RHE 330E Summer 2010
Davida Charney

* Email dcharney@mail.utexas.edu
* Work Phone 471-8746
* Office Location Parlin 131
* Office Hours T 1:00-2:15; TH 10:00-11:15, and by appointment
* Personal Link http://www.dwrl.utexas.edu/~charney/

Policies

Classroom Conduct: Conferences | Attendance | Academic Integrity | Special Accommodations | Computer Classrooms | Email

Papers & Revisions: Rough Drafts | Final Drafts | Format | Revisions | Lateness | Portfolio

Conferences

Plan to consult often with me, in person, by telephone, or e-mail, to discuss your projects and your progress in the course. We can talk about an assignment, try out some ideas before a paper is due, discuss comment on a draft, or whatever. See me for help with particular writing problems, to resolve differences about grades, or to suggest ways to improve the course.

At any point in a writing assignment, I encourage you to use the Undergraduate Writing Center FAC 211, 471-6222. The UWC offers free, individualized help for an UT undergraduate by appointment or on a drop-in basis. The consultants are trained to help you develop ideas and present them effectively in writing. Be sure to bring a copy of the assignment sheet.

Attendance and Preparation for Class

You are expected to attend class daily, arrive on time, and participate in all in-class editing, revising, and discussion sessions. If you miss more than six classes, you will fail automatically. If you arrive after I have taken attendance, I will mark it as a one-half absence. If an unavoidable problem prevents you from attending class or arriving on time, discuss it with me as soon as possible. If you miss a class, it is your responsibility to keep up with readings and assignments, and to get notes from classmates.

Academic Integrity

Be sure to read and understand the policy statements in the website from the Office of the Dean of Students. Turning in work that is not your own or any other form of scholastic dishonesty may lead to failure of the course. A report of the incident will also be made to the Office of the Dean of Students.
We will be covering the appropriate use of sources and the skills of paraphrasing, summarizing and citing in class. If you have any questions about the use you are making of sources for your assignments, see me before you turn in the project.

You are permitted to seek help with your writing, but only from classmates and approved tutors. You are encouraged to visit the Undergraduate Writing Center (FAC 211) or the Learning Skills Center. Approved tutors in these locations are trained to help you resolve your own problems, so that all your writing reflects what you have learned. Do NOT use editing services other than these.

Special Accommodations

Any student with a documented disability (physical or cognitive) who requires academic accommodations should contact the Office for Services for Students with Disabilities area of the Office of the Dean of Students at 471-6259 (voice) or 471-4641 (TTY for users who are deaf or hard of hearing) as soon as possible to request an official letter outlining authorized accommodations.

Policy for Computer Classrooms

The Digital Writing and Research Lab (DWRL) is both a teaching and a research lab. As a student enrolled in a computer-assisted writing course, you are welcome to use the computers in this classroom and other dwrl labs (Par 6, Par 102, Par 104, FAC 8, FAC 9, FAC10) outside of class time. For information about lab locations and hours--and other computer related topics--see the following information about dwrl for students (Student Resources.)

Be aware that when you use the classroom computers, some materials saved on the servers or posted on the Internet may be accessible to others.

"The DWRL will not assume responsibility for personal views or any offensive material that you may post to a public forum as a result of your work in this class. Neither will the DWRL assume responsibility for further distribution of any work that is posted to a public forum.

Email Notification Policy

All students should become familiar with the University's official e-mail student notification policy. It is the student's responsibility to keep the University informed as to changes in his or her e-mail address. Students are expected to check e-mail on a frequent and regular basis in order to stay current with University-related communications, recognizing that certain communications may be time-critical. It is recommended that e-mail be checked daily, but at a minimum, twice per week. The complete text of this policy and instructions for updating your e-mail address are available at http://www.utexas.edu/its/policies/emailnotify.html.

Papers and Revisions

Rough Drafts
Rough Drafts. To pass the course, you must complete a "good faith" rough draft of each major assignment on time, obtain feedback from peers, revise your draft substantially in response to that feedback, and turn in a proofread final draft on time. A "good faith" rough draft is substantially complete in its overall line of argument; it includes references to major sources but may require additional research; it may still be rough in audience address, arrangement, style, and mechanics. Do not discard any drafts, notes, papers, or research materials until you receive a final semester grade.

Final Drafts

Turn in TWO copies of each final draft: one printed and one electronic.

Give the file a distinctive name that includes your first name, the assignment, and the file type, such as John_IssueIntro_rough.txt or DClark_contrib_final.doc. Send the draft as an attachment. Turn in your rough draft at the same time.

