Academic Writing for Philosophy, Politics and Economics BA 2022

Lecturers: Eva Ajkay-Nagy and Robin Bellers

Credits: 2 US, 4 ECTS

Time: Fall 2022 - 10 weeks: From Sept 12 (Mon) – Nov 17 (Thurs): Time: 10.40am on Tuesdays and Thursdays during the term.

Mandatory, no prerequisites

Office hours: The Center for Academic Writing is a support unit and as such we make a large number of timeslots available to all students every week. To view our availability, please register with WCONLINE https://ceu.mywconline.com/register.php in order to view our schedule and book a suitable time.

Course Description:

The course Academic Writing for Philosophy, Politics and Economics focuses on the skills and basic elements of academic writing. The aim of this course is to increase students’ agency as writers by acquiring both the theoretical knowledge and practical skills necessary to produce texts for the interdisciplinary academic discourses. More specifically, students will have an opportunity to practice critical reading and writing through summarising, analysing, evaluating and synthesising ideas. Students will also learn how to engage with scholarly sources effectively and incorporate them into their own texts. The main focus will be the argumentative essay as the building block of most genres of academic writing.

The syllabus is subject to change. Depending on each lecturer, there may be variations in terms of specific readings and tasks in the syllabi for each group. The most recent updates will always be announced in advance and posted on the e-learning course site.

Course Outcomes:

Upon completion of this course, students will be able to:

• Engage with readings critically by evaluating the various contexts (social, historical, or personal) surrounding and underpinning each text

• Be aware of the stylistic conventions of academic writing

• Effectively summarise and analyse various texts while identifying and highlighting their main ideas and messages

• Develop independent perspectives and arguments via persuasive support and successful incorporation of research, thus developing their own voice and creating a balance between their own voice and source summaries

• Effectively deal with counter arguments in order to present a more compelling argument

• Practice the revision skills necessary for the accomplishment of a writing project

• Constructively critique their own and peers' writing, with an awareness of the collaborative and social aspects of the writing process
Intellectual Foundations of the Course:
The course plays an integral role within the PPE Program as it provides students with knowledge, expertise and skills that strengthens their agency as independent scholars, thinkers and writers in the interdisciplinary academic environment. Readings will be assigned and available on the course e-learning site (Moodle) and via electronic access to the CEU library. The sessions are mainly hands-on, workshop-based, but short weekly readings will also be assigned. In addition to the readings and assignments stated in the syllabus, some additional short tasks will be assigned during the course (timely completion of these additional assignments may count as part of the Attendance and Participation grade).

Assessment:
• Attendance: 10% Class attendance (no more than 2 absences) and attendance at mandatory consultations

• Participation in on-line and in-class discussions: 40% Providing written feedback to peers, contributing to class discussion, contributing to class workshops by timely preparation, participation in Moodle discussions

• Written Assignments 50%
  
  Essay 1: How the first assignment progressed since it was written in the second session

  Essay 2: The main focus here is on the process, and the short writing assignments during the course, as opposed to just an assessment of the final paper as a product (Responding to the Assignment, Length and Submission Requirements Fulfilled)

Grades are awarded based on Annex 2 in CEU’s Student Rights, Rules, and Academic Regulations

Syllabus:
Readings which accompany each class are available on Moodle. The first seven sessions are in the Pre-term week.

Pre-T Session 1: Introduction to the course, to each other and more! We will outline the aims and process of the course and explain how the course is to be assessed.

Pre-T Session 2: Write an essay.

Pre-T Session 3: In this session we give a second essay title – and we ask for your gut reaction, your initial hypothesis or thesis. We also begin to look at the title and decide what problems that raises. We will briefly look back at the thesis statement and key terms from the essay you wrote in the second session. You will be expected to submit your early thesis, along with any definitions that you need at this stage before next session.

Pre-T Session 4: From the readings before this session, we will have a look at notetaking and brainstorming but avoiding pitfalls such as plagiarism. In this session we consider how and what material you recorded for the homework assignment, and we ask you to consider whether you need to make changes to how you take notes.

