

# WTG200

## Advanced Academic Writing:

### Ethics at work

#### Fall 2016

##### *I. COURSE INFORMATION*

Instructor:	Dr Chris Dawson
Instructor's Email:	cdawson@fus.edu
Office Hours:	Mon 13.00 - 17.00
Class location:	Main Villa Classroom 1, Kaletsch Campus
Class meeting times:	Mon / Thurs 10.00 – 11.15

##### *II. COURSE DESCRIPTION*

This core-curriculum advanced writing course consolidates students' academic communication skills through the theme of business and work ethics. Students will engage with philosophical texts and case studies dealing with various aspects of business and/or work ethics – distributive justice, social responsibility and environmentally conscious business practices among others – in order to improve critical reading, argumentative writing, and oral presentation/debating skills. The course helps students understand that academic communication primarily involves entering a conversation with others and particular emphasis will be placed on responding to other people's arguments as well as developing their own arguments based on those responses. Using the broad theme of business and work ethics as a medium for discussion, students will not only explore what it means to join an academic community and their role in that community as purveyors of knowledge but also work on editing text to produce high-quality writing in collaboration with others. (This writing-intensive course counts towards the Academic Writing requirements.)

### **III. RATIONALE**

This course is intended to perfect students' academic writing skills. It may be taken after completing WTG 100 or on the recommendation of advisors or professors. It is recommended for students who aim to ensure their academic writing is of a very high standard.

### **IV. COURSE GOALS**

The course aims to provide realistic practice in writing in an academic context to maximum effect.

### **V. SPECIFIC LEARNING OUTCOMES**

- Identify a research question which primarily addresses a current question in the literature and also draws on your own knowledge, skills and interests
- Write a tightly constructed chapter of a larger book in collaboration and consultation with the other authors
- Learn to edit texts for content, acknowledgements, factual accuracy, clarity, elegance, precision, and language mechanics
- Work in a team with shifting power structures and responsibilities to achieve a complex goal in a limited time
- Present information and arguments in a way that is clear, thorough, and engaging, making use of clearly presented and explained graphs and other visuals as necessary
- Learn to quickly assess complex texts, and develop the ability to find the key arguments and distinguish how each paragraph fits with the point being made
- Engage closely and critically with complex arguments, identifying how they fit with other views and where tensions arise.

### **VI. REQUIRED TEXTS AND MATERIALS**

There are two books to be purchased for this course.

The first is one of the ten books listed below, but before buying it you need to agree with the other participants in the course because each of us is going to work with a different book.

The other book to be purchased for this course is not a textbook, and it will be bought at the end of the semester rather than the beginning. It will be the book written by the students themselves and made available for purchase online.

Anderson, Elizabeth *Private Government* 2017

Bregman, Rutger *Utopia for Realists* 2014

Conniff Allende, Sam *Be More Pirate* 2018

Dalio, Ray *Principles* 2017

Laloux, Frédéric *Reinventing Organisations* 2014

McAskill, William *Doing Good Better* 2015

Raworth, Kate *Doughnut Economics* 2017

Sandel, Michael J. *What Money Can't Buy* 2012

Sinek, Simon *Leaders Eat Last* 2017

Srinivasan, Bhu *America, Inc.* 2018



## **VII. ASSESSMENT OVERVIEW**

Quality of finished chapter	25%
Sub-tasks, presentation, spoken essay	25%
Editing and co-writing	25%
Participation, online discussion and debating	25%

## **VIII. ASSESSMENT DETAILS**

The finished chapter will be assessed on the quality of writing (clarity, elegance, perfection of editing for grammar, word choice etc.), on engagement with the literature (identification and engagement with key texts, analysis of arguments, defense of final position), and on how effectively it fulfills its role in the finished book.

Sub-tasks will include finding and analyzing sources, drafting the chapter, and written responses to the other tasks, as well as an analytical presentation about a text and a spoken essay on the topic of the chapter.

You will edit others' work, and will be involved in working together on writing an introduction and conclusion to the book. These tasks will be graded in part individually (where your contribution can be clearly traced) and partly conjointly.