Format

Drafts of all out-of-class papers must be typed. The upper right corner of the first page should contain a heading with the following information:

* your name
* course and unique number
* my name
* paper title (A Phase Appropriate to Your Topic)
* paper status (Assignment Name and rough, final, or revised draft)
* date of latest draft

Double space your papers and use 1 inch margins on all four sides. Do not justify the right margins of your text. Do not use fancy or oversize fonts (10 or 12 points is acceptable). Number the pages. Staple the draft.

Revisions

You are welcome to revise any or all of your major papers to improve your grade. The grade of the revision will replace the original grade (but penalties for lateness that applied to the original grade will still apply to the revision). To receive a higher grade, a revision must go well beyond corrections of style and grammar—you may wish to discuss plans for revisions with me before you complete them. Revisions will be due in your final portfolio during finals week.

Lateness Penalties

* Late rough draft—5 pts deducted from final draft grade
* First late final draft—no penalty
* Additional late final drafts—not accepted

Final Portfolio
If you choose to revise any papers, you must turn in a portfolio. Portfolios include:

* commented-on and graded drafts of any papers you have revised
* revised paper (labeled as such with current date)
* a self-addressed envelope large enough to hold your papers, addressed to your Austin address or your permanent address. ATTACH STAMPS--take the portfolio to the post office, have them weigh it and give you postage. Do not seal the envelope!

Resources:

| PopSci Home | UT Library | ERES | Undergraduate Writing Center | Contact Charney |

COURSE DESCRIPTION: Goals | Required Texts| Assignments

Goals

In this substantial writing course, we will examine how scientific inventions and discoveries are portrayed to the public through newspapers, magazines and popular nonfiction books. These portrayals are important because scientific findings have huge social, political, and ethical consequences for all of us. For us to make good decisions about healthcare, the environment, the food supply and national security, we need fair and accurate portrayals of how science works.

Required Texts

Having Your Say, Charney et al., Longman, 2006

The Ten Most Beautiful Experiments, George Johnson, 2008

Communicating Uncertainty, Friedman, Dunwoody, Rogers (eds.), 1999

Assignments

15% Beautiful Experiments Essay (2-4 pages)

35% Rhetorical Analysis of Popular Science Articles (5-7 pages)

35% Media Coverage Analysis (5-7 pages)

15% Homework, informal responses to readings, topic proposals, peer reviews.

SCHEDULE

Unit 1 : Popular Science News Analysis: Rough Draft Due | Final Draft Due
Unit 2 : Media Coverage Rough Draft Due | Final Draft Due
3-June
Introductions, Rhetoric, Popular Science

Read: Course Policies on class website.

In-Class: What's rhetoric? What's science?

4-June
Popular, Journalistic and Scientific Culture Clashes

Read: Course Policies on class website; Stone "Omni Meets Feynmann" and review Pew Survey. Both are on ERES (pwd su10) under "About Pop and Sci"

Post: On "Other" Discussion Board. Answer any of these--or post any other responses you like; Who reads Omni? Who's Feynman? (Google as necessary.) How well do they represent popular and scientific cultures? Why did Stone choose this pairing?

In-Class: How do scientific and popular culture compare?

7-June
Unit 1: Popular Science Analysis

The Scientific Publication Cycle; Scientific News Articles

Read: HYS, Chapter 3; Overbye "Elevating Science" (on ERES under "About")

In Class: Scientific Ethos
Post: On "Other" Discussion Board

• What kinds of claims are supported by the data in the Pew survey? (See Ch 3).
• How does Overbye's audience compare to Stone's? Is Overbye being controversial? What are his main overall claims?

8-June
Recognizing Research Articles; Identifying Scientific Claims

Read: Wurl "Ocean Layer" on ERES (pwd su10); Hahn "AIDS" on ERES

In Class: Analyze Wurl article structure. Find additional research articles in NYTimes Science Times--search by topic or by reporter.

Post:

* What kinds of claims does Wurl's research address? How about Hahn? (Consider claims of existence, definition, value, cause, action.
*
Comment on what a scientific research article looks like--what topics do both Wurl and Hahn seem to include/exclude? How is space distributed?

9-June
"Scientist at Work" Profiles; Rhetorical Appeals;

Read: HYS, Chapter 4--Ethos, Pathos, Logos

Read: Dornhaus and Holloway Profile on ERES

In Class: Analyze distribution of topics in NYTimes Science Times; distinguish between news, profiles, breaking research articles.

