

**Oakland University**  
**College of Arts and Sciences**  
**Department of Writing and Rhetoric**  
**WRT 150, Composition I, 4 credits**  
**Summer 2016**

**Instructor:** *Lori Ostergaard*

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**Class Time:** *Online (deadlines M, W, & F)*

**Office Phone:** *248-370-2075*

**Office Hours:** *ONLINE*

**WRT 150, Composition I, Catalog Description:**

A course emphasizing the rhetorical and stylistic demands of college writing through focus on experiential, analytical, and expressive writing. Students learn to generate, organize and develop their ideas and to make choices as writers that are appropriate to the rhetorical situation. A grade of 2.0 or higher must be achieved to advance to WRT 160. Prerequisite: Placement by faculty evaluation of writing or successful completion of WRT 102.

**Course Objectives:**

Students in **WRT 150, Composition I** will learn to

- Analyze rhetorical situations (writer, text, context, purpose, audience) in a variety of genre and media.
- Enact appropriate rhetorical strategies, including kairos, ethos, logos, pathos, to communicate ideas in a variety of genres.
- Apply rhetorical knowledge to gain a better understanding of a professional discourse community.
- Develop strategies for reading rhetorically, evaluating, and responding to a variety of texts, including visual, electronic, written and verbal texts.
- Reflect on their own writing processes, evaluate their own learning, adapt their learning to new settings, and develop the habits of mind of effective college writers.
- Employ writing as a process of making meaning, requiring multiple drafts and revision.
- Demonstrate syntactic fluency and control of language conventions, including awareness of sentence and paragraph structure.
- Exhibit accurate use of documentation systems, generally MLA.

**Required Text(s) and Supporting Course Material:**

*Grizz Writes: A Guide to First-Year Writing at Oakland University* (4th ed, red cover)

Select readings from [Writing Spaces](#) (*online, open-source textbook*)

**Course Procedures:** WRT 150 provides first-year students at OU with an introduction to writing and rhetoric and with the preparation you will need to be an effective writer and rhetor in WRT 160, Composition II, and beyond. Our class will meet online all semester, and online class time will consist of peer reviews, reading discussions (written), group activities, collaborative writing, and quizzes. Homework will include reading assignments, short writing assignments, research for projects, and drafting and revising your major projects in the class.

This online class will “meet” three times a week, which means that every week you will have three deadlines to meet. Failure to meet those deadlines will result in both absences (2) for each class and a 0 on that assignment. Online classes are challenging because you will need to make certain you complete homework and in-class assignments on your own. While I will send out a Moodle forum post at the beginning of every week to let you know what work will be expected for that week, you will need to provide yourself with reminders to do that work. Self-motivation is key in online classes.

Because this is a summer class, it will be even more challenging than an online class during the regular semester. Instead of 14 weeks to complete all of the work required for WRT 150, you will have only 7 weeks. Class work will, therefore, be doubled every week, and things are going to move very quickly.

In addition to Moodle News Forum posts, which are stored in Moodle and emailed to you, you will find videos and written instructions from me each week in Moodle. Some of these video or written instructions will serve as introductions to rhetorical theory, research, and writing practices. Some will prepare you for the major and minor projects you will need to complete, and some will include explanations for individual or group work activities. Some of our online classes will involve paper drafting, peer reviewing, and revising. No matter what is planned for each day, you should plan to keep up with the work required and to anticipate the work that will be required the following week. .

I’ve been teaching college writing for 15 years and 9 of those years have been here at OU. The first class I ever taught on this campus was a WRT 150 class, and to this day that class represents one of my very best experiences as a teacher. First-semester college students bring new life to our campus every year, breathing new energy into the entire academic enterprise. I’m really excited for us to work together this semester, and I hope you are too!

### **Expectations of Students:**

#### ***OU excused absence policy and department attendance policy:***

All WRT classes adhere to the OU Excused Absence Policy for OU events and activities:

[http://www2.oakland.edu/provost/web/reports/OU\\_Excused\\_Absence\\_Policy\\_Final.pdf](http://www2.oakland.edu/provost/web/reports/OU_Excused_Absence_Policy_Final.pdf)

For absences not covered by the university policy, students in writing and rhetoric courses are allowed a certain number of absences without penalty: during a 14 week semester you are allowed 3 absences without penalty, but because this is a 14-week class delivered in just 7 weeks, you are allowed only 1.5 absences before your course grade is lowered. This includes absences due to illness, family vacations, or schedule conflicts. Participation in online activities counts as class attendance, and this online class will have activities due three times (three days) every week. For each absence beyond the 1.5 allowed, your final course grade will be lowered by 0.2 points on the 4.0 scale for our three-times-a-week classes. If you miss more than the summer equivalent of three combined weeks of class (so just over a week and a half or five online classes for our summer course), you will not be eligible to receive a grade above 0.0.

Attendance is posted in Moodle, at the top of the course page. Be certain that you pay attention to the deadlines for each class and that you regularly check your course grades and attendance.

**Late Work:** I reserve the right not to accept major late projects at all. I also reserve the right to grade late projects down a full grade (from a 4.0 to a 3.0, for example) for each online class period they are late. I also reserve the right to return graded late work when my schedule permits. Any major projects submitted late may not be revised for a better grade. Online class work on M, W, and F that is submitted late will receive a 0 and count as an absence.

**Academic Conduct Policy:** Cheating on examinations; plagiarism; falsifying reports/records; and unauthorized collaboration, access, or modifying of computer programs are considered serious breaches of academic conduct. The Oakland University policy on academic conduct will be strictly followed with no exceptions. See *Undergraduate Catalog*, "Academic Policies and Procedures": <http://www.oakland.edu/?id=24228&sid=482>

**Peer Review and Sharing Your Work:** The grades you earn in your Writing and Rhetoric classes are confidential. However, the texts you produce in our classes may be shared with your classmates as a part of our regular peer review process. Our classes will prepare you to meet the needs of a variety of readers in college and beyond, and to do so, we provide ample opportunity for your compositions to be read and responded to by classmates and by the course instructor. You should, therefore, always assume that the work you compose in our classes is public, not private.

