

English 203

Introduction to Research for Professional Writers



Course Description

English 203 is an introduction to essential research methods for technical and professional communication, including both formal and informal approaches to primary and secondary search. Strong emphasis on ethics, including best practices for conducting anti-racist research. The course will include engagement with relevant theoretical reading and hands-on activities.

Course Outcomes

In this course, you can expect to learn the following:

1. Best practices for conducting ethical research, taking into consideration principles of diversity, equity, inclusion, and accessibility.
2. Critical methods for conducting secondary research, including how to navigate databases to find academic resources.
3. Strategies for summarizing, paraphrasing, and synthesizing your secondary research, and using it to inform your primary research.
4. Methods for conducting primary research, including research design, data collection, data processing, and data analysis.
5. Writing skills and knowledge regarding how to effectively share your conclusions.

Required Materials

1. Spinuzzi, C. (2018). *Topsight 2.0: A Guide to Studying, Diagnosing, and Fixing Information Flow in Organizations*. Urso Press.

*****Order this book as soon as possible*****

2. Other articles and materials that will be provided via Brightspace.
3. I also recommend purchasing the publication of the style guide for your discipline. (MLA, APA, Chicago, etc.)

Fall 2022
Section 001
CRN: 15717
3.0 credits

Modality: Face to Face
MWF 11:30a – 12:20p
HEAV 227

Instructor: Shelton Weech
Office: Heavilon 207
Email: sweech@purdue.edu
Office Hours: MW 10:15a – 11:15a
or by appointment

Coursework

1. Literature Review: In this project, you will review secondary research about a topic in professional writing studies. The project will include the following:
 - a. Summary of an academic article (100 points)
 - b. Research Question Workshop (50 points)
 - c. Annotated Bibliography (50 points)
 - d. Final Literature Review (200 points)
2. Pilot Study: In this project, you will build from your secondary research and design and execute a pilot study about a topic in professional writing studies. The project will include the following:
 - a. Proposal Memo (50 points)
 - b. Data Collection (100 points): 1 observation and 1 interview
 - c. Final Pilot Study Report (250 points)
 - d. Pilot Study Presentation (50 points)
3. In addition, there will be 150 points worth of quizzes and assorted classroom activities. **These 150 points must be completed in class and cannot be made up if you are absent.**

Grading

The course grade will be determined as follows. All grades are final. I do not round up (or down). Note: Failure to complete the main deliverables of both of the primary projects will result in a failing grade.

Assignment	Points
Summary of Academic Article	100
Research Question Workshop	50
Annotated Bibliography	50
Literature Review	200
Data Collection	100
Pilot Study Report (Proposal + Research + Report)	300
Pilot Study Presentation	50
Misc. quizzes, class activities, etc.	150
TOTAL	1000

Letter Grades/Points
A+ = 970 – 1000
A = 940 – 969
A- = 900 – 939
B+ = 870 – 899
B = 840 – 869
B- = 800 – 839
C+ = 770 – 799
C = 740 – 769
C- = 700 – 739
D = 600 – 699
F = Below 600

General Course Policies

Participation: Your success in this class is largely dependent on your engagement and daily efforts. Because this is a face-to-face course, there are points (150) that are contingent on your presence in class, including quizzes, in-class writings, and other activities. These activities cannot be made up unless you reach out to me and I make an exception. I reserve the right to deny exception requests.

Late work: Just as in any work environment, you are expected to organize your time and meet deadlines. **I generally do not accept late work.** That said, if circumstances arise that make it impossible for you to complete an assignment on time, please reach out to me as soon as possible so we can work something out.

Contacting the Instructor: Please contact me via email at sweech@purdue.edu. I will respond within 1 business day. Don't expect a reply after 6:00pm EST/EDT.

My office hours are Mondays and Wednesdays before class (from 10:15 – 11:15am) or by appointment. I am also happy to meet via Zoom. If you can't stop by my office in person, please send me an email so we can make arrangements. These meetings prove to be extremely beneficial for students, so please don't hesitate to reach out.

Attendance: This is an in-person, face-to-face course. As such, attendance is an integral part of your success. There are 150 points allocated to in-class activities (quizzes, writing activities, etc.) that cannot be made up if you are absent, regardless of your reason for missing class. A few absences will not hurt your grade, but with repeated absences, those points add up. I will take attendance every class period—sometimes at the beginning of class, sometimes later. If you arrive to class after I have taken attendance, you will be counted as absent. You can still get classwork points for these days if you are there for the work. **If you are absent for a total of more than 6 class periods, you will automatically fail the class.**

All of that said, **if you feel sick, please stay home.** If you have any symptoms associated with COVID-19, contact PUSH (765-494-1700). If you are quarantined, we can make any needed accommodations.

