

HONORS 3200 Workshop: Writing in a Research University
Spring 2020

Honors Center 150. MW 11:50-1:10

*Meets Upper Division Communication/Writing Requirement

Michael Gills, Ph.D.
Professor/Lecturer
Honors College
114 Honors Center
F 1-2, or by appt.
801.587.8906
m.gills@utah.edu

Course Description.

Honors 3200: Writing in a Research University is designed for undergraduates (ideally at the sophomore through senior level) who have chosen a major, completed core requirements, and are in the process of researching and drafting the Honors Thesis. The class seeks to develop and employ critical thinking, inquiry and analysis, written communication and teamwork, while completing work that will be of critical use beyond the workshop. This is accomplished by close reading, and using the writing process as a medium for learning and articulation. Central to the course is the understanding of forms and structures found across academic disciplines and audiences from various backgrounds. Students work in diverse discipline peer review groups throughout the semester. Such is a strength and foundation of the class. Oral presentations, daily canvas discussions, original innovation, and the discourse of taking up the mantle as an emerging scholar in a field are integrated into the curriculum as forms of writing. Risk taking and divergent thinking are encouraged, just as diverse perspectives are presented and explored throughout the term.

Writing 3200 is an intense research based workshop wherein students come to value the support structure of their peers. It is not a class where writers work in a vacuum. For this reason, success will hinge on the commitment to attend and engage thoroughly in all workshops, and daily writing log ins on Canvas. As well, and from the beginning, writer/researchers will be required to claim the **sometimes terrifying freedom** with which the writer must struggle. We will proceed under the understanding that one masters research methods and subsequent writing by doing research and composition via the writing process: drafting, critique, and revision. In this way, writing becomes a vehicle for learning, then articulating in an engaged way what is learned.

Learning Outcomes.

This course addresses the following Essential Learning Outcomes: Inquiry and Analysis, Written Communication and Teamwork.

Inquiry and Analysis: Student writers will understand a broad range of interconnecting issues and

Gills/Workshop/2

concepts that pertain to advanced academic research.

Written Communication: Student writers will analyze writing and research in their field and bring their own written discourse up to a publishable level via the workshop process. Writer Researchers will further engage this writing process in an extensive written research project that makes an original contribution to their field. Often, this project points toward (or actually is) the Honors Thesis.

Teamwork: Student writers will use the input of peers via the writing workshop to develop their own critical thinking about issues and problems crucial to being an engaged scholar and citizen. As workshop participants, student writer/researchers will participate as team members in the evaluation, critique and revision strategies of peer work.

Texts.

Student Research Writing for our ongoing Writers Workshop.

Essays from *The Next American Essay*, ed. by John D'Agata, posted as pdfs to Canvas.

The Marriott Research Library.

*Suggested. Hult, Christine and Huckin, Thomas. *The New Century Handbook*. (any issue)

Assignments: the total number of percentage points is 100.

1. *Creative Nonfiction Essay* (10%)

This may be personal in nature, though not necessarily so. Essays from the D'Agata text *The Next American Essay* will serve as models. 5-7 pages. Include a works cited page. (10%).

2. *Honors Thesis Analysis* (10%)

This assignment will require you to locate Honors Theses for your discipline in the Marriott Library. You'll then choose one, study it thoroughly and write a two page analysis to be presented formally to the class. (500 words).

3. *Seminal Text Analysis* (15%)

For this essay, determine a seminal text which serves as your foundation in your discipline. Analyze the text(s), determining why it is important, and the strategies by which it posits information in such a way as to be pivotal. In what ways is the text necessary? What does it react to? How will it help to advance your own project? (5-7 pages).

Gills/Workshop/3

4. *Obsolete Theory Essay* (15%)

Over time, some theories and methodologies in your field have become obsolete. They have been (or are in the process of being) discarded, while new ones have taken on more value. The purpose of this assignment is to have you analyze such a "discarded theory" while postulating how or why another idea has risen to prevalence. The critical review will be completed in two steps: Part One--summary of the theory or methodology and Part Two--commentary on why such is no longer the case and what has replaced it. (5-7 pages).

5. *Dangerous Idea in your Field Presentation* (5%)

The assignment is to come up with a dangerous idea in your field, present it orally, and thoroughly engage your peers. The student presenter's main job: create discussion while addressing issues of our day as they pertain to your discipline. Five students present each class for four days. This will take place during (and likely inform) the research and drafting of the Contribution Paper. (Oral presentation. 5-7 minutes).

6. *Contribution Paper/Literature Review* (25%)

This assignment asks you to take on authority by conducting your own research (in your field), constructing a position and sharing it with others. Think of this as the capstone writing project for the course, an opportunity to operate as the full-fledged writer you've become. (10-20 pages).

7. *Participation/Peer Engagement/Daily Canvas Log In* (20%. *Can not be made up*).

You are required to log and post daily--Monday through Friday--to Canvas at a time of your choice. This dialogue constitutes the structure of how we *become* a workshop and serves to connect us as individual writer/scholars working toward a common goal. As for topics, you are free to write about what relates to your daily life as a scholar, citizen and human being (see earlier note on "terrifying freedom"). Kindly be respectful. And note that canvas keeps up with your daily entries.

