



# STS 200: Writing the Critical Thought Essay

Dan Harvey, TA, Writing Across the Curriculum

# Writing Across the Curriculum

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## Presentations to Classes

### Fall 2010

**Graduate Students Writing Workshop**

**Writing Genres**  
**Elements of Scholarly Academic Papers**  
University of Alberta, November 18 2010

**Nursing 390: The Scholarly Paper**  
Faculty of Nursing, November 5 2010

**Political Science 101: The Scholarly Research Essay**  
Faculty of Arts, November 5 2010

**RLS 502: The Thought Paper and Thesis Proposal**  
Faculty of Physical Education, Recreation, and Leisure Studies, October 25 2010

**Mechanical Engineering 200: Writing the 500 word paper**  
Faculty of Engineering, October 25 2010

**Religious Studies 274: How to write the long essay**  
Faculty of Arts, October 18 2010

  
**Presentations to Classes**

Centre for Writers  
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WRS Courses  
Roger Graves  
Blog  
Academic Honesty

# Presentation slides



## Roger Graves

Director, Writing Across the Curriculum

Professor, EFS

February 8, 2010

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writing initiatives

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As Director of Writing Across the Curriculum, I'll be working with faculty and students across the university to improve student writing. I consult with instructors and departments, and I teach writing in a wide variety of courses when students in those courses are starting a writing assignment. I will also be working with students and faculty in the Department of English and Film Studies, my home department.

I am the author, co-author, or editor of six books and 29 articles, including *Writing Instruction in Canadian Universities*. My current research interests include the development of doctoral student writing, writing assignments across disciplinary fields, and rhetorical approaches to text encoding. Currently I serve as co-President of the Canadian Association for the Study of Discourse and Writing (CASDW), the

### Recent presentations to classes

This page contains links to slides displayed at presentations I've given to classes.

### Research and faculty presentations

### Digital rhetoric



# Centre for Writers



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<a href="#">Home</a>	<a href="#">Home &gt; Home</a>
<a href="#">Book An Appointment</a>	<h2>Welcome to the Centre for Writers</h2>
<a href="#">Contact Us</a>	<p>We offer free writing support to all students, instructors and staff at the University of Alberta – in any subject, discipline, program, or project at any stage of the writing process</p>
<a href="#">About Us</a>	<p><b>To BOOK, CHANGE, or CANCEL APPOINTMENTS, please click <a href="#">HERE</a></b></p>
<a href="#">Hours and Location</a>	<p>This website also offers style manuals, dictionaries, ESL/EAL resources, writing handbooks, and discipline-specific writing resource</p>
<a href="#">Tutor Bios</a>	<p>C4W will be open during the Fall Term (September 20 - December 10):</p>
<a href="#">Policies</a>	<p>Monday to Thursday : 10:00AM – 7:00 PM</p>
<a href="#">Centre for Writers Guiding Principles</a>	<p>Friday : 10:00 AM – 5:00 PM</p>
<a href="#">FAQ</a>	<p><b>Professors/Instructors: request a classroom visit by a tutor.</b></p>
<a href="#">Resources</a>	<p>Are you a U of A student? Do you want to work as a tutor at the Centre for Writers next year? Click <a href="#">here</a> for more information!</p>
<a href="#">Other Writing Centres</a>	
<a href="#">WAC</a>	
<a href="#">WRS</a>	
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# The writing process

## Getting started

- Explore the assignment
- Make rough notes
- Pick a tentative topic

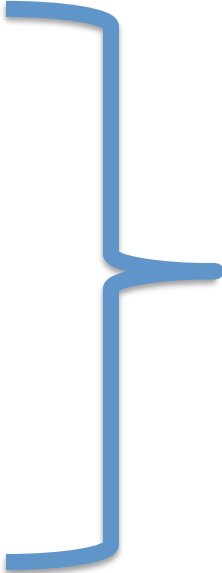
## Getting feedback

- Make an appointment at the Centre for Writers
- Get feedback on your draft/revise

## Revising

- Work on style and lower order concerns
- Proofread, consult checklist for assignment

# Organizing your paper

- Introduction 1/2 - 3/4 page
  - Body 3 1/2 - 4 pages
  - Conclusion 1/2 - 3/4 page
  - References
- 5 pages total**
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# The assignment

Choose one of the following “Questions for Critical Thought” to answer in your essay. Use the textbook and one “Suggested Reading” from the appropriate chapter to **formulate your argument** and write your essay. Proper citation and bibliographic practices are expected.

