



UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA

Fall 2025

WRIT 1301: University Writing

University of Minnesota - Twin Cities

4 credits

Instructor Name: David Ostrom

Instructor Email: david.ostrom@moundviewschools.org

In person: Wednesdays, during period 5. Wednesdays 3:15 - 4:15 in Room 229D or by appointment

About this Course

WRIT 1301 introduces students to writing processes, skills and strategies that provide a strong foundation for future writing of all kinds – academic, professional, personal, civic. Core areas of focus include: rhetorical awareness; critical thinking; information literacy; multimodal composing; accessibility; and giving, getting and applying feedback. The course requires regular peer-to-peer and peer-to-instructor interactions and scaffolded activities and assignments as students develop several projects over the course of the semester. Regular participation is critical in this course.

Guiding Principles about Writing

- Writing does not come after learning; writing is part of learning. Writing helps us develop our ideas and learn concepts more deeply.
- Writing is a process that involves brainstorming, researching, drafting, and revising.
- Writing is not solitary, but interactive. Writing becomes more meaningful when there is interaction between writers and readers.
- What counts as “good writing” depends on the context of the writing--the academic discipline, the audience, the purpose, and the medium.
- We learn to write by writing, not by memorizing rules about writing.
- Good writing involves a lot of activities that don’t always look like writing: reading, research, discussion, listening, giving and getting feedback.

- Writing can take many forms and communicate in multiple modes, not only through text, but through visuals, design, sound, and even movement.

Undergraduate Student Learning Outcomes

All undergraduate courses at the University of Minnesota are required to identify which of the undergraduate student learning outcomes (SLOs*) they support. Housed in the College of the Liberal Arts (CLA), WRIT 1301 directly supports the development of the following core competencies (which are an extension of SLOs):

- 1) Oral & Written Communication: intentionally engages with an audience to inform, persuade, or entertain.
- 2) Analytical & Critical Thinking: comprehensively explores issues, ideas, knowledge, evidence and values before accepting or formulating an opinion or conclusion.

*No one course will meet all of the University's undergraduate SLOs. And even when a course aligns to a Student Learning Outcome, the work of the course *contributes* to the student meeting the SLO over the course of their undergraduate career.

Specific WRIT 1301 Course Goals

In this course, you will:

1. Develop rhetorical knowledge
 - a. Experience writing as meaning-making and connection with and communication to a particular audience
 - b. Analyze choices writers make in diverse rhetorical contexts to shape their writing to suit particular subjects, purposes, and audiences
 - c. Develop familiarity with how writing conventions, modes, format and features vary by genre and make choices to follow conventions of chosen or assigned genre in ways that best suit the rhetorical contexts for your work
2. Develop your writing process in a community of writers
 - a. Develop familiarity and confidence in the various stages of writing, including brainstorming, drafting, revising, peer response, editing, reflecting
 - b. Build trust and respect for the skills and ideas in a community of writers and work together to grow as students and writers.

- c. Give productive feedback to peers and solicit, synthesize and act on feedback at different points in the drafting process, including feedback from fellow students and others
 - d. Develop and use project management skills as you encounter future writing tasks across and beyond the university
- 3. Practice critical reading, thinking, and composing
 - a. Find and evaluate diverse source materials, analyze the works for their organizations, assertions, and uses of evidence, and ethically and effectively integrate ideas from other sources into your work
 - b. Evaluate multimodal and digital options, and apply drafting and revision strategies afforded by those technologies for the creation and delivery of your work
 - c. Reflect on your composing and learning processes and your ability to plan and make changes to those processes based on your analyses

Course Format

Class will meet four days each week, even if there is a “no school” day during the week. For example, if there is no school on a Friday, we will meet Monday through Thursday. During normal, full weeks of school, your off day (usually referred to as a “workday”) will be on Wednesday. On workdays we will meet in our regular classroom, but there will be no instruction on that day. You may use the time to speak with me, finish peer review work, and/or work on homework.

You will submit your process work in Google Classroom or handwritten on paper. You will submit final drafts both as a hard/paper copy and to Google Classroom.

Course Projects

Throughout the semester, the work of four major projects will be supported by reading, low-stakes practice activities and assignments, and lots of instructor and peer feedback. You can access more detail about units, projects, and assessment in Google Classroom. You can expect to write and interact with your peers throughout the projects—either informally or formally.

Major Projects: Our course will be organized around four major projects:

STUDENTS MUST SUBMIT ALL FOUR OF THESE PROJECTS TO PASS THIS COURSE

1. **Personal Narrative (Project 1)**: recreate an experience; tell about a personal risk; explain a case of dissonance; write a memoir of an important person or event; explore personal literacy.

