



McGill University is located on land that has long served as a site of meeting and exchange amongst Indigenous peoples, including the Haudenosaunee and Anishinabeg nations. McGill honours, recognizes, and respects these nations as the traditional stewards of the lands and waters on which we meet today.

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**WCOM 250 701 CRN 5425**

**Research Essay and Rhetoric**

**Fall 2022**

**Course Start and End Dates:** Thursday, 1 September, to Thursday, 1 December

**Class Meets:** Tuesdays and Thursdays 10:05-11:25

**Classroom Location:** Education Building 539

**Instructor:** Dr Richard Reid Cooper

**Office Hours:** By Appointment (Zoom)

**Phone:** A message may be left at the main office of the MWC: 514-398-7109.

**Email:** Please use the email tool in *myCourses* for all course-related communications. In the event that the *myCourses* site or email tool is not functioning properly, you may use my regular McGill email address: richard.cooper@mcgill.ca

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**Course Description and Objectives:** In this course, you will learn how to engage in written academic discourse of the sort you will encounter throughout your university career. Specifically, you will develop knowledge and a set of skills that will improve your ability both to analyse written works and to create well-written, well-structured pieces of writing that employ conventions appropriate to a variety of academic genres, audiences, and purposes. Since academic writing begins with inquiry, you will also learn how to generate and frame questions related to your discipline and to think critically about potential answers to them. In addition, you will learn how to enter into written conversations in ways that make your arguments compelling to an audience of critical thinkers. By engaging in peer review of others' work and submitting multiple drafts of key assignments, you will come to understand and approach writing not simply as a final finished product, but as a process that encompasses planning, composing, revising, and editing.

In particular, by the end of the course you will have learned how to:

- identify, analyse, and critique various genres of writing in relation to audience, purpose, organization, and style (APOS)
- plan, organize, draft, and edit shorter forms of academic writing, including summaries and critical analyses
- use library resources to research, develop, and write longer academic essays (2000-2500 words)
- effectively revise and edit your own and others' written work
- engage in reasoned and respectful discussions and debates, both orally and in writing
- develop sound arguments based on logical reasoning and evidence

- identify and avoid logical fallacies and other argumentative weaknesses
- effectively apply the rules and conventions of English grammar and mechanics in the service of both coherence and style
- choose vocabulary, organize materials, and create a "persona" so as to influence a target audience
- exploit the relationship between form and content for stylistic and rhetorical purposes
- cite sources according to at least one scholarly system of documentation
- present and format written work according to accepted academic conventions

Writing assignments include a Library Article Summary (LAS), an Article Critique (AC), a Research Paper (RP), two Research Assignments (RA), an In-Class Composition (ICC), and two Grammar Tests. Participation and attendance will constitute 10% of the final grade.

**Notes:**

- WCOM 250 is designed for students who are fluent in spoken and written English. If you are not certain whether you fall into this category, please consult your instructor about whether you would be better served by taking **WCOM 255: ESL Research Essay and Rhetoric**.
- WCOM 250 may be taken as an **elective** toward completion of your degree. Some restrictions may apply. If in doubt, consult your Faculty advisor.
- WCOM 250 is a required course for some programs. Please consult with your Faculty advisor.
- Faculty of Education students who complete WCOM 250 may not subsequently take for credit an Effective Communication course offered by the Faculty of Education. Please consult with your Faculty of Education advisor for further information.

**Required Text:**

Troyka, Lynn Quitman, and Douglas Hesse. *Simon & Schuster Handbook for Writers*. 11<sup>th</sup> edition. Toronto: Pearson, 2017.

This text has been ordered as an **e-book** through the [McGill \(LeJames\) bookstore](#) and will be available for purchase on the bookstore website. Students will receive an access code to activate their purchase and all further instructions will be included when the purchase is complete.

**Evaluation:**

Note that, in accordance with article 3.1.7 of the [University Student Assessment policy](#), failure to submit an assignment worth 20% or more will result in a final course mark of "J" (calculated as a failure in the TGPA and CGPA).

