

Introduction to University

ARTS 1110

Course Syllabus

Contacting your instructor

For information on contacting your instructor as well as other important information from your instructor see the Instructor Letter in your course website.

Course description

Welcome to *Introduction to University (ARTS 1110)*. This is a course that is designed to help students make the transition to university by imparting the knowledge, skills and attitudes requisite for success in university study. It may seem odd to offer a course that is designed, essentially, to teach students how to learn more successfully. In particular, it may seem odd to do so at the point at which they are entering an institution of higher learning. Over the past three decades, however, that is precisely what universities have begun to do. Realizing that a number of good students were facing difficulties in first year studies, researchers (in particular, Dr. John Gardner and his colleagues at The Policy Center on the First Year of College at University of South Carolina) began to investigate the specific needs of first year students. What they found was that students were more successful when they had been guided through their transition to the particular intellectual practices that characterize university life. That is the nature of our purpose here: We want you to learn how to learn.

Course objectives

Upon completion of this course you should be able to improve:

- metacognitive competence through enhanced understanding of learning strategies;
- individual writing skills through the highlighting of the writing process;
- research skills through the process of selecting and justifying appropriate resources for each of three selected theses; and
- critical thinking skills through the application of structure and logic to writing, research, and problem-solving.

Course materials

Required

The University of Manitoba Bookstore will have a package of all three textbooks for ARTS 1110 students, Value Pack. This package includes:

"Custom Introduction to University. Fourth Custom Edition for the University of Manitoba". Compiled by Michael O'Brien Moran.

"A Students Guide to Academic Writing". 2014 Edition. Written by Michael O'Brien Moran.

"MyCanadianWritingLab Student Access Code".

"The Little Brown Essential Handbook. 5th Canadian Edition". Written by Jane E. Aaron, Elaine Bander.

****TEXTBOOKS ARE NOT SOLD SEPARATELY****

Course overview

The course has been divided into three sections: Introduction to Academic Writing and Research; Metacognition and Learning; and, Critical Thinking Across Curriculum. It is important to note, however, that the topics are inherently interrelated and that we will be referring to one unit even as we work through another. For instance, the instruction in academic writing will occur throughout the course, providing guidance as you work on your written assignments. In addition, because critical thinking and metacognition (a concept which refers, at least in part, to the process of reflecting upon one's own thinking) are important aspects of the writing process, there will be some overlap of the discussions of those concepts when we are discussing writing. In turn, some of the principles of academic writing and research will be used in our discussions of critical thinking and learning. We cannot talk about one without talking about the other. By the end of the course, however, the connections should be clear.

Academic writing and research

The information concerning academic writing and research runs throughout the course, with individual slide series being identified on the course schedule. It is woven into the two writing assignments of the course. In the individual series of slides, we will explore the **process** of writing with the intention of identifying the ways in which students (even those who have, traditionally, had difficulty writing essays) can improve their work. To that end, (a) we will concentrate on the development of meaning, rather than prescriptive rules of grammar, and, (b) we will employ peer evaluation exercises to encourage students to generalize their understanding of specific writing principles to new situations.

Unit 1 Metacognition and Learning

In this unit, we will review the advantages of regarding learning itself as a learned process. Through our discussions of various aspects of learning, we will come to understand the importance of adjusting our learning strategies to accord with specific circumstances.

Unit 2 Critical Thinking Across Curriculum

Critical thinking is often regarded as a hallmark of university education. Research into the development of critical thinking skills, however, reveals that the capacity for critical thinking is dependent upon an understanding of the rules that govern knowledge in specific disciplines (for example, one cannot practice critical thinking about physics if one does not understand how physicists practice critical thinking). In this unit, we will identify some of the characteristics of critical thinking as it is practiced in science, in social science, and in the humanities.

Learning activities

The purpose of this course, first and foremost, is to assist you to become a more successful student. The instructor cannot, however, educate you against your will. Because the course focuses on skill development, and because skill development requires active participation and commitment to practice, you will find that your progress will depend upon your participation in the prescribed learning activities (sorry, it just will not work any other way).

Students who complete the assigned reading prior to participating in the online lecture will comprehend and remember the individual weekly lessons better. You are encouraged to think of the essay assignments, the review sheets, and formative tests as learning activities.

Evaluation and grading

1. Each student will write two research papers each worth 30 percent
 - Essay #1 is 1500 words
 - Essay #2 is 1500 words
2. The final examination will be an essay exam and is worth 30 percent.
3. Self-reflection worksheets and self-assessment quizzes over the lectures are worth 10 percent.

Eligibility for rewrites on essays

In order to learn most effectively from the feedback on your first paper, students will be given an opportunity to rewrite their first and second essay under certain conditions.

