

# WRA 110-018: WRITING: SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY

**Course Section:** 018 (Fall 2015)  
**Class Location:** 217 Bessey Hall  
**Class Meeting Times:** Tuesdays and Thursdays, 5:00pm – 6:50pm

**Instructor:** Phil Bratta  
**Email:** [brattaph@msu.edu](mailto:brattaph@msu.edu) or [philbratta@gmail.com](mailto:philbratta@gmail.com)  
**Office Hours:** Tuesdays, 3:00 – 4:30 or by appointment  
**Office Location:** 267 Bessey Hall

Open adds end (8:00pm): September 9, 2015  
Last day to drop with refund (8:00pm): September 28, 2015  
Last day to drop with no grade reported (8:00pm): October 21, 2015

## Course Materials

### Readings

Lowe, Charlie and Zemliansky, Pavel. (Eds.). *Writing Spaces: Readings on Writing Vol. 1 & 2* (both free and open access)

<http://wac.colostate.edu/books/writingspaces1/>

<http://wac.colostate.edu/books/writingspaces2/>

Krause, Steve. *The Process of Research Writing* <http://www.stevendkrause.com/tprw/> (free and open access)

Additional readings will be made available in d2l (Desire 2 Learn), our course management environment. These articles will always be in PDF format, so you will need Adobe Reader on your computer or electronic device. I also highly recommend printing these articles out, hence other materials for the course may include printer toner cartridges and printer paper, as well as some of your time and planning. Printing services are also available in the library: <https://www.lib.msu.edu/howto/copycenter/#laser>

### Other Materials

- Subscription to Eli Review: [www.elireview.com](http://www.elireview.com). Our course code is: glider384entice  
Eli is a software service that you access online through your web browser. Eli will be used for writing activities and peer review and responses. We will set up our accounts on the first day.
- Internet Access
- Microsoft Office and Adobe Reader

## Course Description

WRA 110 is a Tier I Writing intensive course designed for the practices of inquiry, discovery, and communication. These practices engage critical thinking, research, and meaningful reflection. In this course, we will think about, examine, discuss, and practice rhetoric: the study and use of language, persuasion, and making meanings. This course also has us think about various writing contexts, rhetorical decisions, and five crucial moves: revision + arrangement + invention + delivery + style. The course encourages you to investigate the relationship between writing and knowledge, and to discover how writing can create, rather than merely transmit, knowledge and meaning for audience(s). Finally, this course focuses on having you conduct academic research and learn about literacies and literacy practices in discipline(s) and profession(s).

WRA 110 is housed in the Department of Writing, Rhetoric and American Cultures. The department has themed the course “Science & Technology.” We will approach this theme broadly, focusing more on the latter part (Technology) than the former part (Science). We will also approach “Technology” broadly, thinking about both non-digital and digital technologies. And we will also equally think about “Culture.”

What should you expect to do throughout this semester? Lots of writing, rewriting, revising, reading, thinking, arguing, ordering, disordering, interpreting, analyzing, summarizing, inquiring, discovering, communicating, “succeeding,” and “failing.” We will be doing these things together.

## Course Methods

I will use various methods of instruction and facilitation, including class or small-group discussion, peer review, one-on-one and paired conferences, lectures, workshops, experimental activities, practice exercises, quizzes, audio-visual resources, and others. Also, I will often use email messages to communicate updates with the schedule, reiterate and clarify ideas from class when needed, and other reasons. Hence, you should stay on top of checking your MSU email account and reading received emails from me.

## Assignments & Grading

This course requires that you produce a significant amount of writing to fulfill your Tier I requirement. **You must complete all assignments to receive a passing grade in this course.**

All assignments, unless otherwise noted, will be submitted via d2l dropbox as a Word document (not a PDF, RTF, Pages, etc.). Please come see me if this is an issue for you.

### Project One: Lived Experience (125 points total)

This project has four components: proposal (5 points), complete draft (40 points), final essay (40 points), and reflection essay (40 points). This project asks you to reflect upon an experience or situation with a technology that changed the way you engage and view the world and what that experience meant/means to you. You will make a claim/argument and use experiential evidence to support it. More details will be made available through the project’s guidelines that I will provide in class.

