Rhetoric Instructor Handbook

Undergraduate Rhetoric Program
Department of English
University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign
2019-2020

TABLE OF CONTENTS

FROM THE DIRECTOR: OUR UNDERGRADUATE RHETORIC PROGRAM AND YOU 4

ABOUT OUR COURSE 5

WHO ARE OUR STUDENTS? 8

COURSE DESCRIPTIONS AND STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES (SLOS) 9

RHETORIC 101: PRINCIPLES OF WRITING 9
RHETORIC 102: PRINCIPLES OF RESEARCH 10
RHETORIC 105: WRITING AND RESEARCH 10
RHETORIC 233: ADVANCED RHETORIC AND COMPOSITION 11
SPECIAL RHETORIC SECTIONS 12
GLOBAL CROSSROADS 12
UNIT 1 12
WESTON EXPLORATION 13

BUILDING YOUR OWN COURSE 13

RECOMMENDED TEXTS AND CHOOSING A TEXT 13
ASSIGNMENT DESIGN 14
HIGH STAKES VERSUS LOW STAKES 15
STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES 15
BACKWARD DESIGN PRINCIPLE 15
CREATING ASSIGNMENT PROMPTS 16
LESSON PLANNING AND DAILY ACTIVITIES 18
TEACHING METHODS 19

EVALUATION AND ASSESSMENT 24

ASSESSMENT 24
EVALUATION 24
GRADES AND COMMENTS 26
DISCUSSING GRADES 27
CALCULATING GRADES 28
HIGH-STAKES ASSIGNMENTS 28
CLASS ATTENDANCE 28
CLASS PARTICIPATION 29
HOMEWORK 29
MECHANICS 29
GRADING SCALES AND METHODS 30

CONFERENCES 30

GUIDELINES FOR EFFECTIVE CONFERENCING 31

POLICIES AND PROCEDURES 32

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY AND PLAGIARISM 32

OFFICE HOURS AND CONTACT INFORMATION **33**
TEACHING ABSENCES AND CLASSROOM LOCATION **33**
COURSE MANAGEMENT SYSTEM (COMPASS2G) **33**
REQUESTING A SITE 33
DIGITAL TOOLS 34
ASSIGNMENT SUBMISSION AND GRADE REPORTING 34
REQUESTING AND CONDUCTING THE ICES SURVEY **34**
MIDTERM AND FINAL GRADES **34**
SEXUAL MISCONDUCT POLICY AND REPORTING **35**

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT **35**

ENGLISH 593: PROSEMINAR IN THE TEACHING OF RHETORIC **35**
OBSERVATIONS **35**
MONTHLY RHETORIC INSTRUCTOR MEETINGS **36**
RHETORIC PROGRAM ASSISTANT DIRECTORS (ADS) **36**
PEER MENTORS **36**
STUDENT ESSAY CONTEST **36**
YOUR OWN PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT **37**

RESOURCES **37**

CLASSROOM TECHNOLOGY **37**
COMMON TECHNOLOGY PROBLEMS (WHOM TO CONTACT) **38**
SUPPLEMENTARY READINGS **38**
DISABILITY RESOURCES AND EDUCATIONAL SERVICES (DRES) **38**
WRITERS WORKSHOP **39**
UNDERGRADUATE LIBRARY AND REQUESTING LIBRARY INSTRUCTION CLASSES **39**
CONTACT INFORMATION 40
LIBRARY INSTRUCTION 40
RHETORIC LIBRARY GUIDE 40
OTHER LIBRARY SERVICES AT THE UGL 40

USEFUL CONTACTS **42**

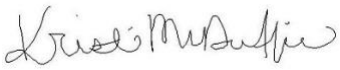
DEPARTMENTAL CONTACTS 42
UNIVERSITY LIBRARIES 42
CAMPUS LEARNING RESOURCES 42
CAMPUS LIFE RESOURCES 42
CAMPUS BOOKSTORES AND COPY SHOPS 42

From the Director: Our Undergraduate Rhetoric Program and You

Welcome to the English department, and to your new or continuing teaching position in our Undergraduate Rhetoric Program. Our program is designed to prepare students for the various kinds of writing situations that they may face in their other and future college work, as well as their writing lives beyond college. It is also designed to teach them more about academic writing, which we are defining as source-based, argumentative writing in a postsecondary setting. In our Rhetoric courses, we emphasize writing as both an intellectual process and a rhetorical act, one that takes place in a larger community of writers and thinkers that is both within and beyond the university itself—and definitely not just in a classroom for a singular teacher (or even just for fellow students). Therefore, we hope you will encourage your students in Rhetoric 101, 102, 105, and/or 233 to see *themselves* as writing for real people with real problems and debates to resolve, all the while learning how to negotiate college-level discourse expectations as well as develop and answer complex questions about the world around them. Specifically, we see our Rhetoric courses as teaching not only principles of effective writing and rhetoric, but also best methods for successful inquiry. We want students to ask: How do researchers formulate questions? What kind(s) of evidence do they need to look for answers? What happens when conversants who appear and voice their opinions in that research process disagree with one another? What does it mean to be "right" or "wrong" about a problem, issue, or debate? Can a writer ever use rhetorical strategies to please everyone? Should he or she even *try*?

In other words, we see Rhetoric 101, 102, 105, and 233 as not just general education courses that purport to make students "good" writers at the end of sixteen weeks, like so many parents, legislators, and academic pundits believe is possible. In fact, we won't even begin to promise that "good" is an adjective that will apply to all of your students at the end of the semester—at least not in the fix-it shop ways that they may think. This is not a remedial course, or a course that assumes students are here because they have deficits. Rather, we see our first-year Rhetoric students as being filled with potential and possessing many capabilities that our courses will capitalize upon and advance in productive ways, all the while assessing these students' abilities regularly, honestly, and accurately. Will your students know more about writing (and research) than they did at the start of the term? Hopefully. Will your students be more aware of their own writing processes, limitations, and strengths? Probably. Will your students have a better sense of what it means to write in college versus what it meant to write in high school? Almost certainly. But our Rhetoric courses are just a starting place—they are not corrective courses that magically certify students for *all* writing occasions or *all* rhetorical situations. Such an outcome is not possible and is also not our job as a writing program, nor yours as a writing instructor.

Instead, we ask that you see our Rhetoric courses as a chance to walk students through the principles of writing (and rhetoric, and research) that you yourself know so well already, that brought you to graduate school now, or in the recent past, and that make you a good choice to teach our first-year students. Whether your academic specialty is in literary studies, creative writing, or writing studies, you are a part of that community of writers that our students seek to join. You are both a model and a guide for what it means to write on a university campus, and how research-based writing can be both extremely frustrating and amazingly rewarding. And you are the audience for this guide, which will direct and support you in teaching Rhetoric at UIUC.



Dr. Kristi McDuffie, Interim Director of Undergraduate Rhetoric

About Our Course

Although each of us has different expectations of our students, collectively we should share some common goals for our Rhetoric courses. We ask you to maintain an emphasis on multi-draft writing—and to attend to issues like development, clarity, organization, and style. Yet each of these goals is based on the philosophy that within an environment of process-centered learning and collaboration, the mission of the instructor is to help students become more thoughtful and invested writers, as well as researchers.

What Our Rhetoric Courses (Aim to) Do:

We prepare students for college writing expectations.

Our program emphasizes the teaching of research-based academic writing, stressing those practices that will enable students to succeed as writers in a variety of academic settings. Even though argumentative writing is just one way in which students will communicate in their future lives, we choose to focus on this type of writing in our Rhetoric courses because we believe it best represents the work that will be asked of them in their other university courses.

We prepare students for writing situations *outside* the college classroom.

Even as academic writing situations are important, we want students to be able to argue *well* (not just be argumentative, or opinionated) because to do so is a skill and art form lacking in many of our fellow citizens today. We also want students to see the long-term value of writing and communication in so-called real world settings, not just the classroom.

We introduce students to research-based academic writing.

Because a good research project is backed by sound rhetorical principles (Who is my audience? What are my constraints? What types of evidence are the most persuasive in order to support my claims, and why? What will I want to learn, and is that the same as what I want to *prove?*), we teach approaches to considering (and confronting) the views of others as they exist in both primary and secondary sources. Students learn a variety of strategies that help them to probe texts and definitions, compare summaries, locate sources, evaluate perspectives, communicate their discoveries, and sustain an argument. Our aim is to teach students to read critically as well as to write with precision, clarity, and most of all, depth of thought at the college level.

We teach the importance of revision.

By focusing on process as well as a product, we explore how, given a writing task, writers decide on an angle of attack: how they research, organize, and narrow their field of inquiry; how they arrange, compose, revise and edit their language; and how they determine when it's time to stop. But of course, in truth, no piece of writing is ever really finished. Even professional writers—including all of you, as writers yourselves—know that what has gone to press almost always could have been better. As students learn and internalize viable revision processes, they can analyze and even question feedback from their peers and their instructor. They can monitor what is getting through to their audience and what is not, and they can pressure their editors to be more exact as well. Putting a work through several drafts gives students the sense of how an essay grows and changes; it also allows students to rethink their ideas, modify or change their positions, and understand the limitations of their approaches as they shape and reshape arguments through deep inquiry.

We develop students' rhetorical skills and knowledge.

Since our Rhetoric courses emphasize research-based academic writing, we focus on helping students respond to the demands, conventions, and diversity of forms of research, and the exigencies and conventions of academic discourse. We teach students to respond to various academic audiences and rhetorical situations by choosing effective styles and genres for those contexts, including citation and documentation practices. To that end, we teach students the basic principles of rhetoric in our courses as well as the important position rhetoric occupies in the university as a whole—in our writing, our research, our daily conversations, and ultimately, our careers.

We help students to see themselves, and each other, as researchers and producers of knowledge.

A primary emphasis in our Rhetoric courses is to show students how to value and inhabit their roles as writers and researchers who contribute knowledge to an academic community. One important means of fostering this awareness is to encourage students to learn from one another in a collaborative and challenging academic environment.

Thinking about Our Rhetoric Courses in Relation to Other Models of Writing Instruction:

Many who teach in our first-year Rhetoric program have not taken a first-year course in research-based academic writing. Your college may not have had a comparable requirement, or you may have placed out of the course due to AP credit, or you may have taken a literature-based composition course in your college career instead. Or, you may have taught first-year writing elsewhere, and have a model of what it is from the practices in that program. Here are some observations about first-year Rhetoric at the University of Illinois that might help distinguish it from other models of writing instruction on other campuses:

Rhetoric 101, 102, 105 and 233 focus on writing as a process, with any grammar instruction as supplemental and something that arises in the context of student writing, not the focus of the class.

While grammar is, of course, important—and we anticipate you will act as a resource for grammatical questions and offer explanations as needed, whether in large group, small group, or individual settings—we ask that you neither give students high-stakes tests on grammatical principles nor make grammatical mistakes the foundation for a significant portion of a particular paper's final grade. You will face issues of grammar and usage in the classroom, from both native English speakers and English language learners, but we ask that you address these issues supportively, rather than punitively, and above all, not see their correction as the primary purpose of the Rhetoric class as a whole.

Rhetoric courses here teach source-based, academic writing instead of "modes" of writing, creative nonfiction, or personal narrative.

A modes course is where students might spend two weeks on argument, two weeks on description, two weeks on comparison and contrast, and so forth. While your course may include assignments influenced by elements of personal writing or a particular mode, the overall focus of the course should be on helping students write in source-based academic genres effectively and thoughtfully. Our Rhetoric courses teach students to write well in college in part by helping them comprehend and respond to the words and ideas of others, and by helping them to learn that artificial separation

of rhetorical actions (i.e., the modes approach) is not how writing generally operates inside or outside the university community. Similarly, while we believe that students' personal experiences necessarily inform the kinds of research they do, we ask that instructors focus the primary high-stakes work of the course on academic, source-based genres.