Grades.

You are required to thoroughly invest in the writing process. For our purposes, that means drafting, criticism and revision. You are asked to commit to attending every workshop. Daily canvas postings are mandatory. Initial evaluation grades on essays are in accord with the University of Utah Registrar: A/Exceptional, B/Good, C/Average for the class, D/Below Average, E/Failing. As a writer who depends heavily on the process of revision, I offer you the opportunity to revise all manuscripts for an improved evaluation score, though the important role of such is that your writing sharpens--along with your self-confidence as a writer. Over the course of the semester, your demonstrated commitment to learning and support of your peers (ie., your work as a peer editor) will all play into your evaluation. Please be sure that I believe that your best friend

Gills/Workshop/4

as a writer is someone with both the ability and the willingness to thoroughly engage with and critique your prose. Don't confuse criticism of your manuscript with criticism of yourself. Evaluation and critique will be rigorous. Revision is requisite. Ask questions. Risk will be rewarded.

Note that 20% of your grade is participation, credit that is diminished with each absence, and forfeited entirely after three misses. Being late (arriving *after* class begins...) more than three times counts as an absence. I ask that you keep up with your own scores and grades from revision. That said, I am happy to meet with you during office hours to discuss your grade and how to improve.

Daily Writing.

You are required to set up a daily writing regiment. That means a particular time and place where you daily compose. You will have ongoing writing assignments to work on during this routine, although any writing is fair game. Writers write daily. I ask each of you writers to set up your daily writing time and space today and begin tomorrow. You might comment on your daily grind via Canvas (and so kill two birds with one stone, though I'm quite fond of birds...). Set up your daily writing routine now and record your daily output for a random evaluation of your writing of your writing process.

Research Intensive Course Designation.

This class provides you the opportunity to pursue original research, and is so designated a Research Intensive Course. The majority of the course is devoted to student writer/researchers conducting and presenting original research and creative work. You will learn to ask appropriate research questions or identify appropriate creative objectives, select and implement appropriate methods, analyze and interpret results responsibly, and disseminate the work effectively, as appropriate for the particular discipline.

As such, The Office of Undergraduate Research invites you to present your significant research projects at this Spring's Undergraduate Research Symposium, to be held on Tuesday, April 7, 2020. Registration is open now through March 18, 2020. You can register for the URS and find information about creating posters, a poster template, and financial support for poster printing at <https://our.utah.edu/events/undergraduate-research-symposium>. You are **strongly** encouraged to take advantage of this opportunity, and I am happy to award extra credit points for you doing so.

Habits of Being: notes on attendance, punctuality, and manners.

If you have a cell phone, turn it off. Put it in your pocket. **Don't text in class or you will be asked to leave.** You are asked to commit to attending **every** class. If you need to schedule dates that you know you'll miss, do so *now*. There are no special absences. To repeat, 20% of your

Gills/Workshop/5

grade is participation, credit that is diminished with each absence, and forfeited entirely after three misses. Being late (arriving *after* class begins...) more than three times results counts as an absence. Plan on being responsible for *all* work. Late assignments will not be accepted. If you are having a problem with an assignment, come see me. I am committed to seeing you flourish in this writing workshop... If you don't understand the above attendance policy, please inquire now.

Writers--what you are now--require thick skins: Criticism is your best friend. We require honesty and integrity and the willingness to self and peer critique. All discourse between students, peers, and the professor should be conducted with the respect requisite of the academic discourse community--no exceptions. *Remaining in the class beyond the second day means that you agree to the preceding request.* A sense of humor is requisite to our day-to-day activities; please try to practice such often.

Plagiarism.

You must do your own original work. Plagiarism is against university standards; it will result in your failure of the course. (See sections II and V of the Student Code for details.)

Students with Disabilities/Nondiscrimination Statement.

The University of Utah seeks to provide equal access to its programs, services and activities for people with disabilities. If you will need accommodations in the class, reasonable prior notice needs to be given to the Center for Disability Services, 162 Olpin Union Building, 581-5020 (V/TDD). CDS will work with you and the instructor to make arrangements for accommodations. All written information in this course can be made available in alternative format with prior notification to the Center for Disability Services.

Accommodation Policy.

No content accommodations will be made for this course. It is the student's obligation to determine, before the last day to drop courses without penalty, if the requirements of this course conflict with the student's sincerely-held core beliefs. If there is such a conflict, the student should consider dropping the class. Please visit the Administration Policy and Procedures Website (<http://www.admin.utah.edu/facdev/index.html>) and look under Accommodations Policy for complete details.

Addressing Sexual Misconduct.

