

COLONNADE PROGRAM COURSE PROPOSAL
FOUNDATIONS CATEGORY (WID)

Writing in the Disciplines

ENG 300 or approved "Writing in the Discipline" course (3 hours)

Writing in the Disciplines courses give students advanced instruction and practice in writing and reading essays within an academic discipline and make students aware of how disciplinary conventions and rhetorical situations call for different choices in language, structure, format, tone, citation, and documentation. Students conduct investigations into writing and reading conventions in their fields and receive advanced instruction in planning, drafting, arranging, revising, and editing discipline-specific essays.

Students will demonstrate the ability to:

1. Write clear and effective prose in several forms, using conventions appropriate to audience (including academic audiences), purpose, and genre.
2. Find, analyze, evaluate, and cite pertinent primary and secondary sources, including academic databases, to prepare written texts.
3. Identify, analyze, and evaluate statements, assumptions, and conclusions representing diverse points of view, and construct informed, sustained, and ethical arguments in response.
4. Plan, organize, revise, practice, edit, and proofread to improve the development and clarity of ideas.
5. Distinguish among various kinds of evidence by identifying reliable sources and valid arguments.

***NOTE:** Departments wishing to develop Writing in the Disciplines (WiD) courses are strongly encouraged to consult with the English Department in developing writing and assessment assignments that are consistent with recognized best practices in composition instruction.

Please complete the following and return electronically to colonnadeplan@wku.edu.

1. What course does the department plan to offer in *Foundations: Writing in the Disciplines*?

The Department of Geography and Geology plan to offer GEOG 300: Writing in the Geosciences in the *Foundations Writing in the Disciplines* section.

2. How will this course meet the specific learning objectives for this category? Please address **all** of the learning outcomes listed for the appropriate subcategory.

GEOG 300: Writing in the Geosciences gives students advanced instruction and practice in writing and reading essays within the geoscience discipline. Students will learn about techniques for appropriate language, structure, format, tone, citation, and documentations in the geoscience discipline. Students will also investigate writing and reading conventions in their field and will draft, revise, and edit multiple discipline-specific essays, including the various sections included in geoscience research proposals and reports, such as study areas, methodologies, literature reviews, article critiques, and discussions.

How will GEOG 300 meet each of the specific learning objectives of this colonnade requirement are discussed below.

Learning Objective 1: Students will demonstrate the ability to write clear and effective prose in several forms, using conventions appropriate to audience (including academic audiences), purpose, and genre.

In GEOG 300, students will write summaries of discipline-specific scholarly journal articles. Students will also complete article reviews to critique existing published articles in the discipline for appropriate language, structure, format, tone, citation, and documentation, as well as research quality. By completing a literature review students will learn to synthesize a significant number of sources focused on a single issue in the geosciences. Students will write abstracts to demonstrate ability to clearly and effectively summarize research in the discipline. To enhance the writing techniques needed to effectively describe a geographical area of study through the summation of existing data (i.e. demographics, geographic location, environmental conditions, etc.), students will also develop a hypothetical study area document related to a geoscience research topic. Collectively, these individual writing components will be used to complete a mock proposal for a geoscience research project. Each of these assignments are designed to have students demonstrate an understanding of how to target a specific audience and to write for a specific purpose within a genre (for example, writing a study area is very different from writing an abstract, and both are very different from writing a literature review since each serves a different purpose in the discipline).

Learning Objective 2: Students will demonstrate the ability to find, analyze, evaluate, and cite pertinent primary and secondary sources, including academic databases, to prepare written texts.

For each of the assignments and objectives in GEOG 300, students must conduct research using primary or secondary sources within the geoscience discipline, identify sources (primary and secondary), and do so using online databases and/or brick-and-mortar libraries. In-class lecture, discussions, and readings will provide instruction and feedback into how students can learn the skills needed to demonstrate successful completion of these objectives. Students will be required to use a documentation and citation style appropriate to the geoscience discipline and will receive instruction and feedback in that documentation and citation style.

Learning Objective 3: Students will demonstrate the ability to identify, analyze, and evaluate statements, assumptions, and conclusions representing diverse points of view, and construct informed, sustained, and ethical arguments in response.

