

English 125-63
Seminar on Academic Writing
Fall 2021

Instructor: Professor Katie Laskowski

(pronouns: she, her, hers)

Course Times/Location: T/TH 8:00 am - 9:15 am O'Malley Center 113

Office: OMC 247

Email: klaskowski22@jcu.edu

Office Hours:

Day	Office Hours	Location
Mondays		
Tuesdays	9:30 am – 11: 30 am	Personal Zoom Room Link: Katie Laskowski is inviting you to a scheduled Zoom meeting. Topic: Katie Laskowski's Personal Meeting Room Join Zoom Meeting https://johncarrolluniversity.zoom.us/j/4464452407 Meeting ID: 446 445 2407
Wednesdays		
Thursdays	9:30 am – 11: 30 am	Personal Zoom Room Link: Katie Laskowski is inviting you to a scheduled Zoom meeting. Topic: Katie Laskowski's Personal Meeting Room Join Zoom Meeting https://johncarrolluniversity.zoom.us/j/4464452407 Meeting ID: 446 445 2407
Fridays		

Important websites:

Canvas: <https://canvas.jcu.edu/login>

First-Year Writing Program: <http://sites.jcu.edu/fywriting>

Writing Center: <http://sites.jcu.edu/writingcenter>

Required books and materials:

Lunsford, Andrea. *Let's Talk... A Pocket Rhetoric*. W.W. Norton & Company, 2021.

Course Overview:

Welcome to English 125! In this seminar course, we will work together to develop your ability to write with power and clarity through focusing on the following crucial components of successful academic writing across all disciplines: argumentation, audience awareness, organization, and style.

More specifically, this seminar will help you learn about the principles and practices of researching and writing for an academic audience. You will learn how to create an argument in response to others' ideas, articulate that argument, and support it with appropriate and credible evidence. In the process, you will also learn how to perform academic research, identify, and evaluate appropriate primary and secondary sources, determine what evidence and reasons are necessary to support your argument, and integrate and synthesize research into your arguments. Finally, you will learn about your own writing process by writing multiple drafts; developing appropriate revision, editing, and proofreading strategies; reading and responding effectively to your own and others' work; citing sources appropriately; and controlling the mechanics of writing such as syntax, style, grammar, punctuation, and spelling in ways that are appropriate for academic readers.

To accomplish these goals, you will read and respond to a variety of sources – both academic and popular – that focus on **othering**. By othering, I mean individuals who face alienation and marginalization for their perceived differences. In order to grasp this theme, we will discuss topics like gender, animal rights, race, tattoos, pandemic numbers, and more. Although the course focuses on these issues through readings, much of the writing you will do will revolve around topics of your own choosing. My role in this course is to guide and coach you to write argument-based essays for academic audiences and to use appropriate research to support those arguments.

Core Curriculum Learning Goals

This course aligns with JCU's Core Curriculum goals in a number of ways. In order to successfully complete this course and to achieve effective writing in an academic context, students must demonstrate competency in the following areas:

1. Articulation of an argument

*Select and develop an appropriately complex argument given audience, purpose, and length requirements.

*Develop and support an argument appropriate to context, audience, and purpose.

2. Source integration

*Locate, engage with, and integrate evidence into your own argument.

3. Ethical documentation

*Avoid plagiarism and include all important citation information

4. Control of syntax and mechanics

*Use language that conveys meaning to readers with clarity.

Note: These goals derive from the John Carroll University Academic Learning Goals. Specifically, they derive from the following:

- * Develop habits of critical analysis
- * Communicate skillfully in multiple forms of expression
- * Apply a framework for examining ethical dilemmas

In order for students to complete these core curriculum learning outcomes successfully, the First-Year Writing Program at John Carroll University has developed a set of sequenced writing assignments.

