

21W.015 (CI-HW) Writing about Sports

Tuesday and Thursday 12:00- 1:20
E17-136

Professor: Dr. Andreas Karatsolis

Office hours: Tuesday-Thursday 11:00 – 12:00 and by appt.

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CI-HW description

CI-HW (Communication Intensive in the Humanities, Arts, and Social Sciences–Writing Focused) subjects are a subset of CI-H (Communication Intensive in the Humanities, Arts, and Social Sciences) subjects concentrating more particularly on the writing process and the rhetorical dimensions of writing. CI-HW subjects are required for some freshmen and appropriate for all freshmen and sophomores. In CI-HW subjects the primary focus is on writing, and the reading and discussion serve the purposes of students' writing.

CI-HW subjects teach students to

- Create and shape their texts in relation to different purposes, audiences, and rhetorical situations;
- Understand the concept of genre, and learn basic genre analysis;
- Develop strategies for reading analytically, managing and structuring information, drafting, and revising;
- Evaluate sources of information, integrate sources effectively for specific rhetorical purposes, and understand reasons for and systems of source citation in academic writing;
- Understand how to critique other's texts constructively and productively and to use the peer review process to develop their own texts;
- Develop the flexibility in word-choice and sentence construction necessary for conveying complex ideas coherently and adapting prose for different discourse communities.

Catalog Description for 21W.015:

Introduces students to core rhetorical concepts and frameworks through both academic and professional (authentic) genres of sports communication. Discussions are centered around current issues in sports, such as sports education and values, youth development and athlete emotional and mental health, especially at the collegiate level. Particular emphasis is paid on the use of sources, visual rhetoric and the process of feedback and revision. Limited to 15.

The course meets the mechanical requirements for a CI-HW (at least 5,000 words of writing, typically divided among three to five assignments, with at least one assignment revised and resubmitted), as well as an assessed oral component.

Course requirements

Reading and Participation

Communication happens socially and in action; we inquire, discuss, propose and argue for claims, respond to previous claims by published writers and the other speakers in class, and continually develop and revise our positions. If we are not present to listen to the claims and reasoning presented by others, or we haven't read the claims and reasoning of our sources, then this social action grinds to a halt. Therefore, reading the assigned material before class, and actively participating during class is essential. Only fully prepared and active attendance meets the attendance requirement established in CI-HW courses (anything more than **five unexcused absences** results in a failing grade).

Given the technological capabilities of our classroom (E17-136), attending through Zoom is an option in case you cannot be physically present, but we will have to make individual arrangements ahead of time.

In addition to assigned readings, a number of articles will be available on our Canvas site as optional readings to support the work of different assignments in greater depth.

Graded work

Analytical Summary	Written Draft+revision	15%
Rhetorical analysis of a visual	Written+oral	10%
Informed recommendation (Argument)	Written Draft+revision	15%
Descriptive visualization of data	Oral+visual	10%
Proposal	Written Draft+revision	20%
Predictive visualization of data	Oral+visual	20%
Participation (incl. peer review, discussion board and social annotations)	Collaborative	10%

Brief assignment descriptions

Analytical Summary (written) – Draft due: 2/20 – Revision due: 3/6

In this assignment, you will be working with the Analytical Summary genre (familiar to those who completed the summer FEE) in order to explore both the use of sources as evidence, and ways to synthesize information from multiple sources. You will be provided with readings and a prompt on the topic of Olympic Values in Sports, for which we will also have a seminar-type discussion in class.

Rhetorical analysis of a visual (written + oral presentation): 3/11

In this assignment, you present orally in class an analysis of audience, context, purpose and visual design principles of a visual related to basketball. Ideally, your chosen visual should be data-driven and presented within the context of a professional publication.

Analytical Summary and Argument (written) Draft due: 04/01 – Revision: 04/15

In this assignment, you will be building on what we discussed on the Analytical Summary genre combined with an Argument to present a position/idea to an audience of a Student Life Dean at MIT (using of sources as evidence) on the topic of emotional and mental health for college athletes. You may choose topics on overall well-being, student athlete physical and mental health, diversity, or the relationship between sports and academic performance. You will be provided with preliminary readings and a prompt, for which we will also have a seminar-type discussion in class.

Descriptive visualization of data (oral presentation): 04/08

In this assignment, you will be working with a partner to present orally in class your own visualization of data that emerged from a previous NBA playoff series. Ideally, the point of your visualization would be to help explain some of the outcomes or results of games or individual team/player efforts.

Final project: Proposal Draft due: 4/29 - Revision due: 5/13

In this assignment, you will develop a proposal for a youth sports development program, using information from sources as well as information from your analysis of the audience and its needs.

Predictive visualization of data (oral presentation): 4/17 AND 5/1, 5/6

In this assignment, you will create a series of visualizations which analyze and make a predictive argument about your assigned NBA teams. Your audience is your fellow students who will have to use your visual arguments to make their own predictions about all pairings.

