

WRITING

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wp.stolaf.edu/writingprogram/first-year-courses/

Writing is a primary means of learning in the liberal arts. Through courses in the writing program, students read, discuss, and write about significant human issues as they develop critical skills to write effectively. Courses in the writing program are designed to accommodate varying levels of preparation.

The writing program supports two OLE Core Curriculum general education requirements: Writing and Rhetoric (WRR) and Writing Across the Curriculum (WAC).

Most students take WRIT 120 Writing and Rhetoric during the fall or spring semester of their first year. WRIT 120 seminars focus on contemporary questions and issues while emphasizing writing practice to fulfill WRR. Students also may fulfill the WRR requirement by successfully completing designated courses in Asian Conversations, Environmental Conversations, Enduring Questions, Molecular Discovery, Public Affairs Conversation, Race Matters, or through advanced placement credit. Consult the director of writing or the Registrar's Office.

Students who may benefit from more extensive writing instruction and practice complete a writing-intensive First-Year Seminar before enrolling in WRIT 120 during the spring semester.

For more information about Writing and Rhetoric and Writing Across the Curriculum, see OLE Core Curriculum Requirements.

Courses

WRIT 108: Writing Studio (0.25)

Writing Studio emphasizes process and practice as students reflect on their emerging identities as thinkers, readers, and writers. The course is ideal for students seeking ongoing support in their personal and academic transition to the rigor of college-level academics by providing guidance in areas such as course attendance and engagement, completion of assignments, and reading, writing, and speaking development. Offered annually in the fall and spring semester.

Prerequisite: writing placement or permission of the instructor.

WRIT 109: Topics: Supplemental Writing (0.25)

This course provides supplemental instruction in reading, writing, and critical thinking in conjunction with a designated course. Students practice reading course-specific texts, focusing writing topics, writing essay and short answer exams, developing research habits, identifying and using discipline-specific sources, and writing for general and specific audiences. Supplemental assignments complement writing in the designated course. P/N only. May be repeated once with a different designated course.

Prerequisite: concurrent enrollment in a designated full-credit course.

WRIT 120: Writing and Rhetoric

Writing and Rhetoric courses, taught by faculty across the college, engage students in writing for multiple purposes and audiences. Each course explores a contemporary question of interest to college students. Students write in multiple genres and engage in writing as a systematic process with opportunities to respond to feedback. They learn, evaluate, and use appropriate technologies to explore, discuss, and write about course content. This course is limited to first-year students and sophomores.

WRIT 211: Topics in Writing

Blending the reading seminar and writing workshop, this course offers advanced practice in critical reading and writing with emphasis on a particular discipline or topic. Students will read and respond critically to a range of writing that may include textbook chapters, popular feature stories, and creative literature. The course emphasizes how writers make and support claims, integrate research, and narrate to communicate effectively in a variety of genres for multiple audiences. Click on course title in the class and lab for more information about the course for that term.

Prerequisite: successful completion of Writing and Rhetoric.

WRIT 237: McNair Research Writing Across the Disciplines

This course prepares McNair Scholars for the rigors of academic writing. Because the enrolled students represent a variety of disciplines, this course serves as a general introduction to writing in research; it is not meant to replace discipline-specific research methods or writing courses. Students read scholarly literature in their disciplines, write a literature review, draft various sections of a research paper, and prepare for a formal poster presentation. Offered every summer.

Prerequisite: successful completion of Writing and Rhetoric.

WRIT 294: Academic Internship

WRIT 298: Independent Study

WRIT 398: Independent Research

Faculty

Program Director, 2025-2026

Diane C. LeBlanc

Professor of Interdisciplinary Studies, Writer in Residence, and Director of Writing; Associate Dean of the First-Year Experience and Sophomore Thriving
rhetoric and composition; creative writing; gender studies

Elisabeth G. Alderks

Assistant Professor of English

Anne G. Berry

Instructor of Writing; Assistant Director of Multilingual Student Language Support
linguistics; English as a second language

Nicolette Bucciaglia

Assistant Professor of English
creative writing

Brett B. DeFries

Assistant Professor of English

Bridget Draxler

Adjunct Assistant Professor of Writing; Associate Director of Writing, Speaking, and Academic Support

Ryan Eichberger

Assistant Professor of English

Vera Foley

Visiting Assistant Professor of English

Dana Horton

Associate Professor of English and Race, Ethnicity, Gender, and Sexuality Studies

Black feminist theory, African American literature, hip hop studies, Black Atlantic studies, postcolonial literature, multiethnic literature, contemporary American literature, slave narratives, and visual rhetoric

Ashley Morse

Visiting Assistant Professor of Russian Studies

Sequoia Nagamatsu

Associate Professor of English
fiction; creative nonfiction

Nissa Parmar

Visiting Assistant Professor of English

Juliet Patterson

Associate Professor of Practice in English
creative writing; contemporary American poetics; hybrid literature; environmental literature

Jean C. Porterfield

Associate Professor of Biology
evolutionary biology; molecular ecology; gene expression analysis

Amanda Randall

Associate Professor of German
intellectual history; German film; 20th- and 21st-century German literature and cultural studies

Kaethe E. Schwehn

Associate Professor of Practice in English
creative writing

Joseph Sepulveda Ortiz

Assistant Professor of English

Jennifer Shaiman

Assistant Professor of English

Nancy Simpson-Younger

Visiting Associate Professor of English

Christina Spiker

Assistant Professor of Art and Art History

Sean Ward

Associate Professor of Practice in English
20th-century British and Anglophone literature; postcolonial studies; critical theory

Colin Wells

Professor of English
early American literature; 18th-century literature