English 202A: Writing in the Social Sciences  
Summer 2008

Living in the City: (Re)Solving Urban Social Problems

Instructor: Ms. Deas  
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Class time: 11:10-12:30  
Class Location: Willard 365  
Office Hours: T and W 1:30-3:00 and by appt.

Course Description
Cities are not only vibrant, dynamic, diverse places and rich sites of cultural, language, and class diversity, but cities also include a fantastic variety of cultural attractions (museums, historic buildings, monuments, theatres, etc.), sites (neighborhoods, parks, etc.), and institutions (schools, hospitals, public transportation, etc.). Unfortunately, due to large populations, competing interests, and limited resources, cities face a complex array of social problems, which individuals, community groups, non-profits, institutions, and government entities struggle to successfully resolve. In this course we will examine health, social, economic, political, and educational problems within major urban areas including: Chicago, Detroit, Washington D.C., Pittsburgh, Los Angeles, and Philadelphia. Within this wider context of discussion of problems in U.S. urban areas and from the perspective of your academic discipline in the social sciences, you will analyze and create a creative solution for a major urban problem. Perhaps most importantly to the success of your proposed project, you will pay close attention to the diversity of the city, so that your project takes into account and meets the needs of a diverse population. Throughout this course you will learn community-based writing and how to enhance your skills as a practical and academic writer. Finally, we will discuss how to handle the ethical dilemmas that often accompany the work of social scientists.

Specifically the course will:

- Explain the writing process and demonstrate how planning, drafting, revision, editing, and formatting can help you produce essential job-related communications.
- Show you how to prepare job application documents, resumes and letters.
- Teach you the value of audience analysis with emphasis placed on the writer’s obligation to make ethical decisions in meeting the readers’ needs and fulfilling commitments to employers and clients.
- Prepare you to write a multiplicity of business documents, from simple email messages to complex proposals, reports, and finally a grant application.

Textbooks
Course packet. Available at The Big Blue Bookstore on the corner of College and Heister Streets.

Assignments, Due Dates, and Grading Distribution
In order to be eligible to pass this course, you must complete ALL major assignments.
The course requirements are weighted as follows:
- Assignment 1. Resume, Cover Letter, and Graduate Application. Due (15%).
- Assignment 2. Annotated Bibliography. (15%).
- Assignment 3. Statement of Need. (15%).
- Assignment 4. Informal Proposal. (20%).
- Assignment 5. Final Oral Presentation. (25%).
- Homework. See Course Calendar for Details - (10%).
Tampeting with the academic work of others is not acceptable in or out of class.

For credit in any class, the knowledge of what has been taught must be demonstrated by the student. This is accomplished primarily through written work and examination. It is expected that all written work will be held to the highest standard of scholarship and integrity. Student work must be original, not copied from any other source.

In preparing written work, students are expected to:

1. Demonstrate a thorough understanding of the subject matter discussed in class.
2. Show original thought and creativity in their writing.
3. Cite all sources of information used in their work.
4. Avoid plagiarism by not using words or ideas without attribution.
5. Submit their own work without assistance.

Proper work citation is essential.

Properly identifying sources is crucial to maintaining academic integrity. Students must acknowledge the contributions of others and give credit where it is due.


course_policies

Course Policies...

When you make edits, please provide your name and e-mail.

in the box for password. Type: password (this password is case sensitive, use lower-case)

Click the "Let me in my window" button.

Log in using the your login and password.

Click on "Log in" button to complete login.

To access the course, go to: [URL]

The Course
- **Computer Theft.** Electronic theft of computer programs or other software, data, images, art, or text belonging to another.

In agreement with this policy, students who violate any of the stated standards or who have been found to be dishonest will be referred for academic sanctions and will be reported to the University's Judicial Affairs office for possible further disciplinary sanction.

**CONFERENCES/OFFICE HOURS**
Students are encouraged to come to office hours to talk about their projects at any stage. Come in to brainstorm topic ideas, discuss a draft, etc. I am generous with office hours and offer many opportunities each week for students to stop by to discuss their work. Students who would like to take advantage of office hours should let me know in advance to expect them.