Emphasis: invention strategies, narrative arc, voice, tone, and concrete detail.

Suggested length: 3-5 typed pages

2. **Synthesis (Project 2)**: For this project, you will bring together a collection of texts and identify connections among them (synthesis), and then you will participate in the conversation among those texts by adding your own voice and ideas about a particular issue that the texts address. You will find a foundational text (a "conversation" piece) from which to start your exploration of an issue or idea. You will be investigating this issue or idea by asking questions, finding other sources that speak to your topic, synthesizing information from multiple texts, and, ultimately, writing a researched inquiry essay. While part of the process for this project will involve understanding and analyzing these texts by other writers, the ultimate goal of this synthesis is to come to some conclusions of your own about a particular issue or question that you will identify in the texts. Along the way, you'll also be learning important lessons about quoting and paraphrasing, as well as academic integrity.

Suggested Length: 4-5 pages

3. **Ethnography (Project 3)**: Observe and analyze an alien subculture and write about it. You must observe this culture first hand and in person. Consider the meaning of "alien." What is alien to you? If you are on the football team, this subculture is not alien to you, but to someone who has no interest or expertise in athletics, it may very well be alien. Select an observable group, but one that is foreign to you. During your observations, you will take elaborate notes and interview key members of the subculture. In addition, you will do secondary research to augment your observations and interviews.

Suggested length: 10-12 typed pages

- **Annotated Bibliography/Works Cited**: Evaluate each of your sources for validity, reliability, and usefulness. Document each of your sources according to MLA guidelines.

4. **Multimodal Assessment (Project 4)**: Using one of your prior writing projects from this class, transform the essay into a digital product using text along with images, motion, and/or audio.

For each unit, you will practice and develop skills in writing process (freewriting, drafting, revision planning and execution, giving and receiving feedback, editing, reflecting on process and choices) and rhetorical awareness (analysis of context and strategies used in a variety of genres in both published and student texts).

Course Outline & Schedule

Dates	Course Project	<u>Tentative Due</u> Date of Final Project	Linked to Learning Objective/s
September 3 - October 3	Writing from Experience: Personal Narrative	October 3	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Development of Writing Process: Brainstorming, Drafting, Giving and Getting Feedback, Revision Planning, Revising, Editing, Reflecting/Self-Assessing 2) Development of Rhetorical Awareness: Understanding of rhetorical situation: Audience, Purpose, Context, Genre 3) Development of Writing Community: participation and connecting with classmates, giving and getting feedback
September 29 - November 7	Writing from Sources: Synthesis Essay	November 7	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Development of Writing Process: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Attention to developing a focus for the essay by identifying an important conversation among several texts. b. Continue to practice brainstorming, drafting, giving and getting feedback, revision planning, revising, editing, reflecting/self-assessing 2. Development of Rhetorical Awareness: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Learning to read different types of texts, including more complex, scholarly texts. b. Drawing connections and contrasts among texts, their authors, and their rhetorical situations c. Understanding how authors, including themselves, incorporate other texts into their own writing 3. Development of Writing Community: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Discussion of source texts helps students arrive at a focus for the essay

			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> b. Students continue to give one another feedback at various points in the writing process.
November 6 - December 20	Researched Inquiry: Ethnography	December 19	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Development of college-level Research Skills <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Evolution of observational research skills b. Creating and revising a search strategy c. Learning to use U of M library resources, including databases and consultations with librarians. 2. Development of Rhetorical Awareness: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Students should make choices about the rhetorical situation of their writing, including audience, purpose, context, establishing authority, and possibly genre. b. Students should develop their ability to evaluate the sources they find. 3. Development of Writing Process: Brainstorming, Drafting, Giving and Getting Feedback, Revision Planning, Revising, Editing, Reflecting/Self-Assessing 4. Development of Writing Community: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Participation and connection with classmates, giving and getting feedback AND b. Connection with/use of a campus resource, such as peer research consultation or Center for Writing.
January 5 - January 23	Multimodal Project	January 22-23	<p>Development of Multimodal Reading/Composing:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Attention to and analysis of multimodal aspects of readings b. Development of essay with attention to multiple modes of communication and accessibility c. Development of digital literacy by evaluating digital options, and applying drafting and revision

			strategies afforded by those technologies, for the creation and delivery of their work.
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Grading/Assessment

The major goals of this course are to engage you in the writing process, writing community, and self-reflection, so that you have many tools at your disposal to meet the writing challenges of future college courses and beyond. For this reason, your engagement in the writing process and in our writing community will have a significant impact on your grade. Though your final drafts of projects will also receive grades, it will not be possible to pass the course by simply turning in those final essays.

