



TCORE 100
Introduction to Interdisciplinary Study
with
Ali Walker Stromdahl

Class Times	W 10:20-12:25 CP 103	Credits: 2 P/NC
Office Hours (also by appointment)	BHS 105	M, W 12:45-1:30 or by appointment
Contact	253-698-4450	alisonws@uw.edu (best way to reach me)

COURSE DESCRIPTION AND LEARNING GOALS

Welcome to TCORE 100 at the University of Washington Tacoma! We will spend the next ten weeks together to help prepare you for the reading and writing you will encounter in your first year in the core program here. We hope this course helps you “get your feet wet” by introducing you to many of the important skills and concepts necessary for success in academic writing. We hope by the end you will be feeling confident entering your TCORE 101 course, knowing you’ve had the chance to preview and practice the kinds of reading and writing you will be doing in your first year at UWT.

This course is going to emphasize several things that will help prepare you for your first year.

1. **Writing!** You will be writing a lot in this class, every day. We want you to get used to writing all the time in response to lots of different responses so that when get your first writing assignments in your core classes, generating ideas, drafting, and reworking your writing will feel second nature.
2. **Reading!** You'll be introduced to several types of readings (non-fiction and scholarly), two of the most common you will encounter in your first year, and we'll go over strategies for reading.
3. **Thinking about how you think.** In this class, you will spend lots of time on reflecting on how you write, read, and think. Lots of times we just do work automatically without really thinking in-depth about why we wrote or read a certain way. The most successful college students are the ones that can describe why they did a task the way they did. This is a good habit to develop, and is called something educational researchers call *metacognition*. These same researchers say this practice of metacognition is essential for mastering writing – or any skill for that matter.
4. **Learning about the way people learn and think.** We'll also be diving into some research about how people learn, specifically about what kinds of practices help us remember what we learn, apply what we learned, and carry what we learned with us throughout our college carrier. This will help you get the most out of your college education.
5. **Introduce you to interdisciplinarity.** All the academic programs at UWT emphasize interdisciplinary study. For example, instead of exploring sociology here, education there, and history behind the barn, you may find yourself taking a course that includes all three, considered together. This interdisciplinary approach helps you become a more creative and knowledgeable citizen in the twenty-first century, as well as an innovative problem-solver. After all, living in an increasingly global society, rich in diversity and challenge, calls for similar richness in teaching and learning.

The first-year core curriculum introduces the pleasures and rigors of interdisciplinary study while preparing you for your major. In TCORE 100, you learn (1) what interdisciplinary study involves and (2) how to prepare yourself for future current and future learning and writing. This two-credit link to the core allows you to develop learning strategies that help you grapple successfully with the intellectual work of the first year at UWT and beyond. Whatever cohort you are in and whatever major you select will require excellence in reading and writing skills.

METHODS OF INSTRUCTION

Class sessions include discussion, workshops, small groups, individual work, and short lectures. This course is not a lecture course, and will require you to be an active learner and participate throughout the course.

ASSIGNMENTS AND POINTS*

ASSIGNMENT	TOTAL Points
Participation	20
Literacy History	20
Learner Profile	25
Final Portfolio and Cover Letter	35
Total	100

***This course is credit/no credit. To receive credit for the course, a student needs to earn a minimum of 85 points and fulfill the participation policy above. You also must turn in every assignment in order to pass the course.**

PARTICIPATION

Preparing for class, attending every session, and participating intelligently is critical to becoming a successful college student. Everyone gets discouraged, but this course helps you problem-solve and keep going. However, it's your responsibility to attend class and do all the other things that successful college students do. Every day you attend class, you will have the opportunity to earn points for participation. To earn the points, you must come prepared having done the reading and homework and ready to actively participate. Simply showing up to class is a good first step, but ultimately you must actually participate to earn the points. If you must miss a class, please contact me by email or phone before the class session starts to let me know that you will not be present: doing so means your absence is excused. **You get one excused absence this quarter.** Each class is worth 2 points. **Since participation is key in this class, if your participation grade drops below an 85 percent (2 missed classes), you fail the course.**

LITERACY HISTORY

At the beginning of the course, we will explore our ideas about who we are as writers and how we came to those ideas about ourselves. This first essay will give you the opportunity to describe how you think of yourself as a writer and how you came to that understanding. You will write a draft of the essay, workshop the draft with your peers, and revise. This essay will be due during week 4. This first essay will also give us the opportunity to talk about college writing and how to self-assess our essays to see if they are meeting assignment expectations.

LEARNER PROFILE

Your second essay will require you to think about the way you learn, not only to reflect on your past but to plan for the learning challenges you will face in college. To prepare for this essay, we will be reading part of a book, *How People Learn*, to give you the language and concepts that will help you talk about your learning in a sophisticated, scholarly way.