Each of the assignments in GEOG 300 requires students to demonstrate the outcome required by this objective. Assignments are constructed as a series of stepping-stones that culminate in a research proposal. The individual “stepping-stones” include a literature review, methodology, study area, and abstract. Thus, to complete the research proposal, students will have assessed the current state of research in the geosciences (article reviews, literature review), found a variety of sources specific to their research topics (i.e. articles, books, etc.) (literature review, methodology, study area), identified and evaluated the arguments in these sources (article reviews), synthesized these arguments (literature review), and used them to construct an original argument (completed research proposal and abstract), supporting the argument through primary and secondary evidence, and properly documenting the resources cited in their research proposals (references).

Learning Objective 4: Students will demonstrate the ability to plan, organize, revise, practice, edit, and proofread to improve the development and clarity of ideas.

For each of the assignments in GEOG 300, students must plan, draft, and revise their writing. Students are frequently required to complete an outline of the assignment, submit drafts for peer and/or instructor feedback, revise for content improvement, and edit and proofread for final grading. Instructor feedback includes evaluation of grammar and writing styles, as well as content (the ability to summarize a source accurately; the ability to synthesize multiple sources effectively; the ability to advance an argument and discussion successfully; etc.). Most assignments will consist of multiple drafts with feedback from the instructor and/or peers. The growth of ideas and their execution from draft versions to the final completed assignment will be compared when determining grades in an effort to assess the students’ planning, proficiency in proofreading, and aptitude for addressing reviewer feedback related to essay organization, clarity, and content.

Learning Objective 5: Students will be able to distinguish among various kinds of evidence by identifying reliable sources and valid arguments.

Students must be familiar with multiple sources, and the evidence presented within, in order to complete each of the assignments in GEOG 300. For example:

1. The article reviews will require students to identify significant information (thesis, main supporting evidence, varying points of view, competing scientific theories and/or methodologies, etc.) from a single source and to distinguish that significant information from less significant details.
 2. The literature review requires students to understand, evaluate, and distinguish the kinds of evidence, and effective use of the evidence, from multiple sources, and to bring those sources into conversation with one another to make a claim about the breadth of disciplinary scholarship.
 3. The research proposal requires students to utilize the arguments of others to construct their own arguments, and then to use different kinds of evidence to support their arguments. Evidence could include datasets, original research data, interviews, artwork, letters, archival materials, diaries, and a variety of secondary sources.
3. In addition to meeting the posted learning outcomes, how does this course contribute uniquely to the *Foundations* category (i.e., why should this course be in Colonnade)? Discuss in detail.

The geoscience discipline is unique in that it includes a combination of techniques from the social and physical sciences. Thus, this course will allow students to learn the unique blend of specific researching, synthesizing, and writing techniques used in this field.

4. Syllabus statement of learning outcomes for the course. NOTE: In multi-section courses, the same statement of learning outcomes must appear on every section's syllabus.

The following items will appear in all GEOG 300 syllabi:

Course Description: This course is the foundation from which students begin to engage in learning geographic research objectives, theories, approaches, and methods. It is an examination of the broad field of geoscience as an academic discipline. This course stresses conducting geoscience research using the scientific method, ethical practices, and the generation of original research ideas. There will be aspects of physical and cultural geography, meteorology, spatial technologies, basic and applied research, and quantitative and qualitative research included in the course.

Learning Objectives: This course fulfills the Colonnade Program's requirements for the Writing in the Discipline subcategory of the Foundations Category. As part of that program, students in GEOG 300 will demonstrate the ability to:

1. Write clear and effective prose in several forms, using conventions appropriate to audience (including academic audiences), purpose, and genre.

2. Find, analyze, evaluate, and cite pertinent primary and secondary sources, including academic databases, to prepare written texts.
3. Identify, analyze, and evaluate statements, assumptions, and conclusions representing diverse points of view, and construct informed, sustained, and ethical arguments in response.
4. Plan, organize, revise, practice, edit, and proofread to improve the development and clarity of ideas.
5. Distinguish among various kinds of evidence by identifying reliable sources and valid arguments.