The grades you earn for daily assignments and final projects will be recorded in Schoolview. Your final grade will be reported both on your high school report card and your University of Minnesota transcript. These two final letter grades will be the same for both high school and UMN.

Student Workload Expectations

The University of Minnesota Senate prescribes the quantity of work needed to earn a credit as three hours per credit per week, or approximately 45 hours per credit per semester. The manner in which the course is taught determines how much of the work will be in the classroom, laboratory, library, or independent study and research. Since WRIT 1301 is a 4 credit course, you should expect to spend about 10 hours per week, including class time, on average. There will be some weeks where you will require more work, some will require less.

Required Texts

Gang Leader for a Day by Sudhir Venkatesh. In this text, Venkatesh, a first-year graduate student, gains access to a gang and embeds himself in this subculture for over eight years. We will read excerpts of this text for the ethnography project.

All texts (handouts, excerpts, full-length) will be provided in digital and/or hard copy form. Students do not need to purchase any texts.

Conferences

At least twice during the semester, you will be required to attend small group or individual conferences with your instructor. These conferences will happen in person. They will give you practice meeting with instructors and also support your development of a strong writing process. I will also be available for additional conferencing and conversation through office hours whenever you have questions or want to talk about any aspect of your work and the course. Student Writing Support (see below) is another resource that can support your writing development through online or in-person consultation.

Attendance

Because this course emphasizes writing community and writing process, your timely presence in class is an important part of your learning. There are class activities, such as peer conferences and discussions, that cannot regularly be made up outside of class. You should make your attendance to this class a priority.

If you do have to miss class, you are responsible for notifying me ahead of time, if possible, and making up the activities you missed in class.

This is a University of Minnesota course, and many absences that might be excused by the high school are not considered excused absences at the University. (see the U of M's Make-up Work for Legitimate Absences Policy below). These include family vacations and employment. When possible, make sure to schedule non-urgent health care appointments at times that will not require you to miss our class meetings.

Unexcused absences will impact your grade. An excessive number of absences, even if they're excused, will also have an impact. The First-Year Writing Program's attendance guidelines state that missing the equivalent of one week or more with unexcused absences may result in a lower grade. Missing the equivalent of three weeks or more with unexcused or excused absences may result in failing the course.

Of course, illnesses and emergencies happen, but if you anticipate having regular difficulties attending the class, you should reach out to me right away.

Late Work

Late work will negatively affect your learning and your grade in the course. Late reading responses, pre-writing, or rough drafts will prevent you from fully participating in the writing process and the writing community. Because this is a course about the writing process, **I will not accept process work for an essay at the end of a project.** Pre-writing has no value if it's done at the same time as or after you've written the final draft. I do understand that life happens. If you know you are not going to meet a deadline or if an emergency arises, contact me immediately so that we can arrange an extension.

- **Process work** (pre-writing, first and second drafts, reflections, and final drafts): 10% reduction after due date. These assignments expire after three days.
- **Reading responses:** Assume that the due date and expiration date are the same. Late work is not accepted unless the student was absent the day it was due.
- **Major assignments**, i.e. the four project final drafts, are due on the dates given in class, even if you are absent. **Late essays are subject to a 10% grade reduction.** Of course, extenuating circumstances arise, but I will require documentation to verify late assignments. **All essays will expire three days after the due date.**

Documenting Your Work

It is important for you to keep copies (paper and/or digital) of the work you create for this course, as well as personal copies of the syllabus and assignment overviews. While the *credit* for this course should easily transfer to other colleges, your institution may want some documentation in order to accept this course for your first-year writing requirement. If you can show them the syllabus, the assignments, and all the work you did, you'll have an easier time getting the course accepted. I recommend creating a folder on Google Drive, where you keep final copies of your essays, as well as digital copies of the syllabus and each major assignment.

Student Writing Support at the U of M

The Center for Writing at the University of Minnesota offers one-on-one consultations with students at any stage of the writing process. Online and Zoom appointments are available, so you are able to use this resource even though you are not on campus. I encourage you to take advantage of this support whenever you feel it would be helpful to you throughout the semester. Find more information at [Student Writing Support](#).

Other writing support on campus includes the libraries' Peer Research Consultants and Multimedia Consultations with trained students and librarians.

U of M Policies

Student Conduct Code

The University seeks an environment that promotes academic achievement and integrity, that is protective of free inquiry, and that serves the educational mission of the University. Similarly, the University seeks a community that is free from violence, threats, and intimidation; that is respectful of the rights, opportunities, and welfare of students, faculty, staff, and guests of the University; and that does not threaten the physical or mental health or safety of members of the University community.

