SC 761: Second Year Writing Seminar  
Boston College  
Spring 2013

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Course Website: on Blackboard  
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From the Fall 2012 Syllabus…  
1. To continue (and register for) the class in the spring, you must be well along in your research and hand in a rough draft of your article introduction, with accompanying bibliography, by January 15.

Please refer to Fall 2012 syllabus for course description and grading standards.

Required Text  
Becker, Howard. 2007. Writing for Social Scientists: How to start and finish your thesis, book, or article (older edition will work also)

Optional Text  
Belcher, Wendy. 2009. Writing your journal article in 12 weeks: a guide to academic publishing success (This book is on reserve at the BC library. I have scanned the necessary sections, but you may want to have a look at the full book.)

Weekly Schedule, Spring 2013  
Week 1. Jan 15  
No class.

Homework #1 due by 8 a.m.:  
1. A spring semester seminar contract. Follow the general format of the fall seminar contract, including the narrative, timeline, and what you have already accomplished. Post on Blackboard.

Week 2. Jan 22  
No class

Homework #2 due by 8 a.m.:  
1. A minimum 500-word response to all of Becker's Writing for Social Scientists. In your response, make an argument about why you found Becker to be useful, not useful, or a mixed bag. Post on Blackboard.

Week 3. Jan 29  
Class meeting  
- Discuss contracts, progress on projects  
- Discuss Becker
- Discuss conference presentations

Homework #3: Not due until next week, but you should be working on it now.

Week 4. Feb 5
No class.

Homework #3 due by 8 a.m.:
1. A draft of one of the following, depending on the current state of your project
   a. An outline of how you think you will organize your entire findings section,
   b. or, if you already have a draft of your paper, your findings section,
   c. or, if you are doing quantitative work, the section discussing and interpreting your analysis,
   d. or a revised literature section (only if it has been revised since you handed it in at the end of the fall semester).
Post on Blackboard.

Week 5. Feb 12
Class meeting.
   - Discuss HW #3 and #4

Homework #4 due by 8 a.m. the day before class:
1. Feedback on your partner’s HW #3. Post to Blackboard.

Partners: Liam/Bobby; Julia/Jeff; Don/Maheen; Tom/Me.

Week 6. Feb 19
No class.

Homework #5 due by 8 a.m.:
1. Compile an editing checklist for yourself. This should include anything that you have trouble with in your writing (grammar, vague words, types of punctuation, passive voice, jargon, pretentious fluff, etc.). For example, if you have a tendency to use vague words, list as many of those words as you can think of; if you use passive voice, list as many common passive word constructions as you can; if you rely on pretentious terms, list those. This list will help you search for and fix these problems more quickly in the future.
2. Compile a similar list of writing problems for 1 classmate, based on their writing in HW #3. If HW #3 is not extensive enough for this assignment, ask your classmate to send you a writing sample.
Post both to Blackboard.

Partners: Liam/Jeff; Julia/Don; Bobby/Tom; Maheen/Me.
Week 7. Feb 26
Class meeting.
- In-class progress reports
- Discuss HW #5 and #6

Homework #6 due by 8 a.m. the day before class:
1. A revision of HW#3 taking into account the grammatical and writing problems identified by you and your partner in HW#5. Post to blackboard.

Week 8. March 12
No class.

Homework #7 due by 8 a.m.:
1. A draft of one of the following, depending on the current state of your project
   a. Your analysis section, if you only submitted an outline for HW#3,
   b. Or, a draft of your literature section. Keep in mind that this section should process the past work on your topic, not just review it. In other words, it should make an argument about what has been done, how you add to this work, and why that matters. See the Belcher readings on “relating to the lit” and “making an argument” for guidance.
   Post to Blackboard.

Week 9. March 19
Class meeting.
- In-class progress reports
- Discuss HW #7 and #8

Homework #8 due by 8 a.m. the day before class:
1. Feedback on your partner’s HW #7. Post to Blackboard.

Partners: Liam/Maheen; Bobby/Jeff; Julia/Tom; Don/Me.

Week 10. March 26
No class.

Homework #9 due by 8 a.m.:
1. PDF of a scholarly article that has a “hook” (an engaging opening) you find compelling.
2. A hook for your own project.
3. A revised version of the introduction to the paper. See the Belcher readings on “title, abstract, intro, and closing” and “making an argument” for guidance.
Post all on Blackboard.

Week 11. April 2
No class.
Week 12. April 9

Class meeting.
- In-class progress reports
- Discuss HW #9 and HW #10
- Journal Review process

Homework #10 due by 8 a.m, the day before class:
1. Edits of your partner’s “hooks” and introductions (in “tracked changes” mode). Post to Blackboard.

   Partners: Liam/Julia; Bobby/Maheen; Don/Tom; Jeff/Me.

Week 13. April 16

No class

Homework #11 due by 8 a.m.:
1. A draft conclusion to your paper. Post to Blackboard.
2. Read Reitt’s “An Academic Author’s Checklist” (on BBV) and use to revise your paper. (Some of her suggestions will not apply to you, as this was mean for people writing books.) You do not need to post your revised paper to Blackboard.

Week 14. April 23

No class

Homework #12 due by 8 a.m.:
1. Identify a journal that publishes the kind of paper you are writing.
2. Look at that journal’s submission policy online, with a particular focus on limitations on article length.
3. A report on the following:
   a. One or two paragraphs discussing why you chose that journal.
   b. One or two paragraphs on whether you anticipate any difficulties in meeting the journal’s length limitation.

   Post to Blackboard.

Week 15. April 30

Class meeting.
Class presentations.

Homework #13:
1. A maximum 10-minute presentation of your project (to present in class). You should practice the presentation beforehand to ensure that you can communicate your main points in 10 minutes. Think of this as practice for conferences and other social gatherings with colleagues.