Library Article Summary ( <b>LAS*</b> )	10%	(250-350 words max.)
Article Critique ( <b>AC*</b> )	15%	(750-1000 words max.)
Library Research Assignments	10%	(5% each)
Research Paper ( <b>RP*</b> )	30%	(2000-2500 words)
In-Class Composition	10%	
Grammar Tests	15%	(7.5% each)
Participation and Attendance	10%	

**(Note: 1 double-spaced page, excluding any images, graphs, etc., is roughly equivalent to 250 words.)**

\*For these assignments (LAS, AC, and RP), students will receive detailed audio feedback on a first draft. Students are strongly encouraged to revise these three assignments in an attempt to improve both their skills and the final mark for each assignment. A second grade will be awarded to the revised submission, and this second grade will be averaged with the first draft grade of the assignment. **Note, however, that the following conditions must be met before a revised text will be considered for reassessment:**

- the *original* (first draft) assignment must demonstrate significant effort
- on the basis of the audio feedback provided by the instructor, students must itemize identified weaknesses in their first-draft assignment and then complete assigned exercises in the textbook or online that address the identified weaknesses (if such exercises are assigned)
- both the exercises and the original, *graded* draft must be handed in with the second draft.

If the exercises and original graded draft are not submitted along with the second draft, the latter will not be accepted, and the original grade will stand. Similarly, if substantial revision in the identified areas has not been made, the original grade will stand.

**All assignments must be uploaded under the appropriate abbreviation on *myCourses* by 11:59 p.m. on the date on the Course Schedule on which they are due. The assignments must be submitted in Word format. Please save your assignments by putting the initials of your first and last names before the abbreviation for the assignment (e.g. RC LAS 1). When you print out an assignment, however, save it first as a PDF document. In no case should assignments submitted on *myCourses* be in PDF format.**

*As per McGill regulations, a student may not submit a piece of work that has already been submitted and graded for a course taken in a previous semester. Violations of this regulation will be reported to the Dean of Students and may result in disciplinary action.*

## UNIVERSITY POLICIES, PROCEDURES, AND RESOURCES (MWC UG Courses)

### 1. McGill Resources for Academic Success

#### (a) Inclusive Learning Environment

McGill is committed to providing an inclusive and supportive learning environment. If you experience barriers to learning in this course, do not hesitate to discuss them with your instructor. If you have a special learning need or disability, you are encouraged to contact the [Office of Student Accessibility and Achievement](#).

#### (b) Health and Wellness

Student wellbeing is a priority for the University. To help students find the support they need as quickly as possible, all of McGill's health and wellness resources have been integrated into a single [Student Wellness Hub](#), a one-stop shop for everything related to physical and mental health. If you need access to services or would like more information, you are strongly encouraged to visit the Virtual Hub.

Students also currently have *free* access to [Keep.meSAFE](#), a psychological counselling service where students can speak to a counsellor in *one of six languages*. For more information, please visit the [Student Services web page](#).

#### (c) McGill Writing Centre (MWC) Tutorial Service

Writing well is key to both academic and professional success. The McGill Writing Centre (MWC) offers credit courses in academic and professional writing, and a tutorial service open to all McGill students. The tutorial service offers one-to-one sessions with seasoned instructors and experienced tutors who will work with you at any stage of the writing process.

For information about the availability of in-person and online appointments, please visit the [MWC's Tutorial Service website](#).

**(d) McGill Library**

Discover the McGill Library's rich array of resources. Watch a short [welcome video](#) in English, French, Arabic, Chinese, Hindi, Persian, Spanish, or Urdu.

**2. Academic Conduct**

**(a) Academic Integrity**

Students are responsible for knowing McGill's rules and regulations concerning academic honesty, which can be found on the [Students Rights and Responsibilities](#) website. Violations of academic integrity undermine not only the value of honest students' work, but also the academic integrity of the University and the value of a McGill credential. The Student Rights and Responsibilities website provides resources that can help students avoid dishonest work, and an explanation of the disciplinary measures that go with it.

