

Gr. 9-10 Academic Writing: Reading and Writing Summer 2025

Instructor: Aaron Weiss

Date: Friday, July 4 to August 22, 2025

Time: Fridays 7:00 pm – 8:30 pm

Course Outline: Strong academic writing skills are essential for success in higher education and a future shaped by information, technology, and innovation. Academic writing challenges students to think critically, analyze ideas, and engage with diverse perspectives. On a broader scale, critical thinking drives progress in fields such as science, medicine, and technology, while on a personal level, it sharpens problem-solving abilities, supports career advancement, improves decision-making, fosters civic engagement, and nurtures intellectual curiosity. This course is designed to teach students *how* to think, not *what* to think, by equipping them with the tools to critically examine subjects, objects, and themes.

Note: While this is not a grammar course, students will receive feedback on grammar in their written assignments.

About the instructor: As a PhD candidate and a former university teacher and college lecturer, Aaron understands the elements and importance of academic writing. He has taught at various levels of the education system - university, college, high school, and junior high school. He has created and taught academic writing courses online. This area of study is one of his passions. While teaching at York University, he incorporated academic writing into all his courses to ensure students had the knowledge and skills to create academic works.

Learning Objectives:

- Develop writing skills aligned with the expectations of higher education.
- Strengthen critical and analytical thinking abilities.
- Understand and avoid confirmation bias in writing and reasoning.
- Build confidence in constructing well-supported arguments.
- Learn to structure and organize ideas in a clear, academic format.
- Gain a solid understanding of audience awareness and various writing styles.
- Improve clarity and precision in written communication.
- Learn proper citation practices and how to avoid plagiarism.
- Be equipped for the demands of university-level academic work.

Units include:

- Introduction to Academic Writing
- How to avoid confirmation bias
- Understanding authorial intent vs. stated authorial intent.
- Incorporating counterarguments and rebuttals
- The Argumentative Essay
- Understanding “What’s at Stake”
- Bibliography and work cited page.
- Academic vs. non-academic sources
- Different types of evidence

Assignments include:

- Crafting a high-quality, university-level argumentative essay
- Developing counterarguments and thoughtful rebuttals
- Using various forms of evidence effectively
- Integrating at least two academic sources into your writing
- Clearly articulating the significance or “what’s at stake” in your argument
- Compiling and formatting your own bibliography correctly

Grading: The assignments will be worth 80% of their final grade. The remaining 20% is based on their attendance.

Required Texts: Maus 1 by Art Spiegelman. Pantheon Graphic Library, 1993. (Not available free online): Please purchase this text wherever you prefer.