Course Components:

Essay #1 – Introduction to Argumentation: What Do *They* Have to Say? (3-4 pages)

Essay #2 – Commentary: What Do *You* Have to Say? (4-5 pages)

Essay #3 – Academic Research Project (6-8 pages)

Essay #4 – Identity Narrative (4-5 pages)

Reading assignments

Participation (in class discussions, in class writing, active participation in group work)

Peer Review in class workshops

Reading Responses

Final portfolio/Portfolio Cover Letter

Evaluation:

Your grade in this course will be determined in part by the four major assignments, which make up 50% of your grade. The other 50% is determined by your final portfolio, other formal writing, your class attendance record, reading responses, and your work in Peer Review sessions. The following points are subject to change based on the demands of the course and the needs of students; consider these tentative. The breakdown is as follows:

Diagnostic Essay	2.0% (20 points)
Essay #1	10% (100 points)
Essay #2	10% (100 points)
Essay #3	10% (100 points)
Abstract	2.5% (25 points)
Annotated Bibliography	2.5% (25 points)
Essay #4	10% (100 points)
Portfolio Cover Letter	10% (100 points)
Portfolio	25% (250 points)
Reading Responses	8.0% (80 points)
Peer Review	10% (100 points)

Grading Scale:

93-100 = A

90-92 = A-

87-89 = B+

83-86 = B

80-82 = B-
77-79 = C+
73-76 = C
70-72 = C-
65-69 = D
Below 65 = F

You must complete *all* major assignments and the portfolio in order to pass this course. In addition, students must earn a final grade that is a C- or higher in order to pass the course; students who do not earn a C- or higher must repeat the course.

Extra Credit Policy:

There will be no extra credit available in this course.

Participation/Classroom Policy:

As a seminar class that is capped at 18 students, the work required for EN 125 is dependent on your presence in class; in addition to class discussions, we will also engage in group work, in class writing, and Peer Review. Therefore, I expect you to be present for all of our classes. I understand that severe illness and emergencies can prevent you from coming to class. If a situation arises and you can contact me in advance, please do as soon as possible so that we can work together to accommodate your situation. Please note and remember the following:

- You are granted **3** absences. Use them at your own discretion, but make sure you keep track because every absence over three will result in a **full letter reduction** of your final grade. **After four absences, you risk failing this class.**
- When you miss a class, it is **your** responsibility to contact me and inquire about the assignments and work that you missed.
- Alterations to this policy based on extraordinary circumstances will be made at my discretion.

COVID-19 Protocol

All students, fully vaccinated or not, are required to wear a mask in class (and in all indoor public areas), per university regulations. Students who do not comply with this policy will be asked to leave the classroom. The university is **NOT** providing mask exemptions for any member of the university community -- student, staff, faculty, or administration.

In this class, wearing a mask refers to proper wearing of the mask to cover the mouth and nose. Please refer to the following video for how to properly wear a mask:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eDHCzVgIHnM>

This policy may change as the University's COVID-19 policies change based on recommendations from the CDC for Cuyahoga County.

COVID-19 Exposure Guidelines:

- **If you test positive for Covid-19, DO NOT COME TO CLASS!** Based on current [CDC guidelines \(Links to an external site.\)](#): **you will need to isolate from others for 10 days** after the start of symptoms or for 10 days after a positive coronavirus test if you are asymptomatic.
- **If you are unvaccinated and have been in close contact** (within 6 feet of someone for a cumulative total of 15 minutes or more over a 24-hour period) **with someone who has COVID-19, DO NOT COME TO CLASS!!** Also, you need to quarantine for 14 days.
- **Fully vaccinated people who have been in close contact with someone who has COVID-19** should get tested 3-5 days after their exposure, even if they don't have symptoms and wear a mask indoors in public for 14 days following exposure or until their test result is negative.
- **Students who are visibly ill, e.g. coughing, sneezing, blowing their nose, etc. will be asked to leave the classroom** to avoid the possibility of spreading coronavirus or other infectious disease to others in the classroom. Failure to leave the classroom at the instructor's request will result in dismissal of the whole class for the remaining class time and disciplinary action as described above under the Mask/face covering policy.
- **IMPORTANT NOTE for students who are isolated or quarantined because of Covid-19:** For any student who has tested positive and is isolating or who is in quarantine, you will **NOT** be penalized for a class or exam absence provided that you contact the Academic Success Center and provide them with appropriate documentation. They will contact me (and your other professors) that you will be out of class for an extended time, which I will accept as documentation for excused absences.

