
Writing, Rhetoric and Technical Communication

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WRTC 103. Critical Reading and Writing. 3 credits.

Fosters reflective, critical reading, writing and research in public discourse, culture, humanities, technology, and science. Challenges students to consider cross-disciplinary modes of inquiry through multiple genres with an attention to enlightened, global citizenship. Emphasizes revising for rhetorical effectiveness. WRTC 103 fulfills the General Education Cluster One writing requirement and is a prerequisite for all WRTC courses numbered 200 or above. May be used for general education credit. May not be used for major credit.

WRTC 200. Introduction to Studies in Writing, Rhetoric and Technical Communication. 3 credits.

Initial core course and portal of entry into the School of Writing, Rhetoric and Technical Communication. Students will read and discuss foundational articles, undertake course projects and explore the roles that writers, rhetoricians and technical communicators are called upon to fill in their internships and jobs. *Prerequisite:* [WRTC 103](#) or equivalent.

WRTC 201. Theory and Methods in Writing, Rhetoric and Technical Communication. 3 credits.

Introduction to the theories and methodologies employed by practitioners in writing, rhetoric and technical communication. Emphasis is placed on methods of inquiry in the discipline. Primary topics include major theoretical perspectives and theorists; the relationship of research to disciplinary knowledge; and the dynamic nature of language and communication. *Prerequisite or corequisite:* [WRTC 200](#) or permission of the instructor.

WRTC 300. Professional Editing. 3 credits.

Introduction to the conceptual and technical editing of a wide range of documents for diverse audiences and different purposes. Consideration of genre, tone, style and syntax. Students will learn to interact with authors and clients and will practice both hard copy and electronic editing. Course topics allow students to encounter a wide range of editorial experiences to prepare them for the workplace. *Prerequisites:* [WRTC 200](#) and [WRTC 201](#) or permission of the instructor.

WRTC 301. Language, Law and Ethics. 3 credits.

Broad examination of the nexus of law, ethics and language. Exploration of a variety of genres in legal writing, providing a background in the role of law and ethics in society and helping students understand how language operates in the construction of legal and moral codes. Primary topics include intellectual property, privacy, legal issues in

communication, the history of legal language and the ownership and ethical use of information. *Prerequisites:* [WRTC 200](#) and [WRTC 201](#) or permission of the instructor.

WRTC 310. Semiotics. 3 credits.

Systematic approach to the production of meaning and interpretation with analytical examination of semiotic signs as aggregates of information management and communication. Complexity of meaning in communication conduits, speech, texts, images, symbols, codes, icons, media designs, gestures, music and objects are investigated. Also explored is the relationship between semiotic sign systems and ecosocial systems as they impact information management and production in society. *Prerequisite:* [WRTC 103](#) or equivalent.

WRTC 312. Studies in Literacy. 3 credits.

Advanced research and writing course designed to explore the important roles that literacy plays in society. Students will examine the concept of literacy through historical, political, sociological, educational and cross-cultural lenses. *Prerequisite:* [WRTC 103](#) or equivalent.

WRTC 314. Writing in the Public Sphere. 3 credits.

Introduction to the concept of the public sphere and an examination of a variety of texts and media that illustrate the function of the public sphere. Students apply theoretical knowledge to the analysis of public discourse and present their analyses in oral and written formats. Students gain important insights into their own roles and responsibilities as citizens within the public sphere and learn to use language effectively in multiple rhetorical situations. *Prerequisite:* [WRTC 103](#) or equivalent.

WRTC 316. Research Methodologies in WRTC. 3 credits.

Introduction to the process of conducting research grounded in inquiry. Students use a variety of research methodologies to gather information from secondary and primary sources. Students evaluate information for accuracy and usability and interpret information for the audience and rhetorical context they have defined. Students in this course design a research study, carry it out and write a subject appropriate report. *Prerequisite:* [WRTC 103](#) or equivalent.

WRTC 318. Intercultural Professional Communication. 3 credits.

Focus on the importance of culture to professional communication, both in print and online, by using an intercultural perspective to examine audience, purpose, persona, context, language, page and screen design, graphics and color. Includes a consideration of basic models of culture developed in professional environments, incorporating management, teamwork and translation issues, as well as how American culture differs from other cultures worldwide. *Prerequisite:* [WRTC 103](#) or equivalent.

