

Writing 2101G: Introduction to Expository Writing

Winter 2026

Section: 650

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Instructor: Dr. Kathleen Fraser

Course Description and Objectives

“An introduction to the basic principles and techniques of good writing. The course will emphasize practical work and the development of writing skills for a variety of subjects and disciplines.” By “practical work,” this course description from the calendar means to indicate that you will spend much of your time in this course writing, responding to the writing of others and revising your work considering the responses you receive to it. Consequently, in this course you will not only produce written texts but also develop a critical eye for examining the written texts of others, both professionally-written and written by others in your class.

The calendar course description also points to the development of writing skills in “a variety of subjects and disciplines.” While it would simply not be possible to study and write in all the genres that are used across a complex university such as Western, you will be asked to write in more than one genre. When you do so, pay attention to the rules/constraints of that genre and study how those rules give you clues to what is regarded as “good writing” for the genre you are writing in. Try to develop a conscious awareness (metaknowledge) about the rules for writing well and how they shift depending on the context for writing.

More generally, the course aims to contribute to your development of an “ability to communicate information, arguments, and analyses accurately and reliably, orally and in writing, to a range of audiences” (Ontario Council of Academic Vice-Presidents’ statement on ‘University Undergraduate Degree Level Expectations,’ 24 October 2005).

Required Texts and Course Materials

Messenger, William E., Jan de Bruyn, and Judy Brown. *The Canadian Writer’s Handbook*. Third Essentials Edition. Oxford University Press, 2023. The textbook costs \$30. Students must purchase this edition. Older editions will not be sufficient.

Course Requirements

Quizzes (2 x 5%, 1 x 10%)	20%
Essay 1: Rhetorical Analysis	35%
Essay 2: Researched Argument	45%

Attendance policies

We do not meet formally as a class in a Distance Studies course. Therefore, attendance and participation on the Discussion Board are intertwined. While Distance Studies classes are generally asynchronous, they are not self-paced. You must attend class (defined as logging into our OWL section) and participate by introducing yourself and posting questions and thoughts during the first week, and by posting (by participating in each week's set discussion topic) in subsequent weeks where a Discussion topic is indicated on this syllabus. During such weeks (a week is defined *for this purpose* as running from Monday to Sunday), you must contribute at least three separate posts, **at least one of which must be a response to another student, and at least one of which must be a new post.** Extended absences, defined as a failure to post into the OWL classroom for more than five consecutive days, must be coordinated with the instructor.