Classroom Behavior Expectations:

Students engaged in disruptive behaviors in the classroom will be warned that their behavior is impeding the learning process. If the behavior doesn't stop, the student may be asked to leave the classroom. If the student refuses to leave or the behavior continues, a Disruptive Classroom Incident Report may be filed and a student conduct process begun. The university defines disruptive behavior in the classroom as repeated, continuous or multiple student behaviors that prevent an instructor from teaching and/or prevent students from learning. Examples of disruptive behavior include but are not limited to: persistently speaking without being recognized or interrupting other speakers, harassing behavior or personal insults. In Fall 2021, refusal to wear a face mask will be viewed as disruptive behavior.

Technology:

Please be respectful of me and your peers: keep your cell phones on silent and out of sight.

However, if there is an emergency situation in which you need to have your cell phone close by, please quietly leave class if you must answer.

Unless I tell you in advance, you will not need your laptop in class every day (accommodations approved by the SAS Office are an exception). On the days where you bring your laptop to class, please just work on class material.

Reading Responses:

Each week when there are new readings, you will complete a reading response. Depending on how many new readings there are, you can choose which reading to do your response on. I will collect the reading responses at the end of class, so that you may refer to your response for class discussion. Each reading response should be a minimum of 250 words. Each response is worth 10 points. These points add up across the semester, please be diligent and complete them on time. The point of a reading response involves hearing your genuine reaction and reflection on the text. Once you have been exposed to others' responses to the text, your response will be shaped by theirs. Therefore, I will not accept any late reading responses. If there is an essay due that day in class, then we will have no reading responses due. Give me the reading responses by the end of the class. You cannot leave to print out the response or work on the response in class. If you do, I will not accept the response.

Here is what I'm looking for:

- A thoughtful, personal response to the reading
- Evidence that you read and at least thought about the reading (even if you didn't fully understand it)
- This writing can be informal – you are responding to what you read.
- Did you agree? Disagree? How did it make you feel? What did you notice in your close reading? What jumped out at you? What did you find fun? What struck you the wrong way? Etc...
- Make connections between the text and personal experiences, current events, and past readings (other texts).

There are many ways to respond to a text. I am just looking for a brief response to the text that shows that you've not only read it, but have actually thought about it as well. If you write just a summary of the text with no reflection or insight, you will only get five points. If you do not turn it in, you will receive zero points. *These responses cannot be turned in late* (unless you were absent and arranged an alternative assignment with me).

General Instructions for Major Assignments:

These guidelines apply to the five major assignments and the Portfolio, which must all be typed for this class. These assignments will be submitted in class. Response assignments given as homework should also be typed. The major assignments must have a title and should be formatted with 1" margins on each side, double-spaced, in 12-point Times New Roman, and single-sided. You must follow the format outlined by the Modern Language Association (MLA), including proper citation of sources in the text and in a corresponding list of works cited (we will spend time discussing this in class).

Be advised also that all writing done for this class is public. Peers in your class may read your writing during peer review or other activities. I may use sections of your work as examples for the rest of the class; if I do, the writing will remain anonymous and will only be used in a positive context.

Final Portfolio:

One of my main goals this semester is for you to put together a polished portfolio of your writing, which will include revisions of some of your major assignments. We will spend time discussing revision throughout the semester, which will help you practice revising your essays and will lead to the opportunity to choose your most successful revisions for your portfolio. Since the portfolio holds the most weight in the breakdown of your grade, it is fair to assume that this project is extremely important. Again, don't worry; your classmates and I will help you in the revision process so that you can write more effectively, more confidently, and more gracefully. You will get plenty of help and plenty of practice!

The Writing Center:

I encourage you to take advantage of services offered by the Writing Center. The Writing Center will offer limited in-person consultations as well as synchronous and asynchronous online consultations. Consultants at the Center can help with any stage of the writing process, from brainstorming to complete drafts. When the consultant reads your paper aloud, you will catch mistakes that you may have missed otherwise. It always helps to have another set of eyes on your writing.

