



## GSW 1110—Introduction to Academic Writing

*“Put it before them briefly so they will read it, clearly so they will appreciate it, picturesquely so they will remember it, and above all, accurately so they will be guided by its light.”*

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By Appointment

### Achievement Requirements

#### COURSE DESCRIPTION

GSW 1110 has been designed to provide first-year college students with an introduction to academic writing—the kind of writing students are asked to do throughout college and often beyond. Most students who are new to college have had little experience with academic writing and sometimes find learning to write in new ways challenging. To this end, GSW 1110 has been designed to provide the kinds of assistance which will help students more easily make the necessary transition from high school writing to college-level writing.

GSW 1110 is a highly interactive “workshop” class in which you, your classmates, and I will read, write, and discuss together. You will encounter a wide variety of activities in this class: among them, you will be introduced to various invention strategies which have been designed to generate and deepen your ideas; you will be provided with ample feedback on your drafts by your classmates and me; you will be helped to critically evaluate your own writing in order to revise effectively; you will gain experience with analyzing the reading audience and purpose of your papers in order to write your papers persuasively; and you will be given assistance with presenting your ideas clearly and supporting them with academically credible sources.

To achieve these various goals you will write five well-developed essays, the majority of which will be documented with sources. Throughout the course you will assemble all of the drafts you write for each essay in a portfolio in order to demonstrate your progress as a writer over the semester.

## REQUIRED TEXTS & MATERIALS

- *The St. Martin's Guide to Writing*. Short 8<sup>th</sup> edition. Rise B. Axelrod and Charles R. Cooper. Bedford/St. Martin, 2008. (e-book version only)
- *A Writer's Resource*. 3<sup>rd</sup> edition. Elaine Maimon, Janice Peritz, and Kathleen Yancey . McGraw Hill, 2009.
- Portfolio of GSW 1100/1110 materials (available at the BGSU Bookstore and SBX Bookstore).
- A laptop with a word processing program (e.g., Microsoft Word, Open Office, Google Docs, etc.) that you must bring to every class.
- Two data storage devices (e.g., flash sticks, zip disks, CDs, 3.5" computer disks or zip disks, etc).
- A BGSU e-mail address and a MYBGSU account.

## RECOMMENDED COURSE TEXT

- A college-level dictionary which you can use in your General Studies Writing courses and in all of your courses throughout college; an especially good college dictionary, available at the University Bookstore and SBX Bookstore, is *The American Heritage College Dictionary*, 4th edition. Houghton Mifflin, 2002.

## COURSE REQUIREMENTS

The following requirements are designed to help you meet the goals of this course so that you will be prepared for GSW 1120. You must complete ALL the requirements fully to have your portfolio submitted for review. **YOU CANNOT PASS THIS CLASS IF YOUR PORTFOLIO IS NOT SUBMITTED FOR REVIEW.**

## ESSAYS

Each of the five major essays you will write will be based on chapters from the e-book version of *The St. Martin's Guide to Writing* 8<sup>th</sup> ed. You will also work with *A Writer's Resource* for assistance with writing and revising the multiple drafts you will be required to write for each essay. At the end of the semester your entire writing portfolio will be judged by other members of the General Studies Writing staff (following my evaluation of your work). Ultimately, this portfolio evaluation will determine whether or not you will pass GSW 1110.

To ensure that you are ready for the portfolio evaluation process at the end of the semester, you will need to keep your prewriting, various drafts, and peer review comments for every paper you write. Though evaluators primarily will examine your final drafts, they will also assess the steps that you took to reach those final drafts, looking for improvement and progress in your writing.

Drafting is an essential part of this process. While doing more than one draft of a paper may be new to you and may seem like more work than is necessary, people generally do not do their absolute best writing on the first attempt. Drafts offer the opportunity to see what other people have done, to talk about our writing with each other, and to receive my feedback before I evaluate your paper for a grade. Putting effort into early drafts and taking advantage of the review processes will set you up for success on your final drafts.

## REQUIREMENTS FOR SUBMITTING ESSAYS

- Papers should follow MLA format. Examples and information on MLA can be found in *A Writer's Resource*. As well, we will discuss MLA format in class.
- Essays must be word processed, double-spaced, and have standard 1" margins on the right and left sides, top, and bottom of the page.
- The font used for your final drafts should be 12-point Times New Roman or another similarly proportioned and sized font.