Grading

As a spring semester first-year undergraduate subject, you are graded on an A, B, C, or No Record (D or F) basis. However, during the semester, you will be receiving letter internal grade reports with modifiers of + and - for grades A, B and C. Here are the general definitions of these grades:

A - Exceptionally good performance, demonstrating a superior understanding of the subject matter, a foundation of extensive knowledge, and a skillful use of concepts and/or materials.

B - Good performance, demonstrating capacity to use the appropriate concepts, a good understanding of the subject matter, and an ability to handle the problems and materials encountered in the subject.

C - Adequate performance, demonstrating an adequate understanding of the subject matter, an ability to handle relatively simple problems, and adequate preparation for moving on to more advanced work in the field.

D - Minimally acceptable performance, demonstrating at least partial familiarity with the subject matter and some capacity to deal with relatively simple problems, but also demonstrating deficiencies serious enough to make it inadvisable to proceed further in the field without additional work.

P - When the use of the grade P is authorized, it reflects performance at any of the levels A, B, or C.

Peer reviews

You will have multiple opportunities to engage in peer review with your fellow students in this class, both for written and for visual design work. We will dedicate peer review time in our class, so you are expected to have your draft by the due date so that your peer review group members can provide feedback.

Conferencing

At designated times during the semester, you will have required individual or team conferences with me. This is the time for you to ask questions, seek guidance on how to refine your rhetorical knowledge and abilities, develop your arguments, and clarify your visual representations. You should come to conferences (physical or virtual) prepared to participate in a discussion about revising your draft. In addition, at any point during the semester, we can meet and discuss any of the formal assignments before their final submission.

Course policies

Communication

I will be very happy to answer your questions, discuss your work, or respond to your concerns. Please make an appointment, or ask any question via email or phone. Email is the easiest way to reach me. I will try to respond to you within one business day.

Other opportunities for individual help with your writing and speaking

There are two more ways to receive outside help with your writing. The first is by coming to office hours (physical or virtual). If the designated times don't work for you, I may be able to arrange other times if you give me sufficient notice. When you come to office hours, I will expect you to be prepared to discuss the ideas you're considering writing or speaking about, the revisions you plan to make, or problems or questions you have about the topic of rhetoric, the readings, assignments, or the writing process.

The other avenue for help with your writing is the Writing and Communication Center

The Writing and Communication Center offers free one-on-one professional advice from communication experts with advanced degrees and publishing experience. The WCC can help you further develop your oral communication skills and learn about all types of academic and professional writing. You can learn more about the WCC consultations at <http://cmsw.mit.edu/writing-and-communication-center> and register with the online scheduler to make appointments through <https://mit.mywconline.com>. Please note that the WCC hours are offered via video-conference platforms on Monday-Friday, 9:00 a.m.-6:00 p.m., and fill up fast.

Academic Integrity

Academic integrity is the foundation of all scholarship, because being able to trace how our ideas have developed in relation to other people's theories, research, and evidence, as well as our own, is what ensures the soundness of our research. Thus, university communities have a collective investment in ensuring that the practices of academic integrity are thoroughly learned and carefully practiced.

In this CI-HW subject, we'll study many features of academic argument that will help you to understand how scholars make use of sources, and distinguish their own ideas from those of other scholars. You'll learn to read sources carefully, to assess their validity and usefulness to your own thinking, to use some kinds of sources as evidence that you'll analyze and argue about, and other kinds of sources as a theoretical foundation or counterargument to extend or deepen your own ideas about a subject. You will also learn the mechanics of source use: how to accurately quote, paraphrase, and cite sources according to one of the common systems of citation.

As members of this class and the larger scholarly community you are expected to abide by the norms of academic integrity. Everything you submit must be your own work, written specifically for this class. While a good deal of collaboration is encouraged in and out of class, all sources—of ideas as well as words and images—must be acknowledged according to the conventions of academic citation. Willful disregard for these conventions—i.e., plagiarism—can result in withdrawal from the course with a grade of F, and/or suspension or expulsion from the Institute. For more information about policies and practices, please refer to the MIT Policy on Academic Integrity: integrity.mit.edu

Late Work

All your work must be submitted in class on the due date. You may receive an extension only if you contact me before the date on which the assignment is due to explain why you need an extension.

MIT Support Resources

Student Support Services (S3, “S-cubed”)

S3 deans are here to help with academic or personal challenges, and more than 75% of undergrads visit S3. Struggling with a pset because of something going on in your life? Feel too ill to take an exam? Need financial help covering expenses such as winter clothing? **Have an issue and aren’t sure who to contact? S3 deans can help.** [Virtual walk-in hours](#) (no appointment needed) are Mon-Fri 10AM-noon and 2-4PM. For an in-person appointment, call 617-253-4861 or email s3-support@mit.edu. For more info visit: <https://studentlife.mit.edu/s3>.

