



Fall 2013 Workshops

In addition to one-to-one peer tutoring, the RISD Writing Center offers year-round workshops designed to help all RISD students build or refresh writing skills. Our “ESL Focus” workshops focus on topics and content of special interest to non-native speakers of English (who are welcome to all of our workshops, of course). The Fall workshops listed below are each offered multiple times, so choose the one that best fits your schedule (no need to RSVP—just arrive on time, please). We’re also available to give these workshops (adapted as needed) in classrooms upon faculty request. For more info on attending a workshop or scheduling one for your course, please e-mail Meredith Barrett at mbarrett01@risd.edu.

ESL Focus: Decoding & Engaging—Reading Strategies in Academia

Presented by: Peter Carney

Reading in an academic setting can be much more efficient and effective when we practice a few key strategies. In this workshop, we’ll review methods for reading and comprehending academic texts—from skimming and scanning (“previewing”) to detecting the main idea and details (“close” reading) to understanding vocabulary through context and breaking down words by their affixes and roots.

T 9/24 CB302 6:30-8:00pm *or*
W 9/25 Old Library, CB521 6:30-8:00pm

H101 Formal Analysis Paper: Overview and Q+A

Presented by: Jen Liese

Your first H101 paper assignment—the formal analysis—is probably entirely new to you. Your H101 faculty will guide you through the conventions, but you may want to learn more. In this workshop, we’ll review the essentials and the finer points of this cornerstone of art history writing, share approaches for looking, describing, and analyzing, and raise the questions you thought no one else would have.

Th 9/26 CB302 6:30-8:00pm *or*
T 10/1 CB302 4:30-6:00pm

ESL Focus: American Academic Paper—Expectations and Techniques

Presented by: Peter Carney

Writing styles aren’t universal across cultures or contexts. So how do we learn the differences and adapt? Here, we’ll talk about what college professors typically expect in an academic paper—including introductions, thesis statements, coherent paragraphs and structure, examples, and conclusions—then practice pre-writing techniques such as brainstorming and outlining to help achieve these standards.

T 10/1 CB302 6:30-8:00pm *or*
W 10/2 Old Library, CB521 6:30-8:00pm

Making a Statement

Presented by: Meredith Barrett

It’s not always easy for students to take a stand and express their own scholarly argument, especially while encountering so many experts in the research process. In this workshop, we’ll break down the practice of moving from a general topic through research, questioning, and testing hypotheses. We’ll also test thesis statement samples against criteria for strong statements as practice for developing our own persuasive claims.

W 10/2 Writing Center, CB240 4:30-6:00pm *or*
Th 10/3 CB302 6:30-8:00pm *or*
T 11/19 CB302 6:30-8:00pm *or*
W 11/20 Writing Center, CB240 4:30-6:00pm

ESL Focus: How to Avoid Plagiarism Part I

Presented by: Peter Carney

American academic writing insists upon documentation of information or ideas gathered from outside sources. Documentation standards are based in both scholarly tradition and intellectual property laws. Failing to cite sources, otherwise known as plagiarism, violates RISD's code of conduct and can jeopardize a student's grade and status. But documenting sources isn't an inherent skill, it's one we all learn. This workshop will introduce students to what plagiarism is and why it happens, but most of all how to avoid it. We'll further examine how and when to summarize, paraphrase, and quote, and learn terms for clearly introducing other people's ideas.

T 10/8 CB302 6:30-8:00pm *or*

W 10/9 Old Library, CB521 6:30-8:00pm *or*

T 11/5 CB302 6:30-8:00pm *or*

W 11/6 Old Library, CB521 6:30-8:00pm

ESL Focus: How to Avoid Plagiarism Part II

Presented by: Peter Carney

Understanding why we document sources and the language used to do so is the first step in avoiding plagiarism. This workshop will review these ideas and take the next step towards successful documentation by looking closely at citation methods. We'll review the essentials of citing properly, with comparisons between Chicago and MLA, and practice the technical aspects of each style.

T 10/15 CB302 6:30-8:00pm *or*

W 10/16 Old Library, CB521 6:30-8:00pm *or*

T 11/12 CB302 6:30-8:00pm *or*

W 11/13 Old Library, CB521 6:30-8:00pm

Research Papers I: Best Practices in Gathering and Engaging Sources

Presented by: Claudia Covert and Meredith Barrett

Researching to gather information, perspectives, and context for academic writing is an integral part of a RISD education. There's no shortage of information out there, but how do we find the right information? First we'll discuss how to brainstorm search terms around a topic, discern types of sources, and locate those sources. Then we'll review methods for engaging efficiently and critically with our sources, along with models for tracking our research with the final paper in mind.

W 10/9 Writing Center, CB240 4:30-6:00pm *or*

Th 10/10 CB302 6:30-8:00pm

Research Papers II: Best Practices in Integrating and Citing Sources

Presented by: Meredith Barrett

This workshop is not just about avoiding plagiarism, it's about integrating research and writing and entering the scholarly conversation with authority. We'll examine how and why to summarize, paraphrase, and quote, practice conventions for clearly introducing and situating other people's ideas, and review the essentials of citing properly, with comparisons between Chicago and MLA.

W 10/16 Writing Center, CB240 4:30-6:00pm *or*

Th 10/17 CB302 6:30-8:00pm

Writing an Artist Statement that Even You Will Love

Presented by: Jen Liese

While an artist statement is a professional document—often included in grant applications, websites, and the like—it is also an expressive form. Some of the most effective artist statements are ambiguous rather than explicit, poetic rather than literal, playful or political rather than safe. Structures and guidelines can be helpful, but this workshop will also explore breaking out of formulas to encourage experimentation and the development of an authentic voice.

W 11/13 Writing Center, CB240 4:30-7:00pm *or*
Th 11/14 CB302 6:30-9:00pm

Writing for Crit

Presented by: Jen Liese

Critiques are an opportunity to share your work with an insightful audience and gain feedback for a project's development. So why are crits so often sources of stress? And how can we get the most out of the experience? This workshop will invite us to experiment with prompted list-making, self-interviews, and "objective" formal analysis designed to help you articulate your intentions, observations, and questions before crit. We'll also review quick note-taking methods for crit time itself, and using writing post-crit to reflect and self-direct.

*Participants, please bring a piece you've made to engage with in this session.

W 11/19 Writing Center, CB240 4:30-7:00pm *or*
Th 11/20 Old Library, CB521 5:30-8:00pm

Grad Written Thesis Now

Presented by: Anne West and Jen Liese

This is a participatory workshop designed to locate your thesis-writing process now and imagine what your thesis book will become. We will also learn about RISD's many forms of thesis support, including our series of in-depth Wintersession thesis workshops. Grad students from all departments and in any year are welcome, and everyone should come ready to write.

Th 11/21 Old Library, CB521 5:30-8:00pm

Coming in Wintersession and Spring . . .

More of the same Fall workshops and these additional topics:

Building a Graduate Written Thesis: Three Parts that Make the Whole
Grad Thesis Writers Retreat
Undergraduate Creative Writing Series
Grant Writing for Artists and Designers