- Pages must be numbered with your last name and page number in the upper right-hand corner.
- Your essays must have a title beyond the type of assignment, but please don't include a separate title page with your papers.
- When you submit a final draft of an essay to me for evaluation, you will need to include a number of other materials along with it, arranged in the following order:
  - A GSW Rubric should be on top (goldenrod color).
  - The assignment sheet should be included next.
  - The final (or most recent) draft of your essay should be included next.
  - The various drafts of your paper should be included next, in reverse chronological order. Only drafts which contain substantial revisions or which peers or I have commented upon should be included, however.
  
  - On the bottom of the stack should be a completed Audience and Values Exploration/Student Process Analysis Sheet (purple color) and all other prewriting you have done for the assignment.

Please be sure to secure these various documents together with a staple or large paper clip. Do not use a binder clip.

### **WORK SUBMISSION**

ALL work is due AT THE BEGINNING OF CLASS on the day I request it. If it also needs to be submitted electronically, you must also do this before class. DO NOT wait until right before class, as the internet may not work in the classroom. I will not take late work in by e-mail, in my mailbox, or in my office unless you have made arrangements with me beforehand.

You will place your work on my desk before class begins. If your work is not in that pile when I collect it, it is late and I will not accept it.

Should you choose not to submit an Essay on time, the following time table applies:

- Draft 1 for Peer Review
  - If you submit it before Draft 2 is due, but after the peer review period, you will receive credit for it and will be able to receive my feedback on Draft 2
  - If you do not submit Draft 1 before Draft 2 is due, you will not receive credit for Draft 1 and will not be able to check it off your check sheet.
- Draft 2 for My Feedback
  - If you submit Draft 2, up to ONE day after it is due, you will receive credit for it and my feedback
  - If you submit Draft 2, any later than ONE day after it was due BUT before the final draft is due, you will not receive my feedback, but you will be able to submit your Final Draft for grading
  - If you DO NOT submit Draft 2, you will receive an NP on the Final Draft and will not be eligible to revise this essay. However, you will still be able to include it in your portfolio,
- Final Drafts
  - If you submit the Final Draft within ONE day of the due date, I will grade it, but the essay will receive a grade deduction on the final grade. (That means if you earn a P, but submit the paper late, you will receive an AP.)
  - If you submit a Final Draft any later than ONE day after it was due, you will not receive credit for it and will not be able to include this essay in your portfolio. An incomplete portfolio will most likely not be eligible for submission and even if submitted, will most likely earn an NP.

## **Class Work**

I will provide you with a check sheet for this course. That sheet contains every draft, conference, and activity for this semester. It is your responsibility to keep track of the work you do this semester. To pass this course, you must complete this sheet and return it to me at the end of the semester. Any student missing 3 or more items from his/her sheet WILL NOT have met the requirements of this course and WILL NOT be eligible for portfolio review. And attempt to falsify information on this sheet in an attempt to circumvent this requirement will be considered academic dishonesty and will be dealt with as such.

## **LAPTOPS**

All students enrolled in this section are required to have a laptop which they will bring to each class. Because computers are changing how we write, research, and communicate, this course will use technology to help introduce student writers to academic writing. Since we will use the laptops for research, writing, revising, and peer review, your laptop must have a word processing program on it, and it should be fully charged and ready to use for each class.

## **WRITING CONFERENCES**

Because college-level writing can be frustrating at times, it is important to get encouraging and specific feedback from not only other members of the class, but also from me. To ensure that you are getting the encouragement and feedback you need in your writing, it is important that you schedule at least two conferences in my office so that I can give you personalized help and assistance.

## **GSW 1100/1110 LIBRARY RESEARCH GUIDE**

To help familiarize you with academic library research skills, you will be required to work with online materials which have been provided by the staff of the Jerome Library. The materials – which you are encouraged to use on your own as well for this class – are located at the following site:

<http://libguides.bgsu.edu/gsw1100-1110>

By using these materials, you will feel more comfortable and knowledgeable when you physically enter BGSU's libraries and better equipped to begin conducting academic level information research early on. This Research Guide is also available by going to the main library web page and clicking on Research Guides by Course.

## **ATTENDANCE**

Attendance in this class is mandatory. Class time will be devoted to actively building writing skills by writing and revising, discussing, and critiquing your own writing and the writing of others. Such activities simply cannot be "made up" satisfactorily by getting the notes from a peer or by meeting with me.

Timeliness is also a part of attendance. I will take attendance at the beginning of class, before any other activity. If you are not present when I take attendance, you will be marked absent for that day. If you arrive late, you must speak to me after class and ask me to mark you present; I will not do this automatically. If you fail to speak to me; you will be considered absent.

I realize, however, that sickness or emergencies can occur; should you need to miss class, please be sure to contact me, preferably beforehand, to discuss what might be done to assist you with getting on track. I would hope that such absences would not occur more than a couple of times this semester. Students with excessive absences will not pass this course, even if you complete the required number of drafts and conferences.

