

# ERS 2500: Communication Across Topics in Energy Systems

Spring 2016 T/Th 11:00-12:15

Energy Innovation Center Encana Auditorium (EIC 201)

**Instructors:** Bethann Merkle [bmerkle@uwyo.edu](mailto:bmerkle@uwyo.edu) & Ryan Oberhelman [ryan.oberhelman@gmail.com](mailto:ryan.oberhelman@gmail.com)

**Office:** EIC Project Room

**Office Hours:** directly after class or by appointment

## Disability Statement

If you have a physical, learning, sensory or psychological disability and require accommodations, please let us know as soon as possible. You will need to register with, and provide documentation of your disability to University Disability Support Services (UDSS) in SEO, room 330, Knight Hall.

## Course Description & Learning Outcomes:

Students will develop skills in written, oral, and digital communication as appropriate to all specializations within the School of Energy Resources, all allied disciplines, and coursework at all levels. Through repeated instruction, practice, and feedback, the communication sequence will emphasize and progressively develop transferable skills for students' academic work and future professions within Energy Resources. ERS 2500 will emphasize foundational oral and digital communication skills and continue to build on writing skills.

ERS 2500 meets the USP 2015 COM2. Students in the course will develop skills in written, oral, and digital communication as appropriate to an ERS 2000-level class. Through classroom instruction, student practice, and peer and instructor feedback, this COM2 course emphasizes and progressively develops transferable skills for students' general academic work and future professions. As a course developed for students in any major, ERS 2500 emphasizes generalist academic conventions in writing, oral, and digital communication, though it introduces academic conventions specific to the field of Energy studies.

## By the end of the course we hope that you will achieve these goals as writers:

- Understand the writing process and appreciate the importance of revision
- Develop a sense of yourself as a writer and reader
- Know how to provide constructive feedback to your peers
- Create a body of personal work

## And these goals as SER majors:

- Confidently apply written and oral communication towards a wide spectrum of needs within the study of Energy Systems/Sciences.
- Develop professionally; gain a valuable, marketable skillset that will be required for leadership in your professional future.
- Develop intellectually and deepen your critical intuition towards complex energy issues and the rhetorics that surround them.

## Required Materials:

All course texts will be posted on Wyocourses. URLs for Internet content will be posted on Wyocourses as well. Make sure to bring a writing utensil and your printed readings to class every day, as well as something to take notes on. You are welcome to bring your computer/tablet for class-related work. **ALWAYS BRING A PRINTED CURRENT DRAFT OF YOUR WRITING TO CLASS.** We will use YOUR writing every day for full-class and small-group workshop and revision. **Most importantly, bring your enthusiasm, curiosity, and good will to class every day.**

## Technology Requirements and Restrictions:

You need consistent access to a working computer and printer for this course, and in the event your computer or printer is on the blink, be prepared to use university equipment. If you wish to use e-versions of course readings, you may use personal technology in class, but do not allow yourself to be distracted by email or the Web during class time. Students whose excessive in-class use of electronic devices distracts themselves, other students, or the instructor will be asked to leave the classroom.

## Coursework:

Because thinking and writing go hand-in-hand, and because revision is an essential aspect of the writing process, most writing assignments will involve a combination of multiple drafts, peer review, and teacher feedback. Demonstrated engagement in the writing process will be a key component of how your work is graded.

### 1. Informal Writing Assignments:

Throughout the semester, you will respond to writing assignments which model writing for a wide range of disciplines and audiences (within and beyond academia). Many of these assignments will be process and/or preparation writing upon which you can build your essays, and many of these assignments will be incorporated into classroom activities. The quality of your writing, and your ability to participate in class, will indicate whether or not you have taken these informal writing assignments seriously.

### 2. Essays (70% of final grade):

You will write three major essays (12-point font, Times New Roman, 1.25 left/right margins; additional criteria will be provided in assignment prompts).

You must turn in drafts of assignments on the days they are due: failure to do so can result in a reduction in your final course grade or, in extreme circumstances, failure of the course. If you anticipate needing a deadline extension, request one a week prior to the due date.

### 3. Participation and Attendance (30% of final grade):

You are expected to show up to class having read and engaged with the material assigned. Moreover, you will be responsible for engaging in class discussion as an informed, thoughtful, and respectful classmate.

As this is a Tuesday/Thursday class, you will be allowed a maximum of two unexcused absences before additional absences severely affect your final grade.

The week prior to each essay's due date, we will have one-on-one student conferences so that you get the opportunity to speak with us about any concerns you have with your draft. These conferences are mandatory and count as your attendance and participation for that week. Showing up, on time, with a complete draft of your paper in hand will give you the best opportunity for success. An electronic version of your draft will be due at least 12 hours before your conference so we can review it before meeting with you. You will turn in an electronic copy (via WyoCourses) *and* a print copy of major assignments and full and final drafts of essays.