Student Mental Health & Counseling (SMH&C)

Each year more than 20% of MIT students visit Student Mental Health & Counseling Services. Whether you’re struggling with an issue in your own life or concerned about a friend, seeking professional help can make a positive difference. **There’s no cost for services at SMH&C for enrolled MIT students.** You can make a telehealth appointment by calling 617-253-2916. All visits are confidential. To learn more visit: <https://medical.mit.edu/services/mental-health-counseling>.

Disability and Access Services (DAS)

Students who need disability accommodations are encouraged to speak with Disability and Access Services (DAS) early in the semester. If you’ve already been approved for accommodations, DAS can work with you to get your accommodation logistics in place. **Not sure if you have a disability? Many students do not get diagnosed until college.** DAS staff members can help. For assistance email das-all@mit.edu and they will respond promptly. For more info visit: <https://studentlife.mit.edu/das>.

Institute Discrimination and Harassment Response Office (IDHR)

In addition to handling student concerns related to Title IX (including sexual assault, sexual harassment, and other forms of discrimination), **IDHR is a central resource for the entire MIT community for concerns related to discrimination, discriminatory harassment, and bias.** If you have any concerns related to discrimination and/or harassment (including sexual harassment, sexual assault, intimate-partner violence, and stalking), you are encouraged to seek the assistance of IDHR staff members by visiting <https://idhr.mit.edu/our-office/about>.

Peer Ears

Would you like to speak with an undergraduate student about an issue you’re struggling with? **An MIT Peer Ear is a fellow student who cares about others and is ready to listen and help.** Peer Ears are mentored and trained by MIT Medical counselors. To learn more and to make an appointment to chat with a Peer Ear visit: <https://peerears.mit.edu/>.

Information Systems & Technology (IS&T)

As an enrolled MIT student you can access a variety of software at no cost, including Microsoft Office and the Adobe Creative Cloud suite: <https://ist.mit.edu/software-hardware>. **IS&T also loans laptops to students:** <https://ist.mit.edu/loaner-equipment>. If you have any technical questions about hardware, software, or anything IT-related, you can contact IS&T 24 hours a day, 7 days a week at: <https://ist.mit.edu/help>.

Course Schedule (v. 1.0)

Day	Date	Topic	Activity	Assignment due
Tue	Feb 4	Introduction to the class – sports and rhetoric	Syllabus online survey	
Thu	Feb 6	Reading strategies - Using Sources Concepts of Rhetoric/ Canons		Read: Homer, Iliad
Tue	Feb 11	Stasis and Argumentation – Systematic and anchored reviews		Read and annotate: Olympic Values articles
Thu	Feb 13	Introduction to the Olympic Ideal	Seminar discussion	
Tue	Feb 18	NO CLASS – President’s Day		
Thu	Feb 20	Peer review		Olympic Values Draft
Tue	Feb 25	Intro to Visual Rhetoric		The Keeper discussion
Thu	Feb 27	No class -- individual meetings on drafts		
Tue	Mar 4	Rubric analysis (w/examples)	Discourse-level and synthesis activity	
Thu	Mar 6	Analysis of visual rhetoric examples		Olympic values revision
Tue	Mar 11	Rhetorical analysis of visual		3-4 minute presentations
Thu	Mar 13	Introduction to Mental Health in Sports	Seminar discussion	
Tue	Mar 18	Locating and Organizing Sources		
Thu	Mar 20	Oral communication -- Slide design and Visualization tools workshop		

Day	Date	Topic	Activity	Assignment due
Tue	Mar 25	Spring Break		
Thu	Mar 27	Spring Break		
Tue	Apr 1	Peer review		College sports draft
Thu	Apr 3	Visualization workshop		
		individual meetings		
Tue	Apr 8	Descriptive visualizations		3-4 min presentations
Thu	Apr 10	Introduction to Youth Development	Seminar discussion	Read articles on youth development
Tue	Apr 15	Proposal writing (intro, objectives)		College sports revision
Thu	Apr 17	Predictive visualizations Round 1	(April 19 Playoffs Round 1 begin)	3-minute slide deck oral presentations
			No class Monday	
Tue	Apr 22	Proposal writing (methodology, budget, document design)		
Thu	Apr 24	Examples of Proposals		
Tue	Apr 29	Peer review		Proposal draft
Thu	May 1	Predictive visualizations Round 2	(Conference Semifinals begin May 3-4 or 5-6)?	7-8 minute slide deck oral presentations
Tue	May 6	Predictive visualizations Round 2		
Thu	May 8	No class – individual meetings		
Tue	May 13	Last day of class	Visualization celebration session	Proposal revision