

# 885 research colloquium

Fall 2019: Tuesdays, 3:00–5:50pm  
218 Bessey Hall

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## ☆ course description

WRA 885 is designed for first-year doctoral students enrolled in the Rhetoric and Writing program and should allow you to:

1. discover and develop your professional goals and understand, locate, access, etc., the skills, resources, relationships, and materials needed to pursue and reach these goals; and
2. help you situate yourself within our program and within the field of rhetoric and composition studies as a scholar, teacher, and professional.

You will meet and network with faculty in the program to learn about research opportunities and to think about configuring your guidance committee. You will develop, tweak, and refine professional skills and materials that will ideally provide the scaffolding for your entire PhD experience and beyond.

This seminar is also meant to be a space for open sharing, processing, and discussing of what you're learning and experiencing in the program.

## course goals ☆

The goals of the class are to provide a space in which you can:

- think strategically about your personal and professional *time*, including managing work and projects;
- come to a better understanding of rhetoric and composition as a discipline (as a whole);
- come to a better understanding of the subdisciplines and subfields within rhetoric and composition (where you locate your work in the whole);
- identify and begin to situate yourself within the established and emergent trends and topics within the field in ways that will further and enrich your scholarship and teaching; and
- start to establish the scholarly and professional profile you will continue to build throughout the program and beyond by producing a variety of professional materials.

## course materials

All of our class readings will be available on D2L. Our readings will be light. Ridiculously light. Deceptively light for a graduate seminar. Here's why: The readings that will be assigned are the tip of the iceberg. I'm assigning readings that are more supplementary and generally helpful. (You'll encounter key theoretical, historical, and methodological readings in your other required courses.)

You will be constructing your own readings for the course, as appropriate for the projects. We will be doing a lot of reading, but we'll likely not be doing a lot of common reading; rather, you'll be identifying and pursuing reading that interests you around your specific projects and products.

## course schedule

week	day	work due and (general overview of) activities
week 1	N/A	We will not meet the first week of fall semester (classes begin on Wednesday, August 28).
week 2	T 9/3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>introducing 885</li> <li>getting to know each other</li> <li>sharing and discussing our <b>Project 1</b> goal-setting work</li> <li>introducing Project 2 and Project 5</li> </ul>
week 3	T 9/10	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>discussing the RW 2019–2020 graduate handbook and forms</li> <li>seeing the Big Picture</li> <li>brainstorming questions for guests</li> </ul>
week 4	T 9/17	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>talking with guests</li> <li>thinking about journals and/in the field</li> <li>considering conferences and/in the field</li> <li>working on Project 2</li> </ul>
week 5	T 9/24	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>talking with guests</li> <li>mapping mentoring and support networks</li> </ul>
week 6	T 10/1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>talking with guests</li> <li>getting started on Project 3</li> </ul>
week 7	T 10/8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>sharing our <b>Project 2</b> presentations</li> <li>talking about core and concentration exams</li> <li>mapping concentration areas</li> </ul>
week 8	T 10/15	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>talking with guests</li> <li>introducing Project 4</li> </ul>

week 9	T 10/22	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• talking with guests</li> </ul>
week 10	T 10/29	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• presenting your <b>Project 3</b> presentations</li> <li>• configuring your advisory committees</li> </ul>
week 11	T 11/5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• talking with guests</li> <li>• workshopping <b>Project 4: CVs</b></li> </ul>
week 12	T 11/12	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• talking with guests</li> <li>• workshopping <b>Project 4: teaching philosophy statements</b></li> </ul>
week 13	T 11/19	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• talking with guests (RW program alums)</li> </ul>
week 14	T 11/26	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• sharing and discussing our <b>Project 5</b> citizenship and cocurricular experiences</li> <li>• introducing Project 6</li> </ul>
week 15	T 12/3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• sharing and discussing our <b>Project 6</b> goal-setting work</li> </ul>
finals	T 12/10	<p>We will not meet for class during finals week, although I will be available to chat, meet, answer questions, etc. <b>Project 4, Project 6</b>, and any last <b>Project 5</b> write-ups due no later than noon on Tuesday, December 10.</p>



## course projects and grading

There are six projects for the course. I'll provide longer, more detailed assignments for each of these in class, and we'll allocate class time to discussing and working on these. Project due dates are listed above on the course schedule.

