Professional Writing (PWR)

Minor in Professional Writing
Program in Writing and Rhetoric, College of Arts and Sciences

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Professional Writing (PWR)

Advanced knowledge of professional writing helps learners in all disciplines become better prepared to write successfully in professional environments. This minor complements any major, as professional writing skills are necessary in many upper-level courses and highly valued in most professions. Students are encouraged to complete an experientially-based project under a Program in Writing and Rhetoric faculty member’s mentorship.

Requirements for the minor in Professional Writing (PWR)

Completion of the minor requires 21 credits. At least 15 of the 21 credits must be taken at Stony Brook University. Transfer credits are awarded by permission of the Program in Writing and Rhetoric’s Undergraduate Program Director. Courses taken for the minor must be passed with a letter grade of C or higher.

Required courses for all minors:

• WRT 102 Intermediate Writing Workshop
• WRT 200 Grammar and Style for Writers
• WRT 201 Principles of Professional Writing
• WRT 304 Writing for Your Profession

Elective courses for the minor (choose any three):

• WRT 301 Writing in the Disciplines: Special Topics, when offered with topic "Technical Communications"
• WRT 303 The Personal Essay
• WRT 305 Writing for the Health Professions
• WRT 380 Advanced Research Writing: Theories, Methods, Practices
• WRT 381 Advanced Analytic and Argumentative Writing

Recommended experiential learning project

Students are also encouraged to complete a three-credit experiential learning project, either as a zero-credit WRT 444 attached to an upper-division course or to an Independent Study with a full-time faculty member, or as an Internship that would focus on their writing in the area of their major.

PWR Faculty

Faculty information for this program can be found at http://www.stonybrook.edu/commcms/writrhet/people/faculty.html
WRT

Writing

WRT 101: Introductory Writing Workshop
An introduction to the foundations of writing, offering students a variety of rhetorical strategies and helping them develop creative and critical thinking, fluency, and correctness. Coursework creates ample opportunities for significant practice in reading, writing, and critical analysis. Emphasis on writing as a revision-based process. WRT 101 prepares students for WRT 102 and postsecondary academic writing. Prerequisite: a grade of C or better in WAE 194; below 580 on the Evidence-Based Reading and Writing SAT or below 23 on the English Language Arts ACT or below 24 on the combined English and Writing ACT (last administered June 2015). Prerequisite: see course description or http://sb.cc.stonybrook.edu/bulletin/current/policiesandregulations/admissions/placementtests.php.
DEC: A1
3 credits, ABC/U grading

WRT 102: Intermediate Writing Workshop
A study of strategies for extended academic writing assignments including critical analysis, argument or point of view, and multi-source, college-level research essays. Students continue to develop rhetorical awareness, analytical proficiency, and academic research skills. At the end of the course students create a multimodal ePortfolio of final revised essays to be evaluated by their instructor and at least one outside reader. Prerequisite: WRT 101; 3 or higher on AP English exams; 580 or higher on the Evidence-Based Reading and Writing SAT or 1050 or higher on the combined Critical Reading and Writing SAT (last administered Jan 2016); 23 or higher on the English Language Arts ACT or 24 or higher on the combined English and Writing ACT (last administered June 2015); C or higher in an approved transfer course. Prerequisite: see course description or http://sb.cc.stonybrook.edu/bulletin/current/policiesandregulations/admissions/placementtests.php.
DEC: A2
SBC: WRT
3 credits, ABC/U grading

WRT 200: Grammar and Style for Writers
A study of aspects of grammar that are most relevant to clear writing, including parts of speech, verbs, clauses, phrases, punctuation, and complete sentences. Students study prose style as a way to achieve rhetorical effectiveness and, through frequent writing, learn to apply principles of clarity, concision, and coherence. Sentence imitation, sentence combining, and sentence invention techniques are used to help students become more flexible in their syntactic fluidity. Several tests and short papers.
3 credits

WRT 201: Principles of Professional Writing
An introduction to the principles and practices of professional writing, this course is designed to teach students about foundational skills and approaches needed for a variety of professional writing situations. Students learn and apply core concepts, analytical skills, and strategies of effective workplace writing through genres common to a range of fields, such as business, industry, education, the arts, publishing, nonprofit organizations, law, international affairs, and public service and health-related professions. Through engagement with writing studies theory and research, and exposure to different types of professional writing, students will develop an understanding of relevant rhetorical, social, cultural, and ethical considerations. Prerequisite: WRT 102 or equivalent
3 credits