Rhetoric courses here offer opportunities to engage with a variety of argument-based texts that use, and can be used as, sources.

Our Rhetoric students read primarily non-fiction, argument-based texts in pursuit of creating their own non-fiction, argument-based texts. While there may be a reason for an occasional text that is literary in nature, or the occasional narrative film or video, especially as primary sources for discussion, the substantial portion of the course's assigned readings/viewings should be non-fiction, argument-based texts like those we ask our students to compose, or texts about writing and writing processes that help our students consider their writing.

Rhetoric courses here are fundamentally *writing* courses that should allow students from a variety of backgrounds and with a variety of interests a point of entry into the work of the course, and readings and assignments should be pitched to an attainable level for undergraduates.

We in the Rhetoric office know from experience that it's very easy to teach one's interests—whether we realize we are doing so or not—because these are the subjects we know and that are dear to us. We also know that our enthusiasm for scholarly material can sometimes disguise the difficulty of material. In our rhetoric courses we have to be careful if/when we adopt a theme, when we write assignments, and when we choose readings not to obscure the fact that the course is a writing course, to focus too narrowly on a particular worldview or critical lens, or to pitch the course toward our fellow scholars and not to undergraduate writers. We believe that it is most productive for first-year writers to experience a range of academic voices and perspectives, typically through texts that are not "easy" or facile in nature, but are more accessible to undergraduates, who will come from all majors and areas of interest. So, we ask that you choose your readings (whether from a supplemental reader, our Compass database selections, or your own selection of articles and texts), and your overall course theme (if applicable) with your students in mind, pitching the level slightly above what you think they can accomplish—so that they will, as composition studies scholar Mike Rose would say, "float to the mark you set."

Finally, Rhetoric courses here should be challenging, but not impossible.

Our rhetoric courses are designed to help students succeed in college, not to identify underprepared students and fail them. We do not expect you to "screen out" students in pursuit of failing them for the sake of testing their mettle; however, we *do* want you to evaluate them with appropriate rigor and assess their work honestly and fairly. Rhetoric 101, 102, 105 and 233 are not courses meant to keep students from progressing further through the university, but they also should not be regarded as an automatic *A* for all who enter them.

Similarly, we must *teach* the students we are given—not vigorously work to re-place them into a higher or lower course because of our perception of them, or into an ESL course simply because they are second-language. We know that placement mechanisms are not perfect, but we also lose an opportunity to teach when we spend time second-guessing whether a student is in the "right" course. We suggest that you offer your students a first-day or first week diagnostic writing assignment to see what their strengths and weaknesses are as a means of adapting teaching

strategies. Unless there are other circumstances or information available, we must strive to work with all students as part of our classes, and to the best of our abilities.

Who Are Our Students?

Your class will be comprised almost entirely of first-year students who must meet the university's Composition I requirement for graduation, although you may occasionally have students who were unable to take it their first year (classes were full or they were inaccurately advised) or transfer students who have yet to meet their Comp I general education requirement. These students, typically, have graduated in the top ten percent of their high school class, and have earned ACT or SAT scores in the ninetieth percentile or better. While the in-state population includes students from farms and rural communities, from the smaller cities, and from inner-city Chicago, roughly three of every four in-state students will call one of the Chicago suburbs home. Rhetoric 105 classes often simultaneously feature students with diverse backgrounds as well as a dominant suburban middle-class culture. Rhetoric 101-102 classes, in contrast, often include a larger proportion of students who identify as minorities and students from small or underfunded high schools.

An important thing for you to know about our Rhetoric students is that over the past ten years, the undergraduate international student population at Illinois has more than tripled—rising from 1,554 in 2006 to 5,537 in 2016. Much of this growth is due to a rise in Chinese international undergraduates, whose population grew from 72 in 2006 to 3,289 in 2016. The university historically has also had a large South Korean and Indian international student population.

What you can already glean from these statistics is that you may have a significant number of international, English language learners in your Rhetoric courses. This is a particular pedagogical challenge that may differ from other campuses at which you have taught, or where you have been a student. A number of international students will be placed into ESL writing classes here, depending on metrics including their TOEFL scores and English Placement Test (EPT) scores. Yet there will still be a number of international students who place into your Rhetoric courses, and they will still exhibit second-language characteristics in their writing (and speech). Students who come to us as second-language speakers never *stop* being so, and proficiency in a second language can take up to ten years or more—under immersive circumstances. So, as you construct your course readings and assignments, think about how you will approach the class as a whole and keep in mind this substantial population of students and how its needs may differ from those of your US-born, native English-speaking students also inhabiting your course.

Finally, please note that not all first-year students take Rhetoric, as a number of students earn credit for their Composition I requirement based on their ACT or SAT score or AP text. Furthermore, some students elect to take Speech Communications (COM 111 and 112) to fulfill their Comp I requirement instead.

Course Descriptions and Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs)

What follows are descriptions for our Rhetoric program courses (Rhetoric 101, 102, 105, and 233) as well as those courses' goals for student learning. Most of you will be teaching Rhet 105 in your first year, but these other Rhetoric courses listed are important to our program, and help inform how Rhet 105 fits into our larger menu of offerings.

It is very common in universities today for multi-section courses such as Rhetoric 101, 102, 105, and 233 to have something called Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs) that unify these sections and provide common language to explain what the course will achieve, for students and other stakeholders. The SLOs for our Rhetoric courses are designed to help instructors build their own unique courses around common goals shared by the instructors in the writing program as a whole. These SLOs are also designed to articulate *what we want students to have learned by the end of the course.* Students may have learned these skills or competencies at various levels—achieving a SLO does not necessarily mean mastering it at an "A" level. But we do expect that all students who get a *passing grade* in a Rhetoric course at UIUC will have achieved the SLOs listed for that course, at some level of competency.

These SLOs should be the guiding principles around which you build your more specific writing and reading assignments, and design and develop the trajectory of your section(s) of Rhetoric 101, 102, 105, or 233. They should also appear in your syllabus verbatim (see our Syllabus Templates). Below, we have included the catalog description for each of our Rhetoric courses and the corresponding SLOs for that course.

Please note that the SLOs for Rhetoric 102 and Rhetoric 105 are *identical*. This is because we consider these to be equivalent courses. Students who place into the Rhetoric 101-102 sequence will thus be offered a more "developmental" writing course in Rhetoric 101, and then the standard writing course akin to Rhetoric 105 in the second semester, in the form of Rhetoric 102. The difference between Rhetoric 102 and Rhetoric 105, then, is that Rhetoric 102 also comes with individual student tutorials, to support those students who placed into the lower 101-102 course sequence.

Rhetoric 101: Principles of Writing

Students who place into Rhetoric 101 earned a 39 or below on their combined ACT English and Reading sub-scores or a 200-520 on their SAT Evidence Based Reading and Writing sub-score. The Rhet 101-102 sequence includes half hour weekly tutorials to support these students outside the classroom.

Catalog Description: Offers instruction in structuring academic, argumentative essays, including how to develop thesis statements and use evidence across different types of writing. This course is the first semester of a two-semester sequence (Rhetoric 101-102) that fulfills the campus Composition I general education requirement. This course includes weekly individual tutorials. Credit is not given for both RHET 101 and RHET 105. Prerequisite: Placement in RHET 101. This course satisfies the General Education Criteria for: Composition I

Rhetoric 101 SLOs: After completing **Rhetoric 101: Principles of Writing**, students will be able to:

1. Distinguish between the conventions of academic and non-academic texts (print and/or multimodal).
2. Summarize, interpret, and evaluate arguments found in non-fiction texts (print and/or multimodal).
3. Compose argument-driven texts that respond to exigent issues, problems, or debates.
4. Reframe their writing in response to different rhetorical situations.
5. Describe and reflect on their own writing processes, including revisions made in consideration of peer and/or instructor feedback.

Rhetoric 102: Principles of Research

Rhet 102 is a continuation of Rhet 101, in that students must take both of these courses to complete their Composition I requirement for graduation. But Rhet 102 very closely mimics the work of Rhet 105, including the SLOs. Students in Rhet 102 are also supported by half hour weekly tutorials with their instructors each week.

Catalog Description: Offers continued instruction in structuring academic, argumentative essays; concentrating on the use of primary and secondary sources as evidence in research-based arguments. This is the second semester of a two-semester sequence (RHET 101-RHET 102) that fulfills the campus Composition I general education requirement. This course includes weekly individual tutorials. Credit is not given for both RHET 102 and RHET 105. Prerequisite: RHET 101. This course satisfies the General Education Criteria for: Composition I

Rhetoric 102 SLOs: After completing **Rhetoric 102: Principles of Research**, students will be able to:

1. Identify and explain the role rhetorical appeals and the rhetorical triangle can play in non-fiction print and/or multimodal texts.
2. Create and sustain across one or more pieces of writing a focused research question that responds to an exigent issue, problem, or debate.
3. Compose cogent, research-based arguments, in print-based and/or multimodal texts, for specialist and/or non-specialist audiences.
4. Locate, accurately cite (through summary, paraphrasing, and quoting) and critically evaluate primary and secondary sources.
5. Demonstrate knowledge of writing as a process, including consideration of peer and/or instructor feedback, in one or more pieces of writing from initial draft to final revision.

Rhetoric 105: Writing and Research

Rhet 105 is our main composition course at UIUC; students who earned combined ACT English and Reading sub-score of 40 to 63 or an SAT EBRW sub-score between 530 and 690 are placed into this course. (Students who receive an ACT combined English and Reading sub-score of 64 or higher or an SAT EBRW sub-score of 700 or higher earn credit for their Composition I requirement.)

Catalog Description: Offers instruction in research-based writing and the construction of academic, argumentative essays that use primary and secondary sources as evidence. This course fulfills the Campus Composition I general education requirement. Credit is not given for both RHET 105 and any of these other Comp I courses: RHET 101, RHET 102, CMN 111 or CMN 112. Prerequisite: an ACT English/Reading combined sub-score between 40-63 or an SAT EBRW score between 530-690. This course satisfies the General Education Criteria for: Composition I

Rhetoric 105 SLOs: After completing **Rhetoric 105: Principles of Writing and Research**, students will be able to:

1. Identify and explain the role rhetorical appeals and the rhetorical triangle can play in non-fiction print and/or multimodal texts.
2. Create and sustain across one or more pieces of writing a focused research question that responds to an exigent issue, problem, or debate.
3. Compose cogent, research-based arguments, in print-based and/or multimodal texts, for specialist and/or non-specialist audiences.
4. Locate, accurately cite (through summary, paraphrasing, and quoting) and critically evaluate primary and secondary sources.
5. Demonstrate knowledge of writing as a process, including consideration of peer and/or instructor feedback, in one or more pieces of writing from initial draft to final revision.

Rhetoric 233: Advanced Rhetoric and Composition

Rhetoric 233 is taken by two kinds of students: Those who are seeking to fulfill their Advanced Composition requirement for graduation, and those who have partial transfer credit toward the Composition I requirement, but need an additional course to completely satisfy that requirement. Thus, this course serves mainly sophomores and above, from transfer and internal populations. Some of these students will not have taken Rhet 105 at UIUC, which makes it a tricky curriculum to design and navigate; hence the more advanced SLOs attached to it, below.