WRTC 326/SCOM 354. Environmental Communication and Advocacy. 3 credits.

An exploration of the multifaceted aspects of environmental controversies including the rhetoric, advocacy campaigns and decision-making processes that produce and attempt to manage environmental conflict. Emphasis on persuasive efforts by, interest groups, corporations, resource managers, government agencies, scientific experts, politicians and citizens to influence public understanding of environmental issues, adoption of sustainable behavior and lifestyles, and public policy outcomes. *Prerequisite:* [WRTC 103](#) or equivalent.

WRTC 328. Practicum. 1-3 credits per semester, repeatable up to 6 credits.

Allows students to engage in practical experience opportunities in the field of Writing, Rhetoric and Technical Communication. Students may apply no more than three

practicum credit hours toward completion of WRTC major or minor requirements.

Prerequisite: [WRTC 103](#) or equivalent.

WRTC 330. Rhetorical Analysis and Criticism. 3 credits.

Survey and application of a range of rhetorical approaches to analyze print, oral, visual and multimodal forms of everyday communicative practices. Primary topics include the origins of rhetoric, the manifestations of contemporary forms of communication, the rhetorical theories used to explain those forms and the criticisms developed to respond to them. *Prerequisites:* [WRTC 200](#) and [WRTC 201](#) or permission of the instructor.

WRTC 332. Computers and Writing. 3 credits.

Introduction to the interrelationship between composing practices and technology. Emphasis is placed on the importance of the computer and related technologies to the practice of reading and writing. Primary topics include major theoretical perspectives on computers and writing, implications of the computer and digital technologies for the teaching of writing and the nature of the interaction between language and technology. *Prerequisites:* [WRTC 200](#) and [WRTC 201](#) or permission of the instructor.

WRTC 334. Introduction to Popular Writing. 3 credits.

A theoretical and practical overview of the growing field of popular writing. Students will analyze a broad range of genres – including reviews, commentaries, profiles, blogs and ads – from a broad range of publications, including newspapers, magazines and the Web, with the goal of acquiring a critical understanding of the rhetorical aims and practices of popular writing. *Prerequisites:* [WRTC 200](#) and [WRTC 201](#) or permission of the instructor.

WRTC 336. Tutoring Writing. 3 credits.

Integrates the theory and practice of tutoring writing in academic settings and is suited for developing tutors, teachers, consultants and editors. The course includes mentorship and practice in the University Writing Center, and it provides students opportunities to develop as writers, scholars and professionals. Upon completion of the course, students will be eligible for, but not guaranteed, employment in the University Writing Center. *Prerequisites:* [WRTC 103](#) and permission of the instructor.

WRTC 338. Genre Theory. 3 credits.

Introduction to key concepts and principles of genre theory, specifically as taken up by scholars and practitioners of writing, rhetoric and technical communication. Students will investigate both academic and nonacademic genres and explore different purposes for writing in a range of appropriate genres. *Prerequisites:* [WRTC 200](#) and [WRTC 201](#) or permission of the instructor.

WRTC 340. Writing as Leading. 3 credits.

Investigation of contemporary leadership theories as they apply to writing; students will apply these principles and techniques to their own writing. The course will explore how writers lead readers and how leaders employ writing and use writers to influence their audiences. Students will gain experience writing in typical leadership genres, such as the position paper and the op-ed piece. *Prerequisites:* [WRTC 200](#) and [WRTC 201](#) or permission of the instructor.

WRTC 342. Writing Place. 3 credits.

Examines the relationship between language and location by analyzing print and virtual rhetorics of the social and natural environment. Students will learn about the rhetorical tradition of place-centered expression and the importance of place in society. *Prerequisites:* [WRTC 200](#) and [WRTC 201](#) or permission of the instructor.

WRTC 350. Foundations of Technical Communication. 3 credits.

Introduction to the major theories, issues and contributors in the field of technical and scientific communication. Students explore global print and electronic communication, ethical and legal issues and the project cycle. Starting with rhetorical analyses of audiences and progressing through deliverables students learn to problem solve through a variety of technical communication projects and develop their career interests in chosen technical communication fields. *Prerequisites:* [WRTC 200](#) and [WRTC 201](#) or permission of the instructor.

