St. Pius X High School

English 110: Intro to Academic Prose Fall 2026

Our Mission: “To Restore All Things In Christ” Pope Pius X

Instructor: Bridget Barta and Dr. Cynthia Jones
Email: bbarta@spxkc.org, jonescy@umkc.edu

Course Description
This course introduces students to college-level reading, writing, and discourse analysis: it engages students in the analysis and creation of texts that reveal multiple perspectives about specific rhetorical situations and cultural issues. In addition to learning how to revise by analyzing their own writing, students will learn to edit their own work and use proper academic documentation.

Textbooks and Novels
Provided:
Elizabeth Wardle and Douglas Downs*, Writing about Writing: A College Reader,* 4th edition, Macmillan, 2020. ISBN: 9781319195861.

All other assigned reading will be available online through links in either Google Classroom or Canvas.

Required Materials
- Daily Journal - Composition Notebook (Will be kept in classroom)
- Binder or Folder for Handouts
- Pen or pencil
- Notebook paper

Course Design and Philosophy
The curriculum for this course is built on the premise that the ability to negotiate differences of values, culture, identity, experience, and knowledge artfully and effectively in language is one of the central goals of a college education. Historically, the practical study of how we can effectively reason with and persuade others has been called rhetoric. In a society as diverse as the United States, and in a world that is increasingly globalized, improving your rhetorical powers of speech and writing will help you not only to succeed in college and your profession, but also to negotiate interactions with new individuals, groups, settings, cultures and forms of knowledge, each of which often has its own ways with words.

As a student in college, you will be asked to do many types of writing, applying different forms of knowledge, drawing on diverse sources and your own experience, and working within many disciplinary contexts. The activities of the course are partly designed to help you practice and investigate this diversity of college writing. Indeed, the readings in our textbook, *Writing About Writing (WAW)*, aim to help you build up a practical and theoretical knowledge about writing and rhetoric. In other words, the course is designed to help you develop tools to analyze different rhetorical situations, audiences and contexts, as well as the language

conventions of different communities or disciplines, with the goal of learning writing skills that are transferrable to a wide variety of academic contexts and public writing tasks.

In other words, we will carefully examine "threshold" concepts and terms that scholars use in studying writing and rhetoric. So, for example, we will carefully examine terms like "discourse community," "literacy sponsors," "rhetorical situation." Although we will read a good deal of challenging academic writing about writing, the course is also constructed to explore relations between academic speech and writing and the larger social and physical worlds outside the university. How can academic speaking and writing connect with your own personal voice, identity, interests and values? How does rhetoric function in popularly circulated texts such as feature articles, photo essays, videos, and mass media? How can we use our knowledge in ways that broaden our participation in democratic public discourse and engage shared problems that concern us not only as academics or professionals, but also as persons and citizens?

We cannot stress strongly enough that the most essential work of any writing course is revision. There is much more to writing than first thoughts, first drafts, and first pages. A writer learns most by returning to his or her work to see what it does and doesn't do, by taking time with a project and seeing where it might lead. This class is a place where you will practice writing, but it is also a place where the writing is expected to change as you develop connections and as your inquiry progresses. We will be asking you to revise – to step outside your writing – to see what it might represent (rather than only what it says) and to make changes. We will invite you to pay close and critical attention to what you have written, and to make this critical attention part of the cycle of production, part of your work as a writer.

Student Learning Outcomes

1. Develop a clear focus
2. Construct a purposeful organizational scheme appropriate to the rhetorical situation
3. Identify, analyze, and synthesize credible and relevant sources to support focus
4. Compose appropriate and relevant content to illustrate mastery of subject
5. Employ format, style, syntax, and usage appropriate to the rhetorical situation
6. Utilize appropriate mechanics, grammar, punctuation, and spelling

Unit Outcomes

Unit 1: Literacy	**Unit 2: Rhetoric**
• Define literacy • Analyze literacy narratives • Reflect on personal literacy • Write a literacy narrative • Reflect on writing process • Critique peers' drafts • Create a revision plan • Revise draft(s) • Define academic honesty • Practice integrating sources • Practice academic citation	• Define rhetoric • Apply basic rhetorical terminology • Apply rhetorical reading strategies • Analyze a text's rhetorical situation • Integrate sources • Write an analytical essay • Reflect on writing process • Critique peers' drafts • Create a revision plan • Revise draft(s) • Integrate sources • Use academic citation