Catalog Description: Offers advanced level instruction in developing research-based arguments of moderate complexity within a special topics format. It includes introduction to the use of multimodal or other non-print resources as evidence in written arguments. Prerequisite: Completion of campus Composition I general education requirement. This course satisfies the General Education Criteria for: Advanced Composition

Rhetoric 233 SLOs: After completing **Rhetoric 233: Advanced Rhetoric and Composition**, students will be able to:

1. Evaluate the effectiveness of claims and advanced rhetorical strategies employed in complex arguments in non-fiction print and/or multimodal texts.
2. Situate their ideas in conversation with relevant discourse communities through appropriate source selection, evaluation, and integration (including proper citation practices).
3. Compose arguments in print and/or multimodal texts for a specific discourse community that synthesize multiple and/or competing perspectives.

4. Engage in writing as a recursive process which includes reflection and response to feedback, and that culminates in publication within a peer community.

A Little More About Placement into Rhetoric Courses . . .
As noted above, students can place into Rhetoric 105 (our main course) or Rhetoric 101-102 (our "developmental" writing course sequence). That placement is determined by a student's combined ACT English and readings sub-score or their SAT EBRW score, as follows:

- ACT Reading + English scores of 64-72
  or SAT EBRW score of 700-800: Exemption from Rhetoric 105
- ACT Reading + English scores of 40-63
  or SAT EBRW score of 530-690: Placement into Rhetoric 105
- ACT Reading + English scores of 2-39
  or SAT EBRW score of 200-520: Placement into Rhetoric 101-102

We recognize that the ACT and SAT placement systems are highly imperfect. But at this moment, we have neither the person-power nor the resources to implement, for example, a modified directed self-placement system, or a portfolio-based placement system. So, we continue to use the ACT combined English and Reading sub-scores or the SAT Evidence-Based Reading and Writig scores, knowing that some students may have benefitted from a different placement (whether higher or lower) that a standardized exam cannot determine due to its lack of nuance and limited assessment of true, process-based student writing abilities.

Special Rhetoric Sections

Some Rhetoric 105 sections are designed for special purposes or populations, such as those sections constructed to serve the needs of specific student populations who reside in an on-campus, undergraduate Living and Learning Community (or LLC). Interested instructors may indicate their desire to teach one of these special sections by selecting it on their teaching preference form each semester. Selections are normally made on the basis of seniority and availability.

Global Crossroads

Each semester we offer one section of Rhetoric 105 at the Global Crossroads Living and Learning Community (LLC) in the Pennsylvania Avenue Residence Halls (PAR). Undergraduate students at the Global Crossroads LLC usually possess a strong interest in international issues. These LLC students usually are almost evenly comprised of both American-born and international individuals. Global Crossroads instructors design course sections based on international topics that emphasize cross-cultural themes, keeping in mind that students outside the Global Crossroad cohort may also enroll in these sections. You can find more information on the Global Crossroads program at:
http://housing.illinois.edu/living-options/living-learning-communities/global-crossroads

Unit 1

This Rhetoric 105 section is held in Allen Hall, an undergraduate residence hall that seeks to construct a small-college environment encouraging interaction between students outside class meetings. Students in Unit 1 are accustomed to small class sizes and having more access to their instructors than might be found across campus. Enrollment is usually restricted to residents of this residence hall. Other courses besides Rhetoric 105 that are held at Unit 1 are customarily

humanities-based. There is one Rhetoric 105 section offered for Unit 1 each semester. You can find out more information about Unit 1 at:
http://www.housing.illinois.edu/living-options/living-learning-communities/unit-one

Weston Exploration

This Rhetoric 105 section is held in the Living-Learning Community (LLC) at Weston Hall on Peabody Drive. Students at Weston are those who may most likely belong to the Division of General Studies and who are in the process of discovering their interests and selecting a major field of study, with occasional exceptions. Courses offered at Weston Exploration represent various humanities and general education courses. You can find out more information on Weston Exploration at:
http://www.housing.illinois.edu/living-options/living-learning-communities/weston-exploration

Building Your Own Course

The syllabus templates provided along with this handbook provide you with a standard format for the structure of the syllabus for your course. Beyond the program's shared guidelines and policies, you should construct the more specific content (writing assignments, daily activities, readings) of your own course as guided by the Student Learning Outcomes.

Required Text and Optional Supplemental Texts

I Write: A Writing Guide for the Undergraduate Rhetoric Program at the University of Illinois is the required rhetoric program textbook for Rhetoric 102 and 105. The textbook is authored by instructors in the rhetoric program and tailored to our courses at UIUC. *I Write* will help students think about the construction of arguments; the use of rhetorical terms; the incorporation of sources as evidence; and best strategies for building and sustaining a position in a debate, in writing or in other settings. Additionally, the textbook contains several sample student essays from our Rhetoric courses.

You do not need to order the textbook through the bookstore, as students will purchase the textbook through the webstore link: http://go.illinois.edu/RHET . This link is on the syllabus template, and all instructors should include it on their syllabus. Students pay one price and receive both the digital eText and the print versions of the textbook. They buy it online, receive automatic access to the eText, and then pick up their physical copy from IUB. Please encourage your students to pick up the physical copy.

The *I Write* textbook will teach students the principles of writing, such as rhetoric, argument, and research. It can be distinguished from a reader, which includes essays and articles for discussion, and a handbook, which focuses on the structure of writing in various genres as well as grammar, usage, and style. If you would like to supplement the textbook with a reader, handbook, or secondary textbook, you may order other textbooks, pending programmatic approval. The rhetoric program houses a selection of exam copies in EB 294 that instructors should feel free to peruse.

I Write is designed for use in Rhetoric 102 and Rhetoric 105. Rhetoric 101 and Rhetoric 233 instructors should select a textbook for their course.

Recommended Texts for Rhetoric 101

See the Rhetoric 101-102 Instructor Handbook for these recommendations.

Recommended Texts for Rhetoric 233

Wysocki, Anne Francis and Dennis A. Lynch. *Compose, Design, Advocate.* 3rd Ed. Pearson, 2018. Print. ISBN 978-0-13-412274-8.

This rhetoric works well for a course with a new media approach. It focuses heavily on audience and context when composing across different media, and introduces principles of detailed analysis of multimodal compositions (including print). It includes exercises, but will require supplemental materials in order to meet the course SLOs. Available as a print or e-book.

Rosenwasser, David and Jill Stephen. *Writing Analytically with Readings.* 3rd Ed. Cengage, 2015. ISBN 978-1-285-43647-0.

This text explores writing as a recursive thought process (with a heavy emphasis on analytical thinking). Readings are framed with discussion questions that go beyond mere comprehension of content. The book includes exercises, but will require supplementary materials to meet all SLOs, especially SLO #1, which focuses on advanced rhetorical strategies. Available as a print text or e-book with or without readings (without readings is in its 8th edition and has a different ISBN).

Ramage, John D., John C. Bean, and June Johnson. *Writing Arguments: A Rhetoric with Readings.* 10th Ed. Pearson, 2016. ISBN 978-0-321-90673-1.

Writing Arguments reinforces and adds new types of argumentation to students' knowledge (for example, Toulmin), and reviews and goes beyond essential concepts of rhetoric by introducing more advanced rhetorical concepts (enthymeme, stasis). It includes some readings but will require substantial supplementary readings, as it is mostly text. Available in print form only.

Recommended Handbooks

Bullock, Richard, Michal Brody, and Francine Weinberg. The Little Seagull Handbook with exercises. 3rd Ed. Norton, 2016. ISBN 978-0-393-60264-7. (Also available without exercises.)

Lunsford, Andrea A. *Easy Writer with Exercises.* 6th Ed. Bedford/St. Martin's, 2017. ISBN 978-1-319-07749-5.

Assignment Design

Once you have selected your texts for your course, you will want to start thinking about designing core assignments to structure the semester's lessons and activities. As you construct these assignments, first here are some terms to be aware of, for use in your planning:

High Stakes versus Low Stakes

"High-stakes" assignments refer to the assignments that will go through multiple drafts, instructor and peer comments, and which need to be evaluated for a grade. These assignments count toward the required 25 pages of revised writing each Rhet 105 student must complete. "Low-stakes" assignments are the exercises, the homework, and/or other work that you might mark (if you mark it at all!) for completion and/or use for formative assessment. Low-stakes work is often characterized also by in-class writing, small group work, and worksheets or exercises completed in class regarding specific skills (for example, MLA style or quoting or paraphrasing).

Student Learning Outcomes

The SLOs, as noted above, create the boundaries within which Rhetoric instructors are allowed to build, play, construct, and reconstruct their individual visions for a course. First, locate the boundaries and make a list of the tangibles. In other words, what is it that we're asking students to do, and with what tools? Make a list, re-read, notice, do whatever works best for you to identify what is absolutely required for all instructors and students of Rhetoric 101/102/105/233. By the end, what should students KNOW and be able to DO? What are the assignments you want to create that will measure students' achievement of these SLOs?

For each assignment you design, you must make the connection between what you're asking students to do and the SLO it meets. If you can't make this connection, then the work might not be right for Rhetoric 105.

Backward Design Principle

The basic principle of backward design is to start at the end: before thinking about daily work, readings, etc., you should imagine and create the final project. For many of you, this might be a research project, for which you could ask these questions: What type of research project? What are the boundaries? Will there be a common theme? Will the research build throughout the semester?

Once you have imagined your final project(s), the next step in backward design is thinking through this statement: "In order to compose a successful [final project], students will need to…" However you complete this sentence becomes the trajectory of your course, which is all building toward successful completion of the final project.

- Decide what order of things makes best sense.
- Decide how much time each should take.
- Create units, design assignments, assign readings, etc. to support students in whatever they need to know and be able to do in order to be successful at the final project.

Backward design should be employed over multiple layers, beginning with the overall final project for the semester. Then, consider how other high-stakes assignments will contribute to successful completion of the final project and imagine them. From there, move back to the day-to-day and activity-by-activity planning. The questions remain the same:

- In order to complete a successful [high-stakes assignment], students will need to…
- In order to complete a successful [daily work activity], students will need to…
- In order to complete a successful [homework assignment], students will need to…

Creating Assignment Prompts

Each High-Stakes assignment prompt should include:

1. Statement of assignment purpose and the SLOs this assignment meets; assignments may meet one or more of the SLOs, and multiple assignments may address the same SLO(s).
2. Directions: what do students need to do, and in what order?
3. Due date and instructions for how/when/where to submit the assignment.
4. Formatting and length expectations: how many pages/words, what margins, what other stylistic or formal guidelines should students follow?
5. Evaluation stakes, criteria, and/or rubric.
6. *Optional:* Prompts can also include advice from you to the student (process, strategies, guiding questions, etc.).

When you distribute the prompt, it can be helpful to allow time for:

- An in-class explanation and discussion of the prompt
- Students to ask questions
- Reading, analyzing, and discussing successful samples of the assignment (Remember that *I Write* has sample student essays, so even if this is your first time teaching you will have sample material you can use for many, if not most, assignments.)

When writing the prompts for your assignments, consider the rhetorical situation: the prompt is a sort of argument for the value of the work you're asking students to do. Additionally, what information does your audience need and want? What will be helpful to them as they complete an assignment?

The prompt should be as clear and concise as possible about your expectations, the stakes, and requirements. It should also be a prompt, a nudge, a start, a place from which they can begin to imagine they want to demonstrate that they can do what you're asking them to do. Finally, write your prompts so that they contain all the information students need, but are not so text-dense as to overwhelm students.