As a student at the University you are expected to adhere to the Board of Regents' Student Conduct Code. Note that the conduct code specifically addresses disruptive classroom conduct, which means "engaging in behavior that substantially or repeatedly interrupts either the instructor's ability to teach and/or a student's ability to learn." The classroom extends to any setting where a student is engaged in work toward academic credit or satisfaction of program-based requirements or related activities.

Scholastic Dishonesty

You are expected to do your own academic work and cite sources as necessary. Failing to do so is scholastic dishonesty. Scholastic dishonesty means plagiarizing; cheating on assignments or examinations; engaging in unauthorized collaboration on academic work; taking, acquiring, or using test materials without faculty permission; submitting false or incomplete records of academic achievement; acting alone or in cooperation with another to falsify records or to obtain dishonestly grades, honors, awards, or professional endorsement; altering, forging, or misusing a University academic record; or fabricating or falsifying data, research procedures, or data analysis. If it is determined that a student has cheated, the student may be given an "F" or an "N" for the course, and may face additional sanctions from the University. The Office for Community Standards has compiled a [helpful page about how to avoid scholastic dishonesty](#). If you have additional questions, please clarify with your instructor for the course. Your instructor can respond to your specific questions regarding what would constitute scholastic dishonesty in the context of a particular class, e.g., whether collaboration on assignments is permitted,

requirements and methods for citing sources, if electronic aids are permitted or prohibited during an exam.

Make-up Work for Legitimate Absences

University policy recognizes that there are a variety of legitimate circumstances in which students will miss coursework, and that accommodations for makeup work will be made. This policy applies to all course requirements, including any final examination. Students are responsible for planning their schedules to avoid excessive conflicts with course requirements.

1. Instructors may not penalize students for absence during the academic term due to the following unavoidable or legitimate circumstances:
 - illness, physical or mental, of the student or a student's dependent;
 - medical conditions related to pregnancy;
 - participation in intercollegiate athletic events;
 - subpoenas;
 - jury duty;
 - military service;
 - bereavement, including travel related to bereavement;
 - religious observances;
 - participation in formal University system governance, including the University Senate, Student Senate, and Board of Regents meetings, by students selected as representatives to those bodies; and
 - activities sponsored by the University if identified by the senior academic officer for the campus or the officer's designee as the basis for excused absences.
2. For circumstances not listed in (1), the instructor has primary responsibility to decide on a case-by-case basis if an absence is due to unavoidable or legitimate circumstances and grant a request for makeup work.
3. Students must notify their instructors of circumstances identified in (1) or other circumstances leading to a request for makeup work as soon as possible and provide information to explain the absence. Some situations will be sufficiently urgent that arrangements for makeup work cannot be made prior to the date of an absence. In such cases, arrangements should be made as soon as possible following the student's return.
4. The instructor has the right to request, and the student must provide if requested, verification for absences, with the exception of a single episode medical absence that does not require medical services.

5. The instructor has the right to request verification for a single episode medical absence if (i) the student has had more than one single episode medical absence in the class, or (ii) the single episode medical absence involves missing laboratory sessions, exams or important graded in-class assignments.
6. The instructor may not penalize the student and must provide reasonable and timely accommodation or opportunity to make up missed work, including exams or other course requirements that have an impact on the course grade if the student:
 - Was absent due to circumstances identified in (1);
 - Has complied with the notification requirements; and
 - Has provided verification if the instructor has requested further information.
7. Colleges and academic units may establish more specific criteria for notifying instructors and completing the associated make-up work, especially when the absence involves activities that may not be possible to make up, such as laboratory or clinical sessions and performances.
8. Instructors are not obligated to accommodate a student who has missed so much of the critical components of a course, even for legitimate reasons, that arrangements for makeup work would not be reasonable.

Use of Personal Electronic Devices in the Classroom

Using personal electronic devices in the classroom setting can hinder instruction and learning, not only for the student using the device but also for other students in the class. To this end, the University establishes the right of each instructor to determine if and how personal electronic devices are allowed to be used in the classroom. For complete information, please reference: <https://policy.umn.edu/education/studentresp>.

Appropriate use of course materials

Taking notes is a means of recording information but more importantly of personally absorbing and integrating the educational experience. However, broadly disseminating class notes beyond the classroom community or accepting compensation for taking and distributing classroom notes undermines instructor interests in their intellectual work product while not substantially furthering instructor and student interests in effective learning. Such actions violate shared norms and standards of the academic community. For additional information, please see: <https://policy.umn.edu/education/studentresp>.