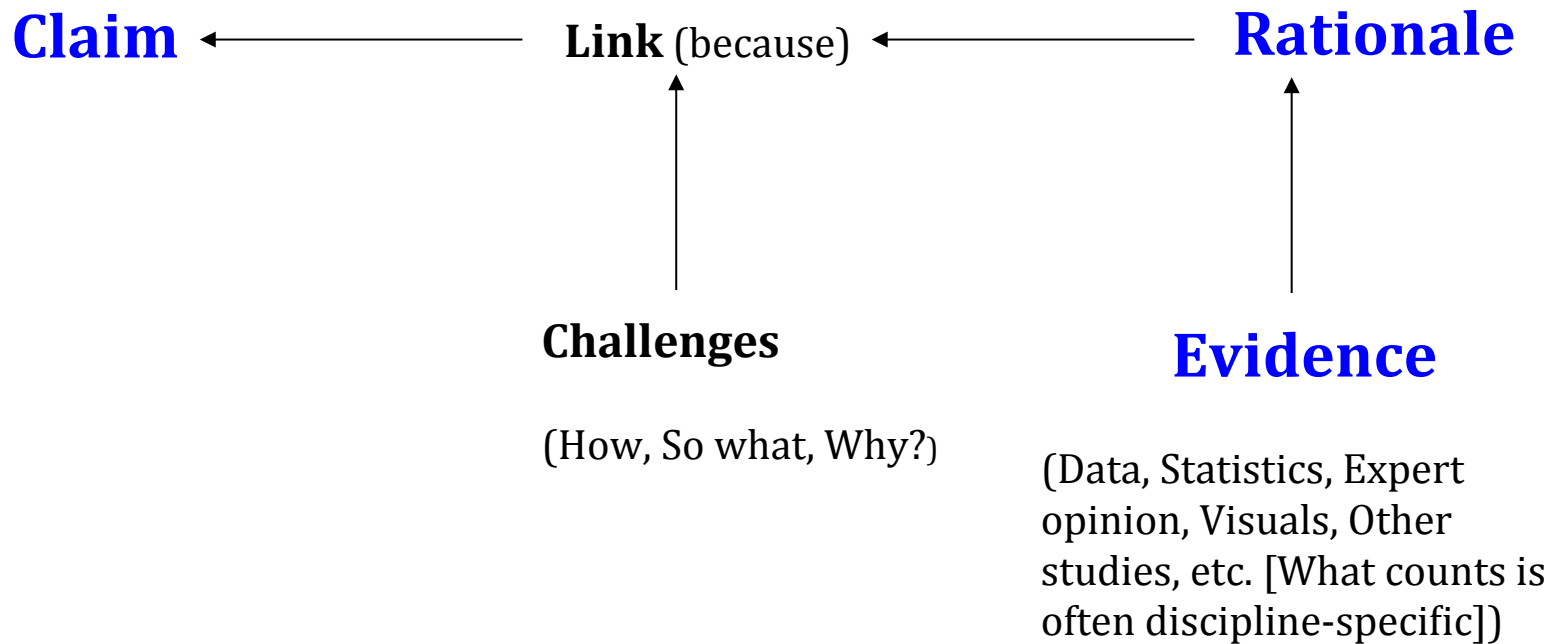
“Argument” = you need to take a **position**

# Possible topics

- 1) **Compare and contrast** the theoretical view of technology as power with that of technology as mechanization.
- 2) **Describe** how the iPod feeds into the creation of a hyper-post-Fordist culture and how this is different from a Fordist Culture.
- 3) When **comparing** utopian and dystopian views of technology, which one do you think has more applicability to society today? **Provide a rationale** for your point of view.
- 4) **What are the key premises** of object and social affordances? **Discuss** how this framework applies to the use of Facebook.
- 5) Using QWERTY as an example, **discuss** the concept of nondiffusion. **What are the types** of socio-economic or cultural variables that can underpin nondiffusion?



# Informal logic



# Make a claim

- 1) When **comparing** utopian and dystopian views of technology, which one do you think has more applicability to society today? **Provide a rationale** for your point of view.

Possible position statement:

# Rationale

Utopian:

Dystopian:

# Evidence

What kinds of things count as evidence in STS 200?

# Position/thesis statement

When **comparing** utopian and dystopian views of technology, which one do you think has more applicability to society today? **Provide a rationale** for your point of view.

“In contemporary society, technology increasing leads to dystopian outcomes, as advances in surveillance, biometrics, and telecommunications actively limit the freedom, privacy, and personal autonomy of individuals.”



# Introduction

- Introduces topic

“This paper examines the role of technology in contemporary society and....”

- Explicitly states your position

“I argue that technology increasing leads to dystopian outcomes, as advances in surveillance, biometrics, and telecommunications actively limit the freedom, privacy, and personal autonomy of individuals.”

- Provides an outline of the paper

“After defining what I mean by “dystopian,” I take up three representative technologies—CCTV, fingerprint/iris scanners, and social media websites such as Facebook—and show how the detrimental effects of each outweigh their benefits. I argue that such effects demonstrate the beginnings of a more controlling and dystopic society.”

# Outline

1. Introduction
2. Body paragraph 1
  1. Def. of “dystopian” vs “utopian”
3. Body paragraph 2
  1. Surveillance: CCTV in Britain
4. Body paragraph 3
  1. Fingerprint/Iris scanners
5. Body paragraph 4
  1. Facebook
6. Body paragraph 5
  1. Relate 2-4 together, show similarities
7. Counter-argument?

# Position/thesis statement

**What are the key premises** of object and social affordances? **Discuss** how this framework applies to the use of Facebook.

Position:

# Outline

1. Introduction

Conclusion

# Position/thesis statement

Using QWERTY as an example, **discuss** the concept of nondiffusion. **What are the types** of socio-economic or cultural variables that can underpin nondiffusion?

Position:



# Outline

1. Introduction

Conclusion

# Conclusion

How do you “get out” of the paper?

1. Summary of position

2. Implications?

1. Professional
2. Science/technology
3. Further research
4. Political/judicial
5. Social/cultural

3. Connections/insights?

# Drafting/revising

- Get a “trusted reader” to provide feedback
- Consider using other students in the class, the Centre for Writers or group tutorials for this
- Ask readers to read for a purpose: e.g., focus on thesis, structure, intro/conclusion, transitions, etc.

# Don't hand in a first draft!

Towards the due date, shift your focus from

**Higher-order concerns** (argument, thesis, structure, evidence), to

**Lower-order concerns** (proof-reading, grammar, punctuation, citation style, format)