

## UNIVERSITY OF RHODE ISLAND

Department of Writing and Rhetoric  
Spring 2014

### WRT 104: Writing to Inform and Explain

MWF 9:00am – 9:50am • Washburn Hall, Rm 308

**Instructor:** Lindy E. Brigette

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**Phone:** 207-671-1033 (to call or text)

**Office location:** TBA

**Office hours:** before and after class, and by appointment

**Course Website:** <http://briggettewrt104sp14-mwf9.wikispaces.com/>

**Course:** WRT 104

**Section:** 0003

**WRT Main Office:** 324 Roosevelt

**Mailbox location:** 324 Roosevelt

- We will be using this site on almost a daily basis – homework will always be posted there.
  - I will go over the ins and outs of how to access and use its functions.
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#### WRT 104 Course Description

Welcome to WRT 104! You have chosen a course that will challenge your knowledge and practice of writing, as well as your understanding of yourself as a writer. This course fulfills the English Communication (ECw) requirement (part of General Education requirements), and focuses on writing as the sharing of information – **Informing & Explaining!** This course covers varieties and strategies of expository writing for different audiences and situations. Students are introduced to a number of different genres, including reports, proposals, letters, reviews, websites, and academic essays. In addition, this course provides extensive practice in writing effectively, reading complex texts, and using information technologies. These three skill areas are required for the General Education program here at URI, and therefore they are integrated into our assignments and activities.

All first-year writing courses at URI require four major projects plus other brief or informal writings; a focus on revision, with peer review and formative teacher response; a class session with a reference librarian who introduces the use of reference databases; the use of research to inform or persuade; and a final portfolio worth 40% of the final grade. In completing this course successfully, you will become more confident in using a number of writing strategies; you'll be able to respond effectively to the writing of others; you'll recognize different genres and purposes and be able to adapt to different audiences or demands. Generally speaking, at the end of this class, you'll be better prepared to face any writing task.

#### Required Texts:

- Glenn, *The Harbrace Guide to Writing* (URI edition/Cengage, 2013) “**HGW**”
- Bullock and Weinberg, *The Little Seagull Handbook* (Norton, 2011) “**LSH**”
- Reynolds and Davis, *Portfolio Keeping*, (3rd edition, Bedford St. Martin's, 2014) “**PK**”

#### MANDATORY Course Requirements:

1. Completion of all projects or other assignments (reading) on due dates (including online postings, reading responses, post-writes, on-time submission of drafts, thoughtful revision between drafts, peer-review work).

2. Completion of a final portfolio that follows all guidelines;
3. Active and consistent participation in online forums, small group, peer response, and collaborative work;
4. Preparation for each class and helpful contributions to class discussion;
5. Regular attendance (see below) and communication with instructor.

## **LEARNING OUTCOMES**

These apply to Gen Ed WRT Courses and 100-level WRT Courses.

### **1. Understanding of Rhetorical Situation**

- a. Students recognize that different rhetorical situations (audiences, purposes, contexts) call for different types of writing.
- b. Students practice different types of writing appropriate to different rhetorical situations (audience, purposes, contexts).
- c. Students reflect upon and explain the appropriateness of their choices for the rhetorical situation.

### **2. Composition Processes and Practices**

- a. Students recognize differences between revision and editing.
- b. Students practice various methods of invention, collaboration, research, ethical incorporation of sources, peer review, and revision.
- c. Students describe and analyze their different methods of invention, collaboration, research, ethical incorporation of sources, peer review, and revision.

### **3. Conventions and Craft**

- a. Students recognize standards of correctness, usage, and style.
- b. Students practice a range of styles, registers, and conventions.
- c. Students revise and edit their work to produce polished texts that meet the demands of the rhetorical situation.

**Writing Center Information:** The URI Writing Center welcomes *all writers, all disciplines, all levels, and all stages of writing*. The center is located on the 4th floor of Roosevelt. The tutors are trained to help with any writing situation, and they are always happy to help. This year, it is even easier to make appointments online: go to <https://uri.mywconline.com/>

**Attendance:** The small-class environment of WRT classes makes dedicated attendance and full participation the responsibility of each and every class member. Most (if not all) of the work we'll do in class *cannot be reproduced outside of our class meetings*, and your daily attendance not only counts toward your grade, but it also means you'll always be up to speed on what we're doing as a class. Students who miss classes are responsible for 1.) Explaining the absence and/or verifying its necessity; 2.) Getting the assignments from a classmate or from our WRT 104 course wiki (see URL above); and 3.) Making up the missed work. *If you notify me enough in advance*, absences for religious holidays, athletic participation, or other university-sanctioned events are excused. Other absences (for illness, accident, or personal tragedy) may also be approved; it is your responsibility to contact me AS SOON AS POSSIBLE to explain the absence within 12 hours of the missed class, or to provide documentation at the following class meeting. Absences that are not university-

sanctioned or instructor-approved will mean a loss of points or a deduction to the final grade. While allowance can be made for an emergency, ***students who miss a total of three weeks of classes will fail the course*** (9 absences for our MWF section).

**NOTE:** Check for announcements about class cancellations or call the Weather Line at URI: 874-SNOW (874-7669). The policy on snow days is this: if a due date or a workshop is planned, we will honor it on the next class meeting (unless an online alternative is created via email, Sakai, or our WRT 104 wiki.). If URI cancels classes for weather-related emergencies, please check our WRT 104 wiki site for announcements and assignments. Most of the time readings and draft due dates will remain as scheduled, but I may contact you regarding any changes.