If you miss class, you are responsible for finding out what you missed. I will not seek you out, nor will I provide you with materials you may have missed if you do not request them from me.

## **COURSE & CLASSROOM POLICIES**

### **LOST ESSAYS**

You are responsible for maintaining a copy of each draft of your essays. Your essays will be returned to you promptly after they have been submitted to me, and all essays must be present in the portfolio at the end of the semester. It is your responsibility to compile these essays in your portfolio folder so that a portfolio assessor can further review them. Since occasionally essays, backpacks, or computers are stolen, lost, or destroyed, you should keep an additional hard copy of each essay and a back-up disk in a safe place. I strongly suggest that you use your BGSU My Files account to save your work (<https://myfiles.bgsu.edu/>). Ultimately, it is your responsibility to submit a complete portfolio.

**Incomplete portfolios will not be evaluated; students without portfolios will not pass the course.**

### **REVISION POLICY**

Knowing how to revise your writing is an important aspect of being a successful writer; therefore, you will be required to write multiple drafts of your papers, and we will work hard on the development of your personal revision and editing skills. One goal of this class is for you to learn to determine when a paper has been revised to the point where you can submit it as a “final draft” which will earn a “passing” evaluation. Taking advantage of our class time, your own homework time, my office hours, the Writing Center, and other available services and tools will provide you with the support you need for submitting final drafts that are at the “passing” level.

Sometimes, though, even with hard work students submit final drafts that are not passing. If you encounter this situation you may revise two of your essays (you may choose from essays #2, #3, or #4) once more after their original final evaluation – but **only if you first schedule a conference with me to discuss your revision strategy**. Note that a revised essay is due within one week after I return the original essay, and it should be turned in with the original graded essay and rubric, as well as with a new rubric.

### **ACADEMIC HONESTY**

Please refer to BGSU’s current *Student Affairs Handbook* and to your GSW portfolio materials for information regarding BGSU’s academic honesty policies. These policies and penalties apply to our class, as well as to all other classes at BGSU. We will discuss plagiarism and academic honesty in depth this semester.

### **LAPTOPS & CELL PHONES POLICY**

#### **CELL PHONES**

Cell phones must be turned on vibrate or silent the ENTIRE time class is in session. If you absolutely must respond to a call during class, please leave the room. Persistently leaving the room during class or disrupting the class with your cell phone is not only rude, but also will result in you missing important parts of class and negatively impacting your grade.

#### **LAPTOPS**

We will be using your laptops nearly every day and we may even use the internet for class purposes. But the internet is a learning tool and should not be used for personal reasons like checking e-mail, networking sites or shopping. Should the use of the internet become a problem, we will stop using it and the use of laptops will be vigilantly controlled.

## **CONTACTING ME BY E-MAIL**

### **RESPONDING TO E-MAIL**

E-mail is the best way to contact me outside of class and office hours for help with questions about your writing or about my assignments. Please note, however, that email can be unreliable. Servers may be down, computers may malfunction, etc. As a result, I cannot be responsible for any email messages that are lost or addressed incorrectly.

If you email me something, I will email you back, ordinarily within 24 hours. However, if you don't receive my email reply, this means that I did not receive your message and that you should discuss the content of your email with me personally. If you e-mail me after 10:00pm, I will not respond to you until morning. Additionally, if you e-mail me within 15 minutes of the start of class, I will not respond to your e-mail until after class.

### **E-MAIL ETIQUETTE**

An e-mail is a formal, written communication between you and me. Please adhere to the following conventions to assist with clear communication and a prompt response.

- Include a descriptive Subject Line
- Include an appropriate greeting
- Use complete sentences and properly spelled words
- Sign your e-mail with your first and last name
- BE SURE ANY ATTACHMENTS ARE IN .doc AND NOT .docx FORMAT OR I WILL NOT BE ABLE TO OPEN THEM (If you need help with this, please see me.)

## **CLASSROOM DECORUM**

This classroom is a place where ideas are exchanged. We will spend much time in discussion, both as a class and in small groups. You may hear ideas and opinions that you do not agree with. Disagreements and disputes can provide lively and productive discussion about many issues. However, any time you disagree with a classmate, you must take the time to listen to his/her position and if/when you respond to that position, you must do so respectfully. We will spend time in class discussing how to appropriately defend your own position and refute another's position. **But the basic ground rule is that you cannot attack another person's comments or writing in such a way that you attack the person rather than the ideas he/she is presenting.** Although it is difficult, you must try to separate the person, who has feelings that can be hurt, from the ideas that he/she is presenting. You are much more likely to sway someone's opinion if you can find a point of common ground and work from your commonalities than if you simply bulldoze or berate him/her.