At the end of the GEOG 300 course, students will have gained experience developing geoscience research skills for use in cultural and physical geography, meteorology, and spatial technologies, with an emphasis on hypothesis and research question formation, sample design, documentation, and the organization of ideas and data. Students will read and write essays within the geoscience discipline with a focus on adjusting language, structure, format, tone, citation, and documentation according to disciplinary conventions and rhetorical situations. Students will gain experience in the methods of disseminating scientific ideas, results, and analysis, as well as discussing results and conclusions in both written and oral format. Additionally, students will conduct investigations into writing and reading conventions in this academic field and receive advanced instruction in planning, drafting, arranging, revising, and editing discipline-specific essays. Among other assignments, each student will produce a research proposal appropriate to his or her specific research interest in the geosciences.

5. Give a brief description of how the department will assess the course beyond student grades for the Colonnade learning objectives.

The Department of Geography and Geology will assess the effectiveness of GEOG 300 by incorporating the Colonnade Plan Learning Outcomes into our existing assessment structure.

The Department will collect samples of writing from every section of GEOG 300. These samples will be chosen randomly and all student information will be removed. Teams of Geoscience faculty will assess these essays following the measures of success in general education courses as established by the Department's Colonnade Assessment Committee:

4 = outstanding (far exceeds expectations)

3 = good (exceeds expectations)

2 = average (meets basic expectations)

1 = poor or unacceptable (falls below basic expectations)

Because of the large volume of essays that must be read, the Department will select a minimum of one target item from the Colonnade Plan Learning Outcomes to assess each year, with all five learning objectives assessed over a three-year period. For example, in

AY 2014-15, the Department will assess the item: *Identify, analyze, and evaluate statements, assumptions, and conclusions representing diverse points of view, and construct informed, sustained, and ethical arguments in response.*

Note that following best assessment practices, the Department will “unbundle” that outcome into two distinct areas of assessment:

- 1) Students will show the ability to identify, analyze, and evaluate statements, assumptions, and conclusions representing diverse points of view;
- 2) Students will show the ability to construct informed, sustained, and ethical arguments in response to those diverse points of view.

Our targets are as follows:

- 1) 80% of GEOG 300 essays will score 2 (average—meets expectations) or higher for both measurements
- 2) 20% of GEOG 300 essays will score 3 (good-exceeds expectations) or higher for both assessments.

Our plan is to go through each of the learning outcomes with the same measurements and targets. If one outcome falls short of its target, it will be marked for particular attention and the departmental committee will implement a plan to improve instruction in that area. It will be assessed again to ensure improvement.

The Department’s Colonnade Assessment Committee (previously the General Education Committee) has operated for several years, and has in place the infrastructure and training to run this assessment. This plan to assess the Colonnade Plan Learning Outcomes will build on this foundation and will serve as a comprehensive approach to evaluating the effectiveness of GEOG 300.

The Department of Geography and Geology will assess GEOG 300 with pre- and post-test assessment tools that quantify student improvement in understanding concepts related to learning objectives. Students will be given the pre-test survey during the first two weeks of the semester prior to any appreciable content learning. The post-test survey will be given in the final two weeks of the semester prior to finals week. The pre- and post-test assessment tools consist of a number of questions related to learning objectives gathered. The questions in the assessment tool will be drawn and adapted from the Geoscience Concept Inventory and the Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Database. The Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Authority, a department of the Australian national government, is the most comprehensive, validated assessment test bank specific to the environmental science discipline, and is therefore the most suitable resources for assessing the course for the aforementioned learning objectives. Both of these assessment resources contain questions validated using standard item analysis techniques (Libarkin and Anderson 2005; Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Authority, 2013).

Results from the GCI assessments will be used to evaluate whether or not student learning objectives are being achieved. Results will be used to improve content and application teaching methods in the classroom.

6. How many sections of this course will your department offer each semester?

The Department plans to offer one section of GEOG 300 each semester.