Proposal: 400-600 words in length (about 1-2 double-spaced pages)	Due Wednesday, September 9 by 11:59 pm (d2l dropbox)
Complete Draft: 1000-1200 words in length (about 3-4 double-spaced pages)	Due Monday, September 14 by 11:59 pm (d2l dropbox)
Final Essay: 1000-1200 words in length (about 3-4 double-spaced pages)	Due Friday, September 18 by 11:59 pm (d2l dropbox)
Reflection Essay: 400-600 words in length (about 1-2 double-spaced pages)	Due Friday, September 25 by 11:59 pm (d2l dropbox)

### Project Two: Cultural/Technological Artifact Analysis (125 points total)

This project has three components: proposal (15 points), complete draft (35 points), and final essay (75 points). This project builds from Project One by considering and writing about a technology in relation to culture. The project will require a deep, *critical* analysis of the technological artifact and how it functions with cultural paradigms and values as well as continues (or not) those cultural paradigms and values. More details will be made available through the project’s guidelines that I will provide in class.

Proposal: 400-600 words in length (about 1-2 double-spaced pages)	Due at individual conference meeting
Complete Draft: 1000-1500 words in length (about 3-5 double-spaced pages)	Due Monday, October 12 by 11:59 pm (Eli Review)
Final Essay: 1000-1500 words in length (about 3-5 double-spaced pages)	Due Friday, October 16 by 11:59 pm (d2l dropbox)

**Project Three: Multimodal Remix (125 points total)**

This project has two components: multimodal remix deliverable (25 points) and reflection essay (100 points). This project will require you to create a multimodal text of an idea(s) from either Project One or Project Two. What you create should include at least two other modes of communicating ideas: alphabetic text, video clips, images, audio, music, and possibly a variety of texts (Web-based and otherwise). The Reflection Essay will address how you engaged with making decisions, the making process, and learning. More details will be made available through the project's guidelines that I will provide in class.

Multimodal Remix: Video (2-3 minutes long), audio, song, website, storyboard, visual map, among others	Due Friday, October 30 by 11:59 pm (TBD)
Reflection Essay: 1000-1200 words in length (about 3-4 double-spaced pages)	Due Wednesday, November 4 by 11:59 pm via (d2l dropbox)

**Project Four: Disciplinary Literacies (175 points total)**

This project has three components: interview document (25 points), complete draft (50 points), and final essay (100 points). This project is where you will practice academic research—finding academic articles, critically reading them, analyzing the language used, synthesizing information and knowledge, etc. What you will research is a technology in your discipline or desired profession. In addition to interviewing someone in the discipline and/or profession, you will need to locate reliable sources (both scholarly and non-academic) and use them correctly and effectively in your essay. More details will be made available through the project's guidelines that I will provide.

Interview document: 400-600 words in length (about 1-2 double-spaced pages)	Due Wednesday, November 25 by 11:59 pm (d2l dropbox)
Complete Draft: 1500-2000 words in length (about 5-7 double-spaced pages)	Due Friday, December 4 by 11:59 pm (Eli Review)
Final Essay: 1500-2000 words in length (about 5-7 double-spaced pages)	Due Friday, December 18 by 11:59 pm (d2l dropbox)

**Mode of Submission**

Unless otherwise noted, all components of projects will be submitted through d2l dropbox. Emailed submissions will NOT be accepted except for the Multimodal Remix if needed. When you submit assignment files, name the files this way:

Your last name\_AssignmentName  
 Example: Smith\_LivedExperience

All essays must be in 11- or 12-point Times New Roman, Garamond or Cambria font and double-spaced. Your name and page number should be in the top right header of each page. Your final drafts should be polished and presented in a professional manner.

**Graded Materials**

You are responsible for maintaining duplicate copies of all work submitted in this course and retaining all returned, graded work until the semester is over. Should the need arise for a re-submission of essays or a review of graded essays, it is your responsibility to have and to make available this material.

