

Advanced Writing / Connect Course Description (Updated December 2014)

English 300, Advanced Writing / Connect will use the three signature questions of UWO's University Studies Program (USP) as tools for analyzing, researching, and composing arguments about contemporary public issues:

- How do people understand and engage in community life?
- How do people understand and create a more sustainable world?
- How do people understand and bridge cultural differences?

Writing will be your primary mode of inquiry in this course. You will undertake multiple, interconnected writing tasks to critically examine issues in liberal education; and you will connect educational experiences to your future roles as a citizen and professional.

The first unit of this course will engage you in a broad discussion of the purpose of a liberal education through shared readings, class discussion, and reflective writing. We will examine historical and contemporary perspectives about the function and value of liberal education, particularly in relation to colleges and universities' efforts to promote responsible global citizenship.

The course's second unit will apply a number of perspectives to local, national, and global public issues. Through shared readings, class discussion, and analytical writing, you will compare diverse perspectives on local, national, and global issues. At this point, you also will begin your own research, assembling a multi-disciplinary annotated bibliography with a critical analysis of the way that the sources approach the issue similarly and differently.

You will compose a minimum of 6000 words during the semester, of which at least 2500 will be based on sustained analysis and researched of a significant topic or issue. Researching, writing, and revising multiple drafts of a final 1800-word researched essay will comprise the final unit of the course. This essay will explore an answer to a specific research question about a particular public issue of local, national, or global importance and make an argument for a specific perspective about the issue based on your research. These relationships will be established through your interdisciplinary investigation of the issue, which may include participant observation, interviews, and study of published popular and scholarly sources.

Learning Outcomes

To accomplish these broad goals, you will focus on:

1. **Understanding** the knowledge, skills, and attitudes central to UWO's essential learning outcomes and the University Studies Program's three signature questions.
2. **Adapting** skills, abilities, theories, or methodologies gained in one situation to new situations to solve problems or explore issues.

3. **Evaluating** the effectiveness of the signature questions as lenses for investigating topics of local, national, or global importance.
4. **Developing** a researched essay that connects and differentiates between perspectives from multiple fields of study.

The Value of Integrative Learning

English 300 will involve actively synthesizing connections between multiple written perspectives and human experiences to deepen understanding of select common issues. Writing is focused on identifying and solving problems.

To provide a common language for this central course endeavor, the following rubric will be helpful:

Integrative learning is an understanding and a disposition that a student builds across the curriculum and co-curriculum, from making simple connections among ideas and experiences to synthesizing and transferring learning to new, complex situations within and beyond the campus. (AAC&U)