

(Office Hours: TTH 10:00-11:00 AM On Zoom)

Syllabus for EWRT D002.60Z: Critical Reading, Writing, and Thinking (Fall 2023)

(5 units): CRN# 27274

- Instructor: Charles Gray
- Instruction: online (asynchronous)
- Instruction dates: 09/25/2023-12/15/2023
- Office: Zoom
- email: charlesleonardgray@gmail.com
- Office Hours: TTh 10:00-11:00 AM on Zoom

Important Dates:

- Last Day for Adds 10/08/2023
- Census Date 10/09/2023
- Last Day for Drops w/ Refund 10/08/2023
- Last Day for Drops w/o W 10/08/2023
- Last Day for Drops 11/17/2023

Required Texts and Materials

- There are no required textbook purchases; all required reading material will appear on our course website.
- I strongly recommend that each student acquire a bound (blank) composition book (9.75" X 7.50") for keeping a learning journal according to a process I will describe on the class website.

Course Description (time requirements)

- A conventional 5-unit course would entail 60 in-class hours and 120 out-of-class

hours equalling 180 total hours.

- I reckon that students taking the course in this format should engage with course

materials 10 hours per week to keep up with the required course work.

Course Description (content)

- In this course we will be developing our skills in critical thinking, reading, and writing. To me that means learning how to identify truths (or untruths) that are expressed to us in texts and other media as well as refining our skills in writing such truths as we can discover.
- In pursuing of these goals we will be reading and writing about works by Plato, Bertrand Russell, Rene Descartes and others who have contributed mightily over the centuries to the pursuit and expression of such truths as are available to us. We will also be reading narratives by Jorge Luis Borges and others featuring philosophical content in operation in worlds recognizably similar to our own.
- My aim is to help you develop a powerful vocabulary for conceptual analysis that will

- contribute to improved critical reading and writing skills that will serve you well in all of your other academic endeavors.
- All of the texts we will be working with together will be on our Canvas website or online.
- The Plato and Descartes texts we are using are English translations of Ancient Greek and modern French respectively. These works are very famous, and many translations exist for them. You are welcome to study with translations in whatever language you wish, but all references in your assignments must be to English translations.
- I will be using the following translations in my lesson preparations. They are not available online as far as I know, but they can be purchased very inexpensively, and I recommend that you do so:
 - Plato, *Theaetetus*. Translated by M.J. Levitt (0-87220-158-9).
 - Descartes, *Meditations on First Philosophy*. Translated by Donald A. Cress (0-87220-420-0).
- Additionally, you will need one or more blank bound composition books 9.75" X 7.50" for journal writing.

Student Learning Outcomes

- EWRT2_SLO_1 Apply critical thinking skills to writing and complex readings.
- EWRT2_SLO_2 Demonstrate academic (analytical, argumentative) writing based on reading of complex texts.

- EWRT2_SLO_3 Demonstrate analysis, comparison, synthesis, and documentation of independent research.

Course Grade

The grade in this course will be a letter grade with +/- . That grade will be mostly determined by a percentage of the total course points earned by the student. The

percentage will be converted to a letter grade. I will average the grades of the writing assignments and other activities during the term. That percentage will be the main criterion for the final grade, but I may adjust it for non-objective factors such as participation on discussion boards or patterns of improvement.

There will be **six** 2-page essays (20 points) responding to class readings and **three** 4-5 page MLA-style essays (100 points) due in the course of the term. There will be some kind of written self-evaluation due at the end of the term. The weight of that evaluation will be determined during the term and stated clearly before it becomes due.

Here are the approximate values: 60-F, 61-D-, 62-D-, 63-D, 64-D, 65-D, 66-D+,
67-D+, 68-D+, 69-D+, 70-C-, 71-C-, 72-C-, 73-C, 74-C, 75-C, 76-C+, 77-C+,
78-C+, 79-C+, 80-B-, 81-B-, 82-B-, 83-B, 84-B, 85-B, 86-B+, 87-B+, 88-B+, 89-

B+, 90-A-, 91-A-, 92-A-, 93-A, 94-A, 95-A, 96-A+, 97-A+, 98-A+, 99-A+,
100-A+

Basic Rules for Everyone (These are always in force.)

- 1) All course work must be turned in to the Canvas website unless otherwise instructed.
- 2) All assignments must be turned in on time! Do not fool with this! The Canvas time stamp will be the final arbiter of lateness. Since life sometimes presents us with unexpected challenges, work can be turned in up to seven (7) days late, but 10 percent of the total possible points for the assignment **may** be deducted starting at one minute late, so be very careful. No excuses will help you here, and no exceptions will be recognized, so please do not waste your time (and mine) explaining to me why your work is late. Simply submit it as soon as possible and prepare for the possible consequences.
- 3) There are no extra credit assignments though I may add small assignments (such as quizzes or short essays) to the course point total in the course of the semester.
- 4) No incomplete grades will be awarded, so be aware of the final drop date with “W.” After that date, you must be given a letter grade.

Academic Integrity Policy

The entirety of the college’s academic integrity policy is in force at all times in this

class. The details of that policy can be seen on the college website and in the student handbook. Specific to this class is that any work submitted containing plagiarized material **may** receive a grade of zero. I will suggest specific strategies for using the newly available AI's, and they will appear on our class website.

Help for Students

Need help? Student Success Center peer tutors can relate and are ready to help! Go to the SSC homepage and click on the yellow links for on-campus schedules and Zoom links.

- Individual Weekly or Drop-in Tutoring: Come with assignments or questions, or just drop by to see how tutoring works.
- Workshops, group tutoring and group study: Most people learn better with others...give it a try!
- Support for online learning: Speak with a friendly peer tutor or SSC staff member about motivation and organization strategies for online classes.

We get

it and are going through the same things, so let's support each other!

- Need after-hours or weekend tutoring? See the Online Tutoring page for information about NetTutor (via Canvas) or Smarthinking (via MyPortal).