**As of Fall 2019, all newly admitted students must complete the Academic Integrity Tutorial (AIT) in Minerva** during their first semester at McGill. Failure to complete the tutorial will place a hold in Minerva and restrict the student from registering for courses in the following semester. The Tutorial can be accessed as follows: **Minerva → Student Menu → Academic Integrity Tutorial**.

**(b) Respectful and Professional Communication**

This course is designed to help you learn to communicate professionally both during your time at McGill and in your future workplaces. In keeping with [McGill's policies on student rights and responsibilities](#), it is expected that during class discussions and small group interactions you will communicate constructively and respectfully. Sexist, racist, homophobic, ageist, and ableist expressions will not be tolerated during class meetings, discussion boards, or any other site used for teaching and learning purposes.

**3. Policy Against Sexual Harassment and Violence**

McGill University is committed to creating and sustaining a safe environment through proactive, visible, accessible, and effective approaches that seek to prevent and respond to sexual harassment and sexual violence. *McGill's Policy against Sexual Violence* underlines this commitment and ensures that procedures are in place to address complaints. To learn more, visit the [Office for Sexual Violence Response, Support, and Education](#) website.

Sexual Violence Training: "It Takes All of Us"

In accordance with a new law, Bill 151, Policy to Prevent and Fight Sexual Violence in Higher Education Institutions, McGill is in the process of implementing training measures for all community members. The

online training will be mandatory for everyone at McGill – all students, faculty, and administrative and support staff.

As of Fall 2019, all newly admitted students must complete the sexual violence training course, called “It Takes All of Us,” in myCourses during their first semester at McGill. Failure to complete the training will place a hold in Minerva and restrict the student from registering for courses in the following semester. The training can be accessed through myCourses and will appear as a separate course in your profile.

#### 4. Policy on Harassment and Discrimination

McGill University is committed to promoting an equitable environment where the fundamental dignity of all of its members is respected. The objectives of [McGill’s Policy on Harassment and Discrimination Prohibited by Law](#) are to promote education and awareness about equity issues and to ensure that procedures are in place to [address complaints](#).

#### 5. Final Grades

The official final course grade is the one that appears in Minerva. An unofficial final grade appearing in other locations may be subject to change. The department reserves the right to correct mistakes.

To learn more about University letter grades, visit the [University’s Regulation and Resources page](#).

Consult this page to learn more about the University’s policy on [assessment of student work](#).

What does a final course grade of “J” mean?

A “J” grade is a failing grade due either to (i) an unexcused absence for an official final exam, or (ii) failure to submit required work worth more than 20% of the final grade for the course as a whole. A “J” is calculated as a failure in the TGPA and the CGPA.

#### 6. Other Course Policies and Procedures

**This course is administered via myCourses.** Students are advised to *check the myCourses site on a daily basis*. Failure to do so may result in your missing important information. **Neither absence from class nor failure to check myCourses is an acceptable excuse for being unaware of important course-related information.**

**Assignment Submission:** Unless otherwise specified, assignments are due by electronic submission via myCourses on the dates specified by the instructor. Accordingly, assignments submitted via e-mail or in any other medium will not be accepted unless the instructor has given prior written permission.

**Consequences of Late Submission:** Late work will be penalized by **2% per day, including weekends**. Work handed in more than 7 days late (including weekends) will not be accepted. Legitimate exceptions include documented medical, family, and personal emergencies, and observance of holy days. Students planning to observe [holy days](#) listed in the McGill calendar should notify the instructor by email no less than two weeks prior, and preferably at the beginning of the course.

**Recording class activities:** Students may not record any class proceedings or collect any electronic data (including photos and videos) from class activities without the express consent of the instructor.

© Instructor generated course materials (e.g., handouts, notes, summaries, test questions, etc.) are **protected by law** and may not be copied or distributed in any form or in any medium without the explicit permission of the instructor. Note that infringements of copyright can be subject to follow up by the University under the [Code of Student Conduct and Disciplinary Procedures](#).