**Major Assignments (550 points)**

Project One: Lived Experience	125 points
Project Two: Cultural Artifact	125 points
Project Three: Remix	125 points
Project Four: Disciplinary Literacies	175 points

**Other (250 points)**

Quizzes, Activities, Conferences, and Participation	150 points
Peer Reviews completed in Eli Review system	100 points

95-100%: 4.0	756-800 points
90-94%: 3.5	716-755 points
80-89%: 3.0	636-715 points
75-79%: 2.5	596-635 points
70-74%: 2.0	556-595 points
65-69%: 1.5	516-555 points
60-64%: 1.0	476-515 points
0-59%: 0.0	0-475 points

**NOTE:** Grading for this course will be rigorous. I highly recommend you begin the assignments early and visit The Writing Center with your drafts. The WC main hub is located at 300 Bessey Hall. More information is available at [writing.msu.edu](http://writing.msu.edu)

Students who receive a grade below 2.0 must retake a 100-level WRA course

What does a “4.0” represent? Can you earn a “3.0” by simply going through the motions and meeting the minimum requirements of the assignments? Here is a general description and logic of what the points will mean for this course:

A “4.0” is awarded for truly outstanding or superior work. A 4.0 document means that the submitted version of the document presents a well-developed, well-supported claim or argument or reflection. These documents are free of major errors and would require only minor revisions, at most, to be acceptable as exemplary models. 4.0 work is also consistent at the process level, both in and outside the classroom and evident in the writing and classroom participation.

A “3.0” is awarded for high quality work. 3.0 documents may have some significant element missing and would require a significant amount of revision. Often, these documents must be developed in more detail, be more carefully substantiated, or researched.

A “2.0” is average and awarded for adequate work that meets minimal requirements but not much more. These documents have serious problems, sections missing, or inaccurate information. They don’t have a deep, critical approach to the focus and they reflect poorly on the author’s efforts on the whole.

A “1.0” is awarded for substandard work or work with significant flaws. Documents below a 2.0 are typically incomplete and without much effort shown with what is complete. They mostly do not follow the assignment guidelines.

A “0.0” is awarded for completely unacceptable work or not following the assignment guidelines. Missing work is also assigned a 0.0.

**Plagiarism**

**Important Tip:** You should never copy and paste something from the Internet without providing the exact location from which it came. Plagiarism can occur even without any intention to deceive if you fail to know and employ proper documentation techniques. No excuses will be accepted.

If you plagiarize all or any part of any assignment, you will be awarded a failing grade on the assignment and may fail the entire course. Additionally, University policy suggests that, as a MINIMUM, instructors should impose a course grade penalty and report any incident of academic dishonesty to the Office of the Dean of Students. Your work may be tested for its originality against a wide variety of databases by anti-plagiarism sites to which the University subscribes, and negative reports from such sites may constitute PROOF of plagiarism. Other forms of academic dishonesty will also result in a failing grade on the assignment as a minimum penalty. Examples include cheating on a quiz or citing phony sources or quotations to include in your assignments. Bottom line: write original material for the course, cite appropriately, and don't take shortcuts. If you are struggling and feeling desperate, please email or come talk to me before due dates of assignments.

Unless otherwise indicated by me for class group work, all work must be your own. Nothing written for another course will be accepted.

## Academic Honesty

Michigan State University has adopted the following statement about academic policy:

### General Student Regulations

• **1.00 Protection of Scholarship and Grades:** The principles of truth and honesty are fundamental to the educational process and the academic integrity of the University; therefore, no student shall:

- **1.01** claim or submit the academic work of another as one's own.
- **1.02** procure, provide, accept or use any materials containing questions or answers to any examination or assignment without proper authorization.
- **1.03** complete or attempt to complete any assignment or examination for another individual without proper authorization.
- **1.04** allow any examination or assignment to be completed for oneself, in part or in total, by another without proper authorization.
- **1.05** alter, tamper with, appropriate, destroy or otherwise interfere with the research, resources, or other academic work of another person.
- **1.06** fabricate or falsify data or results.

Procedures for responding to cases of academic honesty and possible repercussions are outlined in Spartan Life: Student Handbook and Resource Guide. They can also be found on the web at:

<http://www.msu.edu/unit/ombud/honestylinks.html>

## Attendance

WRA110 is a participation-oriented, skills-based writing course, which means that you will build your skills incrementally and systematically in each class throughout the semester. Much of the learning that takes place is spontaneous and difficult to reproduce outside of class, thus frequent absences will affect your progress and success dramatically. Writing is a process and experience-based, hence this is not a course where you can “catch up” on what happens during class if you miss. If you fall behind, you will stay behind.