Tips for Writing Assignments (and Helping Students Respond to Assignments)

1. *Be thoughtful in design, and keep the SLOs in mind.* Spend time selecting and formulating your assignments, and for high-stakes work, consider how your assignments meet our Rhetoric SLOs for the particular course. Well-developed assignments are more likely to yield successful student writing than are topics thrown together at the last minute, or without thought to the lessons and activities that have built up to that assignment. Try to anticipate how students will handle a topic; they may respond in ways you hadn't counted on.
2. *Scaffold your assignments.* Use the time in-class to teach what students need to know to produce successful high-stakes assignments, and always make sure there is a relationship between in-class work and out-of-class work (and make that relationship clear and explicit to students); encourage your students to talk about (and write about) their assignments in class. This is related to teaching writing processes; schedule time to teach a number and variety of prewriting, drafting, and revising activities. Don't assume your students will already have the skills that they need to complete successful high-stakes academic writing (thesis statements, source integration and citation, argument and supporting evidence, primary and secondary

sources, and more); if it's a part of the evaluation criteria and learning outcomes, make space to teach it before they will be evaluated on it.

3. *Time your assignments well.* Don't ask your students to hand in Essay #2 if you still haven't returned Essay #1, graded and commented upon; they deserve to see what they did well, and not-so-well, on their last paper before they submit another one. Try to return regular essays within one week; two weeks is reasonable for the longer research papers. Delays in returning graded papers considerably weaken the impact of your feedback.
4. *Use varied and interesting topics.* Provide a choice of prompts for a single assignment, or allow your students to create their own subtopics (within reason). Be sure to devise prompts that make clear the rhetorical situation at hand, and/or ask students to respond to and explore a particular rhetorical situation through the completion of the assignment. Find out what interests your students and use their suggestions whenever practical, particularly when you have a significant number of second-language learners in your classes—which almost all of you will. Take into account that your own cultural background may not be the same as your students'.
5. *Prevent plagiarism.* When you borrow topics or prompts from other instructors, try to tailor them to your own purposes and avoid using a borrowed assignment verbatim. Consider requiring students to turn in their drafts with the final copy of each essay. Original thinking for topics, combined with sufficient guidance during the writing process, should diminish the possibility of plagiarism—though it will not eliminate it completely (see the section on Academic Integrity that appears later in this handbook for what to do when students *do* plagiarize, or you suspect that they have). Many students simply don't recognize the difference between their own writing and someone else's: it's your job to teach that very important aspect of academic writing.
6. *Allow for student feedback.* Informal in-class writing provides your students with a chance to express how they feel about their writing assignments, which topics they want to write about, and how they see their own writing as part of the course goals. Some instructors ask their students to write a paragraph about the essay they're about to turn in, assessing its merits or describing their writing process; students then submit this paragraph with the essay. This is called *meta-writing* and can be very effective in not only helping students through the writing process, but keeping track of how much work they are doing on their current essay project, and with what pacing.
7. *Expose students to each other's writing.* Ask your students for permission to reproduce their essays for class discussion and sample texts the next time you teach this essay, or simply do it anonymously (don't restrict yourself to what you consider a "good" essay; use acceptable and poorly executed papers as well, but be kind and development-focused in your commentary). Use peer review for as many high-stakes writing assignments as possible. In addition to receiving multiple people's feedback on their writing, this practice also gives students the opportunity to see other examples. Additionally, the rhetoric program runs a Student Essay Contest each semester. The sample student essays in our textbook come out of this contest, and students have the opportunity to win prizes for their work. Encourage students to submit their writing to the contest, as it gives them the opportunity to publish and share their work with a larger audience.

Lesson Planning and Daily Activities

While preparing for each class period, try to have the following questions answered before you walk into class:

- What do I want students to learn by the end of the class?
- What concepts or skills will each activity reinforce and how does this fit into the larger goals of the course?
- Do my methods match the material?
- How much time will I spend on each section?
- What materials and resources will I need?
- If plans *A* fall flat, what is my plan *B*?
- What will I do if there is time left over?

You also should think about breaking your class period into shorter segments, usually 2-4 per period, depending on the goals for the day, the actual activities, and the duration of the class (50 or 75 minutes). As you create an "agenda" for the day, try to provide a variety of activities (which in turn helps students remain alert). Give an indication of your daily plans on your **course calendar**; indicate topics, goals, and/or activities for the day, in addition to listing homework and due dates.

A Sample Class Plan: 75 minute class (TR or MW):

- 5 minutes: Lay out the agenda for the day to your students (this may sound self-explanatory to you, but it is crucial for the students' understanding of the course as a whole); if possible, explain how today's lesson relates to previous and/or future work; collect homework; use the blackboard to assign homework and/or outline the day's agenda. If you can, come to class a bit early: this is the time when some of your students will approach you with questions.
- 5-10 minutes: Assign a writing exercise; have the students respond to a question on the material they have read for today.
- 20 minutes: Lead a discussion on an assigned reading (consider asking students to prepare a question of their own for the reading, and call on students randomly to hear their questions, posed to the class).
- 10 minutes: Present a mini-lecture about new rhetorical material.
- 15 minutes: Assign an exercise in conjunction with this new material.
- 5 minutes: Explain a new writing assignment.
- 5-10 minutes: Ask students to sketch out a plan for meeting the goals set by the new assignment.
- 5-10 minutes: Ask students to work in pairs, sharing and explaining the approaches they've sketched.
- 5 minutes: Synthesize (have students summarize what has happened in class today, or summarize class material in closing mini-lecture).

As you can see, the above plan imagines that activities might take anywhere from 75 to 90 minutes. You don't need to use all of these activities, nor is this a plan you should follow every day (or even every week); this lesson plan suggests earlier in the semester, before students are knee-deep in drafting and revising a high-stakes writing assignment. You'll have a better sense of the pace of your students, and of the class as a whole, after you are in the classroom with them for a few weeks. If earlier activities run long, the next class can start with the activities devoted to exploring and discussing the tasks of the new writing assignment. Over-planning, as a rule, never hurts.

Teaching Methods

In general, our Rhetoric courses are discussion- or workshop-based, student-centered learning environments. There are times when different teaching methods are called for, so here is a quick overview of when you might employ a particular teaching technique and to what ends.

When Should You Lecture?

Lecturing can be useful in small doses throughout the semester, especially when you want to:

- Convey material that cannot be easily integrated in discussion, or about which you have expertise
- Clarify difficult concepts
- Provide background information for essays
- Synthesize previously covered material (particularly complex concepts).

Lectures are best delivered in the form of mini-lessons, such as in 8-12 minute blocks. Consider some way to augment visually what you are saying: the blackboard, computer/internet projection, or a handout to outline your main points. Also consider giving students time to ask questions before, during, and after the lecture, and/or following up on the lecture with small group work that reinforces what you are trying to teach.

When Should You Assign In-Class Writing?

In-class writing should be a significant part of your class design, particularly because first and foremost, Rhetoric 101, 102, 105, and 233 are *writing* courses. Consider assigning in-class writing in order to:

- Help students to become less afraid of (and more practiced in) writing as a regular activity
- Brainstorm, draft, and revise parts of their high-stakes writing assignments
- Get a "progress" report from students (or student groups) on ongoing assignments or projects
- Give students low-stakes assignments that you glance over rather than analyze, and that are generative rather than summative
- Allow students to write to each other (peer review; for more on this, see below) and ask questions they might not want to raise in front of the whole class
- Help students synthesize discussion material (for example, asking them to write a paragraph at the end of a large group discussion of a reading, and then share their impressions)

When Should You Use Peer Review?

The short answer: for every graded, high-stakes essay assignment (or equivalent). Peer review should be a regular part of your course, and a means by which students practice making their writing more public, beyond the instructor's assessment and evaluation. In peer review, students offer written and verbal comments on each other's papers, either in small groups or in pairs. Best practices in composition studies dictate that peer review be a visible component of a first-year

writing course, in order to help students practice writing for multiple audiences and break out of the teacher-student dichotomy that can trap student writing into simply being a performative act.

It is critical that students have the opportunity to solicit and produce peer feedback throughout the entire semester (not just once or twice). Peer review can happen:

- in and outside class
- in teams of two, groups of 3-4, or during whole-class workshops (e.g. with writing projected for all to read and discuss)
- in response to all kinds of writing and all stages of the writing process
- in informal discussions and formal review letters
- with and without instructor-led discussions

Here are some additional guidelines for a productive peer review:

- Set up specific rules for the process and give students a handout with prompts to guide their responses to peers. Create specific questions that require a response beyond yes/no or an assessment of quality (good/bad/indifferent) and also require students read, rather than just gloss over, their fellow students' paper(s).
- De-emphasize the correction of mechanical errors, and focus on the elements of writing that you are working on at that particular time of the semester, such as argument, elements of rhetoric, paragraph organization, source integration, and other larger issues. Make these the content of your peer review worksheet questions. Consider centering the peer response questions on the essay evaluation criteria.
- Consider whether you want to assign peer review groups or let students choose their own, and whether you want students to work with different partners in each session, or instead prefer to create permanent writing groups or pairs.
- Monitor the class carefully during peer workshops, going from group to group, to ensure that each student receives helpful responses. This can be an excellent time to make notes about individual students that can be used to calculate participation grades later. Don't be afraid to ask groups to report on their process and progress.
- Evaluate peer commentary as part of the participation grade, or as part of the essay grade itself (e.g., weighting it as a percentage of the revision effort). Require that all students turn in written comments on all peer reviews, and include their own peer reviews (of their own work) when they submit the final version of their essay(s).

When Should You Give Quizzes?

Quizzes are an evaluation tool in many college-level courses that test mastery of content. Since our Rhetoric courses are less about content mastery than about improvement of students' writing, reading, and critical thinking skills, you will want to use quizzes sparingly, if at all, in order to ascertain:

- Whether your students are *doing* the out-of-class work you assign. Consider open-book or open-note quizzes on assigned readings, which can also teach students good note-taking habits, and can help stimulate class discussion once the quizzes are collected.
- Whether students *understand* the reading, which will in turn help them with their own writing. A quiz with no grade attached can allow you to see if students understand key

concepts from an article or essay, and/or whether they are able to use those concepts in their own writing.

When Should You Use Large Group Discussion?

Discussions involve students in dialogue not only with you, but also with each other and with the text or materials at hand. You should consider discussing the foundation of your course pedagogy, in order to:

- Give students practice in testing their ideas on a broad audience
- Create a mini *agora* in your classroom (i.e., where rhetors gathered in ancient times to debate and interact regarding important issues)
- Involve students in their own learning process—becoming active, rather than passive, learners
- Dissect readings or other texts under review, with students (not just you) helping one another with interpretation and analysis
- Talk about the process and product(s) of writing, and writing as a regular activity in their lives as college students, and beyond.

Tips for Discussion

As you devise questions that will lead off and guide discussion, anticipate likely student responses to them, and then think about how you can build on these responses to further the discussion. Remember to have learning goals outlined for the discussion in advance and understand—and make explicit to your students—how they connect to the class trajectory at large (the high-stakes assignment, the rhetorical principles you are studying, etc.). A fabulous class discussion may make you and your students feel good, but it first and foremost needs to contribute to the class learning about *writing.*

1. Think in advance about how to sequence your questions, moving from the simple to the complex, from the concrete to the abstract. One might start discussion of a reading, for example, by asking verifiable questions about its content (Where and what is the thesis? What is the first major line of support for this claim?), then move to questions about its rhetorical strategies (What is the effect of delaying rebuttal to the very end? What would have been the effect of offering rebuttal at once, as the last essay we read did?), then ask students to identify and test the argument's warrants, and conclude by asking about its implications or potential applications (if we accept the author's argument, what should we be doing in response to X)? Good questions sometimes fail to elicit response because they are asked too soon, before students have built up a collective understanding of a reading's structure and purpose. Phrasing questions is something of an art, one that you will develop over time in your teaching.
2. Students may display a distant understanding of an assigned essay, or respond with outright hostility to complex essays, especially in the first few weeks. Few students, after all, will have had experience reading the kinds of material we assign, particularly complex, non-fiction writing; few will recognize the value of taking notes as they read, or of rereading, unless we teach these practices. Many will be inclined to skip passages they don't immediately understand. Often when a student says a reading is "boring" she means "I didn't understand (some or all of) it." By featuring those passages, by inviting students

to unpack complex ideas and demanding that they contend with the tough sentences, we do them a valuable service.