When conflicts or absences can be anticipated, such as for many University-sponsored activities and religious observations, the student should inform the instructor of the situation as far in advance as possible. For unanticipated or emergency absences when advance notification to the instructor is not possible, the student should contact the instructor as soon as possible by email or phone. When the student is unable to make direct contact with the instructor and is unable to leave word with the instructor's department because of circumstances beyond the student's control, and in cases falling under excused absence regulations, the student or the student's representative should contact or go to the [Office of the Dean of Students \(ODOS\) website](#) to complete appropriate forms for instructor notification. Under academic regulations, excused absences may be granted by ODOS for cases of grief/bereavement, military service, jury duty, parenting leave, or emergent or urgent care medical care.

Protect Purdue: Any student who has substantial reason to believe that another person is threatening the safety of others by not complying with Protect Purdue protocols is encouraged to report the behavior to and discuss the next steps with their instructor. Students also have the option of reporting the behavior to the [Office of the Student Rights and Responsibilities](#). See also [Purdue University Bill of Student Rights](#) under University Resources in Brightspace.

Academic Integrity: Incidents of academic misconduct in this course will be addressed by the course instructor and referred to the Office of Student Rights and Responsibilities (OSRR) for review at the university level. Any violation of course policies as it relates to academic integrity will result minimally in a failing or zero grade for that particular assignment, and at the instructor's discretion may result in a failing grade for the course. In addition, all incidents of academic misconduct will be forwarded to OSRR, where university penalties, including removal from the university, may be considered.

Purdue Honor Pledge: As a Boilermaker pursuing academic excellence, I pledge to be honest and true in all that I do. Accountable together - we are Purdue.

Nondiscrimination Policy: Purdue University is committed to maintaining a community that recognizes and values the inherent worth and dignity of every person; fosters tolerance, sensitivity, understanding, and mutual respect among its members; and encourages each individual to strive to reach his or her potential. In pursuit of its goal of academic excellence, the University seeks to develop and nurture diversity. The University believes that diversity among its many members strengthens the institution, stimulates creativity, promotes the exchange of ideas, and enriches campus life. A hyperlink to Purdue's full Nondiscrimination Policy Statement is included in our course Brightspace under University Policies.

Accessibility and Accommodation: Purdue University is committed to making learning experiences accessible. If you anticipate or experience physical or academic barriers based on disability, you are welcome to let me know so that we can discuss options. You are also encouraged to contact the Disability Resource Center at: drc@purdue.edu or by phone: 765-494-1247.

Major Campus Emergency: In the event of a major campus emergency, course requirements, deadlines and grading percentages are subject to changes that may be necessitated by a revised semester calendar or other circumstances beyond the instructor's control. Relevant changes to this course will be posted onto the course website or can be obtained by contacting the instructors or TAs via email or phone. You are expected to read your @purdue.edu email on a frequent basis.

Student Support

If you're struggling and need mental health services: Purdue University is committed to advancing the mental health and well-being of its students. If you or someone you know is feeling overwhelmed, depressed, and/or in need of mental health support, services are available. For help, such individuals should contact Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS) at (765)494-6995 and <http://www.purdue.edu/caps/> during and after hours, on weekends and holidays, or by going to the CAPS office of the second floor of the Purdue University Student Health Center (PUSH) during business hours.

If you find yourself beginning to feel some stress, anxiety and/or feeling slightly overwhelmed: Try WellTrack, <https://purdue.welltrack.com/>. Sign in and find information and tools at your fingertips, available to you at any time.

If you need support and information about options and resources: Please see the Office of the Dean of Students, <http://www.purdue.edu/odos>, for drop-in hours (M-F, 8 am- 5 pm).

Basic Needs Security: Any student who faces challenges securing their food or housing and believes this may affect their performance in the course is urged to contact the Dean of Students for support. There is no appointment needed and Student Support Services is available to serve students 8 a.m.-5 p.m. Monday through Friday. Considering the significant disruptions caused by the current global crisis as it related to COVID-19, students may submit requests for emergency assistance from the [Critical Needs Fund](#).

English 419 Course Calendar

This calendar will be periodically adjusted to meet the needs of the class. Readings may change or additional readings may be added.

