

Humphrey Institute of Public Affairs
Professor Ann Markusen

PA 5990 Sec 3, SPR 2005
2:30-4:25 Tu, Th
January 18-March 10

5990 Writing for Planners and Policymakers

Grade Option: (A/F), no auditors permitted

This workshop is designed for MURP, MPP and MS students writing professional papers or theses. The emphasis is on making and supporting a strong argument on research, a planning exercise or policy analysis. The course is designed to ensure that all students complete their professional papers three weeks before graduation. In the final week two weeks of the course, each student will make an oral presentation of his/her completed work to the class.

The workshop will begin with several weeks of reading on the process of professional writing combined with reports from each student on his/her paper/thesis project. Readings will cover the writing process, the statement of powerful ideas, audience analysis, peer feedback and developing powerful language. The middle section of the course will involve presentation and feedback on each student's writing. The third and final section will focus on revision of first drafts to reach a final product and on oral presentation.

Class sessions for the first six weeks will consist of discussions of the readings, writing exercises and peer group feedback. Sessions will cover the writing process, the statement of powerful ideas, audience analysis, peer feedback and developing powerful language. For peer feedback sessions, you will select three pages – 750 words – of your work-in-progress to share with a group of 4-6 other students. This means arriving at the session with copies of the pages so that each group member can follow along as the piece is read (and one for the instructor). Each student will have an opportunity for his/her work to be read and discussed by the group during the first half of the term. Class sessions later in the term will focus in depth on the quality of the organization, arguments and presentation of each paper.

Each student will also keep a personal journal. This is informal writing you do nearly every day (2-3 entries per week in addition to what we do in class). Focus on ideas, images, and experiences that come to mind as you take the course – Elbow and Goldberg have many good suggestions for getting started. You may want to adopt a theme for your journal that complements some personal or intellectual project you have underway (examples: personal memories of doing fieldwork; examinations of a major human dilemma such as death or racism; reflections on your life in graduate school; your struggles with your paper). Use computer or handwriting or a combination. Try to think of this as an inspired conversation with yourself where you try out different “voices” and practice “wild mind” writing. We may sometimes share bits of journal writing in class on a voluntary basis, but you will never be required to show your journal to any one. At the end of the course, each student will write a brief (four or less double-spaced pages) overview about what you have experienced in keeping a journal.

Writing Standards: The drafts to be shared with the group, the final paper and the journal overview should all be typed, double-spaced, and in 12 point font. If you try to pack more on a page, you will be caught! Please proofread each carefully.

Grading: Class participation (mandatory) and teamwork: 50%
Final paper and presentation: 50%

Texts:

Elbow, Peter. *Writing with Power: Techniques for Mastering the Writing Process*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1981, 1998. (paperback)

Flower, Linda. *Problem-Solving Strategies for Writing*. Harcourt-Brace, 1998 (paperback)

Goldberg, Natalie. *Writing Down the Bones: Freeing the Writer Within*. Boston: Shambhala Press, 1986. (paperback)

Strunk, William and E. B. White. *The Elements of Style*. New York: Scribners (1979 or more recent) (paperback)

Reader:

Dunlap, Louise. *Powerful Writing Toolkit*, 2000. Mimeo.

Dunlap, Louise. "Advocacy and Neutrality: A Contradiction in the Discourse of Urban Planners." In Anne Herrington and Charles Moran, eds. *Writing, Teaching and Learning in the Disciplines*. New York: The Modern Language Association of America, 1992: 213-230.

Anderson, Paul. "Making Oral Presentations." In *Technical Writing: A Reader-Centered Approach*, New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, Ch. 10: 761-792.

Elbow, Peter. "The Shifting Relationships between Speech and Writing." *College Composition and Communication*, Vol. 36, No. 3: October, 1985: 283-303.

Dunlap, Louise. "Language and Power: Teaching Writing to Third World Graduate Students." In Bishwapriya Sanyal, ed. *Breaking the Boundaries: A One-World Approach to Planning Education*. New York: Plenum Press: 56-81.

