. 2/7	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* <b>Post</b> draft of cover letter to BB</li> <li><b>Read</b> and write a response to: “Economical Writing” by Deirdre McCloskey</li> </ul>	Cover Letter Workshop workshop Informational Interviews
	Thurs 2/9	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Make</b> a list of questions you have about your chosen field and find the names of 3-4 people in that field you might want to reach out to.</li> <li><b>Narrow</b> specific positions to target to 2-3</li> <li><b>Read</b>: “Dear Hume” by Hunter S. Thompson</li> </ul>	Interviews Workshop questions
4	Tues. 2/14	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ <b>Revise</b> your job analysis, resume, cover letter, questions, and combine into one document.</li> <li><b>Listen to</b> &amp; respond to: an episode of your choosing by Freakonomics Podcast</li> </ul>	Workshop

	Thurs. 2/16	<b>Write</b> reflection/conclusion on what you learned about your ideal position. <b>Be prepared</b> to share with the class	Review
	Fri. 2/17	<b>Revise &amp; polish</b> the final draft of each of the assignment materials. Then, <b>write</b> a .5-1 page cover letter that shares 1-2 things you learned and still want to keep practicing at the beginning of your document. <b>Submit on BB.</b>	<b>No Class, of course.</b>

## Phase 2 Calendar

### The Literature Review

During Phase 2, you will conduct a literature review on a topic of your choosing, and learn more about reading texts to summarize and analyze their content for a specific research question.

Note: you should have access to all readings & all assignments every class (in print or on your laptop/phone). This is because we'll likely refer back to previous assignments/readings.

Key: \* discussion post/reading response ■ writing for workshop

Wk	Day	HW Due Before Class	In-Class Discussion
5	Tues. 2/21	<i>No Class, classes follow a Monday Schedule</i>	
		<i>Sample Literature Review:</i> <b>Read:</b> “Concepts of Time and Temporality in the Storytelling and Sensemaking Literatures: A Review and Critique”	
	Thurs. 2/23	<b>Read:</b> “Writing the review of literature: rasgulla as metaphor” by N. Chattopadhyay * <b>Read &amp; write</b> a response to “Ten Simple Rules for Writing a Literature Review” By P. Bourne BB—what are 5 characteristics of a literature review?	Intro. To Literature Reviews Phase 1 Reflection Finding Interviewees in your field
6	Tues 2/28.	<b>Post</b> proposed research idea to Blackboard. <b>Read:</b> “How Diverse Are the Samples Used in the Journals ‘Evolution & Human Behavior’ and ‘Evolutionary Psychology’?” by T. Pollet & T. Saxton	Vetting Sources CCNY Library Databases Sending Requests
	Thurs. 3/2	<b>Post</b> links to 3 scholarly articles and write about how they relate to your research question	Context & Conclusion Interviewer Etiquette
7	Tues. 3/7	<b>Write</b> an annotated bibliography <b>Watch:</b> “How We’re Priming Some Kids for College—and others for Prison” by Alice Goffman	Annotated Bibliographies APA format
	Thurs. 3/9	<b>Write</b> a messy draft of you literature review (summarize, analyze, & synthesize) or ideally, have a topic and find articles <b>Find</b> a recent NYT article related to your topic—briefly summarize and analyze it in your discussion post.	Workshop drafts <b>Tips</b> on synthesizing sources

8	<b>Tues. 3/14</b>	<b>Write</b> a full or messy draft of your literature review <b>Watch:</b> “Climate Change is a Social Justice Issue” by Adriana Laurent	Workshop drafts Phase 2 reflection In-Class Conferences
	<b>Thurs. 3/16</b>	<b>Revise</b> your essay based on peer-comments <b>Write</b> reflection on why your literature review is important (i.e. cover letter) <b>Read:</b> “Lessons in Survival” by Emily Robateau	Share Review In-Class Conferences Share Reflections/excerpts.
	<b>Tues. 3/21</b>	<b>Revise &amp; polish</b> the final draft of your literature review. Then, <b>write &amp; paste</b> your cover letter at the beginning of your document. <b>Submit on BB.</b>	Share Review In-Class Conferences Share Reflections/excerpts

## Phase 3 Calendar

### The Public Awareness Campaign

During Phase 3, with your group, you will practice locating and evaluating sources, composing public awareness campaigns, synthesizing sources, crafting strong thesis statements and stories, and integrating and citing sources. You will compose with you assigned groups the third major writing assignment, the public awareness campaign.

Note: you should have access to all readings & all assignments every class (in print or on your laptop/phone). This is because we'll likely refer back to previous assignments/readings.