7. Please attach sample syllabus for the course. **PLEASE BE SURE THE PROPOSAL FORM AND THE SYLLABUS ARE IN THE SAME DOCUMENT.**

GEOG 300 Writing in the Geosciences
Tentative Syllabus
Fall 2014
Tuesday/Thursday 12:45-2:05 pm, EST 337

Instructor: TBA

E-mail: TBA

Office Location: TBA

Office Phone: TBA

Office Hours: TBA

Course Description: This course is the foundation upon which students begin to engage in learning geoscience research objectives, theories, approaches, and methods. It is an examination of the fields of geography, meteorology, and spatial technologies as academic disciplines. This course stresses conducting geoscience research within the scientific method, ethical practices, and the generation of original research ideas. There will be aspects of physical and cultural geography, meteorology, spatial technologies, basic and applied research, and quantitative and qualitative research.

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oral format. Additionally, students will conduct investigations into writing and reading conventions in this academic field and receive advanced instruction in planning, drafting, arranging, revising, and editing discipline-specific essays. Among other assignment, each student will produce a research proposal appropriate to his or her specific research interest in the geosciences.

Required Text: Northey, M., Knight, D., and Draper, D. 2012. Making Sense in Geography and Environmental Sciences: A Student’s Guide to Research and Writing, 5th Edn. New York: Oxford University Press.

Electronics: Except as made clear by the instructor, no electronic equipment (cell phone, iPads, Laptops, etc.) is allowed to be turned on in the classroom during the class period. If electronic equipment is used, points will be deducted from the class attendance and participation grade.

Grading: GEOG 300 is a requirement of the undergraduate geography program and, as such, is a critical component of the WKU Department of Geography and Geology undergraduate program. Therefore, expectations of students are high. The grade of ‘A’ is reserved for students who consistently produce excellent work on time, and contribute regularly and meaningfully to class discussions. Students will be evaluated in the following areas with the associated point allocations. A standard 10-point grading scale (90-100=A, 80-89=B, etc.) will be used. Instructors for each assignment will be provided in class and/or on Blackboard during the semester. Due dates will be assigned when instructions are distributed. The following point allocation applies to the assignments of this course.

Course Portfolio	100
Research Methods Activities	200
Article Reviews (2)	100
Oral Report	100
Writing Assignments (Step-Stone)	200
Final Research Proposal	200
Classroom Participation	<u>100</u>
Total:	1,000

Stepping-Stone Writing Assignments and Research Proposal: Students will first find peer-review literature related to a topic of interest and complete a series of article reviews of this literature. Students use this information and feedback provided by the instructor, to complete a literature review related to the geoscience research topic. Following, students will write a study area and methodology for proposed geoscience research through the use of various primary and secondary sources such as trusted methodologies provided in published literature. Upon completion of these elements, students will prepare an abstract, which synthesizes the entirety of the research project, and use these individual assignments to write a completed research proposal. Each of these elements to a research proposal will first be

graded (Writing Assignments), and later graded as a collective unit and counted as the Final Research Proposal grade component.

Course Portfolio: Utilizing guidelines provided by the instructor, students will develop a professional course portfolio. Your portfolio will provide an opportunity to exhibit knowledge gained in this course and will serve as a reference document for further academic pursuits. A scoring rubric will be provided that addresses how the portfolio will be evaluated.

Blackboard: The use of Blackboard is required in this course. If you have any problems, read and follow the instructions on the Blackboard main page (blackboard.wku.edu). Blackboard will be used to support class content and discussion, as well as make assignments and supplementary course readings available. Your grade will be provided through Blackboard.

Grades of Incomplete (X) will only be assigned if all but a small portion of the coursework is left incomplete by the student and the inability to complete the course is due to circumstances beyond the control of the student. An "X" is given at the instructor's discretion.

Late and Missed Assignments will be accepted at the instructors' discretion. If a late assignment is accepted, the equivalent of a full letter grade will be deducted each day. If the university cancels classes, students are expected to continue with readings and assignments as originally scheduled unless other instructions are posted by the instructor. If you miss class on a quiz day, a makeup quiz will only be given with an excused absence at the discretion of the instructor. You must inform the instructor of an absence, PRIOR to the start of class on the absence day.