GenAI Tools

In this class, the ability to [skill or competency] is essential for [field of study/professional application]. Because this course emphasizes writing and the writing process], using

Generative AI tools including (but not limited to) ChatGPT, Gemini, and Grammarly are not permitted.

GenAI tools are not substitutes for your intellectual effort or scholarly expression. Active engagement with course materials, critical thinking and judgment, and expression of original ideas should never be outsourced to technology.

Any violation of this is subject to the UMN's Scholastic Dishonesty policy included in the Board of Regents: *Student Conduct Code*.

Violations will be subject to failing the assignment; this included daily assignments (practice) and final projects (performance). In addition, the incident will be reported to the *Office of Community Standards*.

Additionally, the *Student Conduct Code* also prohibits sharing, uploading, or reproducing copyrighted course materials—including student coursework, lecture slides, readings, and assignments—on AI platforms. Likewise, I will not upload your work to any GenAI tools for teaching or research purposes without your written consent.

If you are unsure whether a particular use of AI is allowed, **assume it is not** and consult the instructor before proceeding.

Requirement for all performance assessments: Students must use Google Doc template posted in Classroom for all parts of the writing process; the entire revision history must be accessible. Use of any AI, Grammarly, or other generative editing software will result in a zero and academic dishonesty referral.

Verbal Review: Any assessment and/or assignment is subject to a verbal review with the teacher. Be prepared to explain and discuss the content and process of your work. If you cannot adequately represent your work, it will be assumed that AI was utilized as a replacement for your learning, and the consequences will be subject to the teacher's discretion.

Sexual misconduct

Sexual misconduct (sexual harassment, sexual assault, stalking, and relationship violence) includes unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and/or other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature. Such behavior is prohibited in the University setting.

Per the U of M policy on sexual harassment, *I am required to share information that I learn about possible sexual misconduct* with the campus Title IX office. Within the requirements of my job, I will be as responsive as possible to your requests for confidentiality and support. You can also, or alternately, choose to talk with a confidential resource that will not share information that they learn about sexual misconduct. Confidential resources include The Aurora Center, Boynton Mental Health, and Student Counseling Services.

Equal access and opportunity

Per the U of M policy on equity, diversity, equal opportunity and affirmative action, the University will provide equal access to and opportunity in its programs and facilities, without regard to race, color, creed, religion, national origin, gender, age, marital status, disability, public assistance status, veteran status, sexual orientation, gender identity, or gender expression

Disability accommodations

If you have, or think you have, a disability in any area such as mental health, attention, learning, chronic health, sensory, or physical, please contact the Disability Resource Center (DRC) to arrange a confidential discussion regarding equitable access and reasonable accommodations.

- If you are registered with the DRC and have a disability accommodation letter dated for this semester or this year, please contact Professor Klink early in the semester to review how the accommodations will be applied in this course.
- If you are registered with the DRC and have questions or concerns about your accommodations, please contact your access consultant/disability specialist.

Mental health

As a student you may experience a range of issues that can cause barriers to learning, such as strained relationships, increased anxiety, alcohol/drug problems, feeling down, difficulty concentrating and/or lack of motivation. University of Minnesota services are available to assist you. You can learn more about the broad range of confidential mental health services available on campus via the Student Mental Health Website.

University Grading Scales

The grading policy in this course conforms to CLA guidelines. Therefore a “C” is equivalent to basic fulfillment of requirements; to achieve a grade higher than a “C” a student must perform beyond the basic requirements. Please keep the following scale and criteria in mind: The University has two distinct grading scales: A-F and S-N. WRIT 1301 cannot be taken S-N.

A-F grading scale. The A-F grading scale allows the following grades and corresponding GPA points:

Grade	Percentage	GPA Points	Definitions for undergraduate credit
A	100-93%	4.000	Represents achievement that significantly exceeds expectations in the course.
A-	92-90%	3.667	
B+	89-87%	3.333	
B	86-83%	3.000	Represents achievement that is above the minimum expectations in the course.
B-	82-80%	2.667	
C+	79-77%	2.333	
C	76-73%	2.000	Represents achievement that meets the minimum expectations in the course.
C-	72-70%	1.667	
D+	69-67%	1.333	
D	66-63%	1.000 -	Represents achievement that partially meets the minimum expectations in the course. Credit is earned but it may not fulfill major or program requirements.
F	62-0%	0.000	Represents failure in the course and no credit is earned.

For additional information, please refer to: <https://policy.umn.edu/education/gradingtranscripts>.