Request a consultation through this link:

<https://jcu.edu/academics/resources-advising/writing-center>

Academic Integrity:

Writing is the communication of your own thoughts for an audience. This class values and appreciates texts that uniquely represent your voice and your work. Plagiarism is defined as a writer incorporating an author's words and thoughts into his or her work without properly citing the original author. We will spend class time this semester discussing the meanings and effects of plagiarism, as well as clarifying what *is* plagiarism and what is *not*. Please review the section on plagiarism in the *FYCJCU*, as well as in the *JCU Undergraduate Bulletin*. Neither plagiarism nor cheating will be tolerated in this class, as it demonstrates irresponsibility and disservice to yourself and your peers. Any student found to have committed or to have attempted to commit any act of dishonesty, including cheating, plagiarism, **manipulating size of spacing, text, punctuation size, etc.**, or other forms of academic dishonesty, is subject to the disciplinary sanctions outlined in the Student Judicial System. ***Students who plagiarize any part of their writing assignment, intentionally or unintentionally, will receive a zero on the assignment, will not be allowed to make up or revise the assignment, and will be referred to the Dean of Student Affairs.*** All direct quotations need to be placed in quotation marks followed by an MLA parenthetical citation; all paraphrased sections from other sources need to be acknowledged in the signal phrase and also cited with an in-text, parenthetical MLA citation. All sources used in the paper must also be listed on a Works Cited page (in MLA format). We will cover MLA format and plagiarism in the first few weeks of the course.

Peer Review:

On days designated for Peer Review, I expect you to come to class with your essay **already printed out**. Although the essay that you share does not have to be your final product, a full-length draft of the assignment is required. If you come to class without your essay printed or without a full draft,

then I will immediately deduct 10 points from your Peer Review points. We will trade essays in class and discuss in pairs and as a class how to improve your argument and purpose in relationship to your audience. If you miss a Peer Review day, unless previously discussed or arranged with me, you will lose out on a significant amount of points.

Late Work:

Essays and assignments are due at the very beginning of class on the specified due dates (unless otherwise instructed, such as for assignments due in Canvas). The grade on an assignment drops one letter for every day that it is late. Essays over one week late will not be accepted, and no credit will be given for that assignment. If you know that you will be absent or away when an essay or homework assignment is due, it is your responsibility to make arrangements beforehand to submit your work early. The decision of whether or not I accept late work, regardless of excuse, is solely mine. **I do not accept essays slid under my office door or by email;** if necessary, put the assignment in my mailbox, which is in the Work Room in the English department.

Mental Wellness Statement:

As a college student, there may be times when personal or life stressors interfere with your academic performance and/or negatively impact your daily life. If you or someone you know is experiencing mental health challenges at JCU, consider contacting the Counseling Center by calling 216-397-4283, or visiting their website at jcu.edu/counselingcenter and requesting an appointment in the online portal. The center also offers drop-in consultations with a therapist in their Let's Talk program – no appointment necessary. All services are free and confidential.

Statement on Accessibility, Inclusion, Harassment, and Bias:

John Carroll University is committed to fostering an equitable and accessible learning and working environment, based upon open communication, mutual respect, and ethical values consistent with our Jesuit and Catholic tradition. We express this commitment in the following policies and procedures:

In accordance with federal law, if you have a documented disability you may request accommodations from Student Accessibility Services (SAS). For more information go to the accessibility page or you may contact the office directly at sas@jcu.edu or 216.397.4967. Please keep in mind that accommodations are not retroactive so it is best to register at the beginning of each semester. Only accommodations approved by SAS will be recognized in the classroom. Please contact SAS if you have further questions.

If you have experienced sexual harassment, assault, or misconduct based upon gender/sex/sexual orientation, and you share this with a faculty or staff member, that person must notify the Title IX Coordinator (TitleIX@jcu.edu or (216) 397-1559), who will discuss options with you. In most cases, communicating with the Title IX Coordinator does not automatically trigger a formal investigation. Members of the University community may communicate with the Title IX Coordinator in order to get more information and seek supportive measures without filing a formal complaint.

For more information about your options and resources in a Title IX matter, please go to the Title IX page, where you can file an online report. An option to report anonymously is available. Members of the University community are encouraged to review the University's Sexual Harassment & Interpersonal Violence Policy, as well as the Resolution Process & Grievance Process for Title IX Sexual Harassment.

If you have experienced bias or discrimination based on race, age, color, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, religion, ethnic or national origin, disability, military or veteran status, genetic information, or any factor protected by law, you are encouraged to report this via the Bias Reporting System.