#### **Grade Distribution:**

Essay 1 (20%): describe an energy system  
Essay 2 (20%): analyze rhetoric of an energy issue  
Essay 3 (30%): persuasive essay re energy topic  
Participation & Informal Writing: 30%

#### **Scale:**

90-100 = A  
80-89 = B  
70-79 = C  
60-69 = D  
Under 60 = F

#### **Classroom Philosophy:**

Our classroom philosophy is short and sweet. Show up, work hard, and treat others with respect. Give a genuine effort to do your best every day, and we will reciprocate with the same. Also, have fun. We want you to smile, laugh, and feel intellectually engaged. If we aren't having a good time together, we need to reassess what we are doing. That's not to say that this course will not be a challenge. It is meant to push you and help you grow.

Also, be patient and don't be afraid to give constructive feedback to us. This is the first year that Bethann and Ryan are teaching together. Things might seem chaotic at times. Work with us, please. This course is meant to serve and enrich you. Don't hesitate to offer suggestions on how we can enhance the course to meet your needs.

#### **Attendance/Participation Policy**

Your participation in class exercises and discussion is critical to the quality of the course and the success of your fellow students. You should attend each class session prepared to actively participate in class discussions. We will keep track of attendance and your participation in class discussion. Unexcused absences are counted against your participation in the class. Reasons for anticipated absences must be cleared with an instructor before the absence. Excuses for emergency absences must be reported to an instructor as soon as possible, but not more than one week after returning to class. We will grant excused absences according to the university policy. University sponsored absences are cleared through the Office of Student Life. See the University Student Absence Policy (6-713) at

<http://www.uwyo.edu/generalcounsel/info.asp?p=3077>

## Academic Honesty

UW Regulation 6-802: The University of Wyoming is built upon a strong foundation of integrity, respect and trust. All members of the university community have a responsibility to be honest and the right to expect honesty from others. Any form of academic dishonesty is unacceptable to our community and will not be tolerated [from the UW General Bulletin]. Teachers and students should report suspected violations of standards of academic honesty to the instructor, department head, or dean. In keeping with UW's Honesty Code, ERS 2500 prohibits acts of plagiarism, which for the purpose of this course is defined as presenting the writing of others as one's own without appropriate attribution and/or citation.

Plagiarism ranges from submitting a paper written by someone else, to copying partial paragraphs or sentences without proper attribution, to duplicating sentence structures, ideas, or information from any source (books, periodicals, the Internet, or others) without proper attribution. Other University regulations can be found at:

- <http://uwadmnweb.uwyo.edu/legal/universityregulations.htm>
- <http://uwadmnweb.uwyo.edu/legal/universityregulations.htm>

## Course Schedule:

Everything in this schedule is subject to change. Be flexible. Course readings, assignments, and contents will be adjusted to your needs as we move through this together.

Week of	Tuesday	Thursday
1/26	Getting to know you/syllabus	<b>Due:</b> Bring scissors, tape/glue stick, writing you did in class re a fascinating energy system. <b>In class:</b> Descriptive Writing/Essay 1 intro; visual thinking workshop
2/2	<b>Due:</b> drawing/model of energy system + ~250 words explaining how you learned about this system. <b>In class:</b> 3-min. presentation of your visual	<b>Due:</b> Draft intro paragraph, target audience (specific individual you know) & 3 terms w/ definitions related to your system <b>In class:</b> Translating jargon/similes & metaphors; in-class writing workshop
2/9	<b>Paper conferences instead of class; conferences held in regular classroom</b> <b>Due:</b> Digital drafts of Essay 1 due via WyoCourses by Mon. 2/8 @ noon.	
2/16	In class revision	
2/23	<b>Due:</b> Essay 1 (in class & via WyoCourses); Unit 1 extra credit <b>In class:</b> Rhetoric of Energy Issues	<b>Due:</b> Summary/response to "Inside Energy" podcast <b>In class:</b> Rhetorical Analysis & Essay 2 intro, texts discussion
3/2	<b>Due:</b> 3 terms/translations <b>In class:</b> more texts discussed	<b>Due:</b> ~250w explaining text choice for Essay 2, thesis, & 3 topic sentences <b>In class:</b> Annotated Bibliography intro
3/9	Paper Conferences	Paper Conferences
3/16	In class revision	
3/23	Spring Break – no class	
3/30	<b>Due:</b> Essay 2 (in class & via WyoCourses); Unit 2 extra credit <b>In class:</b> Persuasive Writing/Essay 3 intro	<b>Due:</b> 2 terms & "translations" <b>In class:</b> Translating jargon for the public, Essay 3 topics brainstorm & outline drafting
4/6	<b>Due/In class:</b> 5-min. group presentations: term or issue translated for specific public audience; term = relevant to your topic for Essay 3	<b>Due:</b> Summary/response to one group's presentation <b>In class:</b> Discussion of group's presentations & relevance to Essay 3, in-class writing workshop
4/13	<b>Due:</b> Draft thesis statement & topic sentences for Essay 3, draft intro for Essay 3, revise outline for Essay 3 <b>In class:</b> Peer review workshop & revision	TBA
4/20	Paper Conferences	Paper Conferences
4/27	In class revision	
5/4	In class writing time	<b>Due:</b> Essay 3 (in class & via WyoCourses); Unit 3 extra credit.