With that said, attendance is also mandatory. If you miss more than **five class meetings (5:00-6:50)** during the semester, you will **fail** the entire course. The University exempts from this policy **only** those absences involving university-sponsored events, such as athletics and band, and religious holidays. With excused absences, you will need to come talk to me **before** the day of the absence. Absences for illness or family emergencies will count toward your **five** allowed absences.

Repeated tardiness will also affect your attendance. Three (3) tardies count as one (1) absence. If you arrive more than 10 minutes after class starts, you will be counted as absent, but you may stay for the class meeting. Your first three (3) absences do not affect your grade; however, for the next two absences after these first three “freebies,” you will lose fifty (50) points for each absence (maximum one-hundred points). Your sixth absence means you will fail the entire course.

Absences also affect class meeting participation, quizzes, in-class writings, and in-class peer review. Unexcused absences mean you can NOT make up points earned during the class meeting. Make-up work will be allowed only for excused absences.

## Preparation

You are expected to be prepared for every class, including completing all reading and writing assignments on time. Failure to be prepared for or to contribute to in-class activities will lower your grade. **Late assignments will not be accepted unless you talk to me prior to due dates.** Failure of technology is not an excuse. If you are anticipating: computer glitches, being the victim of street crime, bad planning, a Senate filibuster, embarrassing messages from a relative on your Facebook wall, animal attacks, hurtful comments by close friends, a disappointing credit report, making a guest appearance on TMZ, being struck by outer space junk, fear of intimacy, rural ennui, suburban malaise, urban aversion, rude tweets, trouble with your scooter accelerator or bicycle pedal, loss of hope in your audacity or vice versa, dating a Kardashian, or anything else that might interfere with your writing, **get your assignments started early!**

## Classroom Behavior

Please keep in mind that students come from diverse social backgrounds. Some of the texts and ideas we will discuss and write about engage controversial topics. Diverse student backgrounds combined with provocative texts require that you demonstrate respect for ideas and experiences that may differ from your own. Racism, sexism, homophobia, classism, or any other kinds of discrimination (whether verbal, nonverbal, etc.) will not be tolerated.

Cell phones should stay home or in your bag or pocket on silent. Laptops and other assorted electronic devices may be used in the class for taking notes, but you will be asked to leave and will receive an absence if you visit websites unrelated to the course or discussion.

## Email Correspondence

Emails are not text messages or Facebook chats. Emails should be professional and grammatically correct, with the basic components always included in every email: short and definitive subject title, proper salutation, clear and concise writing, and a closing signature. I reserve the right to not read and not respond to unprofessional or ambiguous emails.

## Office Hours

Our individual and partnered conferences during the semester will be in my office. But you are encouraged to use my office hours (listed above) if you have questions about your progress in the course, work underway, or any other course-related concerns. If my posted office hours conflict with your schedule, please contact me, after class or via email, to schedule a better time. Having conferences on assignments is frequently the best way to improve the quality of final drafts. And I am always more than willing to meet with you.

## Helpful Resources

The Writing Center  
300 Bessey Hall (Main Center. The WC also has  
numerous satellites across campus)  
517.432.3610  
writing.msu.edu

Learning Resources Center  
202 Bessey Hall  
517.355.2363  
lrc.msu.edu

The English Language Center ESL Lab  
A714 Wells Hall  
517.353.0800  
(opens after week 3)

Main Library  
100 Library  
517.353.8700  
lib.msu.edu

The Counseling Center  
207 Student Services Building  
517.355.8270  
<http://counseling.msu.edu/>

## Students with Disabilities

Accommodations for Students with Disabilities: This course is open to all students who meet the academic requirements for participation. Any student who has a need for accommodation based on the impact of a disability should contact me privately to discuss the specific situation as soon as possible. Students with disabilities should also contact the Resource Center for Persons with Disabilities in 120 Bessey Hall to establish reasonable accommodations. For an appointment with a disability specialist, call 353-9642 (voice), 355-1293 (TTY), or visit <http://MYProfile.rcpd.msu.edu>