**DISABILITY ACCESS STATEMENT**
The Pennsylvania State University encourages qualified people with disabilities to participate in its programs and activities and is committed to the policy that all people shall have equal access to programs, facilities, and admission without regard to personal characteristics not related to ability, performance, or qualification as determined by University policy or state or federal authorities. If you anticipate needing any type of accommodation or have questions about physical access, please do not hesitate to contact me.


Grading Criteria and Policies

This section describes in detail both the criteria I apply to assigning grades and the policies I follow for reviewing and discussing grades. Those policies are intended:

- to avoid misunderstandings
- to be fair
- to minimize temptations to negotiate grades or to ask for exceptions or special consideration.

Please review these criteria and policies thoroughly now, and ask me about anything that isn’t absolutely clear.

Interpretation of letter grades

The major assignments in my courses emphasize quality. In assessing quality, I apply very much the same criteria that an enlightened employer organization would apply to your work. Then I assign a letter grade as follows:

- Any correct, complete, and on-time assignment earns at least a C.
- Work that is unusually thorough, well-organized, nicely presented, innovative, or in some other way superior to a minimum required solution, earns at least a B.
- A grade of A is earned for work that is outstanding in some way.
- Partial or flawed problem solutions can earn any grade A through F, depending on the nature of the omission or errors and on the quality of what’s turned in.

Please note that in order to avoid late penalties (see details below), you must turn all assignments in on-time with all required materials. Moreover, you must turn in all assignments to be eligible to pass this course.

I give the full range of grades A through F both on individual assignments and in this course as a whole.

Late Penalties

To receive full credit, work must come in on time and include all of the components required. Every student is allowed one extension (see conditions on next page). Otherwise, I will enforce late penalties as outlined below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignment</th>
<th>Late Penalties</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Major Assignment</td>
<td>Must include every element of assignment. Reduced 1 letter grade per day late (each weekend day counts as one day).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Missed Peer Review Day</td>
<td>Counts as two absences</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No Peer Review, Draft or 2-Pocket folder</td>
<td>Assignment not accepted without these; assignment will count as late and be reduced for 1 full letter grade per day late.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Missed homework</td>
<td>Final homework grade reduced one letter grade for each missing homework assignment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No Presentation</td>
<td>No credit for assignment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Late to Class</td>
<td>Every student is allowed to be up to ten minutes late to one class without penalty. Beyond one lateness, I reserve the right to count your lateness as an absence.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Missed Class</td>
<td>Every student is allowed three excused absences. Beyond three, I reserve the right to lower your grade down to and including an “F.”</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Extensions
I allow every student one extension. If you need an extension, please request one no later than the class period before the paper is due. To qualify for the extension, you must have a draft for peer review and participate in in-class peer review unless you have received prior permission from me to be excused from in-class peer review.

Please use your extension carefully as you only get one. You should reserve your extension for illness or other emergency. If you use your extension and then get sick, for example, I will still invoke late penalties.

Special considerations and negotiations
Grades are earned not awarded or negotiated, and, in any case, they are not influenced by such factors as:

- How much the instructor likes the student.
- Whether the instructor feels sorry for the student.
- Whether the student will lose a scholarship, forfeit tuition reimbursement, or become ineligible to play sports, etc.
- Whether this grade will ruin a previous straight-A average.

I may feel compassion for your circumstances, but please don’t ask me to raise your grade on the basis of such considerations. That wouldn’t be fair to the students who don’t complain.

Extra credit and second chances
I have carefully created a system that has some lee-way built into it. Beyond the lee-way already designed into the system, I cannot make special arrangements with individual students to do work over, or to do an “extra” assignment, to accept late or “forgotten” homework or major assignments, or to redo major assignments. It wouldn’t be fair to the other students, so please don’t ask.

This document was adapted from Conrad Weishart’s version available at: http://www.udinews.com/gradePolicy.html