**Project 1: Goal Setting, Part 1** (300 points)

**Project 2: Journal Review Presentation** (300 points)

**Project 3: Self-study and Presentation** (300 points)

**Project 4: Professional Documents Portfolio** (500 points)

**Project 5: Goal Setting, Part 2** (300 points)

**Project 6: Citizenship and Co-Curriculars** (300 points; three at 100 points each); *note that these are due throughout the semester but no later than the end of the semester*

You can earn **2000 points** in this class; my general expectations are:

- To earn a 4.0 (2000–1900 points), you must complete all assigned work; produce consistently engaged and insightful final products; and be an active, generous, and productive participant in the intellectual atmosphere of the class.

- To earn a 3.5 (1899–1800 points), you must complete all work for the course; produce generally commendable final products; and be an active and productive participant in the intellectual atmosphere of the class.
- To earn a 3.0 (1799–1700 points), you must complete all major projects for the course, although you may have missed some of the day-to-day work and draft-sharing; produce quality final products; and be a participant in the intellectual atmosphere of the class.

You must complete all six of the projects to pass the class. You should submit your work on time. Late work will only be accepted if you consult with me prior to the class period in which the work is due.

If you are unable to complete all six projects have accrued excessive absences, or if your classroom participation is non-collegial or unproductive, you may receive a 2.0 or lower.



## attendance and participation

Attendance and participation in this class are important. It's part of your grade, of course, but moreover it's what I expect of you and what you can expect from one another.

I'll do my best to make you want to come to class, and make class worth your while. In exchange, I expect you to come to class prepared, and to come to class and to contribute to our activities and discussions.



## safe learning environment

Michigan State University is committed to fostering a culture of caring and respect that is free of relationship violence and sexual misconduct, and to ensuring that all affected individuals have access to services. For information on reporting options, confidential advocacy and support resources, university policies and procedures, or how to make a difference on campus, visit the Title IX website (<http://www.titleix.msu.edu>).

The Rhetoric and Writing program has an issues and reporting guide available on our departmental web site that describes potential problematic situations and ways in which students can seek support (<http://wrac.msu.edu/graduate-programs/graduate-handbooks/>).

Additionally, I expect us to respect each other's learning, privacy, and experiences. Please don't share or post comments or conversations from class beyond our class or on social media without asking others in class first.

## mandatory reporting

Please note that, as your instructor, I am a mandatory reporter at MSU. That means I am required to report incidents of sexual harassment, sexual violence, sexual misconduct, stalking, suspected child abuse and/or neglect (even if the incident occurred while you were young), credible threats of harm to oneself or others, and relationship violence that I learn about or observe in my professional capacity, that involves a member of the university community, or that occurs at a university-sponsored event or on university property.

I do not explain this policy to make you feel ashamed or hesitant in any way; rather, I want to describe it clearly so that you understand my institutional responsibilities.

## basic needs support

Any student in this class who experiences difficulty affording groceries, has insufficient food to eat every day, or is lacking a safe and stable place to live, and believes this may affect their performance in our course or in the program, is urged to contact me, as both your 885 instructor and as WRAC grad director. You may also contact the MSU Food Bank (<http://foodbank.msu.edu>) for help getting access to healthy foods.

The Graduate School at MSU also offers a range of resources for graduate students, including support groups for work–life balance, health care, and support for mental health counseling. For more information, please visit: <https://grad.msu.edu/partners-in-wellness>.

If you are caring for children, and need support finding and paying for care, you may seek support from the Student-Parent Resource Center (<http://studentparents.msu.edu>).

## ada and rcdp support

To receive any accommodation for any disability, students must first register with the Resource Center for Persons with Disabilities. The RCPD will request appropriate documentation and make a determination regarding the nature of the accommodation to which a student is entitled.

The RCPD will then give the student a “visa” that specifies the kind of accommodation that may be provided. It is then the responsibility of the student seeking accommodation to present the visa to his/her instructor.

## ethics and academic integrity

Student–teacher relationships are built on trust. You should assume that I’ve made good-faith decisions about the content and structure of the course; I should assume that the assignments you hand in are yours (that you are the one who produced them); and so on. Acts that violate this trust undermine the educational process. You are expected to develop original work for this course; therefore, you may not submit coursework you completed for another course to satisfy the requirements for this course. That said, if you want to continue a project you started elsewhere, or complete a portion of a project for another course in the context of our course, please let me know, as this is often an acceptable—and, for grad students—desirable practice.

Article 2.3.3 of the Academic Freedom Report states that “The student shares with the faculty the responsibility for maintaining the integrity of scholarship, grades, and professional standards.” Students who violate MSU academic integrity rules may receive a penalty grade, including a failing grade on the assignment or in the course.

