

WRTG 2010 (SUMMER 2025): Critical Thinking, Academic Writing, and Moral Considerations

Instructor: Ron Lovik (he/him)

Email: ron.lovik@utah.edu Please include your section number when emailing. **No attachments!**

Office hours: After each class or by appointment

Course website: Canvas (The most relevant tabs are 'Announcements', 'Assignments', and 'Pages')

Course meeting schedule: This class meets in person, twice per week, on Tuesday and Thursday from 6:00 to 7:30 P.M.

Course location: This class meets at the Sandy Campus (One Sandy Center 10011 Centennial Parkway, Suite 100 Sandy, UT 84070. *Note: this is NOT on the main campus!*)

Course materials: No materials are required for this course. All readings can be found on Canvas.

Course description:

The main idea of this course is a simple one: better thinking leads to better writing. To help facilitate this idea, we'll spend time honing your critical thinking skills by examining various arguments within our theme: moral considerations. Before we can deal with these ideas effectively, however, we must *understand* the information we are given, as well as the information that we give in response. In examining these issues more deeply, we will learn to inform ourselves by contemplating these ideas from multiple perspectives before committing to a position, and supporting that position with evidence.

Course Outcomes:

- Construct a clear and informative thesis statement.
- Objectively support/counter argue various academic materials.
- Foresee possible objections to your arguments.
- Recognize and avoid using a variety of logical fallacies.
- Employ a charitable tone in your writings.
- Enhanced critical thinking skills.
- Cogently participate in relevant environmental issues.

Grading

Grades will be assigned according to the standards reported in the University Class Schedule:

	870-899 B+	770-799 C+	670-699 D+	0-599 E
930-1000 A	830-869 B	730-769 C	630-669 D	
900-929 A-	800-829 B-	700-729 C-	600-629 D-	

Weekly Assignments: 700 points (5 x 140 points each)

Each Thursday (beginning May 15) I'll post a writing assignment on the course website under the heading 'Assignments.' Each of these assignments will contain its own set of directions and a corresponding article that you must read in its entirety. I will post a total of five assignments, one per week, every Thursday, to be due the following Thursday (giving you one week to complete). Late work will not be graded.

In-Class Assignments: 200 points (4 x 50 points each)

Each Tuesday (beginning May 27) you'll be given a brief assignment that you must analyze and respond to during the final 30 minutes of our class. Note that each of these assignments will differ in content, length, and direction, but will never require more than a written page to complete. No make-up work.

Class Participation: 100 points (9.10 points per lecture)

Actively reading the material beforehand will not only allow you a greater chance of producing thoughtful responses to questions, but ought to prompt questions of your own. To make earning these points easier, part of our lecture time will be devoted to the sections that deal with your weekly assignments. Since participation means something entirely different than attendance, sitting silently in class earns you no participation points. Read the required materials and come to class ready to speak. Ten-percent of your grade depends on it.

Course Policies**Attendance**

Students that suffer from mild to acute absenteeism usually (always) earn average (or worse) grades. Do your best to maximize your opportunities for participation points—as well as valuable skills that directly relate to your weekly assignments—by minimizing your absences.

Tardiness

Your tardiness distracts me as well as your peers. Consistent tardiness will result in closed lectures (no admittance) and the inability to earn participation points for that lecture.

Classroom Environment

Please raise your hand if you'd like to answer a question (or ask one) or make a relevant comment. Once you've been called on, please refrain from long, tedious, or tangential comments. Take care to respect the ideas and beliefs of others through respectful discourse.

ADA Notice

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

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://regulations.utah.edu/academics/6-100.php>) and look under Accommodation Policy for complete details.

Plagiarism

The willful copying/presenting of another person's work as if it were your own--and other forms of cheating--are not only unacceptable, but illegal if the act infringes upon the author's intellectual property rights. The University Writing Program's standard penalty for plagiarism is a failing grade (E) for the assignment and possibly the course. My standard penalty, however, is an automatic failing grade (E) for the course. Don't risk it.

Examples:

- Using someone else's words or ideas without properly citing them.
- Relying too much on someone else's words or ideas, even if you do cite them.
- Submitting someone else's paper or having someone else—or something else—write your paper (an obvious nod to AI use).

If you have doubts as to what else might constitute plagiarism, please refer to sections II or V of the Student Code, or talk to me.

Late Work

Neither late work nor email submissions will be graded. Turn your assignments in early to avoid losing points