Unit 3: Discourse	**Unit 4: Transfer**
● Define discourse communities ● Compare definitions of authority ● Reflect on gaining authority in a new discourse community ● Write a reflection essay ● Reflect on writing process ● Critique peers' drafts ● Create a revision plan ● Revise draft(s) Practice integrating sources ● Practice academic citation	● Define transfer ● Apply threshold concepts ● Write a guide to applying threshold concepts ● Reflect on writing process ● Critique peers' drafts ● Revise draft(s) ● Integrate sources ● Use academic citation

Overview of Major Learning Assessments

1. **Literacy Narrative –** Reflect on your reading and writing history to understand how you've developed as a writer and how those skills can transfer to new contexts.

2. **Rhetorical Analysis –** Analyze a scholarly article using rhetorical reading strategies to evaluate its purpose, audience, and context.

3. **Authority Reflection –** Apply concepts from writing studies to examine how people gain credibility in discourse communities, using your own experiences as a case study.

4. **Portfolio and Threshold Reflection –** Compile your major assignments and compose a comprehensive reflection on your writing process, knowledge, and growth over the term.

Expectations and Responsibilities

- In addition to the Major Learning Assessments, you will have one or two additional writing assignments per week. These will either be discussions, Writing to Learn, or Response to Reading assignments.
- **Keep me in the loop.** Talk to me early and often. I want you to succeed, and I am happy to help you however I can. That said, I cannot help if I do not know that there is a problem or if I am only informed of a problem after the fact (emergencies are an obvious exception). If there is something affecting your performance in class or circumstances that you feel deserves special consideration, let me know as soon as possible, and we'll see what we can work out.
- **This is a collegial environment, act accordingly.** Be respectful of everyone in the classroom by being prepared, reading carefully, and being engaged and collegial. Disruptive or disrespectful behavior is unacceptable.
- **Carefully read the syllabus and all course documents, especially assignments.** It is essential that you understand course policies, for not having read the syllabus or misunderstanding the syllabus does not exempt you from its policies or any penalties for not following those policies.
- **Be Prepared.** I may make minor changes to the syllabus or schedule, but otherwise, do what you need to do.
- **Participate.** Engage your classmates and their work with thoughtfulness and enthusiasm.

I reserve the right to alter the syllabus and schedule of assignments as necessary.

Resources and Policy Statements

Important UMKC Resources and Policies are applicable to every course and every student at UMKC. These are located in the Canvas site for this course under the "UMKC Policies" tab. As a UMKC student, you are expected to review and abide by these policies. If you have any questions, please contact your instructor for clarification.

Academic Honesty

- Cheating and plagiarism will not be tolerated.
- All major essays will be submitted to TurnItIn.com
- 1st Offense - Zero on assignment. 2nd Offense - Zero in the course.
- All instances of academic dishonesty must be reported to the University.

Absences

- Students can miss a total of 10 class periods per school year.
- No absences are excused, all count towards the total of 10.
- After 10 absences, no missed work may be made up for credit.

Grading Breakdown per Semester

Essays/Tests: 50%
Homework and Classwork: 25%
Quizzes: 10%
Final Exam: 15%

SPX Grading Scale

100 - 98.0%.....A+	93.1 - 97.9%.....A	90.0 – 93.0%.....A-
87.0 - 89.9%.....B+	83.1 - 87.9%.....B	80.0 – 83.0%.....B-
77.0 - 79.9%.....C+	73.1 - 77.9%.....C	70.0 – 73.0%.....C-
67.0 - 69.9%.....D+	63.1 - 67.9%.....D	60.0 – 63.0%.....D-