Becker, Howard. "Persona and Authority." Ch. 2., *Writing for Social Scientists*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1986: 26-42.

January 18 Introductions. Papers shared. Free writing.

January 20 Goals exercise. Groups formed. Free writing.

Dunlap, Louise. Tool #1. Freewriting

Goldberg, Natalie. *Writing down the Bones*. 1-22, 41-42, 68-71.

Elbow, Peter. *Writing with Power*, 6-31

January 25 Getting ready to write or speak.

Dunlap, Louise. Tool #2. Trust the Process

Dunlap, Louise. "Advocacy and Neutrality: A Contradiction in the Discourse of Urban Planners." In Anne Herrington and Charles Moran, eds. *Writing, Teaching and Learning in the Disciplines*. New York: The Modern Language Association of America, 1992: 213-230.

Reading Reports:

Elbow, Peter. "More Ways of Getting Words on Paper," *Writing with Power*, 47-100.

Anderson, Paul. "Making Oral Presentations." In *Technical Writing: A Reader-Centered Approach*, New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, Ch. 10: 761-792.

January 27 Differences between speaking and writing.

Dunlap, Louise. Tool #3. Powerful Ideas.

Flower, Linda. "Generating Ideas," "Organizing Ideas." *Problem-Solving Strategies for Writing*. Ch. 6, 7.

Reading Reports:

Elbow, Peter. "The Shifting Relationships between Speech and Writing." *College Composition and Communication*, Vol. 36, No. 3: October, 1985: 283-303.

Review your journal so far and be prepared to share something about it.

February 1 The art of giving and getting feedback. Empirical versus judgmental feedback.

Dunlap, Louise. Tool #5. Peer Feedback.
 Elbow, Peter. *Writing with Power*, 20-25.
 Goldberg, Natalie, *Writing Down the Bones*, 52-4, 57-8, 77-81.

Feedback for one person per groups (bring copies of a segment of your project.)

February 3 Feedback for two people per group.

February 8 Feedback for two people per group.

February 10 Balancing the power of writers and the power of audiences.
 Coming to terms with your audience *after* a first draft.

Flower, Linda. "Designing for a Reader." *Problem-Solving Strategies for Writing*. Ch.9.

Goldberg, Natalie. *Writing down the Bones*, 43-47

Reading reports:

Elbow, Peter. "Audience," *Writing with Power*, 177-236.

Dunlap, Louise. "Language and Power: Teaching Writing to Third World Graduate Students." In Bishwapriya Sanyal, ed. *Breaking the Boundaries: A One-World Approach to Planning Education*. New York: Plenum Press: 56-81.

February 15 Revising with an audience in mind. The art of introduction.

Dunlap, Louise. Tool #4. Audience Analysis.
 And "Democratic Feedback." Xerox.

Reading reports:

Elbow, Peter. "More Ways to Revise," *Writing with Power*, 121-176.

Flower, Linda. "Reader-based Prose." *Problem-Solving Strategies for Writing*. Ch. 10.

February 17 Powerful language and the grammar gatekeepers

Dunlap, Louise. Tool #6. Powerful Language.

Strunk and White, *Elements of Style*. Whole book.

Reading reports:

Becker, Howard. "Persona and Authority." Ch. 2., *Writing for Social Scientists*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1986: 26-42.

February 22 Feedback for two people per group.

February 24 Feedback for two people per group.

March 1 Feedback for one person. Reflections on the group process.

March 3 Oral presentations for half the class.

March 8 Oral presentations for half the class.

March 10 Ending our work and thinking about next steps.

Final draft and journal overview due.

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Reading Reports Sign-up sheet:

January 25Elbow, Peter. "More Ways of Getting Words
on Paper" _____

Anderson, Paul. "Making Oral Presentations" _____

January 27Elbow, Peter. "The Shifting Relationships
between Speech and Writing" _____**February 10**

Elbow, Peter. "Audience" _____

Dunlap, Louise. "Language and Power" _____

February 15

Elbow, Peter. "More Ways to Revise" _____

Flower, Linda. "Reader-based Prose" _____

February 17

Becker, Howard. "Persona and Authority" _____