3. Make it clear that you expect the students to listen to each other without interrupting. If a student is particularly disruptive—and this is seldom the case—talk to him or her individually. Please remember that you do not have to put up with undisciplined behavior. Contact your peer mentor or Rhetoric Program administrative staff if a student prevents the class and you from working comfortably.
4. If your classroom allows for it, consider asking your students to sit in a circle for discussion. In that way everyone can see everyone else, and no one can hide behind another person's back. More students are likely to contribute to discussion if arranged in a circle than when they are seated in rows or even pods. Further, circular seating fosters direct address among students. In the HAB classrooms, we have the advantage of having tables that are on wheels and can be moved into groups or a large circle at will.
5. Cultural dynamics of gender, race, and class will shape classroom discussion. Studies of conversational style, for example, illustrate how gender figures in the pattern and content of turn-taking. For example, if a student prefaces a turn with "This may sound stupid, but . . .," this student may have no expectation of her contribution being doubted as inadequate. Instead, she may be aiming to give needed ground to other speakers, to provide space for continued conversation. It is your job to recognize such subtle degrees of miscommunication and to intervene to keep discussion moving forward productively. Whatever the dynamic in your classroom, try to ensure that everyone has a chance to contribute and that no one feels threatened. And recognize, of course, that student perception of your own gender, race, and social position will also affect student response.
6. Encourage your students to ask questions. Apart from asking "Are there any questions?" you can make your request more specific: "Does anyone have any questions about the historical context of Tompkins' essay?" Don't just ask for questions as an afterthought or a signal that class is over. Make it clear that you are genuinely interested in their questions. Students who are truly confused about an issue may not ask questions because they don't know what questions to ask. Try phrasing potential questions for them ("Do you think Tompkins' statement about 'perspective' is clear? What if two people have different perspectives on a fact? Are we supposed to believe that the facts themselves are different for different people?"). If you feel that students respond to your questions well enough but aren't asking questions on their own, you can assign brief writing tasks (as homework, at the beginning of class, or even in the middle of a discussion) that ask them to generate questions posed by their reading and responses to the reading.
7. You can turn a student's question over to the class. Doing so may help students realize that you are not the sole source of knowledge in the room and can foster a collaborative spirit of inquiry. This response requires some tact, since you don't want students who ask questions to feel that their ignorance or lack of comprehension is on display.
8. Finally, you may choose to answer the question yourself. If you are stumped by a question, never fake an answer or avoid the question. Whether you possess an answer is less important than your ability to show students how to retrieve such information for themselves. Depending on the complexity and context of the question, you might suggest

how the student can find an answer, or look up the information yourself (an advantage of having wired classrooms, as well as students with portable technologies like cell phones and laptops!) and find it together as a class or report on it next class.

When Should You Use Small Group Work?

Teaching through small group activities has several advantages. The students get to know each other, they are exposed to each other's ideas, and they learn to use analytical terms easily in conversation. Consider small group work for these kinds of learning situations:

- Encouraging more quiet/reserved students to get engaged in the discussion and/or material
- Developing peer groups that will assist later with high-stakes activities (e.g., peer workshops on essay drafts)
- Breaking up the monotony of large group discussions in which one or more students dominate the conversation
- Focusing on deeper problems or questions that need multiple perspectives, and more time to answer/address
- Creating mini-projects or smaller components of a larger project, to be shared with the whole class for feedback
- Collaborative writing situations, for low-stakes work or scaffolding toward high-stakes assignments

Tips for Group Work

1. Group work resembles revision workshops in terms of planning; we can't just walk into the classroom and expect students to form balanced groups. Consider the dynamics of the classroom when you divide the class into small groups (place talkative students with quieter ones, etc.).
2. Group activities should be focused: for example, you can have students answer a number of study questions, distributing the questions among the groups so that every group comes up with, and reports on, a different set of answers. This gives the students practice in communicating their answers to others. Define the task as specifically as possible: "Discuss the readings by Malcolm X and Benjamin Franklin" will make for unfocused responses, since students won't be sure exactly what you want them to consider. You'll get more coherent answers with something like, "Select five books that Malcolm X mentions in this section from his autobiography, and explain how these specific books contribute to his overall thesis." To encourage students to keep at the task at hand, put a time limit on group work; fifteen minutes is usually more than enough. Appoint a scribe in each group, a student who is responsible for recording the group's answers in writing.
3. Don't neglect to have students *write* together in small groups: for instance, ask them to revise a sample paragraph for a particular audience. Another useful group activity is collaborative research. Have students work together to locate as much information from as many different sources as possible on a given topic. They'll be less intimidated by the library if they go there together and work the online catalogues as a group.
4. After the group work, have the students share their findings with the class. Keep an eye on the clock to make sure every group gets its say. If you run out of time, however, you

can still collect the groups' written statements, combine them into a handout, and use them during the next class hour.

Evaluation and Assessment

A topic of concern for almost all new instructors of writing is how to evaluate students' work. In this section, we provide some terms, tips, and strategies for approaching the assessment of student papers and other class work.

Assessment

Assessment is essentially noticing what's there, what isn't there, and offering meaningful feedback, typically without a grade, or with a provisional "draft" grade that is not counted in a final tally of the student's course grade. **Formative** assessment should be used by the student in the formation of knowledge, practice, and for future success. It provides opportunities for improvement of future work, and leaves open the possibility of change in a piece of writing based on the comments/feedback provided.

Formative assessment might look like:

- comments on drafts that point out ways students can and should improve;
- conferences with students;
- responses to and discussion of proposals.

Summative assessment happens at the end of the writing and learning process. It should reflect your assessment of student achievement at the summation of a project, a unit, or the semester. It might be comments that reflect the students' work, the check-marks on the rubric, or an end note on a paper. It will also typically include a grade that has some weight or bearing on a student's progress in the course.

Evaluation

Evaluation is the associated grade or other value that accompanies an assessment. Evaluation is different from assessment. Evaluation is the placing of a numbered/lettered/check-plussed value on student work. We make this distinction to note that a grade is not, in itself, an assessment—particularly if that grade is not accompanied by any kind of explanatory material or rubric, and "floats" without context. So, much of student work in our Rhetoric courses will require evaluation, but evaluation (grade) is not the only means by which student work must be responded to. Assessment—both formative and summative—must also be given to students, and on a regular basis, if they are expected to improve over the course of a semester. Our program expects that **instructors will respond to student writing with not just editing marks or a set of end comments, but also with reasonably meaningful marginal and end comments that include suggestions for improvement, particularly for drafts**. For revised (final) papers, comments may be more minimal, but should always indicate what kind of progress a student is making overall, particularly in terms of specific skills and competencies that were taught in that assignment, or within an assignment sequence. Remember that positive and encouraging comments are more meaningful to students than we sometimes realize, so you should also make an effort to give positive, in addition to negative, remarks.

Here are a few basic grading considerations as you begin to think about your students' work:

Set a schedule. Some people like to grade first thing in the morning, some in the evening. Some like to organize their grading by time (i.e., "I'll grade for three hours tonight"), others by papers (i.e., "I'll grade seven papers tonight"). After a stack or two, you'll get a sense of what works best for you. Most of the time, grading, say, 16-22 papers in one day is a bad experience and not fair to your students.

Know your criteria. If you've told students you are most concerned with the specificity of their thesis statements for Essay #1, then your comments and grading range should reflect that priority. Before you start grading papers, reread your assignment prompt and announced criteria, and think about how those criteria fit with the SLO(s); think about what you taught and what students practiced in the classes leading to the assignment. Only grade what you have taught; don't grade based on things you didn't ask for, or skills or competencies that students cannot be expected to have at this stage of the course.

Be selective but specific in your comments. You need not write down comments on every sentence or potential problem in an essay. Research shows that students cannot process too many comments on a single essay, and you don't have time to be exhaustive on every essay anyway. Identify and comment on the most significant issues and/or recurring problems. If possible, make those comments dialogic by asking questions rather than making statements. Design your comments from a reader's perspective ("as a reader, I was confused by this point. Did you mean X or Y? What might happen if you consider Z?").

Don't spend too much time on each paper. Try to limit yourself to no more than 15 minutes per major essay; later, you may get your time down to even less. We're not pushing you to set speed records with your grading, but we recognize that you will want to manage this time-consuming task so that you have time for your own work. If your first stack of papers takes a long time to complete, rest assured that you will quickly become more efficient and confident in grading. And if you've completed your comments on a paper but can't decide between a B- or a C+, make a note to yourself to go back to that paper later and determine the final grade. Don't agonize over it. Usually your gut—your first response to the paper—is right anyway.

Finish one paper assignment before moving to another. As a rule, you should return papers to students *before* you require them to turn in the next paper. Allow them time to apply the advice you've given them in your comments.

Return papers at an advantageous time during class. This piece of advice is slowly becoming obsolete as more instructors move to online assignment collection and grading. However, if you are collecting and returning hard copies, remember that if you return papers at the beginning, students may be distracted, so plan for that. If you return them at the end, but want to talk about them, students may be on their way out the door. So, consider what purpose you want the returned papers to serve in that class period, and hand back accordingly. And if you are returning comments electronically, it can be helpful to spend a few minutes in class where students have time to look at their comments and ask questions about them.

Grades and Comments

Often, students mistakenly believe that the grading of writing is a purely subjective process. But grading standards do exist, and one of your jobs will be to help your students learn to apply these objective criteria to their own writing. The SLOs can help with this. Did students do the work of the particular SLO that is attached to the assignment? How well? Among other things, a grade on a paper reflects how well the student has fulfilled the assignment: how clearly she has argued; how he has arrayed evidence; whether or not she has foreseen any objections a reader might raise to the points made; how well he has tailored the piece to the reader's needs or expectations. Crucially, grades should conform to the criteria you announce in conjunction with each writing assignment, and not be based on other arbitrary or unstated factors. It may be best to use a rubric and to share this rubric with students when you hand out the assignment prompt, even though you will also be adding comments to the paper itself.

Of course your students will be most concerned with the bottom line: the grade at the end of the paper. But even more important, from our perspective, are the comments you write to tell your students how well they have done and where their papers could use some rewriting.

Paper comments fall into two categories: marginal comments throughout the essay, and the summarizing end comments.

Marginal comments. Use marginal and between-sentence comments to point out strengths and weaknesses of individual sentences, point out one or two carefully selected grammatical problems, praise a particularly strong piece of diction, etc. If you begin to see the same problem throughout the essay—say, lack of concrete examples to support analysis—you can put a check mark next to each paragraph and write "see end comment." Marginal comments can be descriptive as well as evaluative: you can use them, for example, to show how the paper creates and fulfills (or fails to fulfill) the expectations of an engaged and experienced reader.

End comments. Use end comments to summarize the success of the essay and to point out problem areas or developing strengths in the student's writing that he or she should be aware of for future writing assignments.

When you write an end comment, consider your overall impression of the writing: How well does it answer the specific demands of the assignment? Could you follow the writer's argument from the beginning of the essay to the end? If not, where and why did the writer lose you? What is good about the paper? Begin your end comments with these strengths.