**Email communication:** Note that, in accordance with McGill University's [official email policy](#), the instructor will not respond to email messages sent from outside the McGill network (e.g., gmail). As well, while instructors appreciate that email correspondence is an efficient method of communication, students should keep in mind that instructors are not on call. Students should therefore not expect a response to emails during the weekend or after 5:00 p.m., Mondays through Fridays. Prior to contacting instructors via email, students seeking course-related information, including information about assignments, should first attempt to locate that information by (a) consulting the course syllabus or textbook, (b) consulting materials uploaded to the course website (myCourses), or (c) consulting with other students in the class. Generally speaking, during the week, a valid request submitted via email will receive a response within 36 hours, exclusive of weekends and statutory holidays.

### Participation and Attendance Grade

Since WCOM 250 develops your knowledge and skills through *continuous* assessment, student success depends in good part on the following:

- regular attendance
- completion of assignments according to both deadlines and guidelines
- thorough revision of assignments in response to instructor feedback
- completion of readings and exercises as specified in the course schedule
- constructive participation in discussions and debates with peers
- commitment to the practice of peer review

Regular and constructive participation is an integral part of the learning process and therefore an important indicator of the degree to which a student has achieved the learning outcomes specified in the syllabus.

Accordingly, participation and attendance grades will be awarded as follows:

- A percentage grade between **85% and 100%** for participation and attendance indicates that the student has attended classes without fail (except for legitimate absences) and, within a range reflected in the percentage, has been well prepared for class, having printed, downloaded, read, and reflected on material as requested and completed at-home work as assigned; has participated in a mature and thoughtful way to class discussions and other in-class activities; and has made a positive contribution to class dynamics.
- A percentage grade between **80% and 84%** for participation and attendance indicates that the student has rarely been absent from class for other than legitimate reasons and, within a range

reflected in the percentage, has nearly always been fully prepared for class, having printed, downloaded, read, and reflected on material as requested and completed at-home work as assigned; has participated in class discussions and other in-class activities in ways that frequently demonstrate careful reflection; and has often made meaningful contributions to class dynamics.

- A percentage grade between **70% and 79%** for participation and attendance indicates that the student has rarely been absent from class for other than legitimate reasons and, within a range reflected in the percentage, has usually, but not always, been fully prepared for class, having printed, downloaded, read, and reflected on material as requested and completed at-home work as assigned; has participated in class discussions and other in-class activities in ways that occasionally demonstrate careful reflection; and has sometimes made meaningful contributions to class dynamics.
- A percentage grade between **50% and 69%** for participation and attendance indicates that the student has not attended classes regularly and, within a range reflected in the percentage, has often been unprepared for class activities and/or failed to complete at-home work as assigned; has rarely participated in class discussions and/or other in-class activities or in ways that demonstrate careful reflection; and has rarely contributed in a constructive way to class dynamics. Students who are conspicuously absent from class without explanation or legitimate reason can expect to receive a participation and attendance grade towards the lower end of this scale.

## Course Schedule

Please note that this schedule is subject to change in the event of circumstances beyond the University's or instructor's control. Any such changes will be announced in class and posted to myCourses. Unless otherwise indicated, readings and exercises can be found in the *Simon & Schuster* e-book. Readings must be completed ahead of time, that is, for the following class, unless otherwise noted. Exercises should be done at the student's discretion if there is a recurrent problem in writing.