WRT 205: Writing about Global Literature
In this lecture course, we will read literature from countries such as Indonesia, Botswana, Burma, Nigeria, Brazil, Egypt, Kenya, Vietnam, and Trinidad. Students will write a one-page response to their reading for every class, and principles of thoughtful writing, including correct punctuation, will be reinforced. There will be two tests and a final exam.
DEC: B
SBC: HUM
3 credits

WRT 206: Writing about African-American Literature and History
In this lecture course, we will read American Literature written by African-Americans and study that literature in its historical context. Readings will include works such as Frederick Douglass's Narrative, Harriet Wilson's Our Nig, William Wells Brown's Clotel, Charles Chesnutt's "The Sheriff's Children", W.E.B. Dubois's The Souls of Black Folk, Ida B. Wells's Lynch Law in all its Phases. James Weldon Johnson's Autobiography of an Ex-Colored Man, Langston Hughes's The Big Sea, Zora Neale Hurston's Their Eyes were Watching God, Richard Wright's Uncle Tom's Children, Chester Himes's Real Cool Killers, Alice Walker's The Color Purple, Toni Morrison's Beloved, and Walter Mosley's Always Outnumbered, Always Outgunned. Literary readings will be supplemented by documents and essays that provide historical context. Students will write a one-page response to their reading for every class, and principles of thoughtful writing, including correct grammar, will be reinforced. There will be two tests and a final exam. Prerequisite: WRT 102 or equivalent
DEC: K
SBC: HUM
3 credits

WRT 301: Writing in the Disciplines: Special Topics
Writing in specified academic disciplines is taught through the analysis of texts in appropriate fields to discover discourse conventions. Students produce a variety of written projects typical of the genres in the field. Different sections emphasize different disciplines. Typical topics will be Technical Writing, Business Writing, Legal Writing, and Writing for the Health Professions. May be repeated for credit as the topic changes. Prerequisite: WRT 102 or equivalent
3 credits

WRT 302: Critical Writing Seminar: Special Topics
A writing seminar, with rotating historical, political, social, literary, and artistic topics suggested by the professors each semester. Frequent substantial writing projects are central to every version of the course. May be repeated for credit as the topic changes. Prerequisite: WRT 102 or equivalent
DEC: G
SBC: HFA+
3 credits

WRT 303: The Personal Essay
The personal essay is a form that has recently come back into fashion. In this class we will engage the form by writing our own personal essays as well as reading and responding to the work of writers who have come to define the genre: examples include E. B. White, Langston Hughes, and Raymond...
Carver as well as more contemporary writers such as Joan Didion and Gene Shepherd. We will explore the differences between shaping experience as truth in a personal essay or memoir and as a work of fiction. As a definition of personal essay evolves, we will consider whether personal writing and essay writing (or ‘essaying’) have a place in academic writing. Students in this class will also be able to prepare a personal statement for their application for graduate or professional school.

Prerequisite: WRT 102 or equivalent
3 credits

WRT 304: Writing for Your Profession
In this course students learn about types of documents, rhetorical principles, and composing practices necessary for writing effectively in and about professional contexts. Coursework emphasizes each student’s career interests, but lessons also address a variety of general professional issues, including audience awareness, research methods, ethics, collaboration, and verbal and visual communication. Students complete the course with practical knowledge and experience in composing business letters, proposals, and various kinds of professional reports. A creative, self-reflexive assignment also contextualizes each individual’s professional aspirations within a bigger picture of his/her life and culture.

Prerequisite: WRT 102 or equivalent
3 credits

WRT 305: Writing for the Health Professions
Enables students interested in a health care career to strengthen their critical writing skills. While learning to gather information and to apply ethical principles in a logical, persuasive fashion, students will explore and write about various types of evidence concerning the health care needs of different populations: a field research project on a health issue affecting a local target population of their choice, a critique of government documents that contain data on that issue and population, and a review of scholarly research on the same issue as it affects the larger national population represented by that local one. Writing assignments will include drafts and final versions of a research proposal, field research results, numerical analysis, literature review and a final project incorporating all of the previous work conducted about that issue and population. Students will also write a reflective paper which can serve as the basis for a personal statement for medical or other health-related graduate school applications.