Less than 60.0%.....F

Dual Credit EN 110 - Course Schedule

Month	Focus and Essential Skill
August	Focus: Thresholds of Writing Essential Skill: Identify and explain key threshold concepts of writing (e.g., writing is a process, writing is shaped by audience and purpose), and reflect on how they apply to academic and personal writing contexts.
September	Focus: Literacy Narrative Essential Skill: Develop a coherent narrative that integrates reflection and self-assessment, demonstrating control of structure, detail, and voice to convey how personal literacy experiences shape writing identity. Literacy Narrative Due: September 22
October	Focus: Rhetorical Analysis Essential Skill: Analyze how authors use rhetorical strategies and appeals to achieve purpose and impact the audience, and craft an organized, evidence-based analysis using precise academic language. Rhetorical Analysis Due: October 28
November	Focus: Discourse Communities Essential Skill: Examine and describe the conventions, values, and genres of a chosen discourse community, and analyze how writers gain credibility and authority within that community. Discourse Analysis Due: December 1
December	Focus: Reflection of Threshold Concepts Essential Skill: Synthesize understanding of threshold concepts to evaluate personal growth as a writer, using specific evidence from prior writing to support conclusions about skills and strategies for future writing tasks. Final Reflection Due: December 15

St. Pius X High School

English 126: Intro to Popular Literature Spring 2027

Our Mission: “To Restore All Things In Christ” Pope Pius X

Instructor: Bridget Barta and Dr. Cynthia Jones
Email: bbarta@spxkc.org, jonescy@umkc.edu

Course Description
This course is designed to help students develop a fuller understanding of the human condition by exploring a range of accessible, bestselling fiction and non-fiction from a variety of periods and places, historic and contemporary. The course may include popular stories, songs and ballads, the scripts of blockbuster plays and films, best-selling novels, and widely distributed nonfictional prose.

Textbooks and Novels
Provided:
Macbeth by Shakespeare (January/February)

To Purchase or Rent:
Genesis by Bernard Beckett (February/March)
The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Nighttime by Mark Haddon (April)
ONE NOVEL OF YOUR CHOICE (Ongoing)
All other assigned readings will be available as handouts or online through links in Canvas or Google Classroom.

Required Materials

- Daily Journal - Composition Notebook (Will be kept in classroom)
- Binder or Folder for Handouts
- Pen or pencil
- Notebook paper

Course Design and Philosophy
Students will work in small groups for both workshop models, as well as reviewing essays for peer feedback. The class will be discussion based and will incorporate many experiences reading and interacting with diverse texts to analyze for deeper levels of understanding. Students will independently deconstruct the text before class to become independent learners and help shape the discourse daily. Critical lens theory will be integrated into the coursework as will moving from the microcosm of text to the larger argument. Students will be asked to read peer reviewed articles and use them as support in their essays. Although there is not one specific thematic study, a stepping off point will be the position or plight of the individual and their role in their culture/society. Included in the discussion will also be song lyric analysis, poetry analysis and art analysis so the students understand the inter-related qualities of literary techniques to develop themes among many different types of texts.

Student Learning Outcomes

Upon successful completion of this course, students should be able to:

1. Create coherent academic arguments that are built upon multi-leveled textual analysis.
2. Close read a passage of writing, and understand how close reading contributes to the appreciation of a text.
3. Engage with texts thoughtfully and insightfully, both in writing and in discussion with others in an academic context.
4. Discuss and write about theme and form in a text at an introductory level.
5. Know analytical methods and reading strategies well enough to develop interpretations of works from different literary genres at an introductory level.
6. Understand basic concepts and terms of literary interpretation and analysis.

Overview of Learning Assessments

1. Active and thoughtful participation in class discussions
    a. This class is run as a discussion and workshop, which means that what you and your classmates have to say will be an important component of the semester's work. Accordingly, everyone will be expected to have prepared and reflected on that day's scheduled assignment, to bring the necessary materials (including the book under discussion) to class, and to actively participate in class discussions.
2. 5 Formal response papers
    a. For each novel we read, one film, and one short story, you will write a response paper of at least 750 words. They are to be thoughtful and intelligent engagements with the readings.
3. Choice novel presentation
    a. Students will choose a text that is not included on our syllabus and will make a 10-minute presentation to the class on that book, with special attention to how the book could usefully be included in a syllabus for a class like this. These presentations may be multimedia/multimodal, though they need not be. Group presentations are also an option; see me to discuss. A handout will be provided with further information.
4. Final portfolio project with a reflective essay
    a. At the end of the semester, students will collect their written work for the course (5 response papers, short essay, presentation) and will submit it to the instructor along with a short, informal essay (at least 400 words, or about 1½ typed, double-spaced pages) reflecting on the semester's work in whatever ways seem appropriate.