	Topics	Readings & Assignments
UNIT 1: Starting Your Research		
Week 1 August 22 - 26 Reading for Research	M: What Is Research? W: Reading Academic Articles F: Summary/Paraphrase	Monday: No readings Wednesday: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Syllabus Summary, Annotated Bibliography, and Literature Review Assignment Sheets Articles: Pacheco-Vega, "Reading Strategies;" Raff, "How to Read;" Carey, "Ten Simple Rules;" Ruben, "How to Read" (all on Brightspace) Friday: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Williams, "From Domination of the Environment..." (Brightspace)
Week 2 August 29 – September 2 Citation & Research Questions	M: Citation & Plagiarism W: Issues in Writing Studies F: Research Question Workshop	Monday: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Find & read up on citation style of your choice (details on Brightspace) Wednesday: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Topsight</i>, Opening & Chapter 1 Friday: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Topsight</i>, Chapters 2-3
Research Question Workshop due Sept 2 in class		
Summary Due Sept 5 11:59pm		
Week 3 September 5 – 9 Finding Sources	M: Labor Day W: Databases F: Database Practice	Monday: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> No readings Wednesday: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> No readings (finish your Summary on time!) Friday: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Selection of resources from Purdue Library, Google Scholar (on Brightspace)
Annotated Bibliography Due Sept 11 11:59pm		
Week 4 September 12 – 16 Synthesis	M: Synthesis W: Synthesis F: TBD	Monday: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Selection of resources about synthesis Shirley, "Post-Fact Fact Sheets" (on Brightspace) Wednesday: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Preparation for synthesis workshop in class Friday: TBD

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work on Synthesis for your Lit Review, will review in class
Week 5 September 19 – 23 Research Design	M: Finding a Gap W: Peer Workshop F: Ethical Research Design	Monday: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Selection of resources on making lit review work for you Sackey, "One-Size-Fits-None" (Brightspace) Wednesday: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> No readings Bring draft of lit review to class Friday: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Topsight</i>, Chapters 4 – 5
Final Literature Review due Sept 25 11:59pm		
UNIT 2: Research Design, Data Collection, and Analysis		
Week 6 September 26 – 30 Data Collection: Observations	M: Empirical Methods W: Observations F: Observations	Monday: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> No readings Wednesday: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Newbold, "How to Conduct" (Brightspace) <i>Topsight</i> Chapter 7 Friday: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> WAC Clearinghouse, "Ethnography, Observational Research, and Narrative Inquiry" (Brightspace) Start planning your data collection now
Proposal Memo due October 2 11:59pm		
Week 7 October 3 – 7 Data Collection: Interviews	M: Interviews W: No class – virtual assignment F: No class – virtual assignment	Monday: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Newbold, "How to Conduct Interviews" Wednesday: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Topsight</i> Chs. 8 and 9 Online activity Friday: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Odell, Goswami, & Herrington, "The Discourse-Based Interview" Online activity
Week 8 October 10 – 14 Data Collection Wrap Up	M: October break W: Interview Practice F: Interview question workshop	Monday: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> No reading Wednesday: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Listen or read "Dr. Jason Swarts on User Help in the Wild" Friday: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Prepare your interview questions
Week 9 October 17 – 21 Analyzing Data	M: Triangulation W: Analysis	Monday: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Topsight</i> Ch. 12 Wednesday: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Topsight</i> Ch. 13, 15

	F: Coding	Friday: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Topsight</i>, Ch. 18
Week 10 October 24 – 28 Analyzing Data	M: Networks	Monday: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Topsight</i> Ch. 20 – 21
	W: Maps	Wednesday <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Topsight</i> Ch. 16
	F: Chains and Breakdowns	Friday <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Topsight</i> Ch. 17, 19
Interview & Observation Raw Data Due Oct 30 11:59pm		
Week 11 October 31 – November 4 Studio Week	Studio Week	No readings this week – you’re going to have class time to work with your data with me present.
Week 12 November 7 – 11 Communicating Your Findings	M: Expanding Your Projects	Monday: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dilger, “Managing an (Inter-Institutional) Empirical Research Project”
	W: Visualizing Your Data	Wednesday: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Knaflic, <i>Storytelling with Data</i> Intro, Chapters 1 and 2 • Skim Widhalm et. al., “Indiana’s Past & Future Climate” (Brightspace)
	F: Visualizing Your Data	Friday: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bring to class a visualization of at least one part of your data. Be prepared to talk about it.
Week 13 November 14 – 18 Communicating Your Findings	M: Descriptions	Monday: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Topsight</i>, Ch. 24
	W: Recommendations	Wednesday <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Topsight</i> Ch. 25
	F: Reporting	Friday <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Topsight</i> Ch. 26
Week 14 November 21 – 25	M: Organizing & Presenting Your Report W: Thanksgiving Break F: Thanksgiving Break	Monday: No reading; work on your report Wednesday – Friday: Thanksgiving Break
Week 15 November 28 – December 2 Work on Projects	Studio Week	No readings this week. You’ll have class time to work on your project with me present.
Week 16 December 5 – 9 Work on Projects	M: Peer Workshop	No readings this week. Work on your reports.
	W: Present Your Data F: Present Your Data	Presentations Due in class Wednesday and Friday
Finals Week		
Final Report Due Dec 11 11:59pm		