Both marginal comments and end comments require you to be as specific in your assessment of students' writing as you ask them to be in their essays. For example, a comment like "Your opening paragraphs are good, but later they become vague" is not very helpful, because it indicates only that you approved of some paragraphs and disapproved of others. Explain why the opening paragraphs are good and how exactly paragraph eight conveys vagueness to you as a reader. The following comment would be a much clearer assessment of an essay:

> *Your first two paragraphs work because you discuss concrete examples of federal legislation that has contributed to the homeless problem in Chicago. But you abandon that specificity as you progress; on page two, paragraph eight, for example, you assert that "the early Reagan administration practically created homelessness" without discussing*

any particular event. As a result, your very interesting argument becomes much less convincing. Prove what you assert and you'll win us over.

It is inevitable that you will begin to use rhetorical jargon in your comments ("transitions," "paragraph coherence," "parallelism") or your own terms for certain problems or successes. But make sure your students know what your shorthand means. Avoid terms such as "awkward" and "vague." Instead choose more specific, rewrite-focused language such as "needs more examples."

Always make it clear to students that you will be happy to explain your comments if they do not understand them.

Discussing Grades

Periodically, students will have questions about the grades you give them on assignments. This is fair, because students are entitled to know what your grading standards are and how they can better meet these standards.

New teachers sometimes worry about being too harsh in their grading, so that when a student asks about a low grade, they are tempted to become either defensive or apologetic. You can avoid this sort of emotional response by allowing yourself (and the student) some time to think things over. If a student asks about a grade as soon as she receives the paper, defer the discussion for a day or two so that the student can read and consider your written comments in more detail. (You can choose, in fact, to make a 24-hour waiting period part of your classroom policies.) The student may not follow up on the question, and if she or he does, the time to reflect on the comments may help convert the discussion from grades to a discussion of the writing itself.

If after the waiting period, the student still doesn't understand your evaluation of the paper, ask to review the paper again before you meet with her. You may even show it to your peer mentor or to a Rhetoric Assistant Director to get a second opinion. When the student arrives, review your criteria; students often better understand our feedback through oral explanation than through reading written comments, and that is all that's needed. In most cases, talk about the grade (the student's agenda) can lead to talk about the writing (our agenda), and this is an opportunity to spend some quality time with a student and talk over ways to write a stronger paper next time.

Occasionally, a student may try to influence you to change the grade, not just explain it. Be polite but firm. You do not need to send every student away from your office satisfied, and you do not have to tolerate any aggressive behavior. Remember that if you follow your own stated standards for grading the assignment, and if your standards align with the goals of the course and the Rhetoric program, we in **the Rhetoric office will always stand behind you**. As such, don't be afraid to give the grade that a student *has earned* and that *honestly reflects the abilities of that student for that particular assignment.* Grades that are out of line with reality (i.e., inflated so as to avoid conflict) don't help anyone; they just deflect problems on to the next course, instructor, or program. Once you are unable to reach a resolution about a grade with a student, refer that student to the Rhetoric Program Associate Director.

Finally, procedural requirements:

1. **Never** leave papers in the hallway, outside your cubical, or in any other public place. This violates students' right to privacy (*see* FERPA) and also causes clutter and possible theft

of students' work and ideas. If a student does not pick up a final paper (or any other assignment) from you at an appointed time, he or she will not come back later for it.

2. If you **feel uncertain** about meeting with a student alone, always feel free to ask a fellow instructor to sit in on (or nearby) your meeting with that student. You can also ask your peer mentor or one of the Rhetoric Assistant Directors to be that person.
3. Do not email grades over unencrypted email, as it is against FERPA requirements. Compass or Moodle are the best methods to convey grades to students online. If a student emails you a question about a grade, encourage the student to meet with you in person in office hours or by appointment.

Calculating Grades

Pedagogically sound response practices will need to be accompanied by clear calculation of students' overall grades. If you haven't taught before, calculating grades may seem like a daunting task, so it's good to have strategies in mind and start a numerical record (like a spreadsheet or a gradebook in Moodle or Compass) before an overwhelming number of assignments pile up.

You should also consider what goes into a grade—whether it be for an individual paper or for a student's work for the entire semester. A distinction should be made between components which an instructor evaluates and components which are used to determine course grades. Components or variables which contribute to determining course grades should reflect each student's competence in the course content. The components of a grade should be academically oriented—they should not be tools of discipline or awards for pleasant personalities or "good" attitudes. A student who gets an *A* in a course should have a firm grasp of the skills and knowledge taught in that course. If the student is academically marginal but very industrious and congenial, an *A* grade would be misleading and inaccurate. Instructors can give feedback to students on many traits or characteristics of their writing, but only academic performance components should be used in determining course grades.

High-Stakes Assignments

The majority of the final course grade should be comprised of the 3-5 high-stakes writing assignments (maybe 15-25% for each assignment, depending on length, goals, etc.). The assignments should generally increase in length and complexity as the semester progresses. Remember that these essays reflect revised writing that instructors and peers have responded to and they reflect the students' achievement of the SLOs.

Some potentially invalid grading criteria are considered below. Though some exceptions could be noted, these variables generally should **NOT** be used to determine course grades:

Class Attendance

Students should attend class meetings because it is assumed that the lectures, demonstrations, and discussion will facilitate their learning. If students miss several classes then their performance on examinations, papers, and projects will likely suffer. **We have a standard program policy on attendance, which is reflected in the syllabus templates you will receive each semester.** If you

penalize a student further than this—say, count against a paper grade simply because a student has missed several classes or include attendance in the participation grade—that is in effect **double jeopardy**. So, final grades can be affected by excessive absences, per our policy, but excessive absences should not be additionally used for capricious additions to (or detractions from) final or individual assignment grade calculations.

Class Participation

Obviously seminars and small classes depend on student participation to some degree for their success, but there are different ways for participants to be successful—particularly students who excel through alternate learning styles or platforms. While we all want classes that are successful and students who are engaged, participation should not be weighted heavily in a student's final grade. Students should be graded in terms of their achievement level, not in terms of their personality type. Instructors may want to give feedback to students on many aspects of their personality, but grading should not be the means of doing so. At most, **participation should constitute 5-10% of your students' final course grades**, be based on elements such as completion of in-class work, engagement with classroom activities, and other measurable events besides personality and temperament. The participation grade should also be determined by some kind of rubric that you make available to students near the beginning of the term, which you keep updated regularly.

Homework

Low-stakes work, from in-class to take-home work, should only constitute **5-10% of your students' final course grades**, whether the work is graded for completion or quality. This is so the majority of the final course grade is based on demonstrated achievement of the SLOs through the high-stakes assignments, rather than effort, attendance, or simple completion of work.

Mechanics

Neatness in written work, correctness in spelling and grammar, and organizational ability are all worthy traits. They are assets in most vocational endeavors. To this extent it seems appropriate that instructors evaluate these factors and give students feedback about them. **However, unless the SLOs include instruction in these skills, which currently they do not, students should not be graded on them in the course**. A student's grade on an essay should not be overtly influenced by his/her general spelling ability, and neither should his/her course grade.

Grading Scales and Methods

Most instructors use a 100-point scale to assign grades to individual assignments, with the final course grade being calculated as a weighted average. Note that this University uses a plus-minus grading system in which the pluses and minuses on grades raise or lower grade points, except in the case of an *A+*, which figures in the same as an *A*. Please use the following scale for converting percentages to letter grades, both for individual assignments and final course grades.

A+ =	98–100	B+ = 87–89	C+ = 77–79	D+ = 67–69	F = 0–59
A =	93–97	B = 83–86	C = 73–76	D = 63–66	
A– =	90–92	B– = 80–82	C– = 70–72	D– = 60–62	

A final course grade can be calculated like this:

Paper one	87	at 15%	87 x .15	=	13.05
Paper two	78	at 20%	78 x .20	=	15.60
Paper three	89	at 20%	89 x .20	=	17.80
Paper four	92	at 25%	92 x .25	=	23.00
Homework	95	at 10%	95 x .10	=	9.50
Participation	100	at 10%	100 x .10=		10.00 (add all)
				=	88.95 (B+)

Note that calculations are easier when assignments are weighted in multiples of five. It's usually best to start out with a lower weight on the first paper, and work your way up to a higher weight by the final (longer) papers. It's also important to make each assignment worth *enough* so that a student needs to do all the work in order to receive a passing grade. We encourage you to consider adding language into your syllabus to this effect: *All students must complete all graded assignments in order to pass the course.* Alternatively, weigh the final paper enough such that an F or a zero on it would mean a student's course grade is noticeably adversely affected. This magic minimum number for weighting such a paper is about 25-30%. If you are teaching Rhet 101-102 and using a portfolio as your final assessment method, consider making that portfolio at least 30% of the final grade for this reason.

Conferences

In Rhetoric 101 and 102, students will usually have their conference needs met in the tutorials, though instructors may elect to hold additional conferences beyond those meetings. In Rhetoric 105 and 233, student-instructor conferences are an important part of the learning process, and generally take one of two forms:

1. *The conference initiated by the individual student.* In this situation you need only respond to the student's particular concern. However, the same rules of conduct apply to all kinds of conferences.

2. *One to two rounds of class-wide conferences during the semester* in which you dismiss class and instead meet with each student over a two- to three-day period. Our program requires that you meet at least once – but not more than twice with the accompanying class cancellations – with each of your students during the semester in a conference setting.

Guidelines for Effective Conferencing

1. You may dismiss your class for one week to account for the individual meetings you will be having with each student; the time you spend in these conferences will far exceed the time you would have spent meeting your class for 150 minutes total. You may count a student's missed conference only as **one absence** against that students' overall attendance, however. Note that you will need to plan your schedule that week accordingly, as conferences will extend beyond the stated class meeting time.
2. Conferences should be at least 15 minutes per student, but not more than 20 so that you can manage your workload. Conferences should be in a public setting, such as a shared office, coffee shop, or library. **Do not meet with a student behind closed doors**. If you have a meeting that you think could be contentious, ask another instructor to stay in the area or speak with a member of the Rhetoric Program staff.
3. When figuring out how to schedule a 15-minute time slot for each of your students into a two- or three-day period, be sure to **schedule a break** every five conferences or so. Not only will the break give you a moment to catch your breath (or to grab a snack or to use the facilities), but it can also cushion your schedule if your conferences run behind. Prepare a conference sign-up sheet either on paper or online, and circulate it among the students for several periods before the conferences. Insist that each student record his or her meeting time, and make sure everyone knows where your office is (remember that knowing a room number in the English Building does not mean students know where the English Building is or how to find a room in it).
4. Coordinate conferences with your syllabus and the goals for the course. Always schedule the meetings with a **specific purpose** in mind so as to use your time strategically. For example, you might have one conference in the first few weeks of the semester in order to go through a pre-graded essay with the student and have a second round of conferences to review a draft of the research paper before it's due. Make sure students bring with them the rough drafts, sample sources, or other materials necessary for the conference.
5. In conferencing, instructors and students alike should respect scheduled times. To encourage students to attend their conferences, count the missed conference as equivalent to one day absent. Remember that your students have busy, time-regulated lives beyond Rhetoric; if you've called a conference or are meeting a student by appointment, try to begin and end a conference by the scheduled times.
6. The conference should be a professional situation with an emphasis on Rhetoric and on your class, **not on personal problems or non-academic issues the student may be having.** It is best to refer students to appropriate campus resources, such as the Counseling Center, rather than provide this kind of support ourselves.

7. While conferences provide opportunities for dealing with unruly students, for clarifying assignments, and for addressing individual problems not shared by the whole class, you can't teach a separate 50-minute class in conference. Students can also visit the Writers Workshop in order to receive one-on-one attention to their writing.

Policies and Procedures

In this section, we outline several policies and procedures that Rhetoric instructors are expected to follow. Rhetoric office staff are available to support you as you navigate these policies.