Expectations and Responsibilities

- **Keep me in the loop.** Talk to me early and often. I want you to succeed, and I am happy to help you however I can. That said, I cannot help if I do not know that there is a problem or if I am only informed of a problem after the fact (emergencies are an obvious exception). If there is something affecting your performance in class or circumstances that you feel deserves special consideration, let me know as soon as possible, and we'll see what we can work out.
- **This is a collegial environment, act accordingly.** Be respectful of everyone in the classroom by being prepared, reading carefully, and being engaged and collegial. Disruptive or disrespectful behavior is unacceptable.

- **Carefully read the syllabus and all course documents, especially assignments.** It is essential that you understand course policies, for not having read the syllabus or misunderstanding the syllabus does not exempt you from its policies or any penalties for not following those policies.
- **Be Prepared.** I may make minor changes to the syllabus or schedule, but otherwise, do what you need to do.
- **Participate.** Engage your classmates and their work with thoughtfulness and enthusiasm.

I reserve the right to alter the syllabus and schedule of assignments as necessary.

Resources and Policy Statements

Important UMKC Resources and Policies are applicable to every course and every student at UMKC. These are located in the Canvas site for this course under the "UMKC Policies" tab. As a UMKC student, you are expected to review and abide by these policies. If you have any questions, please contact your instructor for clarification.

Academic Honesty

- Cheating and plagiarism will not be tolerated.
- All major essays will be submitted to TurnItIn.com
- 1st Offense - Zero on assignment. 2nd Offense - Zero in the course.
- All instances of academic dishonesty must be reported to the University.

Absences

- Students can miss a total of 10 class periods per school year.
- No absences are excused, all count towards the total of 10.
- After 10 absences, no missed work may be made up for credit.

Grading Breakdown per Semester

Essays/Tests: 40%
Homework and Classwork: 30%
Quizzes: 10%
Class Participation: 5%
Final Exam: 15%

SPX Grading Scale

100 - 98.0%.....A+	93.1 - 97.9%.....A	90.0 – 93.0%.....A-
87.0 - 89.9%.....B+	83.1 - 87.9%.....B	80.0 – 83.0%.....B-
77.0 - 79.9%.....C+	73.1 - 77.9%.....C	70.0 – 73.0%.....C-
67.0 - 69.9%.....D+	63.1 - 67.9%.....D	60.0 – 63.0%.....D-

Less than 60.0%.....F

Dual Credit EN 126 - Course Schedule

Month	Focus and Essential Skill
January	Focus: All the World's a Stage (and You're the Critic) *Macbeth* by Shakespeare Essential Skill: Analyze how complex characters develop and interact over the course of a text and evaluate how dramatic elements, structure, and performance choices shape meaning.
February	Focus: Philosophy in Disguise: Cracking the Code of Allegory *Genesis* by Bernard Beckett Essential Skill: Apply critical lenses to interpret allegory and theme and synthesize multiple sources to support an analysis of how an author develops ideas within a philosophical narrative.
March	Focus: Lights, Camera, Austen! Film Analysis: *Pride and Prejudice* (2005) Essential Skill: Evaluate the impact of adaptation choices by comparing a filmed interpretation to its source text, analyzing how visual and auditory techniques convey meaning.
April	Focus: Through Different Eyes: Seeing the World from Another Perspective *The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-Time* by Mark Haddon Essential Skill: Analyze how an author's choices regarding point of view, style, and structure shape meaning and affect the reader, and examine how the text represents diverse perspectives and identities
May	Focus: Reflection: Stories, Stages, and Societies: Exploring Identity Across Time and Genre Reflection Project: Various Short Stories and Poetry Essential Skill: Evaluate how literary devices and artistic techniques work across genres and media to develop theme and integrate peer-reviewed articles to strengthen written arguments.