Class Attendance and Active/Meaningful Participation in all class meetings and activities are mandatory for this course. Unexcused absences merit a failing grade unless an excused absence is granted PRIOR to the beginning of the class/activity.

Schedule Change Policy: The Department of Geography and Geology strictly adheres to University policies, procedures, and deadlines regarding student schedule changes. It is the sole responsibility of the student to meet all deadlines in regard to adding, dropping, or changing the status of a course. Only in exceptional cases will a deadline be waived. The Student Schedule form requires a written description of the extenuating circumstances involved and the attachment of appropriate documentation. Poor academic performance, general malaise, or undocumented general stress factors are not considered as legitimate circumstances.

Student Disability Services: In compliance with university policy, students with disabilities who require accommodations (academic adjustments and/or auxiliary aids or services) for this course must contact the Office for Student Disability Services in Downing University Center A-200. The OFSDS telephone number is (270)745-5004; TTY is (270)745-3030. Per university

policy, please DO NOT request accommodations directly from the professor or instructor without a letter of accommodation from the Office for Student Disability Services.

Academic Integrity/Plagiarism: Cheating and plagiarism of any kind will absolutely not be tolerated. WKU adheres to a strict policy against plagiarism and cheating (see Scholastic Dishonesty Code in your Handbook). Academic dishonesty of any type will not be tolerated and appropriate penalties will be faced by anyone who violates this policy. Student work may be checked using plagiarism detection software. All academic work of a student must be his/her own. One must give any author credit for source material borrowed. To lift content directly from a source without giving credit is a flagrant act. To present a borrowed passage without reference to the source after having changed a few words is also plagiarism. Other examples of academic dishonesty include, but are not allowing other students to copy your work, using work from previous semesters, and plagiarism.

The Learning Center: Should you require academic assistance with your WKU courses, The Learning Center (located in the Downing Student Union, A330) provides free supplemental education programs for all currently enrolled WKU students. TLC @ Downing Student Union and TLC @ FAC offers certified, one-on-one tutoring in over 200 subjects and eight academic skill areas by appointment or walk in. Online tutoring is offered to distance learners. TLC is also a quiet study area (with side rooms designated for peer-to-peer tutoring) and offers a thirty-two machine Dell computer lab to complete academic coursework. Additionally, TLC has four satellite locations. Each satellite location is a quiet study center and is equipped with a small computer lab. These satellite locations are located in FAC, Douglas Keen Hall, McCormack Hall, and Pearce Ford Tower. Please contact TLC @ Downing Student Union for more information or to schedule a tutoring appointment. (270) 745-6254.

TLC @ DUC

Sunday	4:00 pm – 9:00 pm
Monday – Thursday	8:00 am – 9:00 pm
Friday	8:00 am – 4:00 pm

TLC @ FAC

Monday – Tuesday	1:00 pm – 7:00 pm
Wednesday – Thurs	9:00 am – 5:00 pm
Friday	2:00 pm – 4:00 pm

TLC @ Keen

Sunday – Thursday	6:00 pm – 11:00 pm
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TLC @ McCormack

Sunday – Thursday	6:00 pm – 11:00 pm
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TLC @ PFT

Sunday – Thursday	6:00 pm – 11:00 pm
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(PFT residents and their guests only)

A detailed, weekly schedule will be provided at the beginning of the course.

Writing Center Assistance

The Writing Center has locations in Cherry Hall 123 and in the Commons at Cravens Library on the Bowling Green campus. The Glasgow Writing Center is located in room 231 on the Glasgow campus. The Writing Center also offers online consultations for students who live at a distance or who cannot visit during our operating hours. Our writing tutors have been trained to provide helpful feedback to students at all phases of a writing project: they can *help you* brainstorm ideas, structure your essay, clarify your purpose, strengthen your support, and edit for clarity and correctness. But they will not revise or edit the paper *for you*. See instructions on the website (www.wku.edu/writingcenter) for making online or face-to-face appointments. Or call (270) 745-5719 during our operating hours (also listed on our website) for help scheduling an appointment. More information about the Glasgow Writing Center hours can be found at the website: <http://www.wku.edu/glasgow/writingcenter.php>