Class Meeting	Date	In-Class Content	Work for Next Class
1	R 1/09/22	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Introduction to the Course</li> <li>• Introduction to Genre and APOS</li> <li>• Critical Thinking and Reading</li> </ul>	<b>Read</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Textbook pp. 1-20 for an overview of the what is covered in the textbook.</li> <li>• For analytical and critical thinking read pp. 21-36.</li> </ul>
2	T 06/09/22	<b>Identifying Scholarly Articles</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Evaluating the scholarly quality of a text</li> <li>• Characteristics of a reputable scholarly article</li> <li>• Writing Diagnostic</li> </ul>	<b>Read</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Read Guidelines for Library Article Summary on <i>myCourses</i>—come to class with questions.</li> </ul>
3	R 08/09/22	<b>Short Forms of Academic Writing</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Summary and paraphrase</li> <li>• Summary as genre; summary as source</li> <li>• Avoiding plagiarism</li> <li>• Reporting verbs and in-text citation</li> </ul> <b>LAS assigned</b>	<b>Read</b> Textbook pp. 213-16, 228-29; 211-14, 217-18. <b>Locate, print, read, and annotate a <i>reputable</i> scholarly article</b> on a subject that you would like to explore further in your Research Paper.  Bring the <b><i>annotated</i></b> article to the next class meeting and be prepared to give an oral summary of it.
4	T 13/09/22	<b>Summary, Thesis, and Audience</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Oral presentation of article</li> <li>• Nature of a thesis statement</li> <li>• Audience considerations:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ old vs. new information</li> <li>○ integrating definitions</li> <li>○ passive vs. active voice</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<b>Read</b> Textbook pp. 77-79, 293-94, 297-99. <b>Write</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>LAS draft #1</b> and upload one copy on <i>myCourses</i> under Assignments, LAS 1.</li> </ul>
5	R 15/09/22	<b>LAS Draft #1 due (one copy online)</b> <b>LAS peer review session</b>  <b>Thinking about the research paper</b>	<b>Read</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Chapter 22 of the textbook (pp. 245-299).</li> <li>• RP instructions</li> </ul>



			Suggested Research Paper Topics are listed on <i>myCourses</i> . On <i>myCourses</i> , read Research Assignments. Pay special attention to Booth et al. Topic to Question (1).
6	T 20/09/22	<p><b>Subject-to-working hypothesis for the RP</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Narrowing a topic</li> <li>Persuasive vs. informative theses</li> <li>Evaluation of persuasive hypotheses</li> <li>They-say/I-say – entering and contributing to an academic conversation</li> <li>Review of Research Assignment One</li> </ul> <p><b>RP assigned</b></p>	<p><b>Revise</b> your research question and working hypothesis in preparation for the library workshop.</p> <p><b>Bring</b> Research Assignment 1 Document with you to the library workshop.</p>
7	R 22/09/22	<p>Library Workshop</p> <p><b>Research Assignment 1 due online (feedback within one week)</b></p>	<p>Library Workshop</p> <p><b>Go directly to the e-classroom on the main floor of the McLennan Library.</b></p>
8	T 27/09/22	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Critical thinking, logical fallacies, rhetorical appeals</li> <li>Model critical reading practices</li> </ul> <p><b>AC assigned</b></p>	<p><b>Critically Read and Annotate</b> the AC article “Relatively Speaking” on <i>myCourses</i>.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Re-read</b> pp. 21-36 of the textbook.</li> </ul> <p><b>Review</b> AC guidelines on <i>myCourses</i> and come to class with questions.</p>
9	R 29/09/22	<p><b>Class discussion of AC article</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Identifying genre, rhetorical situation, APOS, evidence, and appeals</li> </ul> <p><b>AC assigned</b></p> <p><b>LAS draft 1 returned with audio feedback</b></p>	
10	T 04/10/22	<p><b>Class discussion of AC article continued</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Thinking critically about evidence, persuasion, and the rhetorical situation</li> </ul>	<p><b>Read</b> Chapters 29-30 of the text book (pp. 427-72). Progressively read and study the rest of the chapters in Part 5 of the textbook.</p>
11	R 6/10/22	<p><b>Grammar, Punctuation, and Style part 1</b></p> <p>Sentence types</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Phrases and clauses</li> </ul>	<p><b>Read</b> Chapter 43 of the textbook on commas (pp. 593-611).</p> <p><b>Write AC</b></p>

