

OLIS 607: Professional Paper Seminar
CRN# 24597, Winter 2015, 2 Credits

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Office hours: 2-4 p.m. on Wednesdays in OLIS, and by appointment

Class: Wednesdays, 12-1:20 p.m., Room 230 Lawrence Hall

Course Overview

This seminar is the first of two intended to strengthen professional writing skills through exercises, varied assignments, discussion and feedback. During winter term, students can expect to produce a wide range of written materials similar to those often undertaken by administrators, planners, analysts, project leaders, and managers in the workplace. Spring term will build on those efforts, leading to a final professional report reflecting substantive research.

Goals include:

- Refining information-gathering and writing skills.
- Demonstrating you can effectively communicate concepts, data and opinions with the academic and/or professional communities you wish to join.
- Learning more about topic(s) through rigorous research.
- Establishing credibility with your work, as well as an ability to produce materials that enable others to learn, deliberate and act.
- Completing documents to share with OLIS faculty, your peers and, perhaps, potential employers or graduate programs.

Course Website

The course website is located on the University of Oregon's Blackboard system [<https://blackboard.uoregon.edu>]. The class syllabus, announcements and other materials will be posted on the site. Assignment handouts with specific requirements will be on Blackboard. Students are responsible for monitoring the class site, meeting assignment conditions, and obtaining additional information and clarification *before* due dates.

Please make sure the University Registrar has your correct email address.

Email

I will attempt to respond to email within 36 hours during the week. However, I may take somewhat longer to respond to emails sent on Friday and over the weekend.

Course Structure & Writing Requirements

The seminar is designed informally to meet the diversity of topics and approaches characterizing OLIS projects and students. The winter class will include:

- Short lectures
- In-class writing and writing exercises
- Regular assignments
- Review of resources to improve writing
- Assessment of professional writing samples
- Dialogue and activities for momentum

While writing can be a solitary activity, we ordinarily write for an audience – and writing in the professional workplace often involves collaboration. This class operates as a seminar. Winter and spring classes will:

- a) Offer a supportive atmosphere for improving skills and testing ideas; and,
- b) Put you on a schedule to complete your final paper and the OLIS program by the end of spring quarter.

Note about spring term: The final professional report due before the end of spring term is expected to be within a range of 4,000-6,000 words. Students ideally will confirm with the instructor on the topic and format for this paper by the end of winter term.

Grading & Attendance

This winter course is graded. Class participation and in-class writing constitute 20 percent of the final grade; six writing assignments make up 80 percent of the grade. Students may miss up to one session of the class per quarter without penalty. Please consult the instructor in the event of illness or other extenuating circumstances.

If you miss a class, please arrange to obtain notes from a classmate. Instructor lecture notes may not always be available. If you are not going to be in class, please turn in any requested assignment before the specific class session.

Recommended Readings

I have ordered copies of one book through the University Bookstore. You also may be able to find it as a used book at Smith Family Bookstore.

Bullock, Richard, and Francine Weinberg, 2011. *The Little Seagull Handbook*. New York, New York, W.W. Norton & Company.

Optional Readings

Supplementary reading assignments may be posted on Blackboard. You also may wish to find additional resources in the UO Library or purchase your own copy of specific books on research and writing, such as:

Dunlap, Susan, 2007. *Undoing the Silence: Six Tools for Social Change*. Oakland, California, New Village Press.

Creswell, John, 2009. *Research Design: Qualitative, Quantitative, and Mixed Methods Approaches*. Los Angeles, Sage Publications, Inc.

Elbow, Peter, 1998. *Writing with Power: Techniques for Mastering the Writing Process*. New York, Oxford University Press.

Incomplete Policy

Students are expected to behave in a professional manner and to turn in materials at the designated time. In accordance with University of Oregon regulations, an Incomplete will only be granted when “the quality of work is satisfactory but a minor, yet essential, requirement of the course has not been completed for reasons acceptable to the instructor.” In this class, this means Incompletes will only be given for medical or personal emergencies; they will not be given because a student did not complete final assignments on time. Please plan accordingly.

Course Workload

As a general rule, the expected workload for a graduate-level class is approximately 4 hours/week per credit hour. A two-credit course will require approximately a minimum of 8 hours of effort per week, averaged over the term. Our class meets for 80 minutes each week.

Writing Lab

This is a writing-intensive course. If you struggle with writing, please consider using the services of the Writing Lab. The Writing Lab offers free writing assistance to all UO students. Tutors can help writers develop ideas, express themselves clearly, and meet the expectations of academic writing.

The Writing Lab is located in 72 PLC. Drop in or make an appointment. For more information: <http://tlc.uoregon.edu/learningservices/labs/labs.html>

In addition, the Planning, Public Policy & Management Department has a writing coach on staff – Terrie Monroe. She maintains office hours in the OLIS hour and can help you! For assistance, please consider seeing Terrie.

Academic Misconduct

You are expected at all times to do your own work. It also is the student’s obligation to clarify questions about whether an act constitutes academic misconduct. The University Student Conduct Code defines academic misconduct. You may review the code at <http://conduct.uoregon.edu>. Students are prohibited from committing or attempting to commit any act that constitutes academic misconduct.

Plagiarism

Students should properly acknowledge and document all sources of information (e.g., quotations, paraphrases, ideas). Additional information

about this common and sometimes unintentional form of academic misconduct is available at <http://library.uoregon.edu/guides/plagiarism/students/index.html>.

Students with Disabilities

If you have a documented disability and anticipate needing accommodations in this course, please see me as soon as possible. Please supply a letter from the University Counseling and Testing Center verifying your disability.

Respectful, Inclusive Environment

The School of Architecture and Allied Arts is a community that values inclusion. We are committed to equal opportunities for all faculty, staff and students to develop individually, professionally and academically, regardless of ethnicity, heritage, gender, sexual orientation, ability, socio-economic standing, cultural beliefs and traditions. We are dedicated to an environment that is inclusive and fosters awareness, understanding and respect for diversity. If you feel excluded or threatened, please contact your instructor and/or department head. The University bias Response Team also is a resource to assist you. For more information: <http://bias.uoregon.edu/index.html> or phone 541-346-2037.

Course Outline – Themes & Assignments

Note: Expect in-class writing assignment each week, with additional outside assignments as indicated below. Assignment handouts and other resources will be on Blackboard.

January 7 – Class introductions & course overview

January 14 – The routine & allegedly simple
Assignment due this week: Email communications

January 21 – Writing for outreach
Assignment due this week: Newsletter article, news release or similar

January 28 – Agendas, meeting memos & updates
Assignment due this week: None

February 4 – Feedback, audiences & bureaucracies
Assignment due this week: Agenda item summary (cover memo)

February 11 – Story-telling & other ways to create impact
Assignment due this week: None

February 18 – Expertise & credibility
Assignment due this week: Team project | Progress report

February 25 –Sustainability & your professional writing
Assignment due this week: None

March 4 – Going deeper: research & organization
Assignment due this week: Policy memo (factual report to help readers better understand an issue or action)

March 11 – Risks & rewards
Assignment due this week: None

Finals Week/March 16
Assignment due this week: Policy paper (proposal and findings to help readers solve a problem and/or make a decision)