WRTC 352. Online Design I. 3 credits.

Introduction to the most recent versions of HTML/CSS coding and industry-standard programs for creating web-friendly images, both vector and pixel based. Students will become familiar with elementary JavaScript coding and responsive web design, and explore app-based possibilities. Assignments are project-based and lead to the creation of online deliverables for various purposes. Emphasis on electronic tools and portfolio projects to prepare students for careers in digital communication. *Prerequisites:* [WRTC 200](#) and [WRTC 201](#) or permission of the instructor.

WRTC 354. Document Design. 3 credits.

Examination of the principles of design and the importance of the project cycle in designing documents. Students use layout and graphics programs to create professional brochures, flyers, posters, newsletters and manuals. Students work individually and collaboratively on their projects, producing excellent portfolio pieces. This course gives students flexibility for a wide variety of career opportunities in business and industry, the non-profit sector and government. *Prerequisite:* [WRTC 300](#) or permission of the instructor.

WRTC 356. Web Theory and Design. 3 credits.

Introduction to Web design, emphasizing audience, purpose, structure, accessibility, content and usability. Students analyze, create and redesign effective websites and graphic pieces. Students will also learn how to create Web teams, negotiate contracts and manage large-scale Web projects, adhering to copyright regulations. Using industry accepted applications for Web and graphic design, students in this course have the opportunity to develop several professional portfolio pieces. *Prerequisites:* [WRTC 200](#) and [WRTC 201](#) or permission of the instructor.

WRTC 358. Writing About Science and Technology. 3 credits.

Focus on the development and application of rhetorical strategies and tools used in writing about science and technology for a contemporary, general audience. As citizen-interpreters, students analyze and produce writing designed to make even “hard” science and technology accessible, with particular attention to narrative, to the framing of policy issues and to establishing relevance. *Prerequisites:* [WRTC 200](#) and [WRTC 201](#) or permission of the instructor.

WRTC 410. Sociolinguistics. 3 credits.

Exploration of the role of language in society and an in-depth examination of the theoretical discourse and analytical paradigms within which questions of language are premised, analyzed and debated. Course emphasizes two important fields – micro- and macro-sociolinguistics – in dealing with choices in language use and preferences in communication strategy. Focusing on applied linguistics, students learn how to apply their skills in the social engineering of language to their career development. *Prerequisite:* [WRTC 103](#) or equivalent.

WRTC 412. Language and Information Management. 3 credits.

Focus on language as the nuclear component of communication and information management. Course presents language as a problem-solving device explored through various fields of language and communication studies. It provides students with management skills in efficient information organization and packaging; innovative approach and delivery; effective analyses of audiences; appropriate choice of media; productive marketing of professional skills; and professional networking. *Prerequisite:* [WRTC 103](#) or equivalent.

WRTC 414. Major Theorists in WRTC. 3 credits.

Focused, in-depth study of a specific theorist or scholarly tradition in the discipline. It situates the theorist and his/her work in historical, political, rhetorical and linguistic contexts. Students engage in original research that investigates, converses with and/or builds upon the selected theorist's scholarship. Subject matter varies with each offering. *Prerequisites:* [WRTC 103](#) or equivalent and junior/senior standing or permission of the instructor.

WRTC 416/SCOM 465. Rhetoric of Environmental Science and Technology. 3 credits.

An advanced study of the way the public receives, makes sense of, and influences scientific and technical information about environmental issues. Implications of these processes on environmental policy will be analyzed. Readings and assignments will concentrate on the interactions between technical and public spheres of communication, with an in-depth examination of the way the media facilitates the transfer of information between scientific communities and public audiences. *Prerequisites:* [WRTC 103](#) or equivalent and junior or senior standing, or permission of the instructor.

WRTC/WGS/SCOM 420. Feminist Rhetorics. 3 credits.

Survey of key women figures in classical and contemporary rhetorical traditions and challenges the strategies used to historicize this tradition from feminist perspectives. Explores diverse feminist rhetorical discourses informed by race, sexual orientation, ethnicity and social class. *Prerequisites:* [WRTC 103](#) or equivalent and junior/senior status, or permission of the instructor.

