

CORE 103
Written and Oral Communication-Honors

1. Catalog Entry

CORE 103
Written and Oral Communication-Honors
Three hours lecture (3).

Prerequisite: Admission to the Honors Academy

Development of students' writing and speaking skills with emphasis on logic and information literacy. Students will form and support claims, attending to the assumptions underlying arguments. The course will introduce students to elements of logic, including fallacies and inductive reasoning, and their use in persuasive written and oral communication. This course has been approved for Core Curriculum credit in University Core A.

2. Detailed Description of Content of Course

Like the primary Core A courses, this course emphasizes

- the composing process;
- the relationship between reading, thinking, writing, and speaking;
- the rhetorical principles that inform successful oral and written communication;
- key concepts in public speaking, such as appropriate language and delivery choices, articulation and non-verbal communication, through presentations and debate;
- key concepts in logic and argumentation, including inductive reasoning, stasis theory, Toulmin logic, and logical fallacies, as well as the need to support claims with evidence;
- research as inquiry, using both print and digital sources to gather information on a topic and then use that information as evidence to support an oral and written arguments;
- synthesis of source material with their own ideas;
- an ethical approach to the use of sources;
- and evaluation of the credibility, reliability and accuracy of their selected sources.

Students will also develop their critical reading skills by analyzing multiple literary or rhetorical texts as expressions of ideas and opinions about contemporary life. Students will learn to set aside their own feelings about these texts or the ideas therein, focusing instead on producing an objective, critical analysis of the texts.

3. Detailed Description of Conduct of Course

The course focuses on skills, strategies, and processes rather than on specific subject matter. Activities are various and interactive, with emphasis on active participation by students both as individuals and in groups. When appropriate, instructors may lecture and lead discussions. Activities may also include student-led discussion of assigned reading, student-led discussion of writing in process, small-group discussion of writing in process, and public reading of writing in process, followed by discussion. Ample opportunity is provided for the composition of multiple drafts in response to peer and instructor comments. Writing includes informal writing in the form of reading and learning blogs, correspondence, and class exercises, intended to allow students to make discoveries both about the topics they write on and the nature of the writing process itself. Projects include:

- Personal essay on Self-Expression in the Digital Age – This project introduces students to the Aristotelian concept of ethos by asking students to write a paper in which they reflect on and analyze the ways they present themselves in a variety of situations both offline and online. This project opens the electronic portfolio.
- Textual Analysis Project - Honors – In this project, students will analyze the issues raised by a set of texts in relation to each other, using at least two primary texts and associated secondary texts. Students will cite their sources and include a works cited page. As a part of the project, they will prepare an oral presentation, supported by visual aids.
- Researched Argument Project - Honors – Students will write an argument paper in which they conduct research in an area of inquiry and then argue a thesis related to their topic. They will then prepare an oral presentation, supported by visual aids.

4. Goals and Objectives of the Course.

This course combines the goals and objectives of the four Core A areas, which are to be fulfilled by the entire Core A sequence:

Upon completion of University Core A, Radford University students will have achieved competency in four key concept areas: written communications, oral communication, critical thinking, and technology/information literacy.

Goal 1: Radford University students will demonstrate competency in critical reading, standard written English, audience-specific writing, clear and effective prose, and other elements of composition.

Radford University students will be able to:

- effectively use standard written English (including grammar, punctuation, spelling, and sentence structure) to construct a thesis-driven essay supported by reasonable arguments
- demonstrate the writing process through invention, organization, drafting, revision, editing, proofreading, and presentation
- choose appropriate genres and styles when writing for a variety of different audiences

- describe and evaluate critically a variety of print and other sources, synthesize and document material appropriately, and avoid plagiarism when developing a research paper

Goal 2: Radford University students will be able to communicate orally in clear and coherent language appropriate to purpose, occasion, and audience.

Radford University students will be able to:

- identify and explain components of and influences on the communication process in interpersonal, small group, and public speaking contexts

- demonstrate effective listening and critical analysis skills in interpersonal, small group, and public speaking contexts

- identify and apply communication strategies appropriate to audiences in interpersonal, small group, and public speaking contexts

- identify and demonstrate communication skills appropriate in interpersonal, small group, and public speaking contexts

Goal 3: Radford University students will learn to distinguish knowledge from opinion, challenge ideas, and develop reasonable strategies for belief formation.

Radford University students will be able to:

- apply the processes of deduction, induction, and other key elements of logical reasoning

- create a well-reasoned argument by evaluating the validity of ideas and information, providing evidence and support, and arguing against competing claims when applicable

- analyze issues, solve problems, and apply reasoning to everyday situations

- evaluate written and verbal arguments by discerning any logical fallacies, distinguishing between documented fact and opinion, examining explicit and implicit assumptions, and assessing the use of evidence to draw inferences and conclusions

Goal 4: Radford University students will be able to acquire, analyze, and synthesize digital and print information and explain how digital information is organized and communicated.

Radford University students will be able to:

- explain contemporary technological trends and issues

- utilize industry standard technologies as appropriate for academic purposes
- identify economic, societal, legal, privacy, and ethical considerations for using and sharing digital and print information
- demonstrate the use of basic research techniques to locate information from a variety of electronic and print sources
- apply appropriate modes of inquiry to evaluate digital and print information in terms of credibility, reliability, and accuracy

5. Assessment Measures

Students will produce formal and informal texts, spoken and written, which will be graded according to a set of rubrics designed with the outcomes in mind. For program assessment, a designated set of assignments will be gathered in electronic portfolios of the students' work to be assessed at the completion of the Core A sequence.

6. Other Course Information

Students' speeches will be videotaped, so that they can be uploaded to the electronic portfolio.

7. Review and Approval

Date Action Reviewed by
December, 2008