- The essay must have been handed in on time
- Rewrites must be submitted with the original paper (including grading rubric and comments from the grader)
- All problems identified in the Grammar and Composition section of the rubric must be addressed. The mark for Grammar and Composition (/20) will not change.
- Only marks lost in the Content section (/80) will be adjusted.
- Resubmission is not guarantee of an improved grade.
- No student will receive a lower mark on a rewrite than on the original essay.

Word count for essays

- **Because ARTS 1110 has been designated as a “W” course (and, as such, requires that each student will submit a minimum of 3,000 words for evaluation over the course of the semester), students who fail to submit one or more of the essays cannot receive credit in the course.**
- Word count only includes words that you wrote. It does not include citations, direct quotations, the reference page or the annotated bibliography. It also does not include the title page.
- Please note that word count functions on your word processor only give you an approximate number based on characters and spaces (it is usually low). You are better advised to follow this rule: If you exclude direct quotations, the average page of double spaced text will equal approximately 250 words.

Distribution of marks

Assignment or Evaluation Tool	Total Percentage	My Achievement
Paper # 1 (1,500 words) With Annotated Bibliography	/30	/30
Paper # 2 (1,500 words) With Annotated Bibliography	/30	/30
Submission of weekly self-evaluation forms for essays in progress and completion of self-assessment quizzes.	/10	/10
Final Exam	/30	/30
Total Score	/100	/100

Grading scale

Letter grade	Percentage range	Description
A+	91 - 100	Exceptional
A	81 – 90.9	Excellent
B+	76 – 80.9	Very good
B	71 – 75.9	Good
C+	66 – 70.9	Satisfactory
C	60 – 65.9	Adequate
D	50 – 59.9	Marginal
F	less than 50	Failure

Note: All final grades are subject to departmental review.

Assignments

Essay assignments - Each student will write a total of two research papers designed to allow students to investigate questions that are related to the course material.

All essays are to be written in the rhetorical mode of *rational persuasion*, or *argument*, and must reflect an appropriate awareness of the audience or readership being addressed. Papers will be graded against a marking rubric and will be evaluated for style, content, spelling, and organization.

Important. Essay assignments must be uploaded and submitted through the online assignment dropbox on your course website.

Submission of self evaluation sheets

The emphasis in this course is on the **process** of research and essay-writing and not simply on the **product**. Therefore, **students are required to critically evaluate their own work through a series of stages. For each essay, students are required to complete this at each of the following stages:**

- Thesis
- Outline
- Annotated Bibliography
- Draft

Note: Detailed instructions about the assignments are found in the appropriate assignment link in your course website.

Completion and submission of weekly self assessment quizzes

Part of being a metacognitively aware learner is figuring out what you know and don't know, and then adjusting your study time accordingly. As such, there are weekly quizzes which cover the material presented in the Powerpoint shows and readings, which you are expected to complete and submit. The number of correct responses will not be recorded, that is for your self-assessment. It is your completion of them in a timely manner that will factor into your final grade.

Assignment due dates

Consult your course schedule for the assignment due dates.

Examination

The final examination will be two hours in length and will be a closed book, essay exam. This exam consists of **three** parts. You will be asked to pay attention to rhetorical form, as well as spelling, grammar, and punctuation.

- Part 1: Applied question on “Learning and Memory”. Choose 2 of 5 questions to answer.
- Part 2: Applied question on “Writing, Research and Reasoning”. Choose 2 of 5 questions to answer.
- Part 3: Critical thinking. Choose 1 of two passages. This will require the critical analysis of a short passage.

The final exam will be conducted at the University of Manitoba, Fort Garry campus or at an alternate location off-campus. **All students must declare an exam location.** The Registrar’s Office is responsible for scheduling the final exam. Once finalized, the exam date and time information will be posted on the University of Manitoba Exam site.

Plagiarism, cheating, and examination impersonation

You should acquaint yourself with the University’s policy on plagiarism, cheating, and examination impersonation as detailed in the General Academic Regulations and Policy section of the University of Manitoba *Undergraduate Calendar*. Note: These policies are also located in your *Distance and Online Education Student Handbook* or you may refer to Student Affairs at <http://www.umanitoba.ca/student>.

Distance and Online Education (DE) Student Resources

In your course website there are links for the following:

- Contact Distance and Online Education Staff
- Distance and Online Student Handbook
- Distance and Online Education Website

Acknowledgements

Content specialist:

Michael O’Brien-Moran, PhD
Program Coordinator
ARTS 1110 – Introduction to University
University 1
University of Manitoba

Instructional designer:

Lynette D. Phye, M.Ed.
Distance and Online Education
University of Manitoba

Web Publisher:

Raelene Dziedzic
Distance and Online Education
University of Manitoba

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