**Tardiness and Classroom Courtesy:** We will begin each class right at 9:00am. If you must arrive late, please just come in, take a seat, and jump into whatever we're starting with on that day. Also I will expect that you turn off all cell phones, pagers, or any electronic devices except during in-class activities where we must use them. Trust me, I love texting and browsing social media as much as you do, and I'll be checking my phone right along with you as soon as we leave our classroom. Furthermore, I am the type who will call you out should you be on your phone or texting when you should be presently with our class discussion (there could be embarrassing consequences!!).

**Deadlines and Due Dates:** All work produced out of class is due at the beginning of the class meeting on the date specified. You must complete all assigned writing projects in order to pass the course. Unless special arrangements have been made with me, penalties will be applied to late papers on a case-by-case basis. Again, TALK TO ME at any point if you're struggling with any of the assignments.

**Formatting Papers:** I will give you very specific guidelines and expectations for every assignment. Feel free to ask for clarification at ANY POINT if you're uncertain about how to move forward. Each project must be submitted with your name, the date, the course and section number, and my name at the top left corner (I'll model this for you at various points throughout). We'll also discuss whether you'll submit your work electronically or via hardcopy. Be sure to save all drafts of all projects on a hard drive, disk, and/or online storage space (using Sakai is a great idea).

**Academic Honesty:** It's important that you come to understand plagiarism and its consequences. Plagiarism is taken very seriously here at URI. The penalty for plagiarism is a zero for the assignment and a report to your academic dean, who has the option to fail you for the course; in addition, the charge of academic dishonesty will go on your record in the Office of Student Life. Many instructors may require a paper to be rewritten, with or without credit, separately from or for the portfolio. *The Little Seagull Handbook* and many online resources offer extensive help on matters of plagiarism and how to acknowledge source material. Please consult the *URI Student Handbook* if you have questions about academic honesty and related issues. If you need more help understanding when to cite something or how to make clear your references, PLEASE ASK.\*

**\*Additionally,** my personal philosophy goes like this: If at ANY POINT you find yourself in a situation where you feel like your ONLY option is to knowingly plagiarize (which is cheating)—in other words, if you're stuck and feeling hopeless—please CONTACT ME AS SOON AS POSSIBLE via email, phone, or text message. We'll work out a plan for you to successfully complete the assignment.

**Note on Access:** Any student with a documented disability is welcome to contact Disability Services for Students so that reasonable accommodations may be worked out to support his or her success in this writing course. The office is in the Office of Student Life, 330 Memorial Union. PH: 401-874-2098.

**COURSE PROJECTS – A Brief Look at Our Semester Plans\***

<b>Project #1: Education Memoir</b> 1 <sup>st</sup> Drafts due – Fri, Feb. 14 <sup>th</sup> and Mon, Feb. 17 <sup>th</sup> Pre-portfolio draft due – Wednesday, Feb. 19 <sup>th</sup>	<b>Project #2: Evaluating Media/Advertising</b> Draft due – Wednesday, March 5 <sup>th</sup> Pre-portfolio draft due – Friday, March 7 <sup>th</sup>
<b>Project #3: Investigating URI</b> Draft due – Monday, March 31 <sup>st</sup> Pre-portfolio draft due – Wednesday, April 2 <sup>nd</sup>	<b>Project #4: Critical Analysis (<i>Your Interests</i>)</b> Proposal due – Wednesday, April 9 <sup>th</sup> 1 <sup>st</sup> Drafts due – Wed, Apr. 16 <sup>th</sup> and Fri, Apr. 18 <sup>th</sup> Pre-portfolio draft due – Monday, April 21 <sup>st</sup>
<b>WRT 104 FINAL Assignment: The Portfolio</b> <b>DUE: By noon on Tuesday, May 6<sup>th</sup>, 2014</b> (see below)	

\*This calendar outline is subject to slight changes as the semester unfolds. Changes will *always* be announced in class and be posted on our WRT 104 course wiki site.

**Final Exam:** Your final exam in this course will be the electronic submission of a final portfolio due at 12:00 NOON exactly one week from the last day of classes. For Spring 2014, the last day of classes is Tuesday, April 29 meaning that your final portfolio will be due as an electronic submission by **12:00 NOON on Tuesday, May 6<sup>th</sup>**. Portfolios can be submitted early, however this is a hard deadline and no exceptions can be made.

**Final Grade Distribution:**

Project #1: Education Memoir	= 10 pts (10% of final grade)
Project #2: Evaluating Media/Advertising	= 10 pts (10% of final grade)
Project #3: Investigative Reporting @ URI	= 15 pts (15% of final grade)
Project #4: Critical Analysis	= 20 pts (20% of final grade)
Attendance, homework, participation	= 15 pts (15% of final grade)
Final Portfolio	= 30 pts (30% of final grade)
<b>TOTAL:</b>	<b>= 100 pts (100%)</b>

**University of Rhode Island Grading Scale:**

<b>A</b> 93	<b>B-</b> 80	<b>D+</b> 68
<b>A-</b> 90	<b>C+</b> 78	<b>D</b> 63
<b>B+</b> 88	<b>C</b> 73	<b>F</b> 59
<b>B</b> 83	<b>C-</b> 70	