Academic Integrity and Plagiarism

As writing instructors, the most common form of academic integrity issue that we will encounter is plagiarism. The definition of plagiarism that we use in the syllabus blurb is misrepresenting someone else's work as your own, whether intentionally or unintentionally. (If you have not yet read the blurb in the syllabus templates, please do so now.) While some more egregious cases of cheating (i.e. turning in someone else's paper, copying huge chunks from the Internet) can and do occasionally happen, you are most likely to encounter students who struggle with sufficiently documenting their sources. Learning how to attribute one's sources fully is a messy process, and insufficient citation may indicate in-process learning rather than an academic integrity issue.

The best way to address plagiarism is to try to prevent plagiarism through your teaching practices. Here are some tips:

1. Teach and practice citation practices within your classes (do NOT assume students know this in advance). Use mini-lessons, workshops, handbook exercises, small group work, and other activities to support these skills.
2. Teach academic understandings of authorship and intellectual property, which can help students better respect the need to give credit to the work of others.
3. Keep in mind that international students may have different understandings of source use; once again, do not assume that students share our assumptions about citation practices: teach them.
4. Design unique writing assignments (that support the SLOs) that discourage students from using papers written for other purposes, by themselves or others, including the Internet.
5. Embrace writing as a process. Asking students to create and be accountable for pieces of the high-stakes essay will help prevent last-minute freak-outs that can often lead to intentional plagiarism. Reading student drafts will allow you to intervene in unintentional plagiarism.

Even if you plan well, plagiarism can still happen to the best of teachers. If you suspect plagiarism, gather the available evidence and consult with the Associate Director about the case. While it can be appropriate to ask the student about her or his composing process and/or use of sources, be careful not to accuse the student of plagiarism. Actual accusations of plagiarism must be done through the Academic Integrity Reporting (FAIR) system (https://my.atlas.illinois.edu/fair). This online system is the way that the University documents and tracks academic integrity cases.

Once the Associate Director and the instructor have agreed that the case should move forward, the instructor will write up the Initial Notification, which creates a letter for the student explaining the charge, along with any supporting documentation. The student has ten days to respond to the charge. After the response, the instructor will determine from evidence if an infraction did occur and assign a sanction if appropriate, such as a failing/zero grade on the assignment. The student has five days to decide whether to appeal the case. An infraction (with any sanction) stays on the student's record for six years.

Office Hours and Contact Information

Instructors are required to keep at least one office hour per week, per class section they are teaching. Please try to make this an hour that is reasonably accommodating of students (for example, not 7-8 AM on Friday, or 6-7 PM on Wednesday) and that falls reasonably near your class time, if possible. This will increase the chance that students actually *visit* your office hours. You should also be accessible via email. Set a clear policy for response time to emails in your course syllabus, such as 24-hours during business hours, and stick to it. We discourage you from giving out personal information to students, such as your cell phone number, home address, or social media information.

Teaching Absences and Classroom Location

Meet all your classes unless you are ill or have some other valid reason for absenting yourself. In general, if you miss more than one class for a conference or other pre-planned event, you must find a substitute. Last-minute illnesses are unavoidable, but notify the Rhetoric Program office as soon as possible (217-333-1006), whether you have a substitute or not. Also notify us if you have any change—regular or temporary—in classroom, class hour, or class duration.

Course Management System (Compass2G and Moodle)

A course management system (CMS), sometimes called a learning management system (LMS), is a centralized, private, online site for course administration. UIUC sponsors Compass2G, a Blackboard-administered software, as well as Moodle, as open-source software. Compass2G is the most-common and most-supported option, though the Rhetoric program is moving toward using Moodle, especially for our online version of Rhet 105. **Instructors are required to use a CMS for their Rhetoric courses.**

Requesting a site

You must request a CMS site for each section of Rhetoric prior to the start of the semester, although the process is relatively quick. Students who are enrolled in your course will be enrolled automatically (there will be a 24-hour delay for adds), and you can manually add and drop students on your own.

- Request a Compass site at https://techservices.illinois.edu/services/illinois-compass-2g/getting-started-illinois-compass-2g
- Request a Moodle site at https://learn.illinois.edu/

Some training resources are available at the above Compass link, but the Center for Teaching and Learning also offers Compass training sessions: http://citl.illinois.edu/ Atlas offers Compass and Moodle training and troubleshooting: https://www.atlas.illinois.edu/support/teaching/

Digital Tools

Both CMS options contain a number of digital tools that are useful for writing courses, including discussion boards, assignment submission facilitation, a gradebook, and more. **At a minimum, instructors must use it to share course documents, including the syllabus, assignment prompts, course readings, and more, and to convey grades to students.** Discussion boards can be used for low-stakes assignments, to facilitate peer review, and more. A CMS can also be used as a communication hub for writing emails and announcements to students.

Assignment Submission and Grade Reporting

In order to ensure secure communication of FERPA protected data, instructors are required to post **major assignment grades** to the gradebook of their chosen CMS. Instructors can also use Compass or Moodle as a tool for collecting student papers and other assignments.

Requesting and Conducting the ICES Survey

At the end of each semester, teaching assistants must administer student evaluations using the University's Instructor and Course Evaluation System (ICES); this is what is commonly known on most campuses as the student course evaluation or student opinion survey. You must order the ICES forms for your students to complete every semester and indicate that copies should be sent to the Director of the Rhetoric Program.

You will be notified via email when it is time to request ICES forms each semester. The forms are kept in EB 294. Following the instructions enclosed with the form, request enough evaluation forms for the number of students in your class(es) and return the form to 294. Evaluation forms will appear in your mailbox, generally before the date you designate on the request form. The Rhetoric office suggests administering ICES forms before the last day of classes.

On the day of evaluations, allow students at least 15 minutes of class time for the evaluation, preferably at the beginning of class time (if you ask students to do course evaluations at the end of the hour, they will tend to rush through them in order to leave early). In order to protect the integrity of this process, **do not attempt to influence students** in any way about these forms. The instructor of the course should administer the forms, but **leave the room while your students are filling them out**. Appoint a student to collect the forms, place them in the return envelope, and put them in a **campus** mailbox (there is one on the first floor of EB and one in the Wright Street entryway to HAB). Be sure to return the request form in the same envelope, along with any unused evaluation forms. Pencils are available in EB 294, but please return them.

Midterm and Final Grades

Midterm grades are collected for all first-year students. They are not permanent grades, but rather used for advisory purposes. Estimate a grade based on the work to-date and communicate with students about what is included in the grade and what is left to be completed for the overall course grade. Instructors will receive email communication about when to submit midterm grades, and information is also available at http://registrar.illinois.edu/midterm-grades

Final grades must be submitted for all students. You will receive email communication about how and when to submit final grades through Faculty Self-Service and information is also available at http://registrar.illinois.edu/final-grades. DO NOT enter incomplete grades for Rhetoric students. It is the Rhetoric Program policy not to assign incomplete grades. If you have an ongoing Academic Integrity Case, leave the grade blank for that student and the college of LAS will enter in an Incomplete on your behalf. Occasionally, a final grade has to be changed, such as due to a calculation error. Submit grade changes using faculty self-service. Note that grade deadlines are often earlier in the day than one might expect. Please pay attention and submit grades on time.

Sexual Misconduct Policy and Reporting

All employees of UIUC are required to report any instances of sexual misconduct—which can include harassment, sexual assault, sexual exploitation, dating violence, domestic violence, and stalking—to the University's Title IX and Disability Office. What this means is that as an instructor you are required to report any incidents of sexual misconduct that are directly reported to you, or of which you are somehow made aware. When a report is received, an individual with the Title IX and Disability Office reaches out to provide information about rights and options, including accommodations, support services, the campus disciplinary process, and law enforcement options.

We suggest that you convey your mandated reporter status to students at the beginning of the semester, so that they know you cannot be a confidential resource. You can refer them to confidential resources on campus, such as the Counseling Center and medical professionals. A list of resources is available at wecare.illinois.edu/resources/students/#confidential

Professional Development

In this section, we want to outline some of the professional development opportunities (and ideas for your own professional development) that we think will help you not only become a better instructor in our program, but will also help you in your future teaching and other career pursuits. What these resources intend to provide is both intentionality in your teaching and professional development, and productive collaboration with those who share your same goals.

English 593: Proseminar in the Teaching of Rhetoric

All graduate assistants teaching Rhetoric for the first time will enroll in English 593 in their first fall semester as an instructor. This proseminar is pass/fail and covers a broad range of philosophical and practical issues related to the teaching of writing, from the perspective of best practices in rhetoric and composition studies. Students read a variety of articles and essays on the history, theory, and practice of teaching writing, and engage in weekly discussions on these readings and on topics related to the Rhetoric 105 course. This course is designed to supplement new instructor orientation in August and is a critical element of your training to teach in our program.

Observations

All graduate assistants teaching Rhetoric for the first time will be observed by the Director or Associate Director of Rhetoric, preferably during their first year of teaching. These observations

are meant to be supportive, rather than evaluative, and to provide feedback at a critical time during your development as a teacher. Furthermore, observation letters provide useful documentation of your teaching practices and can be used in future teaching portfolios.

Monthly Rhetoric Instructor Meetings

Between September and April of each academic year, the Rhetoric Program holds monthly meetings for all current instructors, and interested past or future instructors as well. Both teaching assistants and Specialized Faculty who teach in our program are **expected to attend**. These meetings are usually on Friday afternoons from 2:00-3:30pm because no one teaches during this time. The meetings cover updates in the program, pedagogical training, campus resources, and more.

Rhetoric Program Assistant Directors (ADs)

Abbreviated as Rhetoric ADs elsewhere in this handbook, our program typically employs two to four graduate students in English to serve as Assistant Directors of Rhetoric each academic year (and in the summer term), as well as one Specialized Faculty Assistant Director. These ADs are your first resource for additional help with your courses, after your Peer Mentor. The ADs are also responsible for a number of activities related to the Rhetoric office and the teaching of writing, including planning the new instructor orientation in August, assisting the Director with curricular planning and other program issues, assisting the Associate Director with assessment and policy issues, and keeping up on current trends in the teaching of writing. Rhetoric ADs receive a two-to-four-course release per year for their work in the office, and are chosen on a competitive basis each spring.

Peer Mentors

If you are a graduate assistant new to the Rhetoric Program, you will be assigned a Peer Mentor (who may also be an AD) at the end of orientation, and he or she will be a resource for you throughout your first year of teaching (and perhaps beyond). Peer Mentors are matched up with 3-5 new instructors and meet with these instructors regularly throughout the fall semester, helping them with grading calibration, assignment planning, course management, and other issues related to teaching Rhetoric courses. Peer mentors will also observe each of their mentees informally in preparation of the more formal observation by the Director or Associate Director of Rhetoric. Peer mentors (when not also serving as ADs) also help support the Assistant Directors in professional development events, the Associate Director and Director in Prosem, and all the Rhetoric staff in other Rhetoric office activities. Peer Mentors can either work as mentors in their capacity as an AD or be selected each spring on a competitive basis.

Student Essay Contest

The Undergraduate Rhetoric Program holds a student essay contest each semester. This contest provides an opportunity for current students to share the research they have done in their Rhetoric courses, compete for awards, and potentially be published in the Rhetoric program textbook. Each semester the Rhetoric Program will circulate a call for submissions. Students may submit any

material they have written for their Rhetoric courses that semester, regardless of genre. Students who are doing research on human participants will need to obtain permission through our Rhetoric Program IRB protocol, and the Rhetoric office staff will help with this process. Rhetoric instructors are vital to help make this contest a success, as instructors mentor their students in their courses and encourage them to see writing and research (and the publication of that material) as valuable public activities in the university community. We also need instructors to volunteer to help run the contest, particularly as readers for the contest (readers determine which entries receive monetary awards and which are additionally published in the textbook).

