



Academic Year 2025-2026
Syllabus
"How to Develop and Write an Academic Paper"
3 CFU
Prof. Mattia Maglione
Università degli Studi di Roma "Tor Vergata"

Course Description

This course is designed to introduce the students to academic writing and basic research essay writing. The course outlines the fundamental principles, rhetorical modes, and structures of canonical essays along with the characteristics of proper paragraphing. Throughout the contact hours, students will be able to further engage with each step of academic writing from pre-writing and outlining to principles of research methodologies and argumentative strategies. The course will challenge the students to broaden research questions, encouraging them to explore their intended thesis statement and driving research questions coherently within their academic career. Furthermore, the course will cover systems of bibliographical annotation and citation methods with a focus on APA, primarily, and MLA secondarily. Finally, the course will cover different types of academic essays, showing how to write each, using, and challenging the fixed models of essay writing to the advantage of the essay topic.

Teaching Method

The course is based on 2h/3h frontal lecture sessions. Lectures will blend essay theory and practicing and forging academic writing. Students are always encouraged to actively participate.

Assessment and final exam credit

This course carries **3 CFU**. The course is a pass/fail exam (esame di idoneità).

Credits will be assessed upon completion and passing of both the written and the oral final exam. Exam dates will be issued during the semester. Assessment and exam weight distribution:

Term Paper 50%
Final Oral Exam 50%

Term Paper

- **All students** are required to complete short research paper as part of the course. Not completing, not sending and/or not sending the paper by guidelines, will result in failing the integrity of the course.

Final Oral Exam Guidelines

- **Attending students** will be asked questions from slides and essays explained during lectures.
- **Non-attending students** will be asked essay theory questions from one of the mandatory textbooks for the course.
- **All students** regardless of attendance status can be asked questions on the methodology, sourcing and general elaboration of their written essay to further clarify the essay writing process undertaken.

Plagiarism

Plagiarism of published work is an ethical violation. In written work (including overheads or handouts used in presentations), words drawn from others should be indicated by quotation marks and ideas drawn from others should refer to their source. If you are unsure about what needs to be cited, please talk to the professor.

AI Use and Policy

- The unauthorized use of AI is considered student misconduct and results in failing the assignment.
- AI tools that report on AI generated text can be used to challenge the authenticity of submitted assignments as evidence of student misconduct.
- Exceptionally, text produced by generative AI, if included at all, is to be treated like a source and, as such, should be clearly attributed in text in accordance with the citation style chosen. The circumstances or reasons for its generation should be clearly explained and discussed with the professor ahead of assignment submission.
- Students may respond to challenges by demonstrating, in a short conversation, that they possess the knowledge, understanding, and skills evidenced in the assignment they submitted during the Final Oral Exam.

Lecture Calendar

Sept 19th

Sept 26th

Oct 3rd

Oct 10th

Oct 17th

Oct 24th

Nov 21st

Nov 28th

Dec 5th

Dec 12th

Topics

WEEK 1

- Course introduction. The academic context of the essay. What is an essay?
- The art of the essay: Basic form and historical development. Why is it important?
- Orality vs writing research.
- Power of language + words as sings.
- Research question and thesis and intro to structure.

WEEK 2

- Rules, structure, and form of the academic paragraph.
- The act of *prenwriting* and the *writing process*.
- Unity and coherence: the five body and the five body by extension.
- Ethics.

WEEK 3

- Research methods: from personal narrative to process essays and taxonomies and the ‘economics of an essay’.

WEEK 4

- Dilemma and ambivalence. Compare and contrast and cause-effect relationships.
- Addressing continuity within research.

WEEK 5

- Writing research, bibliographies, annotations styles and citation.

WEEK 6

- Argumentative strategies, editing and polishing.

WEEK 7

- Argumentative strategies, editing and polishing (continued). Re-establishing the controlling idea.
- Dissecting the essays of others.

WEEK 8, 9, 10

- Dissecting the essays of others (continued). + Annotated bibliography vs literature review.

Main objectives

Course objectives are articulated for each student to:

- Understand the principles of an academic essay in all its forms.
- Acquire the knowledge to expose and present their paper according to grammatical properness.
- Exemplify collective and individual research through practical and effective paragraphs.
- Focus on the development of logical division within a written academic text.
- Plan, pre-write and outline larger topics controversial and/ambivalent topics.
- Filter and (un)filter research bias in writing.
- Gain a clear and well-rounded knowledge of the necessary coherence of research writing.
- Understand the ethical and moral implications of research.
- Be able to focus on argumentative rhetoric.
- Be able to recognize where to polish, edit and refine writing.
- Be able to distinguish types of essays within canonical forms.
- Be able to evaluate sources.
- Consider the relationship within pieces of scholarship and reporting them into an essay.
- Write an annotated bibliography.
- Write a complete academic paper.

Note: The syllabus can be subject to variation during the progression of the semester.

Required and Suggested Textbooks and Materials (Books in *italics* are required for the course)

Book Title	Author	Publisher	ISBN number
<i>They Say, I Say</i>	<i>Gerald Graff, Cathy Birkenstein</i>	WW Norton	978-0393631678
<i>Writing Academic English</i>	<i>Ann Hogue, Oshima A.</i>	Longman/Pearson	0131523597
Models for Writers	Alfred Rosa, Paul Eschholz	Bedford	978-0312552015

The Pleasure of Finding Things Out	Richard Feynman	Perseus	0-7382-0108-1
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*Editions may be subject to change over time, for the purpose of this course please refer to the most recent editions of each book.

All further readings will be supplied by the professor during the course.

Office hours

Students can interact with the professor after each lecture. For extended meetings students must contact the professor by email to arrange an appointment: mattia.maglione@johncabot.edu or mattia.maglione@uniroma2.eu

NOTE: If you are an **Erasmus or a non-Global Governance student** who would like to attend one or more courses in the Global Governance programme, please be aware that, **before enrolling in the course**, you should have read the code of conduct and the procedural rules characterizing our programme. We assume that, if you enrol in the course, **you have read and accepted all Global Governance values and rules**. Notice that attendance is expected from the very first lesson and you need to attend at least 80% of the course to be considered an attending student.

Description of the methods and criteria for testing learning

The examination assesses the student's overall preparation, ability to integrate the knowledge of the different parts of the program, consequentiality of reasoning, analytical ability and clarity of presentation, in accordance with the Dublin descriptors (1. knowledge and understanding; 2. applying knowledge and understanding; 3. making judgements; 4. learning skills; 5. communication skills).

The examination will be graded according to the following criteria:

Unsuitable: important deficiencies and/or inaccuracies in the knowledge and understanding of the topics; the topics are exposed in an incoherent manner and with inappropriate language.

18-20: barely sufficient knowledge and understanding of most of the topics, with some missing items; sufficient capacity for analysis; the topics are sometimes exposed in an inconsistent manner and with inappropriate/technical language;

21-23: basic knowledge and understanding of most of the topics; ability to analyze and synthesize correctly with sufficiently coherent logical argumentation, with possibly some inaccuracy in the technical language.

24-26: good knowledge and understanding of most of the topics; good analytical and synthetic skills with rigorously expressed arguments, though with possibly a few inaccuracies in the technical language.

27-29: complete knowledge and understanding of the topics; good capacity for analysis and synthesis. Arguments presented in a rigorous manner and with appropriate/technical language, with only minor inaccuracies.

30-30L: very good level of knowledge and thorough understanding of topics. Excellent analytical and synthetic skills and independent judgement. Arguments expressed in an original manner and in appropriate technical language.