## **ADDITIONAL GSW 1110 RESOURCES**

### **WRITING CENTER                      303 Moseley Hall                      (419) 372-2221**

The University Writing Center is a valuable resource that provides students with individual assistance with writing their papers – free of charge. The Writing Center is located in 303 Moseley Hall, and their phone number is (419) 372-2221. Because the Writing Center is ordinarily very busy, it is a good idea to call ahead to make an appointment well in advance of when you would like to meet with a writing consultant.

In addition, if you want a writing consultant to respond to your writing online, you should go to the Writing Center website:

<http://www.bgsu.edu/offices/acen/writingctr/page29898.html>

There, you will be given directions for submitting your questions or your entire draft. Once again, though, plan ahead. An email response will take up to 72 hours, and staff are not available on weekends or evenings to give immediate feedback.

### **ONLINE LIBRARY RESOURCES**

The BGSU Libraries has created the Undergraduate Student Survival Guide, which explains the ins and outs of using the Jerome Library. I suggest that you use this site for basic information on library use, including how to check out materials and how to renew materials online. The URL address below will take you there:

<http://www.bgsu.edu/colleges/library/services/page42583.html>

The library site also offers a virtual tour of Jerome Library at

[http://www.bgsu.edu/colleges/library/vt\\_release/vt\\_main.html](http://www.bgsu.edu/colleges/library/vt_release/vt_main.html)

and a detailed map of its first floor at

<http://www.bgsu.edu/colleges/library/about/page41043.html>.

Before ever stepping foot in the library, you can figure out exactly where you need to go by visiting these sites.

Finally, library personnel are always ready to help with any questions you might have about library use. Feel free to stop by the Research & Information-Desk with your questions or concerns. You may prefer to contact librarians virtually by using the various services described here:

<http://www.bgsu.edu/colleges/library/infosrv/ref/ask.html>

If you need more in-depth assistance, it is possible to set up an hour long appointment to work one-on-one with a Reference Librarian through the Libraries' Individual Research Appointment (IRA) service. Call the Research & Information Desk at 372-6943 for an appointment.

## **GSW'S GRADING SYSTEM AND THE PORTFOLIO ASSESSMENT PROCESS**

### **ESSAY GRADES**

Throughout the term, I will collect and comment upon first drafts (and perhaps on some intermediate drafts) of every essay you write, and I will give them back to you within a week's time so that you can use my comments as guidelines for revision. Your first drafts will not receive a grade.

However, when you submit final drafts of your essays I will provide you with both written comments and a grade. As well, I will fill out an evaluation chart (called a "rubric") for each final draft to indicate the paper's strengths and weaknesses; like commentary on early drafts, your evaluated final drafts will be returned to you within a week's time. The grade for each essay will be a Pass, Almost-Pass, or No-Pass.

- A **Passing (P)** essay shows good control in all of the categories of the rubric. Although there may be a few minor problems, the entire essay is generally well-written and clearly and effectively communicates its ideas.
- An **Almost-Passing (AP)** essay shows a combination of strengths and weaknesses on the rubric. There is room for improvement in some rubric categories of the essay and the essay does not consistently communicate its ideas clearly and effectively. An Almost-Pass means the essay is **not passing**, but it is getting close to being a passing essay.
- A **No-Passing (NP)** essay shows a serious weakness in at least one category of the rubric, and other categories may need attention, too. The overall quality of the essay is significantly hindered because of these weaknesses.

## **GSW 1110 COURSE GRADES**

If your work passes the portfolio assessment at the end of the term, you will receive an **S (Satisfactory)** grade for the course. An **S** will appear on your transcript, but it will not be calculated into your grade point average.

Since GSW 1120 is a challenging course which focuses exclusively upon research-supported, argumentative academic writing, it is extremely necessary for students to enter into GSW 1120 with a solid grasp of the writing skills taught in GSW 1110. However, the General Studies Writing Program acknowledges that writing is a skill which takes some people longer than others to master. For both of these reasons, if your work is not eligible for the Portfolio Assessment, or if you have met all of my requirements but your work does not pass the Portfolio Assessment, you will receive an **NC (No Credit)** for GSW 1110. An **NC** grade allows a student to repeat GSW 1110 without any negative effect upon his or her grade point average.

It is possible to receive a **WF (Withdraw Fail)** in this course, however. If you should stop attending this class for any reason without going through the University's official procedure for dropping the class, you will receive a **WF**, the grade will appear on your grade report, and an **F** will be calculated into your grade point average.