PORTFOLIO

The final assignment, due on the last day of class, will require you to gather all the writing you did over the ten weeks, included in-class writing and drafts of papers. You will also write a reflective letter asking you to think about what you learned in the course and what the collected writings say about you as a writer.

REQUIRED READING

Readings post on Canvas site (there is no book you need to purchase.) You will, however, need to print what we read in class, so be sure you know where the printers are on campus and have money on your husky card so you can print in the library.

REQUIRED COURSE MATERIALS

- Notebook and writing utensil
- Access to Canvas
- Access to a printer, either at home or on campus.

POLICIES AND ETIQUETTE:

Late work: This class goes by really fast, so you need to turn in everything on time. Therefore, *late work will not be accepted.*

Communication: The best way to contact me is via e-mail. I will only answer e-mails that have proper and professional salutations (Dear Alison), proper closings (Sincerely), and ask a specific question. This is great practice for the working world. I also encourage you to communicate with me frequently, especially if you are having problems with the coursework or are facing other challenges that are keeping you from doing your best work in the course. I am far more likely to be lenient if you are staying in constant contact with me should an emergency arise than if you show up weeks later asking for an extension without contacting me ahead of time.

Electronic Devices

Electronic devices (including, but not limited to, cell phones, pagers, laptops, and personal digital assistants) may not be used in the classroom unless you have my permission. Activities that are non-relevant to the course, such as checking/sending email, playing games, and surfing the web, are considered disruptive activities when class is in session. Please turn your cell phones off. If you need to have your cell phones on for a specific family or work reason, please let me know before class begins. If you repeatedly use electronic devices in class when I have asked you to put them away, I will ask you to leave the class and you will lose all participation points for the day.

Classroom Behavior:

In order for the class to function as a fruitful learning environment, all participants need to feel valued and respected. Please treat each other with respect during discussion, no matter what the opinions voiced; listen respectfully when others are talking and take notes during course lectures and discussions.

Academic Standards/Plagiarism

All student work must be free of plagiarism. Plagiarism is defined in the University catalog and in the Student Handbook. Consult me if you have any questions about what is considered “plagiarism.”

A major part of your experience in the class will be reading, synthesizing, and using the knowledge and ideas of others. It is the responsibility of the faculty to help you in this process and to be certain you learn to credit the work of others upon which you draw. To plagiarize is to appropriate and to pass off, as one's own ideas, writing or works of another. Ignorance of proper documentation procedures is the usual cause of plagiarism. This ignorance does not excuse the act. Students are responsible for learning how and when to document and attribute resources used in preparing a written or oral presentation.

For more information, please refer to the Academic Honesty: Cheating and Plagiarism document prepared by the Committee on Academic Conduct in the College of Arts and Sciences, UW Seattle:

<http://depts.washington.edu/grading/issue1/honesty.htm>

ACCOMODATIONS

If you would like to request academic accommodations due to a temporary or permanent disability, contact Lisa Tice, Manager for Disability Support Services (DSS) in the Science Building, Suite 102. An appointment can be made through the front desk of Student Affairs (692-4400), through Student Services (692-4501), by phoning Lisa directly at 692-4493 (voice) or 692-4413 (TTY), or by email (ltice@u.washington.edu). Appropriate accommodations are arranged after you have presented the required documentation of your disability to DSS and you have conferred with the DSS Manager

TENTATIVE COURSE CALENDAR

Readings and assignments are assigned for you to complete BEFORE the next class session. This calendar is TENTATIVE and **may change**.

September 25th: Introduction to course

Homework: 1. Read Ken Robinson “Knowing Your Mind” from the book *Out of Our Minds*.
2. Annotate the text and be prepared to writing an in-class essay in response to the reading.

October 2nd: In-class essay in response to Ken Robinson reading. Discussion of Robinson.

Homework: 1. Read “I Won’t Learn From You” by Herbert Kohl.
2. Annotate text.
3. Write 2 page draft of Literacy Narrative.

October 9th: Due: 2-page draft of Literacy History.
Discuss Kohl.

Homework: 1. Read Chapters 1 of How People Learn and annotate the text.

October 16th: Due: Final of Literacy History narrative.
Discuss Chapter 1

Homework: Read Chapter 2 of How People Learn and annotate the text.

October 23rd: Discuss Chapter 2.

Homework: 1. Read Chapter 3 of How People Learn and annotate the text.

October 30th: Discuss Chapter 3
Learning how to work with sources.

Homework: 1. Write draft of Learner Profile

November 7th: Learning how to work with sources continued.

Homework: 1. Revise draft of Learner Profile

November 14th: DUE: learner profile.
Introduce reflective letter.
Discuss what are the disciplines? How does that affect the kinds of writing I will do in college?

Homework: 1. Complete Portfolio and Cover Letter draft

November 21st: Peer review reflective letter, cover letter, and portfolio.

Homework: Revise final project

November 28th: No class. Optional Conferences

December 4th: Due: Portfolio and reflective letter.
What is interdisciplinarity and why is it valuable?