Your Own Professional Development

In addition to the resources we can provide, we hope that you will consider keeping your own future teaching career in the forefront of your mind as you teach in our program. Some ways you can do this:

- *Before returning student papers, make photocopies of your comments,* if they are paper submissions, or save electronic copies if applicable. Look for any additional drafts, peer comments, and passages from students' finished work that you might want to use for your own teaching portfolio, as well as the assignments to which these papers are responding. Keep a copy of two or three revised papers, so you have a record of how students responded to your assignment. If you use the same assignment in a later course, these samples can help future students.
- *Seek out observations of your teaching beyond your first year.* Employers typically want to see evidence of sustained excellence in teaching. Having on file multiple observations by different individuals (for example, members of your dissertation committee) will help you to demonstrate this excellence.
- *Participate in reading and writing groups in the English department.* Many of our students form peer groups around shared intellectual interests—from teaching to research to service interests. Having a peer group beyond your assigned peer mentoring group (or as an extension of it) will help you build a community in the department, and serve as a mechanism for support when you go on the job market.
- *Apply to work for the Rhetoric Program.* We value a range of backgrounds and experiences in our Rhetoric program staff, and these leadership opportunities help make you a competitive candidate in the academic job market, regardless of your sub-disciplinary affiliation.

Resources

Finally, here are some important resources that you will need to be aware of in order to teach our first-year Rhetoric students. Many of these resources go beyond the scope of the Rhetoric Program, and will come in handy for use with other English Department classes that you may teach, or students that you may encounter, during your time at UIUC.

Classroom Technology

Various technologies are available for Rhetoric instructors to use in their classrooms:

- Some classrooms are equipped with a PC and projector
- Some classrooms have a projector and require that you use a personal laptop or check out a laptop from the department. Dongles and adapters are available for checkout as well. Check these out in 208 EB.
- Some classrooms have no technology and require instructors to check out a laptop, projector, and cart from the English department in room 208.

Please consult the Undergraduate Rhetoric Compass site for more specific information about—and instructions how to use—the technology available in your classroom.

Common Technology Problems (Whom to Contact)

- The Rhetoric ADs can often help you troubleshoot technology problems. Please let us know when you have trouble with classroom technology.
- For technology problems in your classroom, please submit a ticket to Classroom Technology Services at https://techservices.illinois.edu/get-help/classroom-support and let the Rhetoric Office know about the problem
- For technology problems on your personal laptop, please contact Technology Services at http://techservices.illinois.edu/get-help/help-desk
    - For information on connecting your personal laptop to the Wireless Internet service, please see https://techservices.illinois.edu/services/wireless/our-wireless-networks
    - You may also plug into the Ethernet cord if there is one provided in your classroom
- To see a list of what technology is provided in the classroom where you teach, see https://answers.uillinois.edu/illinois/page.php?id=57128

Supplementary Readings

Instructors are required to form their courses around the rhetoric program textbook. Instructors will typically supplement their selection with outside readings. To support this process, the Program has created a database of readings. You may find the list of recommended readings in the Rhetoric Reserve Readings in the Course Content page of the DEVELOPMENT – Rhetoric Program Database in our online, Blackboard, Compass 2G system. See this link: https://compass2g.illinois.edu/. We are currently evaluating other options for storing and sorting this database, so watch for announcements about a new system.

Disability Resources and Educational Services (DRES)

Every syllabus must contain information letting students know that they can approach you if they need any disability-related accommodations in your class. See the syllabus template for the blurb we include in our syllabi. Typically, a student will bring you a letter from the UIUC's Division of Disability Resources and Educational Services (DRES) verifying that the student needs accommodations and specifying what sort of accommodation is needed. If the student has not been in touch with DRES, recommend that they do so. You are also free to reach out to DRES directly for support on working with a student. Their website is http://www.disability.illinois.edu/

Writers Workshop

The Writers Workshop's mission is to support all writers in the UIUC community by providing free writing assistance for students, faculty, and staff from all disciplines and at all stages of the writing process. Consultants work with students in one-to-one interactive sessions that help writers express and articulate their ideas. They help students with anything related to their writing, including brainstorming, organizing, polishing final drafts, integrating and citing sources, and more. The Workshop is not a proofreading or editing service but can teach writers self-editing strategies.

Writers may schedule a 50-minute appointment online at illinois.mywconline.com/; the Workshop also offers walk-in hours M-Th in the late afternoon and evening in the main location, 251 UGL. These short sessions are offered on a first-come, first-served basis and usually last about 15-30 minutes. Walk-in sessions work best for very short documents or specific questions.

In addition to one-to-one consulting sessions, the Workshop hosts writing-related workshops, sponsors undergraduate and graduate writing groups, and consults with instructors about crafting writing assignments and responding to student writing. It also provides in-class presentations by request: many instructors invite a consultant to drop by near the beginning of the semester to offer a short, 10-minute introduction to the Workshop; consultants also work with instructors to provide longer, customized workshops about specific writing topics.

Rhetoric instructors should announce the Writers Workshop's services to all of their students, or you can arrange for a short in-class visit from a consultant. It is important to stress to students that the Workshop is not a remedial service; experienced writers, including University faculty, use it regularly and find its services helpful. Many writers tell us that the most useful aspect of a session is simply talking through ideas with an interested audience.

Encourage your students to make an appointment or walk in as early as possible before an assignment is due. Please do not require an entire class to visit the Workshop (this would quickly overwhelm its resources), but please contact the Director at wow@illinois.edu if you'd like to offer extra credit to your students for attending a tutorial session or workshop (on topics like "Writing with Academic Sources," "Preparing Class Presentations," or "Proofreading and Self-Editing Strategies," which can supplement and reinforce the writing skills students learn in your course).

For more information about the Workshop and upcoming events (it offers support for grad students, too!), visit http://www.cws.illinois.edu/workshop.

Undergraduate Library and Requesting Library Instruction Classes

The primary focus of the Undergraduate Library (UGL) collection is to serve the research, curriculum, and personal information needs of undergraduate students. In addition to serving the needs of the undergraduate population in print and online resources, the Undergraduate Library also houses the primary media collection for the University Library, one of the largest reserve collections, and a robust loanable technology collection that serves faculty, staff, and students at all levels. The collections at the UGL focus on popular culture materials, graphic novels, gaming, loanable technology, fiction, and general subject resources to assist in the first years of college.

The Undergraduate Library also partners with the Writers Workshop to provide support for student research and writing.

Contact Information

If you have any questions about the Undergraduate Library and library instruction contact:

- Susan Avery, Instructional Services Librarian and Associate Professor, skavery@illinois.edu, 217-244-3769
- Kirsten Feist, Instructional Services Specialist, kmfeist@illinois.edu, 217-300-2272

Library Instruction

The library instruction program exists specifically to support the integration of library instruction in courses that fulfill the Composition 1 requirement. We encourage the integration of library-led instruction into your classes. The University of Illinois Library system is one of the largest in the country and it can be difficult for instructors to be fully aware of all of the resources available and keep current with changes in both database access and interfaces. Keeping up can be difficult—most summers there are changes to both database interfaces and access.

Integrated library instruction provides the best possible learning experience for your students. UGL librarians or UGL graduate assistants (who are students in the School of Information) teach classes in the library's teaching labs, where each student will have their own computer. The instruction should be timed to take place at the beginning of a unit that requires the students to do research. There is much greater relevancy for the students when they can see how they will use the resources and strategies taught during the library instruction.

Request your classes as soon as you know when you would like to schedule them. There are several weeks each semester that are extremely busy and are unable to meet all the requested dates and times. The earlier requests are made, the more likely your first choice of date can be accommodated. Please request classes at least two weeks prior to the instruction date. To request a class session, complete a request form, available through the link on the For Instructors page: http://www.library.illinois.edu/ugl/instructors/classhelp.html

Rhetoric Library Guide

The Undergraduate Library has created a guide to support research aspects of Rhetoric courses. The guide is available at: http://guides.library.illinois.edu/rhetoric All instructors are encouraged to link to the guide in their course websites. It provides information about the research process, links to suggested library resources, infographics, and short videos.

Other Library Services at the UGL

The Undergraduate Library offers a number of other services, including:

- **Research and Writing (RAW) Consultations:** RAW consultations are provided in collaboration with the Undergraduate Library and the Writers Workshop. RAW is a drop-in service that provides the opportunity to meet with a Writers Workshop consultant and/or a UGL librarian or GA. For hours and additional information visit: http://www.library.illinois.edu/ugl/RAW.html

- **Ask a Librarian Service:** Ask a Librarian provides the ability to ask reference questions via chat, e-mail, phone, or text. For hours and access to the service visit http://www.library.illinois.edu/askus/
- **Physical Reserves:** Instructors can place physical items (items that they own personally or that the library owns) on reserve for students to use during a course (accessible at the Media Reserves desk in the UGL). Students can check them out for up to two hours at a time. See http://www.library.illinois.edu/cmservices/reserve.html for more information.
- **Media Collection and Reserves**: The UGL contains the majority of the library's audiovisual collection. Search the video collection, including documentary and feature films, through the Library Catalog. Select the Advanced Search option to limit your search to a specific format. The collection circulates to all users, though Instructors may place materials on Reserve to restrict use for students in the Library. Visit http://www.library.illinois.edu/ugl/media/ for additional information.
- **Media Viewing:** Users may borrow media materials from the circulating collection for one week (instructors must provide their own viewing equipment for in-classroom viewing). Media items on reserve for a class circulate only to instructors and only for 24 hours. Reservations for in-class viewing should be made at least two weeks in advance to ensure that the title you want will be available on the day you need it. Media materials must be picked up and returned at the UGL.

Useful Contacts

Departmental Contacts		
English Department	333-2391	http://www.english.illinois.edu/
Undergraduate Rhetoric Program Office	333-1006	http://www.english.illinois.edu/undergraduate/rhetoric/
Graduate Studies	333-3646	http://www.english.illinois.edu/graduate/
University Libraries		
Main Library	333-3477	http://www.library.illinois.edu/
Undergraduate Library	333-3477	http://www.library.illinois.edu/ugl/
Reference/Info	333-2290	http://www.library.illinois.edu/rex/
Book Renewal	333-8400	http://www.library.illinois.edu/circ/services/renew.html
Literature and Languages Library	333-2220	http://www.library.illinois.edu/llx/
Campus Learning Resources		
The Writers Workshop	333-8796	http://www.cws.illinois.edu/workshop/
Center for Writing Studies	333-3251	http://www.cws.illinois.edu/
ATLAS (Applied Technologies for Learning in the Arts and Sciences)	333-6750	http://www.atlas.illinois.edu/
CITES Help Desk (Campus Information Technologies and Educational Services)	244-7000	http://techservices.illinois.edu/ https://techservices.illinois.edu/get-help/help-desk
Campus Life Resources		
UIUC Automated Attendant	333-1000	
Division of Public Safety (Campus Police)	333-1216	http://publicsafety.illinois.edu/
Graduate College Health Insurance	333-0035	http://www.grad.illinois.edu/admissions/instructions/05f
McKinley Health Center	333-2701	http://www.mckinley.illinois.edu/
Office of Student Financial Aid	333-0100	http://www.osfa.illinois.edu/
Counseling Center	333-3704	http://www.counselingcenter.illinois.edu/
Campus Bookstores and Copy Shops		
Illini Union Bookstore	333-2050	http://www.uofibookstore.uiuc.edu/
Document Services (Printing)	333-9350	http://www.printing.illinois.edu/