## **Portfolio Assessment Process**

During the last week or two of class, I will let you know whether your essays are eligible for a portfolio assessment. If your writing has not reached a minimal level of proficiency in GSW 1110 or if you have not satisfied my achievement requirements for this class, your work will not be eligible for a portfolio assessment. This means that I will not be able to submit your portfolio and that you will be required to re-enroll in GSW 1110.

If I make the judgment that your portfolio is eligible for a portfolio assessment, during the last week of the semester your essays will be judged by one or more GSW 1110 instructors in addition to me. These portfolio evaluators will determine whether or not your writing has reached proficiency at the 1110 level. Please note that unlike other courses where one or two weak assignments can ensure failure, GSW's portfolio assessment allows you to make improvements in your writing and to grow as a writer. Even if you struggle with an essay or two, as long as your portfolio shows that you can write proficiently at the 1110 level by the end of the term, you can pass the class.

If your portfolio is passed by a first evaluator, you will receive the grade of "S" (Satisfactory) and will be eligible to take GSW 1120. If the first evaluator determines that your writing, overall, does not demonstrate proficiency at the 1110 level, however, he or she will not pass your portfolio. Subsequently, a second evaluator – often a member of the General Studies Writing staff – will evaluate your work, again looking at your writing as a whole, and will make a final determination regarding whether your writing is proficient enough for you to enroll in GSW 1120 or whether you will need to take GSW 1110 again.

**Policy for GSW Portfolio Appeals:** Students may appeal an instructor's decision not to submit their portfolios for evaluation if they have evidence that they have met their instructor's achievement requirements and that they have fulfilled the minimum criteria for passing the course. Likewise, students may appeal no-passing portfolio assessments if they have reason to believe that the two evaluators (both of whom are trained, experienced GSW instructors) have overlooked important evidence that their portfolio, in fact, successfully meets the established criteria for passing the course. Students should not, however, routinely appeal no-passing portfolios simply because they are unhappy with their instructor's or the portfolio evaluators' decisions.

**Following is the timetable for retrieving portfolio results and for appealing a portfolio decision; please note that any students wishing to appeal a portfolio decision must adhere to this timetable.**

- **Monday, December 14, 5:00 PM**

Deadline for students to appeal an instructor's decision not to submit a portfolio for assessment.

- **Thursday, December 17**

Students **must** pick up their evaluated portfolios between **3:30 and 5:00pm**.

If you will be absolutely unable to retrieve your portfolio and your evaluation results from me at the designated time, it is your obligation to provide me with a large self-addressed, stamped envelope so I can mail the evaluated portfolio to you. To determine the proper postage, before submitting your portfolio to me at the end of the course, please take your portfolio to a post office (such as Stampers on the second floor of the Student Union) where a postal employee can determine the proper postage to affix to your envelope. You should provide me with the envelope – with proper postage already on it – when you submit your portfolio to me.

- **Monday, December 28, 5:00 PM**

Deadline for appealing a non-passing portfolio result by filling out an appeal form in the GSW Office, 215 East Hall.

### **SUMMARY: REQUIREMENTS FOR PASSING GSW 1110**

In summary, to pass GSW 1110 and go on to GSW 1120, you must meet the following requirements:

- Write at least two clearly **Passing** (not **Almost Passing**) expository essays.
- Turn in all five fully-developed and revised essays, including all drafts and prewriting, on time.
- Turn in all other written assignments (daily homework, Audience and Values Exploration/Student Process Analysis sheets) on time.
- Attend classes. (Excessive absences will result in your portfolio's ineligibility for the assessment process.)
- Actively participate in class discussion and group work.
- Attend a minimum of two required conferences.
- Pass the portfolio assessment at the GSW 1110 level.

If you have not satisfied **ALL** the Achievement Requirements for this class, your work will not be eligible for a portfolio assessment. This means that I will not be able to submit your portfolio for assessment, and you will be required to re-enroll in GSW 1110.

If you have any questions about these achievement requirements or other class matters, please be sure to talk to me. While it is my job to instruct you and help you meet these requirements, it is your responsibility to understand what is required of you and to complete these requirements in a timely manner. It is better to ask your questions early in the semester to ensure you spend your time most wisely and efficiently this semester. I will do my best to help you with any questions or situations you bring to my attention in a timely manner, but a failure to plan ahead on your part does not constitute an emergency on my part. Waiting until the last minute to prepare your papers and portfolio may prevent you from completing the necessary requirements or from submitting passing papers, and thus from submitting a portfolio for review. So, please speak to me early and often about ANY concerns you may have about completing this course.