Key: \* discussion post/reading response ■ writing for workshop

WK	DATE	HW DUE BEFORE CLASS	IN-CLASS TOPICS/GOALS
9	Thurs. 3/23	<p><b>Read:</b> “There’s a Clear to Fix to Helping Black Communities Fight Pollution” by Rachel Ramirez</p> <p>(you should have found and scheduled and interview date by now for the person in your field you will chat with)</p>	Group Conferences Phase 2 Reflections Introduce Phase 3 Assignment CUNY Commons Groups Creating a Link Infographics
10	Tues. 3/28	<p><b>Post</b> Outline &amp; group contract to BB</p> <p><b>Sketch</b> ideas for infographics</p> <p><b>Watch:</b> How to Be a Professional Troublemaker</p>	Group Conferences Multimedia Story Narratives
	Thur. 3/30	<p><b>Draft</b> a multimedia story &amp; blog posts</p> <p>* <b>Read</b> and respond to: “A Recipe for Fighting Climate Change and Feeding the World” by Sarah Kaplan</p>	Group Conferences Blog posts
11	Tues. 4/4	<p><b>Revise &amp; Complete</b> first draft of website for in-class review and post to BB.</p> <p>* <b>Read</b> and respond to: “Your Face is not Your Own” by Kashmir Hill (activate NYT sub. <a href="#">here</a>) (TW: disturbing content in the opening paragraph—Erin Brockovich-Esque after)</p>	Give peer review comments to site & respond to reading for participation credit
	Thurs. 4/6	Spring Recess from April 5th to April 13th	

	<b>Tues. 4/11</b>  <b>&amp;</b>  <b>Thurs. 4/13</b>	<p style="text-align: center;">*No Class, of Course*</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Spring Recess Until 4/13</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Remember to</p>	
<b>12</b>	<b>Tues. 4/18</b>	<p><b>Write</b> a peer review of public awareness campaigns (write a 200 word response to a group you haven't reviewed right)</p> <p>* <b>Read:</b> "Future Moves" by Yessenia Funes</p>	Group Conferences Presentation-prep
	<b>Thurs. 4/20</b>	<p><b>Revise</b> public awareness campaigns with your group based on peer comments.</p> <p><b>Be prepared</b> to present your public awareness campaign to the class.</p>	Presentations
	<b>Fri. 4/21</b>	<p><b>Revise</b> your Public Awareness Campaign based on critique you received during peer review. <b>Write &amp; Paste</b> your reflection &amp; evaluation of the group project. <b><u>Submit on BB.</u></b></p>	No class, of course.

## Phase 4 Calendar

### Digital Portfolio and Self-Assessment Essay

During our final phase, you will substantially revise your major assignments, articulate and analyze your learning process and knowledge gained. You will practice formal reflection writing and editing, and prepare your final digital portfolio.

Note: you should have access to all readings & all assignments every class (in print or on your laptop/phone). This is because we'll likely refer back to previous assignments/readings.

Key: \* discussion post/reading response

W K	DATE	HW DUE BEFORE CLASS	IN-CLASS TOPICS/GOALS
13	<b>Tues.</b> 4/25	<b>Gather &amp; re-read</b> your 3 cover letters and your 3 phase essays. <b>Take notes</b> on any sentences or sections that most capture your learning this semester. <b>Review</b> your notes from the in-class writing workshop. Using These notes complete a <b>full</b> draft of your Self Assessment Essay. <b>Submit</b> on BB discussion post.	Intro to Phase 4 Assignment Informational Interviews Workshop Messy SA Create a portfolio link
	<b>Thur.</b> 4/27	<b>Write</b> Reflection & summary of your interview (messy draft) * <b>Read</b> and write a response to: "The Nature of Plastics" by Meera Subramanian	Workshop Interviews
13	<b>Tues.</b> 5/2	<b>Revise</b> your Self-Assessment Essay draft based on critique you received during peer review. * <b>Read</b> and <b>respond</b> to: "To Hell with Drowning" by Julian Aguon	Informational Interviews WordPress Portfolio Design Revision Strategies
	<b>Thur.</b> 5/4	<b>Post reflection</b> on the informational interview to BB. Title the forum with your portfolio link <b>Complete</b> revisions for your final "portfolio" version of your Phase 3 essay. <b>Upload</b> to your Wordpress site.	Workshop Portfolios More on design revision Share informational Interviews
14	<b>Tues.</b> 5/9	• <b>Complete</b> revisions for your final "portfolio" version of your Phase 1 essay. <b>Upload</b> to your Wordpress site. * <b>Read</b> and respond to: "To Speak of the Sea in Irish" by Claudia Geib	Workshop Portfolios More on design/revision Share informational Interviews

	<b>Thurs. 5/11</b>	<b>Complete</b> revisions for your final “portfolio” version of your Phase <u>2</u> essay. <b>Upload</b> to your Wordpress site. <b>Read:</b> The Role of the Behavioral Scientist in the Civil Rights Movement by Martin Luther King	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Workshop Portfolios</li> <li>• More on design/revision</li> <li>Share informational Interviews</li> </ul>
<b>15</b>	<b>Tues. 5/16</b>	<b>Polish</b> the full draft of your final portfolio—with your self-assessment * <b>Read &amp; write a response to</b> “Why I write” by George Orwell	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Final Portfolio Workshop</li> <li>• Course Evaluations</li> <li>• In-Class Final</li> <li>• Goodbyes</li> <li>Share informational Interviews</li> </ul>
	<b>Fri. 5/19</b>	<b>Submit</b> on BB the URL to your Final Portfolio (which should include your Self-Assessment and revised essays and any other notes or comments) Last Chance to <b>Submit</b> any revisions or late assignments.	<b>No class, of course</b>