WRTC 426. Special Topics in Writing, Rhetoric and Technical Communication. 3 credits.

Focused, in-depth study of specific areas or subjects in Writing, Rhetoric and Technical Communication. Topics may pertain to issues relevant to the discipline, to the study of particular theories and practices, or to the study of significant figures in the field. Seminars may be repeated for credit when course content changes. *Prerequisites:* [WRTC 103](#) or equivalent and junior/senior status, or permission of the instructor.

WRTC 430/SCOM 343. Contemporary Rhetorical Theory and Practice. 3 credits.

Examines contemporary rhetorical theory and practice in relation to specific social, economic and technological changes in the 20th century, with particular emphasis on theoretical frameworks. Students learn about the changing needs of postmodern communicators and how new rhetorical theories have developed to anticipate, respond to, and shape those changes. Also explored is the value of contemporary rhetorical theories for communicative and performative events. *Prerequisites:* [WRTC 200](#) and [WRTC 201](#) or permission of the instructor.

WRTC 432. Rhetoric of the Personal Narrative. 3 credits.

Examination of the rhetorical elements of personal narrative. Students will read examples of personal narratives ranging from essays to longer memoirs and

autobiographies, in order to examine questions related to purpose, audience, voice and style. Discussion will include what makes a piece of writing personal, what makes it a narrative and what makes it effective. *Prerequisites: [WRTC 200](#) and [WRTC 201](#) or permission of the instructor.*

WRTC 434. Advanced Popular Writing. 3 credits.

Advanced focus on a particular genre in popular writing, such as reviews, commentaries, opinion pieces, profiles, blogs, or ads. Students will engage with a specific genre to acquire both a critical understanding of its rhetorical aims and practices as well as the skills to practice writing within that genre. Students in this course have the opportunity to develop several professional portfolio pieces. *Prerequisites: [WRTC 200](#) and [WRTC 201](#) or permission of the instructor.*

WRTC 436. Teaching Writing. 3 credits.

Introduces students to the major philosophies, theories and pedagogies of teaching writing. Special attention is devoted to such practical matters as understanding and developing effective writing assignments, methods of responding to student texts-in-progress and evaluating writing. *Prerequisite: [WRTC 300](#) or permission of the instructor.*

WRTC 450. Digital Rhetoric. 3 credits.

Introduces the rhetoric of digital design in a variety of contexts. Students learn what makes for effective static and interactive digital designs and practice analyzing and creating digital designs. Student will compose technical documents within diverse traditions, which include digital rhetoric, mixed media and visual rhetoric. *Prerequisites: [WRTC 200](#) and [WRTC 201](#) or permission of the instructor.*

WRTC 452. Online Design II. 3 credits.

Introduction to data basing and adding animation to a website. Students create interactive, professional websites that can include forms, animated buttons, searchable catalogs and splash pages. Students also have the opportunity to work with additional tools for developing creative portfolio pieces. *Prerequisite: [WRTC 352](#) or permission of the instructor.*

WRTC 454. Publication Management. 3 credits.

Exploration of the publication production process that addresses the theory and practice of project management for professional print and electronic documents. Students work collaboratively to examine managerial and editorial responsibilities. Topics include defining editorial policy, defining management roles, working with project teams, creating document publication schedules, reviewing and editing submissions for publication and collaborating with authors. *Prerequisite: [WRTC 300](#) or permission of the instructor.*

WRTC 456. Usability Testing. 3 credits.

Theoretical and practical study of the product testing of documents and interfaces in a variety of media environments. Students design, plan and conduct tests; code data from the tests; interpret the results and write reports. Students also research and analyze various tests as they learn about the rhetorical aims of document and interface assessment. *Prerequisites: [WRTC 200](#) and [WRTC 201](#) or permission of the instructor.*

WRTC 458. Scientific and Medical Communication. 3 credits.

Introduction to the context and use of language in scientific and medical disciplines. Emphasis is placed on understanding the rhetorical nature of scientific discourse. Primary topics include examining different forms of scientific and medical writing in traditional and digital contexts; the nature of communication within professional

communities; and composing texts for general readers. *Prerequisites:* [WRTC 200](#) and [WRTC 201](#) or permission of the instructor.

