

Course: AP/WRIT 1004 3.0 RESEARCH FOR PROFESSIONAL WRITERS

Expanded Course Description

In this course, students contribute to a course podcast show that explores the changing face of research driven by developments in information communications technology (ICT). ICT facilitates the collection, aggregation, analysis, and sharing of data.

With far ranging implications, ICTs are changing both who can access information and who can contribute it. This shift is felt in the rise of wikis, online maps and location data, web analytics, social media, review platforms, blogs, and crowdsourcing projects as research tools.

Increasingly, businesses have harnessed the power of ICTs to drive sales and brand loyalty by equipping their products (cars, phones, home appliances, televisions) with the means to capture information about who we are and how we live our lives.

Today's ICTs are raising a host of questions about who gets to conduct research, who gets to write, research ethics, data privacy (personal and aggregated), and what constitutes valid research. Through the podcast we explore these issues in specific case studies so we can better understand the evolution of professional writing and research.

In the course, students develop research skills and strategies along with a deeper understanding of research issues from invention to agency and ethics in today's professional writing contexts.

*PLEASE NOTE THAT THE THEME OF THE PODCAST SHOW CHANGES FROM TERM TO TERM. FALL 2016 YEAR IT WILL BE: *Passion Projects – investigating advocacy & impact in Toronto-area community organizations.*

Course Learning Objectives

The course introduces students to critical issues in contemporary research contexts and helps equip students to navigate them with research tactics, skills, and strategies. The course serves to introduce PRWR and ENPR students to the many digital aspects of the Professional Writing program and to begin producing published work for their professional portfolios.

In this course, students develop key principles, critical understandings, and skills that support research in contexts of professional writing. Through study, practice, and reflection, students develop:

- strategies, tactics, and skills for locating, gathering, evaluating, using, and citing information
- critical awareness of the ways information communication technologies enable and constrain research practices
- best practices for research ethics and related issues
- appreciation for context-dependent nature of research conventions and audience expectations
- a deeper understanding of professional writing as an interdisciplinary study of diverse contexts of practice

Working collegially in a supportive environment of a large team project and publishing their work publicly, students will

- gain confidence to share their written work and seek constructive feedback
- provide supportive constructive feedback to their peers
- develop a professional approach to task schedules and assignment deadlines
- value recursive writing processes as much as the final product