For more information about the University's commitment to diversity, equity, inclusion, and accessibility, please visit the Diversity, Equity & Inclusion Division home page.

Preliminary Schedule (subject to change as needed)

Reading assignments are listed on the days by which they should be completed. For example, if a reading assignment is listed on a Friday, you'll want to attend class that Friday having already completed that reading. These readings are subject to change.

Week 1

T 8/31 Course Introductions and assign the Diagnostic Essay

TH 9/2 Read "Listening" and "Thinking Rhetorically" (4-28) in *Let's Talk* and discuss the rhetorical triangle: Ethos, Pathos, and Logos

Week 2

T 9/7 Diagnostic essay due in class, read "Reading to Understand, Engage, & Respond" (52-67) in *Let's Talk*, and assign Essay #1

TH 9/9 Read Adrienne Rich's "When We Dead Awaken: Writing as Re-Vision" and "Writing Processes" (80-98) in *Let's Talk*

Reading response on Rich due

Week 3

T 9/14 Remaining discussion on Rich's essay and *Let's Talk* and read "Summarizing and Responding" (203-222) in *Let's Talk*

TH 9/16 **Peer Review in class.**

Week 4

T 9/21 **Essay #1 due in class** and read “Arguing” (100-131) in *Let’s Talk*. Assign Essay #2.

TH 9/23 Read “Why We Shouldn’t All Be Vegan” and the excerpts from Coetzee’s *The Lives of Animals* and Singer’s *Animal Liberation*

Reading Response due on one of the readings

Week 5

T 9/28 Read “Starting with Questions, Finding Sources” and “Evaluating Sources, Checking Facts” (242-271). We will learn how to navigate the JCU library page, conduct research, and find credible sources.

TH 9/30 Read “The Secrets of Haiti’s Living Dead” and listen to the song “Haiti” by The Arcade Fire and discuss counter-arguments

Reading Response due on the song or article

Week 6

T 10/5 **Peer review in class**

TH 10/7 **Essay #2 due in class** and read “Engaging Respectfully with Others” and “Developing Academic Habits of Mind” (29-49). Assign Essay #3.

Week 7

T 10/12 Read “Columbus, the Indians, and Human Progress” by Howard Zinn

Reading response due at 8:00 am

TH 10/14 **Abstract due in class.** Read the articles on COVID’s death toll and COVID’s impact on the Indigenous community (links on Canvas)

Week 8

T 10/19 Read “Cubes” and “Salvation by Langston Hughes, and read “How it Feels to Be Colored Me” by Zora Neale Hurston

Reading Response due one of the readings

TH 10/21 **Annotated Bibliography due in class.** Read “Notes of a Native Son” by James Baldwin

Week 9

T 10/26 Read “Queer and Now” by Eve Sedgwick

TH 10/28 Look for music and articles on Canvas

Reading Response due at 8:00 am on either October 26th or October 28th

Week 10

T 11/2 **Peer Review for Essay #3**

TH 11/4 **Essay #3 due**, and I will assign Essay #4. Read “Writers Must Develop A Strong, Original Voice” by Patrick Thomas

Week 11

T 11/9 Read Chapter 11 “Narrating” from *Let’s Talk* (188-202). Also, read “Brown” by Tadeu Velloso and “Two Ways to Belong in America” by Bharati Mukherjee
Reading response due on “Brown” or “Two ways to Belong in America”

TH 11/11 Read “Creative Writing Is A Unique Category” by Cydney Alexis
Reading Response due by 8:00 am

Week 12

T 11/16 **Peer Review for Essay #4**

TH 11/18 **Essay #4 due**. Assign the final portfolio assignment.

Week 13

T 11/23 **Friday Classes meet. No Class**

TH 11/25 **No Class. Thanksgiving Break.**

Week 14

T 11/30 Portfolio workshop day #1 (mandatory attendance)

TH 12/2 Portfolio workshop day #2 (mandatory attendance)

Week 15

T 12/7 Portfolio workshop day #3 (mandatory attendance)

TH 12/9 Last day of classes: portfolios and cover letters due

Exams Week 16 (12/13 – 12/17)

No in class final exam; you are required to schedule a meeting with me for a Portfolio conference during the specified hours.