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Independent clause defined/Dependent clause defined and elaborated</li> <li>(relative clauses, noun clauses, adjective clauses, subordinate clauses)</li> <li>Subordination and coordination</li> </ul>	
		<b>Autumn study break (Tuesday's class will be on Friday.)</b>	
12	F 14/10/22	<b>AC draft 1 due (one copy online)</b> <b>Article Critique peer review session</b> <b>Grammar, Punctuation, and Style part 2</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Parallelism</li> <li>Modifiers</li> <li>Agreement (subject-verb and pronoun-antecedent)</li> </ul>	<b>Read</b> Chapter 44 of the textbook on semicolons (pp. 612-16). Also, consult the documents posted on myCourses that deal with punctuation.  <b>Revise</b> LAS
13	T 18/10/22	<b>LAS draft 2 due</b> Review for mid-term Grammar Matters Test	<b>Study</b> for Grammar Test
14	R 20/10/22	<b>Grammar Test 1</b>	<b>Complete</b> Research Assignment 2 and upload one copy on myCourses under RA 2.
15	T 25/10/22	<b>Research assignment 2 due (feedback within one week)</b> <b>Paragraphing in Academic Writing</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Topic sentences</li> <li>Organizational patterns</li> <li>Coherence and unity</li> </ul>	
16	R 27/10/22	<b>Putting Sources into Conversation</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Synthesis</li> <li>Transitional phrases</li> <li>Integrating quotations, summaries, and paraphrases</li> </ul> <b>AC draft 1 returned with audio feedback</b>	<b>Write rough draft of Research Paper</b>
17	T 01/11/22	<b>Rough draft of Research Paper</b> RP rough draft peer review session	<b>Read</b> Chapter 44 of the textbook on apostrophes (pp. 622-25).
18	R 03/11/22	<b>AC draft 2 due</b> Introductions and conclusions in Research Papers <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Review of Grammar Matters Test 1</li> </ul>	<b>Read</b> Chapters 26, 27, or 28 as needed for help with citation styles. More importantly, consult Purdue OWL for the recent editions of MLA (9) and APA (7).

			<b>Write RP draft 1</b>
19	T 08/11/22	<b>RP draft 1 due online</b> <b>Editing the RP</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Revising for conciseness</li> <li>Revising for varied sentence structure</li> <li>Reverse Outlining</li> </ul>	
20	R 10/11/22	<b>AC draft 2 returned</b> Voice and tone in academic writing <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Writing under pressure: preparing for the ICC</li> <li>Introduction to the ICC article</li> </ul>	<b>Read</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Chapter 61 of the textbook (pp. 738-39).</li> </ul> <b>Read and annotate</b> the ICC article “Legends of Linnaeus” on myCourses.
21	T 15/11/22	Discussion of ICC article	<b>Prepare</b> for ICC
22	R 17/11/22	<b>In-class composition (ICC)</b>	
23	T 22/11/22	<b>RP draft 1 returned with audio feedback</b>  <b>Grammar, Punctuation, and Style part 3</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Sentence combining</li> </ul>	
24	R 24/11/22	<b>RP draft 1 returned with audio feedback</b>  Punctuation workshop	
25	T 29/11/22	Review for final Grammar Matters Test	<b>Revise</b> RP and upload one copy on myCourses under RP 2.
26	01/12/22	<b>RP draft 2 due online</b>  <b>Final Grammar Matters Test</b>  ICC returned	

### Summary of Assignment Submission and Return Dates

Assignment	Due Date
Library Article Summary Draft 1	15/09/22
Library Article Summary Draft 2	18/10/22
Article Critique Draft 1	14/10/22
Article Critique Draft 2	03/11/22
Grammar Test 1	20/10/22
Research Assignment 1	22/09/22
Research Assignment 2	25/10/22
Research Paper Draft 1	08/11/22
Research Paper Draft 2	01/12/22
In-Class Composition	17/11/22
Grammar Test 2	01/12/22

Participation and Attendance	N/A
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