

Dissertation Writing (ANG 6930)

Instructor

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Office Location

Grinter Hall

Office Hours

By appointment

COURSE OVERVIEW

This is a hands-on, interactive writing seminar which takes you through the various stages of writing a dissertation, a chapter or a journal article. We will spend a substantial part of class time on active writing.

The following are some of the topics that we will explore: how to develop a strong argument, crafting strong abstracts and introductions, how to formulate aims, objectives and research questions, how to engage with and present theory and relevant literature, how to analyze and present empirical data, structure and form, editing and revision, and the publication process. We will also spend considerable time reading about and discussing ethnographic writing.

My overall aim is to create a safe space where we can grow and develop into successful writers. We will work on identifying and establishing behavioral, artisanal, social and emotional habits that can enhance our writing skills. In addition to reading good and bad examples of writing, we will also share extracts from our own writing and talk about different genres and forms of representation. We will also explore various web-based tools that can help us manage our time and stimulate writing.

Required Texts

Belcher, W. L. (2009) *Writing Your Journal Article in 12 Weeks*

Ghodsee, K. (2016) *From Notes to Narrative*

Sword, H. (2017) *Air & Light & Time & Space*

Recommended Texts

Ellit, D. & Culhane, D. (2016) *A Different Kind of Ethnography: Imaginative Practices and Creative Methodologies*

Lamott, Anne (1994) *Bird by Bird*

McGranahan, C. (2020) *Writing Anthropology*

Narayan, K. (2012) *Alive in the Writing. Crafting Ethnography in the Company of Chekhov*

Sword, H. (2016) *The Writer's Diet. A Guide to Fit Prose*

Wulff, Helena (ed.). 2016. *The Anthropologist as Writer: Genres and Contexts in the Twenty- First Century*

COURSE SCHEDULE

Week	Topic	Readings
Week 1	INTRODUCTION	Advice on Writing From The Atlantic's Ta-Nehisi Coates The complete guide to writing accountability – hold yourself to account and use others to help you achieve your writing goals
Week 2	HOW DO YOU FEEL ABOUT WRITING?	Belcher, W.L. (2009) Week 1 Stoller, P. (2020) <i>Finding your way</i> Wegener et al. (2014) <i>Borrowing brainpower – sharing insecurities. Lessons learned from a doctoral peer writing group</i> Williams, B.C. (2020) <i>Guard your Heart and your Purpose</i>
Week 3	GETTING STARTED	Belcher, W.L. (2009) Week 2 Lamott, A. (1994) <i>Short Assignments & Shitty Drafts</i> Sword, H. (2017) pp. 1-55 Suggested Resource: 750 words The 21 Best Writing Tools of 2020: A Guide for Writers Letter to an overachiever
Week 4	ARGUMENTS, OBJECTIVES AND RESEARCH QUESTIONS	Belcher, W.L. (2009) Week 3 Agee, J. (2009) <i>Developing Qualitative Research Questions: A Reflective Process</i> Sword, H. (2017) pp. 57-101
Week 5	TARGET YOUR WRITING	Belcher, W. L. (2009) Week 4 Sword, H. (2017) pp. 103-147 Ghodsee, K. (2016) pp. 1-22 Besiner & Morales (2018) Tell the story: How to write for American Ethnologist
Week 6	REVIEWING AN INTEGRATING LITERATURE AND THEORY	Belcher, W.L. (2009) Week 5 Ghodsee, K. (2016) pp. 51-61 Denney & Tewksbury (2012) <i>How to Write a Literature Review</i> McGranahan C. (2020) <i>Anthropology as Theoretical Storytelling</i> Sword, H. (2017) pp. 147-206
Week 7	WRITING ETHNOGRAPHY I	Ghodsee, K. (2016) pp.23-50 Behar, R. (2020) Read More, Write Less Ralph, L. (2014) Excerpt from <i>Renegade Dreams</i>

Week	Topic	Readings
Week 8	STRUCTURE	Belcher, W.L. (2009) Week 6 & 8 Selected chapters from students
Week 9	WRITING ETHNOGRAPHY II	Ghodsee, K. (2016) pp. 62-81 Selected chapters from students McLean, S. (2020) "Sea" Stories
Week 10	ANALYZING AND PRESENTING EVIDENCE	Belcher, W.L. (2009) Week 7 Selected chapters from students Explore N-VIVO and MAXQDA
Week 11	WRITING ETHNOGRAPHY III	Ghodsee, K. (2016) pp. 82-90 Selected chapters from students Crossland, Z. (2020) Digging with the Pen
Week 12	MINIMIZE SCIENTISM AND UNINTELLIGIBLE JARGON	Ghodsee, K. (2016) pp. 90-98 Brown, S-E. (2017) 'Talking the Talk' A Case Study in Teaching about Jargon in an Undergraduate Writing-Intensive Anthropology Course at a University in the Northeast United States
Week 13	PROSE AND GRAMMAR	Ghodsee, K. (2016) pp. 99-109 Selected chapters from students Recommended reading: Sword, H. (2007) The Writer's Diet
Week 14	REVISION, REVISION, REVISION	Belcher, W. L. (2009) Week 10-12
Week 15	WRAPPING UP	

COURSES IN THE TIME OF COVID-19

I understand that this course is being offered in a time of tremendous uncertainty, and I recognize that you (and I) may encounter unexpected challenges during this semester. That includes challenges related to health and illness, technology, caregiving responsibilities, work responsibilities, and more. As many of you know, I myself came down with Covid-19 this summer. I share this with you, because I have come to realize that a Covid-19 diagnosis is associated with stigma and shame. By being open about my own experience and status I hope that I can make it easier for others to share the fears and challenges that are associated with Covid-19.

