

Research Methods Workshop (ENGL 3105)
M 2-2:50 (CRN 23481)
W 2-2:50 (CRN 24498)
Irby 201
Spring 2011

Dr. Fowler
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Text: **MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers** (7th ed.)

Course Description: As stated in the Undergraduate Bulletin, English 3105 is a “[r]equired course for English majors and minors. This course is designed to introduce students to the use of research in writing papers for literature courses. Students will use techniques and protocols learned in the course to complete a research assignment drawn from a concurrent upper-division course. This course must be taken in conjunction with the student's first upper-division course(s) in English.”

Please note that this is not an upper-division composition class. My assumption is that you already know the basics of essay writing. I will not be assessing the quality of your paper’s argument or mechanics (spelling, punctuation, grammar, syntax, etc.). That is the grading purview of the instructor for whom you are writing the research paper. I will, however, bring all MLA formatting deficiencies (e.g., quotations, in-text citations, Works Cited page) to your attention. I will not make the corrections for you; I will simply point out what needs fixing. You are the one who must gain adequate proficiency by repeatedly consulting the *MLA Handbook*.

Course Objectives: Students taking this course will

- learn how to incorporate secondary sources as supporting and contextualizing materials for their own thesis-driven arguments;
- familiarize themselves with the research tools available in Torreyson Library (as well as selected libraries in the central Arkansas region);
- learn MLA formatting protocols for research papers;
- produce a research paper for an upper-division English class while gaining specified feedback from this course’s instructor and fellow students in a workshop setting.

Course Schedule:

- 1/19 Introduction
- 1/26 Getting Started, Developing a Process
MLA 3-7
- 2/2 General Format for Research Paper and Selected Mechanics
MLA 116-18; 77-92
- 2/9 Library Orientation (meet in Torreyson 201)
MLA 8-38
- 2/16 Incorporating Quotations
MLA 92-105
- 2/23 Plagiarism
MLA 52-61
- 3/2 In-Text Citations
MLA 214-32
- 3/9 [Quiz #1: quotations and in-text citations]
Works Cited Page
MLA 126-35
- 3/16 Works Cited: Nonperiodical Print
MLA 148-81
[Research topic and preliminary thesis statement due]
- 3/30 [Quiz #2: nonperiodical print]
Works Cited: Periodical Print
MLA 136-48
- 4/6 [Quiz #3: nonperiodical and periodical print]
Works Cited: Web
MLA 181-93
- 4/13 Workshop: Late-Stage Draft of Research Paper
[Revised version of late-stage draft due, Thurs., 4/14, 4 p.m.]
- 4/20 Workshop: Turning Late-Stage Draft of Research Paper into a Final Draft
[Marked version of late-stage draft, final draft, and abstract due, Thurs. 4/21, 4 p.m.]
- 4/27 In-Class Course Evaluation; Mini-Conference: Presentation of Abstracts

Graded Assignments: There are three types of graded assignments in this course: quizzes, several drafts of a research paper, and an abstract of that paper. The quizzes (worth 10, 20, and 20 points respectively) will test your grasp of technical formatting details. The two drafts of the research paper, each worth 100 points, will demonstrate your proficiency in bringing this writing project to a technically accomplished finish. This paper will be at least four pages long (not counting the works-cited page), with at least four secondary sources, one of which will have to be acquired through interlibrary loan. The 50-point abstract, to be evaluated on the basis of its clarity, precision, and thoroughness, you will read aloud in the final class session. Thus, the total raw score for the course will be 300 points. I will convert your accumulated points to a number on a 100-point scale, then assign a letter grade in accordance with the following breakdown: A=90-100, B=80-89, C=70-79, D=60-69, F=0-59. I will round up average scores within a half-point of the next higher letter grade (e.g., an average of 79.5 would earn you a B).

Missed/Late Assignments: If you miss a quiz, it is your responsibility to contact me prior to the next class session and arrange to take it. If you know in advance that you are going to be absent on the day of a quiz, you may arrange to take it before the class session. Failure to pursue either option will result in a score of zero on the assignment.

My paper deadlines are especially firm. I must have sufficient time to mark the paper so it can be workshopped or returned to you during the next class session. Your failure to meet the designated deadline will result in a penalty of one letter grade per calendar day.

Attendance: As this is a weekly class with a relatively small number of sessions, you may only miss up to two class periods, whatever your reasons. If you exceed that limit, you will either have to drop the course or be dropped by me. You may not leave class early; if you do so, you will be counted absent. If you arrive after I have taken roll or without the textbook, you will receive a one-half absence penalty. Please do not bring children to class. Turn off all beeping gadgets at the door.

Course Announcements: Now and then I may send an informational e-mail to your Cub address, so do periodically check your account.

Academic Integrity Statement: “The University of Central Arkansas affirms its commitment to academic integrity and expects all members of the university community to accept shared responsibility for maintaining academic integrity. Students in this course are subject to the provisions of the university's Academic Integrity Policy, approved by the Board of Trustees as Board Policy No. 709 on February 10, 2010, and published in the Student Handbook. Penalties for academic misconduct in this course may include a failing grade on an assignment, a failing grade in the course, or any other course-related sanction the instructor determines to be appropriate. Continued enrollment in this course affirms a student's acceptance of this university policy.”

Plagiarism: Plagiarism, a form of academic misconduct and intellectual dishonesty, occurs when you present someone else's ideas or specific language as your own, intentionally neglecting to give due credit. In light of the fact that this is a course on proper procedures for

writing a research paper, any act of plagiarism on your part will result in withdrawal from the course with a WF.

University Policies: You should be familiar with your rights and responsibilities as outlined in the Student Handbook. In particular, you should consult the Handbook on such matters as Academic Policies and the Sexual Harassment Policy.

Disabilities Statement: “The University of Central Arkansas adheres to the requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act. If you need accommodation under this act due to a disability, contact the UCA Office of Disability Services at 450-3613.”