WRTC 478. Writing in the Legal Professions. 3 credits.

Introduction to issues of ethics and law through a community-based learning model. Emphasis is placed on the use of language in legal settings. Primary topics include intellectual-property and fair use; the interrelationship of morals, ethics and laws; and the creation of genre-relevant documents, including briefs and legal summaries. *Prerequisites:* [WRTC 300](#) and [WRTC 301](#) and either [WRTC 330](#) or [WRTC 350](#), or permission of the instructor.

WRTC 480. Writing for Business and Industry. 3 credits.

Introduction to the communication and discourse practices of the business community through a community-based learning model. Emphasis is placed on working directly with a business organization. Primary topics include language and ethics in business; the understanding of audience for business communication; and the creation of business documents, including proposals and business plans. *Prerequisites:* [WRTC 300](#) and [WRTC 301](#) and either [WRTC 330](#) or [WRTC 350](#), or permission of the instructor.

WRTC 482. Writing for Government. 3 credits.

Introduction to the communication and discourse practices of government through a community-based learning model. Emphasis is placed on working directly with a local, state or federal government agency. Primary topics include language and government; interagency communication; and developing typical governmental documents, including white papers, proposals and grants. *Prerequisites:* [WRTC 300](#) and [WRTC 301](#) and either [WRTC 330](#) or [WRTC 350](#), or permission of the instructor.

WRTC 484. Writing for Nonprofits. 3 credits.

Introduction to the nonprofit sector through a community-based learning model. Emphasis is placed on working directly with a nonprofit agency in the local community. Primary topics include the role of the nonprofit in society, especially as an organization for change; creation of internal and public documents, including proposals, grants and publicity materials; and the legal requirements for nonprofit status. *Prerequisites:* [WRTC 300](#) and [WRTC 301](#) and either [WRTC 330](#) or [WRTC 350](#), or permission of the instructor.

WRTC 486. Writing in the Community. 3 credits.

Introduction to political and social engagement at the community level using multiple texts and a community-based learning model. Emphasis is placed on writing, reflection and hands-on service projects with community agencies. Primary topics include an examination of the central role of rhetoric in citizenship, leadership, social justice and social change. *Prerequisites:* [WRTC 300](#) and [WRTC 301](#) and either [WRTC 330](#) or [WRTC 350](#), or permission of the instructor.

WRTC 488. Writing in the Health Sciences. 3 credits.

Introduction to the medical field through a community-based learning model. Emphasis is placed on communication within the medical field and the translation of medical language for lay audiences. Primary topics include the roles of the practitioner and audience in medical communication; power relationships among clinicians and patients; and the creation of medical documents, including reports, proposals and technical articles. *Prerequisites:* [WRTC 300](#) and [WRTC 301](#) and either [WRTC 330](#) or [WRTC 350](#), or permission of the instructor.

WRTC 490. Independent Study in Writing, Rhetoric and Technical Communication. 3 credits.

Individualized projects in Writing, Rhetoric and Technical Communication. Available only to junior or senior majors, though exceptions may be made at the director's discretion. May be repeated with the director's approval when course content changes. *Prerequisites: [WRTC 103](#) or equivalent and junior/senior status and permission of the director.*

WRTC 495. Internship in Writing, Rhetoric and Technical Communication. 3 credits.

Allows students to incorporate field experience with WRTC course work through internships in government, business, industry, or education where they can observe communication processes and apply effective written, interpersonal and public communication skills. Students must complete an application process and be approved before receiving a permission number to enroll in the course (see Internship page on WRTC website for requirements and forms). *Prerequisites: [WRTC 300](#) and [WRTC 301](#), junior/senior status and permission of the instructor.*

WRTC 496. Capstone in Writing, Rhetoric and Technical Communication. 1 credit.

Creation of a portfolio containing the best work of students from their previous WRTC class projects, internships and independent assignments. Through individual consultations with an instructor, students will determine the form and purpose of their portfolios, which will emphasize their range of writing and editing skills as well as the breadth and depth of their rhetorical and technical knowledge. *Prerequisite or corequisite: [WRTC 495](#) or permission of the instructor.*

WRTC 499. Honors. 6 credits.

Year course.