Pre-T Session 5: In this session you talk about how you go about identifying and considering arguments in favour and against your thesis. We look at brainstorming and effective ways to do so that you might
also choose to adopt. This session is followed by two library-led sessions which help with research. We will give you a number of readings relevant to the essay topic to consider before session 8.

Pre-T Session 6: Library session looking at advanced search techniques.

Pre-T Session 7: Library session looking at assessing internet sources.

W1 Session 8: We look at certain genres which we asked you to read, analysing differences, similarities, and identifying what makes an article academic and how it is written structurally, and therefore how you might read it.

W1 Session 9: The next sessions go through elements you will need to consider when reading critically. This first session is about how you selected relevant material, effective reading skills, reading critically, identifying audience and style. You will be expected to write up a brief ‘contextualisation’ of one of the articles you plan to keep.

W2 Session 10: In this session you identify key arguments, summarize key information needed to defend the thesis. After this session you are expected to write a summary of one article that you have decided to keep for your essay. The summary should be around 250 words max.

There will be a consultation on this summary.

W2 Session 11: Summarising: What is an effective summary? We look at its purpose/s and how it changes depending on where we find it.

W3 Session 12: Evaluation: We look more specifically at logical arguments and bringing in evaluation, but also finish the critical reading process. After this session, you are expected to write a critical assessment of one article that you have decided to keep or reject. You should briefly contextualise the article, summarise the main arguments it presents, and then critically assess that information and ultimately explain why you are keeping or rejecting it. This should be approximately a page long single spaced.

One consultation online/in person.

W3 Session 13: Macro-level structuring – planning the essay. In this session we look at macro-level structuring, and in particular using outlines and how they are helpful for different people. After the session you will be required to draft an outline of your future essay.

There will be a short consultation online on the essay plan.

W4 Session 14: Considering your audience and context – elements of appropriate academic style. We look at what is meant by academic style, how we identify an academic text, what we expect when reading one, what the conventions and demands are but also what flexibility there is.

W4 Session 15: Writing the Introduction and considering differences in other genres. We start the actual writing of the essay by considering what the introduction needs to do, what should be brought in, what can or should not be brought in, and how the introduction can change depending on the genre. We will ask you to look back at the essay you wrote in the second session and consider how you would improve the introduction to that essay.

W5 Session 16: We looked at the Macro level, now we go to the Micro level. We focus on paragraphing and how they drive the argument forward. We also discuss how writing in English differs from other writing cultures and identify some of the issues you will need to consider when editing your own work. At this stage you start writing the main body of the essay, first paragraph/s.
W5 Session 17: Cohesion and coherence through the text. In this session we focus on the body of the essay and the logical progression of the argument and how that is achieved. We pay particular attention to your own writing by revisiting that first essay.

W6 Session 18: Incorporating sources. We return to looking at how to bring in support to your essay and deciding how to cite, whether to paraphrase or use another way depending on the need.

W6 Session 19: Plagiarism, and how to avoid it. We return to clarify this important issue and what is an effective use of a source. We will ask you to decide how to bring in some sources to the first essay you wrote.

W7 Session 20: Library session on citation software, in particular Zotero.

W7 Session 21: Citation styles and mechanics of citation. This session focuses on the often difficult way to actually put the citation together, and where it should go in the text and other complications.

W8 Session 22: Concluding a paper (Argumentative essay: DUE END OF WEEK 10 Requirements: 1,000 words. The essay needs to engage with 3 or more sources and integrate revisions based on peer feedback. Further Assignment Instructions will be provided in class.

Attendance at a last mandatory consultation on the essay.

Final stages of the Writing Process: revision, rewriting, proofreading and editing

W8 Session 23: Peer review of the first draft of the argumentative paper we have been working on. Here you have the chance to see what a number of your peers have written, how they approached the writing of the same task as you. You will read their papers, give feedback to them and get helpful comments on how to improve your own paper. You will then make those improvements before you submit your paper to us.

W9 Session 24: Final editing and reviewing before submission. We draw up a checklist of elements to consider, which should lead to a better paper generally before submission to us or your department. Course review and a review of that very first essay!

Consultations will continue to be made available to students until you graduate from CEU.

Final Assignment Submission: December 15