This course will fulfill the second half of the Writing Pre-Med/Pre-Health prerequisite. 
Prerequisite: WRT 102 or equivalent
SBC: ESI
3 credits

WRT 306: Tutor Training
This course is reserved for new tutors hired by the Writing Program to staff the Writing Center. Instructor permission is required to enroll in this course, which is designed to introduce new tutors to the discipline of writing pedagogy and help tutors contextualize their own experiences in scholarship associated with the field. This course is designed to help new tutors develop their own methodology for tutoring, grounded in some influential scholarship in Writing Center pedagogy.

Prerequisite: WRT 102 or equivalent
SBC: EXP+
3 credits

WRT 380: Advanced Research Writing: Theories, Methods, Practices
Good research skills are critical to academic success. Most disciplines require writing based upon research, as arguments and explanations make little impact on audiences without effective supporting evidence, drawn from relevant scholarship on the subject. This involves knowing how to use appropriate databases, source materials, and composing processes, as well as negotiating the values, genres, and languages of the scholarly communities in which one is researching. In this course, students will learn fundamentals of research methods, practice these methods in a series of integrated research and writing assignments, and engage in critical reflection about research and writing. Students will focus on an area of disciplinary interest to them, and practice these essential research and writing skills through a series of projects: library assignments, research log, research proposal, annotated bibliography, literature review, abstract, research paper and reflection paper.

Prerequisite: WRT 102 or equivalent
3 credits

WRT 381: Advanced Analytic and Argumentative Writing
Argumentative writing involves making a claim and supporting it with specific, related points and appropriate evidence—in other words, it is thesis-driven writing. Whenever we don’t quite like someone else’s idea and we want him or her to come closer to ours, argumentative writing is the most efficient method for such persuasion, in whatever profession you’re considering. This class, therefore, will focus on learning how to effectively utilize argumentative and counter-argumentative writing strategies. Students will explore an area of disciplinary interest to them, through several stages—preliminary draft, multiple versions, literature review—culminating in a 20-30 page piece of writing in which they make a claim about a particular subject in that area of interest and support it with scholarly research and extensive elaboration. This course will fulfill the second half of the Writing Pre-Med/Pre-Health prerequisite. This course is offered as both EGL 381 and WRT 381.

Prerequisite: WRT 102 or equivalent
3 credits

WRT 392: Theories and Methods of Mentoring Writers
Closely examines the difficulties implicit in mentoring writers, with special consideration for the roles of cultural expectations and social dynamics on both the teaching of writing and writers themselves. In small groups and one-to-one interactions, students explore theories and practices upon which composition instruction and writing center work depend. Building on the understanding that writing is a recursive process (a cycle of planning, drafting, revising, and editing), students also learn to analyze and problem-solve issues that become barriers for effective writing and communication.

Prerequisites: WRT 102 or 103; permission of instructor
3 credits

WRT 444: Experiential Learning
This course is designed for students who engage in a substantial, structured experiential learning activity in conjunction with another class. Experiential learning occurs when knowledge acquired through formal learning and past experience are applied to a "real-world" setting or problem to create new knowledge through a process of reflection, critical analysis, feedback and synthesis. Beyond-the-classroom experiences that support experiential learning may include: service learning, mentored research, field work, or an internship.

Prerequisite: WRT 102 or equivalent; permission of the instructor and approval of the EXP+ contract (http://sb.cc.stonybrook.edu/bulletin/current/policiesandregulations/degree_requirements/EXPlus.php)

SBC: EXP+
0 credit, S/U grading
WRT 458: Speak Effectively Before an Audience
A zero credit course that may be taken in conjunction with any WRT course that provides opportunity to achieve the learning outcomes of the Stony Brook Curriculum's SPK learning objective.

Pre- or corequisite: WRT 102 or equivalent; permission of the instructor

SBC: SPK

0 credit

WRT 459: Write Effectively in a Discipline
A zero credit course that may be taken in conjunction with any 300- or 400-level course in any department, with permission of a WRT instructor and of that department's undergraduate program director. The course provides opportunity to practice the skills and techniques of effective academic writing and satisfies the learning outcomes of the Stony Brook Curriculum's WRTD learning objective.

Prerequisite: WRT 102; permission of the instructor

SBC: WRTD

0 credit

WRT 487: Independent Project
Qualified upper-division students may carry out advanced independent work under the supervision of an instructor in the program. May be repeated.

Prerequisite: Permission of instructor and program director

0-6 credits

WRT 488: Internship
Participation in local, state, and national public and private agencies and organizations. May be repeated to a limit of 12 credits.

Prerequisites: g.p.a. of 2.50 or higher; permission of instructor and program director

SBC: EXP+

0-6 credits, S/U grading