

# Engl 344: Writing For Non Profits

## SERVICE & SERVICE-LEARNING IN CONTEXT

Dr. Kate Nesbit

### Learning Outcomes

- To think critically about civic engagement and the concepts of “service” and “community.”
- To demonstrate a knowledge of the processes of written composition from prewriting, through revision, to final product.
- To develop an understanding of how to adapt language to meet audience needs in various speaking and writing situations.

### WRT Outcomes

- **RHETORICAL KNOWLEDGE:** Write a grant proposal and various pieces of “professional writing” designed to appeal to specific audiences, as well as reflective essays that foster critical thinking about service.
- **CRITICAL THINKING:** Apply various problem-solving strategies for analyzing and persuading various audiences, with careful attention to diction and discourse conventions.
- **PROCESS:** Workshop writing with instructor, peers, and community partners.
- **CONVENTIONS:** Produce writing that is reader-friendly, clear and concise, and professional.

## Course Description

Welcome to Writing for Non-Profit Organizations. ENGL 344 is a service-learning course that fulfills requirements for the English major and minor and for the Not for Profit Management minor. What is “service-learning”? According to the Council of Independent Colleges (CIC): “Service-learning is a method and philosophy of experiential learning through which participants in community service meet community needs while developing their abilities for critical thinking and group problem-solving, their commitments and values, and the skills they need for effective citizenship.”

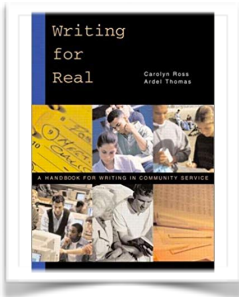
As a service-learning course, ENGL 322 is both theoretical and practical. Students will read, write, and reflect on a variety of issues related to service and the community as we consider our roles as civically-engaged members of various communities. In order to put our ideas about service into practice, students will also engage in a significant writing project for a community partner, thus helping to meet the needs of that organization. The service and learning components of service-learning are reciprocal and complementary: your thinking and writing about service and community will help inform your writing project and, in turn, your work with a non-profit organization will deepen your understanding of service and of how civic engagement improves our communities.

### *History & Acknowledgements*

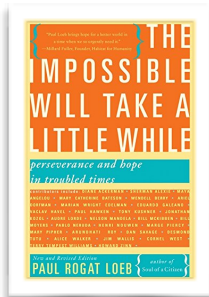
ENGL 344 was developed by Dr. Walter Cannon as a result

## Course Texts

*Writing for Real: A Handbook for Writers in Community Service*, eds. Carolyn Ross and Ardel Thomas, Longman, 2003.



*The Impossible Will Take a Little While*, ed. Paul Rogat Loeb, Basic Books, 2014.



Additional readings will be posted electronically on Blackboard.

of a grant from the CIC in 1994, when Central College was one of about 25 colleges and universities selected to initiate a variety of service-learning programs. After Dr. Cannon retired, the course was taught by Dr. Kim Koza. I am indebted to both Dr. Cannon and Dr. Koza for sharing their syllabi, materials, and expertise with me. This course is also designed in collaboration with the Center for Community-Based Learning, and I thank Cheri Doane, Alejandra Maldonado, Rachele Talbott, and Liz Vande Kieft for all of their support.

## Assignments & Grading

The writing assignments for this course fall in one of three major categories.

- **Writing about service and community**

For this portion of the course, you will produce two academic essays that ask you to reflect upon service, civic engagement, and your relationship & responsibilities to your communities.

- **Practical Writing**

For this portion of the course, you will complete three assignments aimed to prepare you for genres of writing and communication common in the non-profit sector: an email of introduction, a grant proposal, and a communications portfolio.

- **Writing for the community**

For this portion of the course, you will work with a community organization approved by Cheri Doane, Central's Director of Community-Based Learning. You will be attending planning meetings and will get to know the organization/group before becoming involved in various writing projects for the organization.

You will be expected to **set up a project proposal/agreement** with your supervisor, **keep a detailed log of the time you spend** working for your organization, and **produce some substantial writing** for your organization.

You will be expected to work with your community organization for **at least 20 hours** for the semester on designated writing projects. You must spend **at least 5 hours** on-site.

Percentage of Grade	Assignment
30%	Academic Writing about Service (2 Assignments)
30%	Practical Writing (3 Assignments)
20%	Community Writing Project & Detailed Log of Service Activities
20%	Daily Reflections & Reading Invitations

### A Note on Professionalism:

I expect you to conduct yourself as a professional in working with your community partner. This means following through on meeting times, assignments, and the terms of your project agreement. If you fail to act professionally, it will reflect poorly not only on you, but also on this course and on Central College more generally.

Your supervisor is a mentor who is interested in your development and progress, and who will be completing an evaluation of your work at the end of the semester.

## Course Policies and Expectations

### *Attendance Policy:*

You need to be in class and on time every day. Absences cause you to miss out on instruction, learning time, and thinking opportunities. Assignments, directions, homework, and due dates will be updated in class and posted to Blackboard. It is your responsibility to know what these are, even if you miss a class. You are responsible for knowing the material and preparing any assigned work.

You can miss two classes over the course of the semester without a serious impact to your final grade. I do not "excuse" absences (other than the exceptions listed below), so use these absences wisely. Save them for when you are sick or have an out-of-town obligation.

**Your final grade will be reduced by 1/3 of a letter grade for every class you miss above 3 absences.**

Exceptions can be made for extenuating circumstances (college-sanctioned events and activities, injuries, extended illness), but these exceptions must be discussed with me and arranged ahead of time.

You will also be expected to attend one event outside of class time: a civic dialogue panel held in Des Moines toward the end of the semester. We will arrange a date for this panel in the first months of the semester in consultation with your schedules and conflicts.

### *Late Work Policy*

Unless other arrangements are made before the assignment due date, **late work must be turned in within 4 days of the due date to receive any partial credit.** When turned in after the due date and time but within 24 hours, the assignment will receive a grade reduced by a third of a letter grade. **The assignment grade will be reduced by 1/3 of a letter grade for each additional day it is late until turned in.** If the assignment is still not turned in after four days past the due date and time, the assignment will receive a o.

### *24/7 Policy for Discussing Graded Work*

With regard to any assignment at any point in the semester, I am happy to speak with you about what you did well, how you could improve, and what you can work on for future assignments. In order to keep conversations relevant, constructive, and useful to you, please discuss graded assignments with me no sooner than 24 hours after the assignment is returned and no later than 7 days after return. I will gladly email with you to set aside office hour time or set up an appointment to talk in person.

### *Communication with Me*

I strongly encourage students to make an appointment or stop by my office hours to ask for clarification on assignments, raise concerns or discomforts, request help on papers and speeches, or discuss any issue relevant (or irrelevant!) to this class. Attending my office hours shows commitment to this course and demonstrates accountability for your learning.

Outside of office hours, the best way to contact me is through email. I will do my best to respond to your email within 24 hours during the weekdays and 48 hours during the weekends. **If I do not respond within these parameters, please resend the email.**

### *Technology in the Classroom*

As a general rule, I expect that you will turn off/silence and put away all of your electronic devices (cell phones, iPads, etc.) before class begins. This includes laptops and e-readers unless otherwise specified. There are, of course, many reasonable exceptions to this general rule. If you do, for any reason, have a particular need for iPads, cell phones, or laptops during class time, please come talk to me during office hours. There will also be class periods, activities, and peer-review sessions for which I allow and often encourage technology use. I will notify you of these moments as they arise.

### *Content Warning*

In this course, we will read literary texts that depict or discuss violence, including sexual violence and racial violence. If you have suffered trauma and are concerned about engaging with these topics, please email me or see me in my office so that we can discuss accommodations.

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## Central College Policies & Statements

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### *Accommodations for Students with Disabilities*

Central College abides by interpretations of the Americans with Disabilities Act and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 that stipulates no student shall be denied the benefits of an education "solely by reason of a handicap." Disabilities covered by law include, but are not limited to, learning disabilities, hearing, sight, or mobility impairments, and other health related impairments. If you have a documented disability that may have some impact on your work in this class for which you may require accommodations, please contact your Instructor and Nancy Kroese, Director of Student Support Services and Disabilities Services Coordinator (x5247), during the first two weeks of the semester so that such accommodations may be arranged.

### *Plagiarism and Other Academic Dishonesty*

Plagiarism, cheating, and unauthorized collaboration in any form are violations of academic integrity and may result in course penalties ranging from a lowered grade on the assignment to a failed grade for the course. In the case of serious or repeated instances, students may also be suspended or dismissed from the college. A copy of Central's Academic Integrity policy can be found in the Student Handbook, the Course Catalog, and on MyCentral. Students are responsible for reading and understanding the contents of that policy before submitting work to be graded. Questions regarding the policies and enforcement of the policies may be asked during class or during office hours.

### *Notification of Participation in College-Sanctioned Events*

Students who must miss a class to take part in a college-sanctioned event (such as Mock Trial, choir tours, athletic events) are expected to notify instructors well in advance and to complete assignments or exams prior to the absence.

English 344: Writing for Non Profits  
**SCHEDULE OF READINGS AND ASSIGNMENTS**  
*Subject to Change*

<p><b>Week One: Monday, January 20 – Friday January 24th</b>          Getting Started on your Community-Based Writing Project</p>
<p><u>M: 1/20</u>          Course Introduction</p>
<p><u>W: 1/22</u>  <i>Read:</i> Ch. 1 and 2 of <i>Writing for Real</i>, “Why Community-Based Writing?” and “Writing in College and Writing in the Community”  <i>Complete:</i> Reading Invitation  <b>Due: Self-Assessment Worksheet</b></p>
<p><u>E: 1/24</u>  <i>Read:</i> Ch. 6 of <i>Writing for Real</i>, “Negotiating Community-Based Assignments”  <i>Complete:</i> Reading Invitation</p>
<p><b>Week Two: Monday, January 27 – Friday, January 31</b>          Service Narratives &amp; Counter Narratives</p>
<p><u>M: 1/27</u>  <i>Bring:</i> Introduction email draft and computers  <i>Research:</i> Your organization. Familiarize yourself with its mission, its staff, its messaging, etc. through its website, news articles about the organization, and other materials available on the internet.  <i>Complete:</i> Reading Invitation  <b>Due: Email of Introduction</b></p>
<p><u>W: 1/29</u>  <i>Read:</i> Adam Davis, “What We Don’t Talk About When We Don’t Talk About Service” and Ivan Illich, “To Hell with Good Intentions” (Blackboard)  <i>Complete:</i> Reading Invitation  <i>Assign:</i> Academic Writing #1: My Concept of Service</p>
<p><u>F 1/31</u>  <i>Read:</i> Excerpts from <i>Teach for America Counter-Narratives: Alumni Speak Up and Speak Out</i> (Blackboard)  <i>Complete:</i> Reading Invitation  <b>By this date, you must be in touch with your community partner, with arrangements to visit your site and meet with your supervisor.</b></p>
<p><b>Week Three: Monday, February 3 – Friday, February 7</b>          Best Practices</p>
<p><u>M 2/3</u></p>

<p><i>Read:</i> Blouin and Perry, “Whom does Service-Learning Really Serve?: Community-Based Organizations’ Perspectives on Service Learning” and pp. 46-55 of Bacon, “Community Service Writing: Problems, Challenges, Questions” (Blackboard)  <i>Complete:</i> Reading Invitation</p>
<p><u>W 2/5</u>  <i>Read:</i> Stanford University’s “Principles of Ethical and Effective Service”  <i>Complete:</i> Principles to Practices Worksheet</p>
<p><u>F 2/7</u>  <i>Read:</i> Ch. 7 of <i>Writing for Real</i>, “Work Styles and Writing Assignments in the Community”  <i>Complete:</i> Reading Invitation  <b>Due: Signed Memorandum of Understanding</b> (Copies to me and your supervisor). Everyone needs to have visited their site and met with their supervisor by this date.</p>
<p><b>Week Four: Monday, February 10 – Friday, February 14</b>  Grant Writing Unit</p>
<p><u>M 2/10</u>  Grant Proposal Workshop w/ Center for CB-Learning  Readings and Assignments TBA  <b>Due: Essay #1: My Concept of Service</b></p>
<p><u>W 2/12</u>  Grant Proposal Workshop w/ Center for CB-Learning  Readings and Assignments TBA</p>
<p><u>F 2/14</u>  Grant Proposal Workshop w/ Center for CB-Learning  Readings and Assignments TBA</p>
<p><b>Week Five: Monday, February 17 – Friday, February 21</b>  Grant Writing Unit</p>
<p><u>M 2/17</u>  Grant Proposal Workshop w/ Center for CB-Learning  Readings and Assignments TBA</p>
<p><u>W 2/19</u>  Grant Proposal Workshop w/ Center for CB-Learning  Readings and Assignments TBA</p>
<p><u>F 2/21</u>  Grant Proposal Workshop w/ Center for CB-Learning  Readings and Assignments TBA</p>
<p><b>Week Six: February 24 – Friday, February 28</b>  The Individual and Community</p>
<p><u>M 2/24</u></p>

<p><i>Read:</i> Ch. 8, “Academic Writing in a Service-Learning Context”  <b>Due: Grant Proposal—Final Draft</b></p>
<p><u>W 2/26</u>  <i>Read:</i> Danusha Veronica Goska, “Political Paralysis” and John Lewis, “Walking with the Wind” (TIWTLW)  <i>Complete:</i> Reading Invitation</p>
<p><u>F 2/28</u>  <i>Read:</i> Audre Lorde, “The Transformation of Silence,” Naomi Shihab Nye, “Gate A-4,” Imtiaz Dharker, “They’ll Say: She Must Be From Another Country” (TIWTLW)  <i>Watch:</i> Laverne Cox, Commencement Speech at Hampshire College  <i>Complete:</i> Reading Invitation</p>
<p><b>Week Seven: Monday, March 2 – Friday, March 6</b>  The Individual and Community</p>
<p><u>M 3/2</u>  <i>Read:</i> Zadie Smith, “Monsters,” Kim-Mai Cutler, “East of Palo Alto’s Eden,” and Leila Chatti’s “Muslim Girlhood” (Blackboard)  <i>Complete:</i> Reading Invitation</p>
<p><u>W 3/4</u>  <i>Read:</i> Alice Walker, “Only Justice Can Stop a Curse,” Cornell West, “Prisoner of Hope,” and Arundhati Roy, “Come September”  <i>Complete:</i> Reading Invitation</p>
<p><u>F 3/6</u>  Rough Draft Workshop  <b>Due: Essay #2 Rough Drafts</b></p>
<p><b>Week Eight: Monday, March 9 – Friday, March 13</b></p>
<p><u>M 3/9</u>  <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Last day to submit pre-Midterm Reading Invitations</b>  <b>Service Log Check-In: Must have 10 hours of work logged (3 of which must be on-site)</b></p> No Class—Midterm Individual Conferences</p>
<p><u>W 3/11</u>  No Class—Midterm Individual Conferences</p>
<p><u>F 3/13</u>  <b>Due: Final Drafts of Essay #2: The Individual and Community</b>  <b>Assign:</b> Communications Portfolio</p>
<p><b>Week Nine: Monday, March 16 – Friday, March 21</b></p>



<b>Spring Break: No Classes Held</b>
<b>Week Ten: Monday, March 23 – Friday, March 27</b> Communications Portfolio
<u>M 3/23</u> Brochures <b>Read:</b> Chapter 11 of <i>Writing for Real</i> , “Formatting” <b>Complete:</b> Reading Invitation
<u>W 3/25</u> <b>Read:</b> Sample Brochures <b>Complete:</b> Reading Invitation
<u>F 3/27</u> Brochure Workshop <b>Read:</b> Chapter 13 in <i>Writing for Real</i> , “Revising and Editing” <b>Due:</b> Complete Brochure
<b>Week Eleven: Monday, March 30 – Friday, April 3</b>
<u>M 3/30</u> News Release <b>Read:</b> “Public Relations in a Digital Age,” from <i>Writing for Digital Media</i> <b>Complete:</b> Reading Invitation
<u>W 4/1</u> <b>Read:</b> Chapter 12 of <i>Writing for Real</i> , “Documenting” <b>Complete:</b> Reading Invitation
<u>F 4/3</u> News Release Workshop <b>Due:</b> News Releases
<b>Week Twelve: Monday, April 6 – Friday, April 10</b>
<u>M 4/6</u> Blog/Web Article <b>Read:</b> “Blogito Ergo Sum” in <i>Writing for Digital Media</i> (Blackboard) <b>Complete:</b> Reading Invitation
<u>W 4/8</u> <b>Read:</b> Samples <b>Complete:</b> Reading Invitation
<u>F 4/10</u> <b>Easter Break</b>
<b>Week Thirteen: Monday, April 13 – Friday, April 17</b>
<u>M 4/13</u> <b>Easter Break</b>

<p><u>W 4/15</u>  <b>Read:</b> Selection from Writing for Digital Media (Blackboard)  <b>Complete:</b> Reading Invitation</p>
<p><u>F 4/17</u>  Blog Workshop  <b>Due:</b> Blog/Web Article</p>
<p><b>Week Fourteen: Monday, April 20 – Friday, April 24</b></p>
<p><u>M 4/20</u>  No Class—End-of-Semester Meetings</p>
<p><u>W 4/22</u>  No Class—End-of-Semester Meetings</p>
<p><u>F 4/24</u>  <b>Due: Final Communications Portfolio</b></p>
<p><b>Week Fifteen: Monday, April 27 – May 1</b>  Civic Dialogue and Engagement</p>
<p><u>M 4/27</u>  <b>Read:</b> Readings from community partners and <i>TIWTLW</i> (TBA)  <b>Complete:</b> Reading Invitation</p>
<p><u>W 4/29</u>  <b>Read:</b> Readings from community partners and <i>TIWTLW</i> (TBA)  <b>Complete:</b> Reading Invitation</p>
<p><u>F 5/1</u>  <b>Read:</b> Readings from community partners and <i>TIWTLW</i> (TBA)  <b>Complete:</b> Reading Invitation</p>
<p><b>Week Sixteen: Monday, May 4 – Friday, May 8</b></p>
<p><u>M 5/4</u>  <b>Read:</b> Readings from community partners and <i>TIWTLW</i> (TBA)</p>
<p><u>W 5/6</u>  Presentation Dress Rehearsals  <b>Due: Rough Drafts of Presentations</b></p>
<p><u>F 5/8</u>  <b>Class Wrap-Up</b></p>
<p><b>Final Exam Period:</b>  Thursday, May 14<sup>th</sup> at 3:30 pm  <b>Formal Presentation of your Writing Project</b></p>