Many of the classes will be run as business meetings, in which you will learn to participate effectively. In place of the final exam, a round table discussion will be held in which the positions taken up in each of the chapters of the book will be explained, defended, and applied to identify contemporary ethical priorities in business. There will also be an ongoing discussion online. These parts of the class will be graded on the basis of your ability to engage effectively in both business practice and academic debate, using appropriate contribution strategies.

## **IX. GRADING POLICIES AND EXPECTATIONS**

A grade of A on any part of this course indicates writing that is technically flawless, crystal clear and a joy to read.

The B range indicates very good writing that falls short to some extent in terms of editing perfection, clarity of ideas and expression, or connection with the reader.

The C range indicates writing that, with further editorial work, could still be made into very good text: significant work remains to be done to achieve that standard, however.

The D range indicates writing that cannot be considered as high quality, and which would need considerable re-writing, perhaps involving more extensive research or clearer thinking and analysis, before it could match the standard required to publish it alongside other texts.

## ***X. HOW TO DO WELL IN THIS COURSE***

To do well you will need an open mind and enthusiasm for working together with others to wrestle with difficult issues. You will need to take pride in producing a worthwhile contribution to clarifying and/or resolving those issues.

It will often be necessary to make commitments to your fellow students (not only to the professor) to produce various materials to schedule: it is vitally important that you respect all the commitments you make and either succeed in achieving what you take on or provide some effective way of dealing with the consequences of your failing to achieve it.

## ***XI. ACADEMIC INTEGRITY***

All facts, views and expressions referred to must be fully credited to their originators. It is a very serious offence to publish something in your name that makes clandestine use of others' work in any way. You will have the opportunity to decide collectively which citation conventions you prefer to use in the book you are going to create; but everything must always be fully cited.

## ***XII. COURSE SCHEDULE***

### **Week 1 (Jan 21 & 24)**

The contemporary debate.

Input: popular talks on business ethics

Task: choosing a book to work with

### **Week 2 (Jan 28 & 31)**

Identifying research topics and starting research

Input: an introduction to ethical theory

Task: summary of the range of possible positions, and who holds them

**Week 3 (Feb 4 & 7)**

Engaging with the literature

Input: sample presentation

Task: close analysis of chosen book

**Week 4 (Feb 11 & 14)**

Broadening the research and finding other voices

Input: connecting ideas

Task: first presentations of the books; research proposal for chapter

**Week 5 (Feb 18 & 21)**

Research into depth; setting key texts against each other

Input: planning and sequencing

Task: more presentations; detailed chapter outline with statement of initial working thesis

**Week 6 (Feb 25 & 28)**

Starting to write

Input: ethics and rhetoric

Task: first attempt at chapter

**Week 7 (Mar 4 & 7)**

Completing first draft chapters

Input: common writing problems and how to get past them

Task: full text completed

**Academic travel**

**Week 8 (Mar 25 & 28)**

Content edit

Input: public speaking and published writing

Task: report on repetitions and inconsistencies in the arguments of the whole book

**Week 9 (Apr 1 & 4)**

Factual and acknowledgement edit

Spoken essays

Task: detailed report on references and evidence in 2 others' chapters

**Week 10 (Apr 8 & 11)**

Copy editing

Input: the editorial process

Task: rewriting and finalising text

**Week 11 (Apr 15 & 18)**

Pulling the book together

Input: co-writing an introductory chapter

Task: detailed and exhaustive copy-edit of another chapter

**Week 12 (Apr 25)**

Reading and revising the complete text

Task: collaborative writing of introduction and conclusion

**Week 13 (Apr 29 & May 2)**

Setting and printing the book

Input: back to the themes from the contemporary books

Task: get the book made, prepare for discussion

Final exam May 13<sup>th</sup> at 08.30 will consist of an assessed round-table discussion.

### ***XIII. EXAMPLES OF POTENTIAL CHAPTER TOPICS***

Capitalism, socialism and other alternatives

Sustainability and ecological concerns

Corporations and individuals: identity, responsibility and accountability

Corporate social responsibility (CSR)

Stakeholder theory

Corporate and national economies

Radical ethical positions in business: postmodern, feminist, animal rights etc

Decision making, game theory and microeconomic agency

Trade unions, globalization, outsourcing and workers' rights in different regions

Consumer power, boycotting and social media

Corruption in business and politics

Insider dealing, competition, regulation and cronyism

Ethical global business networks including suppliers, investors and consumers