My goal this semester is to support you in doing the best work you can in light of the challenges you face. I understand that as graduate students you face tremendous pressure to work hard, be productive and be as “successful” as possible. That said, I encourage you to remember that your health and well-being are far more important than the work you do in this class or any class. And I encourage you to take the time you need to care for yourself and for your loved ones.

If you are finding it difficult to balance your health and well-being with your work in this class, please let me know. It is okay to ask for help and to acknowledge when you are struggling, and I am happy to help connect you with resources and services on campus and also make accommodations to our course plan as needed. I am accessible by email, and I will do my best to respond to messages within one business day. If I do not respond within 24 hours, you have the right to send me a reminder. I will also have virtual office hour appointments available for you to meet with me to discuss any questions or concerns or thoughts you have about the course or the material more generally.

I also ask that you be patient with me if the challenges of this semester force me to make last-minute changes to the course plan. I will do my best to communicate any changes clearly and make them with respect for the inconvenience, frustration, and confusion that change may cause.

CLASS REQUIREMENTS AND ASSIGNMENTS

Format: This class is delivered in a synchronous online format. We will meet on Zoom every Tuesday from 4:05 pm – 6:35 pm (adjusted for breaks).

Attendance (100 points): Since the course only meets once a week, full attendance in all classes is essential. More than one absence may lower your grade. If you have an excusable absence (see <https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/regulations/info/attendance.aspx>) let me know in advance and I will consider whether you have to make up for the absence in one or another way.

Participation in Class (100 points): You are expected to keep up with the readings and to come to class well prepared and make thoughtful, relevant contributions to class discussions and in meetings with your teams.

Personal Writing and Accountability Plan (100 points): At the start of the semester you will be asked to complete a timeline with deadlines for each of the tasks you want to accomplish and commit to this semester. You will share it with your writing buddy.

Writing buddy (100 points): By enrolling in this course, you commit yourself to working with a writing buddy. Some of the assignments (not many) will require that you work with your writing buddy. As writing buddies you are expected to keep each other on track, and to read and give substantial feedback on the deliverables you commit to in your writing plan. I do not want to dictate how you organize yourself, but I encourage you to consider signing a ‘commitment contract’ since research has shown this to be a successful tool, helping people achieve their goals.

Select and lead brief discussion about book chapter (100 points): Select a text that you would like to share and discuss with the rest of the class. This could be a chapter or an excerpt from a book (non-fiction, fiction, ethnography, poetry, etc.), an academic article, a newspaper article or a blog that you think can teach us something about writing. Within the first few weeks you will be asked to send me a PDF of the text you have chosen (I use the TurboScan app on my phone for scanning). I will integrate the text in the syllabus and the week your selected reading is due; you will be responsible for leading a short 10-minutes’ discussion about the text.

End of Semester Reflection (100 points): Write a short reflection (maximum 500 words) about your experience in the class. I would appreciate if you included constructive feedback to me as an instructor – that you highlight what worked and what did not work.

Grading: There is no essay due for this course and no rigorous grading. As long as you participate, are committed and show your engagement you should all be getting an A. I anticipate that this is a course that you take for your own benefit and that you are highly motivated for getting as much as possible out of it.

UF POLICIES

Academic Honesty:

When students enroll at UF they commit themselves to honesty and integrity. As a result of completing the registration form at the University of Florida, every student has signed the following statement: “I understand the University of Florida expects its students to be honest in all their academic work. I agree to adhere to this commitment to academic honesty and understand that my failure to comply with this commitment may result in disciplinary action up to and including expulsion from the University.” On work submitted for credit by UF students, the following pledge is either required or implied: “On my honor, I have neither given nor received unauthorized aid in doing this assignment.”

Campus Helping Resources:

Students experiencing crisis or personal problems that interfere with their general wellbeing are encouraged to utilize the university’s counseling resources. The UF Counseling and Wellness Center provides confidential counseling services at no cost for currently enrolled students.

1. Counseling and Wellness Center, <http://www.counseling.ufl.edu/cwc/>
2. Student Health Care Center: <http://shcc.ufl.edu/>

For an overview of various resources see <http://www.distance.ufl.edu/getting-help>

Disabilities:

Students with disabilities requesting accommodations should first register with the Disability Resource Center (352-392-8565, www.dso.ufl.edu/drc/) by providing appropriate documentation. Once registered, students will receive an accommodation letter, which must be presented to the instructor when requesting accommodation. Students with disabilities should follow this procedure as early as possible in the semester.

Technical assistance:

For issues with technical difficulties for E-learning in Sakai, please contact the UF Help Desk at:

- Learning-support@ufl.edu
- (352) 392-HELP - select option 2
- <https://lss.at.ufl.edu/help.shtml>