Post: How do these profiles differ from research articles in structure? In topics? In claims? In appeals

10-June
Introduction to Article Analysis Assignment

Read: HYS, Chapter 18 "Critical Reading"

Read: Assignment Sheet and Sample Papers under "Writing Assignments"

Post:

* Look over our articles (Wurl, Hahn, Dornhaus, Holloway) and identify appeals to logos. Is the certainty of any claims qualified? Where does qualification occur?
* Identify appeals to ethos. How many scientists are introduced? How are scientists identified?
* Identify appeals to pathos. Where do these occur?

11-June
Dealing with Disagreement and Uncertainty

Preparing for Peer Review

Read: HYS Chapter 5

Post: Look over our articles (Wurl, Hahn, Dornhaus, Holloway) and identify mentions of controversy, challenge, disagreement. Comment on their thoroughness and fairness. Google challenges as necessary.

14-June
Peer Review Workshop

Writing Due: Science Argument Analysis--Rough Draft

15-June
Popular Science Books
Read: Ten Experiments--Galileo and Harvey

In Class: Allocate remaining chapters for group analysis and discussion

Post: What is so great about what Galileo's (or Harvey's) experiment? What scientific qualities does Galileo exhibit (see Stewart's Topoi)? Sketch the structure of one of these chapters. How do these chapters differ from NYTimes profiles in topic, allocation of space, style?
16-June
Journalistic Style vs. Academic Style

Read: HYS, Ch 6; Ten Experiments--Lavoisier

Post: How did Johnson's occasion for writing this book (see Ch. 6) differ from when he writes a research article? How does this difference account for his style and structure?
NOTE: This is a possible topic for your "10 Experiments" Essay.
17-June
Popular Style vs. Expository Style

Read: Ten Experiments--Galvani

Post: Compare Johnson's chapter on Galileo, Harvey, Lavoisier or Galvani to the one you can find on Wikipedia. NOTE: This is a possible topic for your "10 Experiments" Essay.
18-June
Media Coverage Analysis Assignment

Read: Assignment Sheet and Sample Papers (under "Writing Assignments")

Read: Stewart, "A Rhetorical Approach to News Discourse" on ERES. (It's OK to start on p. 152)

Post: How did the groups' strategies differ? What difference did you find surprising? How important are the the topoi in Stewart's Table 1 to his analysis?
21-June
Final Draft Rereview and Reflection

In Class: Choose topic for Media Coverage Analysis; plan activities for covering the articles.

Writing Due: Science Argument Analysis--Final Draft
22-June
Unit 2: Media Coverage of a Scientific Study

Coverage of Science: Journal Articles, News Releases, News Articles
Read: Fahnestock article. (Under "Writing Assignments," under "Science vs. Media Readings").

Post: Do Fahnestock's criticisms still apply to New York Times scientific research articles? Are these accommodations harmful or helpful? (NOTE: Possible topic for short essay)
23-June
Varieties of Scientific Media: Press Releases and Stories

Post: Identify the author, audience and mission of any unusual institution or publication outlets on your list. (Google websites as necessary)
24-June
How Scientists Attract Scientific Readers

In class: Swales moves

Post: Analyze articles on your topic
25-June

Decoding a Scholarly Scientific Article

Read: The scholarly article on your topic

Post: Analyze the introduction of your article. Which of the Swales moves does it employ? Read the abstract and conclusion. Which results do the scientists consider most important?
28-June

Peer Review Session

Writing Due: Rough Draft of Media Analysis
29-June

Communicating Uncertainty

Read: Friedman, Communicating Uncertainty, Chapter 2
30-June

News Cycles in Academics and Journalism

Read: Friedman Chapter 3
1-July

Giving the Public What it Wants

Read: Genzlinger "All Creatures" on ERES
Post: Apply Genzlinger's 4 categories to news stories about another scientific topic.
NOTE: This is a possible topic for your short essay.
2-July
Writing News with the Audience in Mind

Read: Friedman Chapter 11
5-July

Final Draft Rereview and Reflection

Writing Due: Final Draft of Media Analysis
6-July
Doubting: Thimerosol and Vaccines

Read: selections under Problems in Science
7-July
Doubting: Global Warming

Read: Tierney on ERES
8-July

Parting Homilies

Writing Due: Essay on Ten Experiments or Communicating Uncertainty. Portfolio with graded drafts and revised drafts (Optional)
Resources: