

Writing as Inquiry:  
**WHAT IS KNOWLEDGE?**

**WRIT-SHU 102 040-042**

Spring 2022  
M-W 9:45-11, 11:15-12:30, 1:15-2:30  
Room 609

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### Subject to Change Statement

\*\*\* The syllabus and course schedule may be subject to change. Changes will be communicated via email and in Brightspace. It is your responsibility to check email messages/Brightspace and course announcements to stay current in the course. \*\*\*

### Course Description

Critical inquiry is the heart of a liberal arts education, and writing is this inquiry manifested on the page. In NYU Shanghai's first-year writing course, students will read texts and respond by writing their own. In doing so, they will add their critical perspectives to ongoing academic and public conversations. Students will work to write sophisticated and cogent prose, and learn to effectively incorporate written texts in the development of their own arguments. Class discussions will include strategies for every step of the writing process--from invention and organization to research and revision. In a workshop setting, students will analyze the work of their peers and respond to feedback on their own writing. By the end of the course, students should be able to dissect difficult textual material, recognize rhetorical strategies and genre conventions, and build clear and convincing arguments that matter both within and beyond academic contexts. In *WI*, we will spend additional time focusing on areas of rhetoric, grammar, and style that are relevant to second language writers.

The overarching question of this *Writing as Inquiry* course is: what is knowledge, and how is it produced? We will examine theories of knowledge and of knowledge-production (*inquiry*) and examine what processes constitute knowledge-making, what counts as knowledge, and who is credited with the authority to possess knowledge.

### Specific Learning Objectives:

- To sharpen our skills at reading for, and recognizing, problems as sites of inquiry;
- To develop an ability to read and gauge complex and difficult texts;
- To use reading and interpretive skills as a baseline for asking our own questions;
- To become comfortable with using writing as a tool for creativity, curiosity, experimentation, and inquiry;
- To become sensitive to how the expression of inquiry forms the latter, and to how both depend fundamentally on audience;
- To come to regard knowledge-production as the project of communities and conversations;
- To become writers of cogent, elegant, and sharp prose in different disciplinary contexts;
- To gain comfort with and appreciation for notions of research and writing, and to have fun!

### Required Reading

We will be reading the following texts together; you will also be asked to choose from among additional readings for your essay assignments.

- Foucault, Michel. “Chapter 10: The Human Sciences I: The Three Faces of Knowledge.” *The Order of Things: An Archaeology of the Human Sciences*.
- Haraway, Donna. “Situated Knowledges: The Science Question in Feminism and the Privilege of Partial Perspective.”
- Popper, Karl. “The Logic of the Social Sciences.”
- Chan, Lik Sam. “Liberating or Disciplining? A Technofeminist Analysis of the Use of Dating Apps Among Women in Urban China.”
- Luo, Wei, and Zhen Sun. “Are You the One? China’s TV Dating Shows and the Sheng Nü’s Predicament.”

All readings will be made available on the course website on Brightspace, but you will occasionally have to go outside of Brightspace to access other online-only resources. It is your responsibility to check Brightspace regularly for updates on readings etc. Also please remember that *Rules for Writers* is a required resource for students in writing classes. You should have digital access to *Rules for Writers* through NYU.

## Course Requirements

### Assignments

## Essay 1

### Analysis and Response - (~750 words) / ~3 pages

For your first essay, you will produce a close analysis of an essay of your choice (I will provide a list of options). What is the conversation that the writer is responding to? What is their response—or to put it differently, what is their contribution—to the conversation? What is their argument? And how can you frame their work within our ongoing conversation about knowledge and knowledge-making? In order to identify these aspects, you must point to specific sentences, passages, or ideas from the essay and justify why these provide evidence for your interpretation. Then, as you conclude, you should briefly respond to the writer. Do you see their take on the topic as plausible? Are they overlooking something? Did they take a useful angle on the subject? And how does their text speak to *you*—to your experiences, curiosity, questions, inquiries? You should choose from among the list of essays I will provide, and you are not required to incorporate other, new sources (though, if you can do so meaningfully, of course you can!). I will provide a rubric to my assessment of your work.

## Essay 2

### Scholarly Conversation: How do we know? - (~1000 words) / ~4 pages

Your task in the Scholarly Conversation essay is to pick two texts from two different genres—an academic study of a particular topic and non-academic text (personal essay, thought piece, opinion piece, news article, etc.)—from the two lists that I will provide, and see how you can draw from their very different knowledge-production strategies a deeper, multi-faceted understanding of a particular subject matter. In this process, you will examine the texts' own strategies for making knowledge as well as tease out, or establish, the (not-so-obvious) relationships between them. How do these two texts make knowledge claims about their subject matter? How do they justify their claims to know? And what, specifically in terms of subject matter, can we gain in knowledge from them? Considering these questions is just the first step: the challenge in this assignment is to construct linkages and relationships—of difference and of similarity—between the two texts you chose. How are the two texts' approaches different? And finally, what kinds of knowledge claims can *you* make based on your reading of these two texts together? What can we learn about a particular topic from examining the relationships of these two texts?

We will learn, and I will expect from you, correct and consistent citation following any citation style. I will provide a rubric for assessment.

## Essay 3

### Research Paper - (~2000 words) / ~8 pages // Use at least 3 self-identified secondary sources and 1 primary source

For your final project, you will build on what you've learned in the first two essays in order to set up your own small research project. While until now we have read (*a*) theories about knowledge and (*b*) studies that aim to expand knowledge on certain topics, now it's your turn! In other words, your project will aim *to create knowledge*. For this, you must consider what it means to create knowledge in the first place. You must identify a question that it will be the goal

of your project to answer, and your paper will be your attempt to find answers, while taking into account what other scholars have already contributed to the topic. Trying to find answers means going beyond the already existing work of scholars: you must look at some data/source that comes directly from your topic of inquiry (primary source). The primary source will depend directly on the question you're examining.

But what should your topic be? *It can be anything you want*, provided that you can justify why your particular question merits scholarly investigation. "What is my dog's favorite game?" is not a meaningful research question, but "What does my dog's play behavior tell us about communication and bonding between humans and dogs?" can absolutely be. You will receive plenty of guidance in your choice of question/topic/primary source etc., and many of our readings also serve as great models and examples.

I expect correct and consistent citation following any citation style. I will provide a rubric for assessment.

## Portfolios

For each progression (that is, for each unit), you will maintain a folder (either a physical or an electronic folder or Drive) in which you collect all drafts and all relevant other writing (exercises, peer review comments, relevant in-class work, as well as portions of your own notes on your writing) that you have done for the specific essay. When you hand in your final draft of your essay, you will also hand in the associated portfolio. So what are the relevant materials that should go in your portfolio? As a rule of thumb, *all writing that is directly related to your essay* should be collected in your portfolio. So, for example, peer review comments by your peers on your first draft or on your outline, as well as your notes on these comments, should appear in your portfolio, while general notes on citation should not. (Though sometimes I will indicate for certain in-class assignments that these would be appropriate for the portfolio, even if they are general in nature.) That said, you should "curate" your portfolio such that it accurately represents your writing process. Thus, if, for example, you want to include your reflections, written outside of class, on how you revised your essay, I would welcome that. If you have done some free writing at home that somehow helped you develop your essay, then I would welcome that too. I am not looking for quantity, but for evidence that you have thoughtfully and actively engaged with the writing process. As a consequence, I will not penalize you for not including certain writings as long as your portfolio gives me a good insight into your writing process and your active engagement with the process. I will provide a rubric for how I assess the portfolios.

## Input questions

During the first unit, I will ask four people for each reading to help our discussion of the reading by providing *one* "input question." The question could be anything as long as it contributes meaningfully to tackling the text. For example, you could ask about a point that you found difficult and didn't understand, or identify a central problem in the text. You could also raise a point in the text that you don't agree with, or ask questions about why the author is talking about their particular issue in the first place. Please don't ask trivial questions like who the author is or

when the text was written (note, though, that it would not be trivial to ask who the author is writing for!).

You only have to ask 1 question, and I will ask you to present it to the class as we begin discussing the reading; this shouldn't take you more than a minute. If you feel really uncomfortable speaking in front of your peers, you can send me your question at least 24 hours in advance of class. But I strongly encourage you to take this chance to share your thoughts with your classmates in person.

I will not evaluate you on the "quality" of your question, because the whole point is to encourage you to think and experiment as you please. If you do not complete the assignment, though, this will adversely affect your participation grade.

## Conferences

Conferences are 30-minute sessions of one-on-one individualized conversation with me, which are meant for you to discuss your writing, ask specific questions, or work through particular problems that you're encountering. That is, conferences are *your space* to take ownership of your learning and get individualized help. Conferences will take place twice in the semester (in Progression 1 and Progression 3), though you're of course welcome to come to my office hours regularly for more individual conversation. Although I will not force you to avail yourself of a conference, I very strongly recommend that you do use them, as I have found that they help both you and me tremendously.

In weeks when conferences are scheduled, our regular class meetings may be canceled. Please check the Schedule of Classes for the relevant dates.

## Grade Breakdown

<b>Participation</b>	10%
<b>Essay 1: Analysis and Response</b>	20%
<b>Essay 2: Scholarly Conversation</b>	25%
<b>Essay 3: Research Paper</b>	30%
<b>Portfolios</b>	15%

### *A note on grading policy:*

Writing is a process, which means that perfection cannot be expected during a project's development. Most writers, myself included(!), produce terrible first drafts (and second, and third...), but this is a necessary part of the process of writing and shouldn't make the writer feel bad. For this reason, and in order not to discourage experimentation, I will not be grading first

drafts (but I will of course be providing feedback including, where appropriate, a rubric to show how your draft is doing in the various criteria). This policy is intended to allow you to test out different writing methods and strategies and work towards the one that works the best for you individually. **This does not mean that drafts don't require effort.** On the contrary: because the process of revision is essential to good writing, I will take your drafts and the subsequent changes they go through very seriously. The Portfolio part of your final grade reflects my assessment of your writing process and how much conscious effort you have invested in working to improve it.

#### Grade Scale (Letter Grades)

Letter Grade	Points	Percent
A	4.00	Example: 92.5% and higher
A-	3.67	Example: 90.0 – 92.49%
B+	3.33	Example: 87.5% - 89.99%
B	3.00	Example: 82.5% - 87.49%
B-	2.67	Example: 80% - 82.49%
C+	2.33	Example: 77.5% - 79.99%
C	2.00	Example: 72.5% - 77.49%
C-	1.67	Example: 70% - 72.49%
D+	1.33	Example: 67.5% - 69.99%
D	1.00	Example: 60% - 67.49
F	.00	Example: 59.99% and lower

#### View Grades

You will be able to access your grades via Brightspace. I encourage you to inquire about your standing at any time. Please note: the above grading scale is the one I will use for calculating your grade; in case of any discrepancies (with Brightspace or anything else), the above grading scheme will prevail.

## Schedule of Classes

	<i>Session Topics and Readings (due before class)</i>	<i>Assignments Due (11:59pm)</i>
<b>Week 1 – FIRST PROGRESSION</b>		
M, February 7	Introduction What are you curious about exploring in academia?	Please submit your introductory paragraph before next class.
W, February 9	<div>Read: Popper, “The Logic of the Social Sciences,” 87-98</div> Reading for a problem + <i>Input questions</i>	Upload your in-class worksheet after class.
<b>Week 2</b>		
M, February 14	<div>Read: Foucault, “The Human Sciences I: The Three Faces of Knowledge”</div> Reading for key moments, concepts, voices + <i>Input questions</i>	
W, February 16	Reading for key moments, concepts, voices, continued	Upload your in-class worksheet after class.
<b>Week 3</b>		
M, February 21	<div>Read: Haraway, “Situated Knowledges,” 575-585</div> Reading for structure + <i>Input questions</i>	
W, February 23	Reading for use (knowledge, theory, data)	<b>Essay 1 Draft 1</b> due on Friday, Feb 25, 11:59pm
<b>Week 4</b>		
M, February 28	Conferences: class canceled	
W, March 2	Conferences: class canceled	<b>Essay 1 Draft 2</b> due on Friday, March 4, 11:59pm
<b>Week 5 – SECOND PROGRESSION</b>		

M, March 7	<div><i>Read:</i> Chan, “Liberating or Disciplining?”</div> What is an argument and a claim? Examining an example of knowledge creation
W, March 9	Was there an argument in this class (and in your writing)?

#### Week 6

M, March 14	<div><i>Read:</i> Luo and Sun, “Are You the One?”</div> Knowledge-making part 2 Building on other scholars’ work
W, March 16	Quoting, summarizing, paraphrasing—and why

#### Week 7

M, March 21	Engaging a problem	
W, March 23	Why it matters	<i>Essay 2 Draft 1</i> due on Friday, March 25, 11:59pm

#### Week 8

M, March 28	How to revise (effectively!)	
W, March 30	Peer review	<i>Essay 2 Draft 2</i> due on Friday, Apr 1, 11:59pm

#### Week 9 – THIRD PROGRESSION

M, April 4	Coming up with a “topic” (i.e. a question)	
W, April 6	Refining your question	Submit your tentative research question by Friday, Apr 8, 11:59pm

#### Week 10

M, April 11	Library Workshop	
W, April 13	Determining method, reading in field	Submit your 1-line proposal for how to investigate your question by Friday, Apr 15, 11:59pm

#### Week 11



M, April 18 Workshop  
[Note: Conferences this week!]

W, April 20 Conferences: class canceled

Sunday, April 24 Legislative day, but class canceled for conferences

### Week 12

M, April 25 In-class workshop

W, April 27 In-class workshop *Essay 3 Draft 1* due on Friday, Apr 29, 11:59pm

### Week 13

M, May 2, Labor Day Labor Day – No classes

W, May 4 Peer review

### Week 14

M, May 9 Revision workshop

W, May 11 Concluding class *Essay 3 Draft 2* due **tonight, May 11**, at 11:59pm

## Course Policies

### Public Health Requirements and COVID-19 Student Code of Conduct

You are expected to comply with the COVID-19 Student Code of Conduct, including the requirements for physical distancing and face coverings. Classrooms have been configured accordingly. If you violate the COVID-19 Student Code of Conduct or fail to follow your instructor's related warnings, you may be asked to leave the classroom and/or may be subject to disciplinary action. You may review the Code on NYU Shanghai's [Community Standards page](https://shanghai.nyu.edu/campuslife/community-standards) (<https://shanghai.nyu.edu/campuslife/community-standards>).

### Late and Missed Assignments

Late assignments will receive a one-third deduction for each day late (ex. B+ to B). Missed assignments will earn a zero (an F). Sole exceptions will be given to medical emergencies, family emergencies, and to accommodate disability. Obligations outside this class (such as other coursework or sporting events) will not justify lateness. I will only grant extensions in rare cases, and only if you ask for them in a timely manner (that is, at least 24 hours before the deadline). Re-writes are also possible in rare circumstances; if you ask for a re-write, you must revise your paper very substantially, that is, you must change several major aspects and parts of your essay for me to consider a better grade.

## Attendance

- You are expected to attend all scheduled classes. If you are unable to attend a class, notify me before that class.
- Unexcused absences will affect your ability to complete the course successfully.
- Regardless of your performance, if you are absent the equivalent 5 times, your final grade will be lowered a full letter grade (e.g., from a B+ to a C+). If you are absent the equivalent of 7 times, you will fail the course. The two single exceptions to this policy are the following:
  - You may miss class for the observance of religious holidays. If you anticipate being absent because of religious observance, notify me in advance so we can create a plan for making up missed work.
  - If you are ill and need to miss more than one week of classes, you must speak to the Health & Wellness Office. Once Health and Wellness verifies the reasons for your extended absence, I will consult with Academic Affairs and recommend the best course of action so that you may complete the course successfully. I will not look at doctor's notes, both for your health privacy reasons and because I cannot verify the authenticity or content of the notes.
- Coming late to class will adversely impact your participation grade.
- Disturbing the work of the class (such as repeatedly walking out to use the bathroom, eating, using electronics for anything other than class) will adversely impact your participation grade.
- In-person students who cannot attend class due to quarantine/isolation should communicate their situation in a timely fashion and be prepared to adapt to the provided accommodations to continue contributing to the class. The method of accommodation is at my discretion. Being in quarantine does not give you a "pass" to skip class or submit work late without prior arrangement.
- Outside of religious absences and those verified by university administration, I do not distinguish between excused and unexcused absences. For remote students, I also do not distinguish between absence from a synchronous class and absence from an asynchronous class (that is, failure to make the minimum contributions required to be considered "present" during the submission window for asynchronous work).

## Electronics Policy

*Electronic Devices:* Do not use electronics (phone, computer, social media, etc.) in class for any reason other than for class work. I will notice, and it will adversely affect your participation grade. That said, we're in the 21<sup>st</sup> century, so class-related electronics use is permitted.

*Recording Class:* To ensure the free and open discussion of ideas, you may not record classroom lectures, discussion and/or activities in any form without my advance written permission; if permitted, any such recording can be used solely for your own private use. If you have approved accommodations from the Office of Disability Resources permitting the recording of class meetings, you must present the accommodation letter to me in advance of any recording. Distribution or sale of class recordings is prohibited without the written permission of the instructor and other students who are recorded.

## Instructional Technology

*Communication:* I will contact you regularly via the Brightspace system. You should check for emails from me (reminders, logistics, updates, etc.) at the email address connected to Brightspace. Please note that I will try to respond to your emails within 24 hours; but please do not expect responses late at night or on the weekends. It's usually not a good idea to try and get in touch with me a few hours before a deadline. Be respectful, give me time, and I will do my best to support your learning.

*Assignment Notification:* All assignments will be posted to our class Brightspace site. You are responsible for looking at Brightspace after each class period to learn about the next homework assignment.

*Assignment Submission:* All assignments will be submitted on Brightspace. If you for any reason cannot submit an assignment on Brightspace, let me know and we will brainstorm a solution. As a rule, I don't accept email submissions. You're of course welcome to ask me questions, also about your work, via email.

*Instructional Tools:* We will be using various instructional technology resources in this class. You can learn about the tools used in this class through the [Student Digital Learning Toolkit](#). You are responsible for communicating with me in a timely fashion if you are facing any challenges using these tools.

*Instructional Technology Assistance:* If you need assistance with these tools, check the RITS website [here](#) or the RITS Toolkit [here](#), or you may email [shanghai.rits@nyu.edu](mailto:shanghai.rits@nyu.edu).

## Academic Integrity

As my colleague Marcos Martínez puts it, “[a]cademic writing builds on the work of others who have written and created before us. Academic writers use and cite the ideas, words, and images of others in order to document grounds for knowledge, illuminate contexts of argument, acknowledge intellectual influences, distinguish our own analytical voices, and encourage further investigation and inquiry. If, on the other hand, we take others' work as our own--using their phrases, images, concepts, or arguments without acknowledgement--we not only hamper these goals but also cross the line into academic dishonesty. **The presentation of another person's words, ideas, judgment, images, or data as though they were your own, whether intentionally or unintentionally, constitutes an act of plagiarism**” (Martínez, n.d.).

Carefully read NYU Shanghai's *Statement on Academic Integrity* (in the [Undergraduate Bulletin](https://shanghai.nyu.edu/academics/curriculum/bulletin) [<https://shanghai.nyu.edu/academics/curriculum/bulletin>]). Breaches of academic integrity could result in failure of an assignment, failure of the course, or other sanctions, as determined by the Academic Affairs office.

## Disability Disclosure Statement

NYU Shanghai is committed to providing equal educational opportunity and participation for students with disabilities. It is NYU Shanghai's policy that no student with a qualified disability be excluded from participating in any NYU Shanghai program or activity, denied the benefits of any NYU Shanghai program or activity, or otherwise subjected to discrimination with regard to any NYU Shanghai program or activity. Any student who needs a reasonable accommodation based on a qualified disability should register with the [Moses Center for Student Accessibility](https://www.nyu.edu/students/communities-and-groups/student-accessibility.html) (<https://www.nyu.edu/students/communities-and-groups/student-accessibility.html>) for assistance. Students can [register online](https://www.nyu.edu/students/communities-and-groups/student-accessibility/academic.html) through the Moses Center (at <https://www.nyu.edu/students/communities-and-groups/student-accessibility/academic.html>) and can contact the Academic Accommodations Team at [shanghai.academicaccommodations@nyu.edu](mailto:shanghai.academicaccommodations@nyu.edu) with questions or for assistance.

## Title IX Statement

Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 (Title IX) prohibits discrimination on the basis of sex in educational programs. It protects victims of sexual or gender-based bullying and harassment and survivors of gender-based violence. Protection from the discrimination on the basis of sex includes protection from being retaliated against for filing a complaint of discrimination or harassment. NYU Shanghai is committed to complying with Title IX and enforcing University policies prohibiting discrimination on the basis of sex. Mary Signor, Executive Director of the Office of Equal Opportunity, serves as the University's Title IX Coordinator. The Title IX Coordinator is a resource for any questions or concerns about sex discrimination, sexual harassment, sexual violence, or sexual misconduct and is available to discuss your rights and judicial options. University policies define prohibited conduct, provide informal and formal procedures for filing a complaint and a prompt and equitable resolution of complaints.

### Links to the Title IX Policy and related documents:

- [Sexual Misconduct, Relationship Violence, and Stalking Policy](#)
- [Procedures for Complaints Against Students](#)
- [Procedures for Complaints Against Employees](#)
- [Resource Guide for Students](#)
- [Resource Guide for Employees](#)

## Academic Resources

### ARC Services

The Academic Resource Center (ARC) offers both individual, one-on-one tutoring as well as group sessions in a variety of ways, in a variety of courses. You can log on to [WOnline](#) to book an appointment with a Global Writing & Speaking Fellow or a Learning Assistant (LA). The Global Writing & Speaking Fellows conduct individual consultations on writing, speaking, reading, and academic skills coaching. LAs provide both individual and small-group tutoring support in over 30 STEM, Business, Economics, IMA/IMB, and Chinese Language classes. Visit [shanghai.nyu.edu/arc](https://shanghai.nyu.edu/arc) for more information about ARC services.

### Library Support

The Library is available to support your research needs. They have access to over 20,000 print resources, 2,000 DVDs, and 1,000 databases (including over a million e-books, as well as streaming audio and video and image databases).

Librarians with expertise in your research topic are available to meet either *in person* or *online* [by appointment](#) or [by email](#) to help you navigate the research process, from developing a research question and formulating a research strategy, to selecting databases, requesting materials, and citing your sources. Visit [shanghai.nyu.edu/library](https://shanghai.nyu.edu/library) for more information on:

- 24/7 access to e-books, e-journals, streaming media, and databases
- Booking one-on-one consultations for research help
- [Asking the Library](#) questions via chat or e-mail

*Electronic Reserves:* Students can access course readings using their NYU credentials for courses they currently enrolled in at <https://ares.library.nyu.edu/>

*Interlibrary Loan Service:* For materials not available to you immediately, you can request scanned copies of a book chapter or journal article through our [Interlibrary Loan \(ILL\) service](#). If you don't know which chapter you need, you can request a Table of Content through ILL.