**Social Practices:** Social practices are rhetorical practices, and I expect you all to maintain the highest level of social, rhetorical, and ethical behaviors in this class. This includes

- your contributions to class discussions, peer review activities, online activities, and group projects;
- your commitment to submitting timely and complete work;
- your *ethos* as a respectful citizen of the classroom and as a thoughtful rhetor in class-related communications; and
- your capacity for successful collaboration with others.

### **Grade Determination:**

#### **Project 1: Rhetorical Analysis 20%**

With this first assignment, you will learn to rhetorically analyze a text related to your potential field of study, and you will produce a rhetorically effective and instructive analysis of that text for your peers. Your analysis will be 3-5 pages long, and it will be developed through multiple drafts and a peer review.

#### **Project 2: Career/Major Research 20%**

For this project you will present a broad profile of your chosen field that moves into a narrow discussion of the communication practices within that field. Your research will include some primary research methods, including at least one interview with a professional in the field. This project will be 4-6 pages long, and it will be developed through multiple drafts and peer reviews.

### **Project 3: Group Multimodal Career/Major Presentation 20%**

For this project you will do a rhetorical analysis of a specific audience who needs to know more about your career or major. You will then work with a small group of peers to design a multimodal presentation about your careers/majors for that audience.

### **Portfolio 10%**

For this final project in the class, you will revise a single project you completed earlier in the semester. You will also compose a 4-6 page reflection analyzing the work you have done all semester, what you have learned about writing and rhetoric, and how the information and practices you gained in this class will impact your studies across campus and beyond.

### **Online Class Work 30%**

Online class work will generally be graded on a 4.0 scale and may not be made up or revised for a better grade. Some low-risk online activities will be graded pass/fail. Online work includes the three-times-a-week Moodle work you complete, peer reviews, discussion forums, group activities, collaborative writing, and quizzes. Because this is a collaborative, workshop-style class, most online class work may not be made up if you do not complete it by the deadline or revised for a better grade.

**Revision Policy:** Each project you complete in this class will develop over the course of a week or more. You will brainstorm, freewrite, sketch, or discuss early ideas for your projects; research your topics; develop early drafts that your peers and I will provide you with feedback on; and revise those drafts to turn them in for a “final” grade. For your first two projects, you will also have the option to revise for a different/better “final” grade; and you will have an additional opportunity to revise a single project for inclusion in your end-of-the-semester portfolio.

**Reflection Policy:** For each of the first two projects that you complete in this class, you will compose a reflection analyzing the process you used to develop that project, the ways you tailored your project to meet the demands of your audience, and how you incorporated peer and instructor feedback into your final revision of that project. At the end of the semester, you will compose a final reflection analyzing the work you have done and what you have learned throughout the semester. This final reflection will comprise the majority of the portfolio you submit for this class.

**Preferred Name and Pronoun Policy:** If you do not identify with the name that is listed with the registrar, please notify me so that I may appropriately amend my records. In addition, if you prefer to go by a different pronoun, please inform me. Unfortunately, Moodle cannot be updated to reflect your preferred name, but your classmates and I will be more than happy to address you with the name and/or pronoun that you prefer.

**Grading Scale:** Oakland University uses a numerical 0.0 to 4.0 scale. All of your work in this class will be graded on this 4.0 scale or pass/fail. When I have completed grading a large or small project or online class activity, I will post those grades online.

**Add/Drops:** The University add/drop policy will be explicitly followed. It is the student's responsibility to be aware of the University deadline dates for dropping this course.

**Accommodations:** Students with disabilities who may require reasonable accommodations should make an appointment with OU's Disability Support Services office by calling (248) 370-3266 or TTY: (248) 370-3268; faxing (248) 370-4989; or e-mailing [dss@oakland.edu](mailto:dss@oakland.edu). The DSS provides Faculty Notification Letters detailing approved services. Students are responsible for delivering these letters to their professors and are encouraged to discuss specific arrangements for reasonable accommodations with their professors. Please see the DSS website at [www.oakland.edu/dss](http://www.oakland.edu/dss) for more information.

**Writing Center:** The Oakland University Writing Center is open to OU students, faculty, and staff in all disciplines at any stage of the writing process. The center provides writers with an interested and supportive audience of well-trained consultants who help both novices and experts develop ideas and revise drafts into polished products. Students in WRT classes are strongly encouraged to visit the Writing Center. As an online student, you may be eligible to use the Writing Center services online.

**WRT 104, Supervised Study:** At the beginning of the semester your course instructor will ask you to provide a writing sample, which s/he will use to determine if you would benefit from enrolling in WRT 104, Supervised Study. But you do not need a referral from a WRT instructor to enroll in this elective class: any student who wants additional help with his/her writing in any of our introductory writing courses or in any of the university's writing-intensive courses may elect to enroll in WRT 104. This 1-2 credit course provides students with one-on-one tutorial instruction from a WRT faculty member based on the areas of writing the student wishes to work on.

### **Time Schedule and Topical Outline**

Weeks 1-2 An introduction to rhetoric.

Project 1: Rhetorical Analysis of career/major documents

Weeks 3-5 An introduction to primary and secondary research practices.

Project 2: Career/Major Research

Week 6 An introduction to visual rhetoric and multimodal composition

Project 3: Group Multimodal Career/Major Presentations

Week 7-Exam Week An introduction to the writing portfolio

Portfolio and Reflective Cover Letter