Title IX makes it clear that violence and harassment based on sex and gender (which includes sexual orientation and gender identity/expression) is a Civil Rights offense subject to the same kinds of accountability and the same kinds of support applied to offenses against other protected categories such as race, national origin, color, religion, age, status as a person with a disability, veteran's status or genetic information. If you or someone you know has been harassed or

Gills/Workshop/6

assaulted, you are encouraged to report it to the Title IX Coordinator in the Office of Equal Opportunity and Affirmative Action, 135 Park Building, 801-581-8365, or the Office of the Dean of Students, 270 Union Building, 801-581-7066. For support and confidential consultation, contact the Center for Student Wellness, 426 SSB, 801-581-7776. To report to the police, contact the Department of Public Safety, 801-585-2677(COPS).

Safety

The University of Utah values the safety of all campus community members. To report suspicious activity or to request a courtesy escort, call campus police at 801-585-COPS (801-585-2677). You will receive important emergency alerts and safety messages regarding campus safety via text message. For more information regarding safety and to view available training resources, including helpful videos, visit safeu.utah.edu

Preferred Pronouns

Please note your preferred pronouns in an initial canvas post. This workshop requires a safe and respectful space, and we will work toward creating such from the beginning.

Course Schedule.

The following schedule is subject to change. Like any decent map, it allows for spontaneous diversions (note the Rand McNally strategy against those who'd plagiarize their maps) and the anticipation of unforeseen splendors. Please be sure to pay attention in class for announcements of additions, deletions, or substitutions. Stay tuned and alert, writers.

Week One

Introduction to Course. Sign up for Creative Nonfiction Essay. Begin writing regime/daily canvas log ins. Be prepared to post your essay online to Canvas on the class date prior to your workshop date. Ask questions as/when needed.

Begin daily writing routine.

In the meantime, to provoke thought, please find the following as pdf attachments on our canvas site.

Assigned close reading (to be covered in roughly this order):

Dillard, "Total Eclipse"

Weinberger, "The Dream of India"

Mathews, "Country Cooking From Central France"

Griffin, "Red Shoes"

Week Two

Essay discussions.

Make sure you're signed up for Workshops
Out of class, read. Draft your essay.

Week Three

Creative Nonfiction Workshops.

Week Four

Creative Nonfiction Workshops. Assign Thesis Analysis.

Week Five

Finish *Creative Nonfiction* Workshops.
Honors Thesis Analysis due for in class presentation.
Research/Drafting: Honors Thesis Analysis.

Week Six

Honors Thesis Analysis due for in class presentation.
Assign Rhetorical Analysis/Seminal Text Assignment.

Week Seven

Finish Honors Thesis Analysis.
Proposal/RA.
Ongoing Research & Development/Rhetorical Analysis/Seminal Text.

Week Eight

Rough draft of Rhetorical Analysis due. Writers Workshops.
Revise. Rhetorical Analysis due.
Assign Critical Review/Obsolete Theory Essay.

Week Nine

Conferences.
Canvas Progress Reports.
Research and Development/Obsolete Theory.

Week Ten

~~~~~Spring Break~~~~~

**Week Eleven**

Due, Working Draft/Obsolete Theory. Writers Workshops.  
Obsolete Theory Due.  
Assign Contribution Essay/Dangerous Idea Presentations.

**Week Twelve**

Dangerous Idea Presentations/Discussions.  
Research and Development/Drafting Contribution Essay.

**Week Thirteen**

Dangerous Idea Presentations/Discussions.  
Research/Drafting Contribution Essay.

**Week Fourteen**

Finish Dangerous Idea Presentations/Discussions.  
Contribution Workshops.

**Week Fifteen**

Contribution Workshops.  
*All revisions due.*

**Week Sixteen**

Contribution Essay Due.  
Celebratory Reading Class.  
*fin.*

**Essay 1/Creative/Nonfiction Essay**

For our purposes, Essay 1 will be a newly written essay (note that our definition of essay is to weigh, to explore, to quest as opposed to "report"). This may be personal in nature, though not necessarily so. Choose a direction and follow where it leads—be bold, risk all, let the writing teach you as a vehicle toward some truth you didn't know you knew. Go to the Academic Search Premier/Marriott Library search engine and find scholarly material on your topic; pull such into your narrative—this will necessitate a works cited page. Essays from *The Next American Essay*

## Gills/Workshop/9

will serve as guides, though not restrictively so. You will workshop this essay during weeks three or four. *Start your writing regime now.* Write daily. Set a time and be there. Embrace rough drafting. Trust the Process. Be prepared to post a draft to the Discussion Board on Canvas on the class date \*prior\* to your workshop date, 5-7 p./include a works cited page (for those of you workshoping on a Monday, this means post up Friday).

After your workshop session you will have \*one week\* to revise, post up to Canvas and deliver a hard copy to your professor. You will be asked to attend all workshop sessions and engage thoroughly. If you complete the parameters for this process, you will earn full credit. Partial Credit will be awarded for students not meeting requested parameters.

Onward and all luck writers,  
MGills

*Audience:* us/advanced curriculum scholars in the academy

*Purpose:* to step beyond your happy/safe place; creativity/innovation/imagination—the fire therein  
(and the outcome of such will be for us to get to know each other).

*Strategy:* critical reading of Essays, writing as Process