

ERS 2500: Communication Across Topics in Energy

Spring 2017 T/Th 11:00-12:15

Engineering Building 1055

Instructors: Bethann Merkle bmerkle@uwyo.edu & Kevin Kelley kkelle18@uwyo.edu

Offices: Hoyt Hall; Bethann (326); Kevin (225) **Office Hours:** By appointment and _____

Welcome!

We are excited to embark on this journey of writing, thinking, and communication with you! This won't be your typical academic experience. While you will do research, present arguments, and think carefully about how an audience will respond, you won't write standard academic research papers, and you won't be writing just to your course instructors.

Instead, ERS 2500 will give you first-hand experience communicating inside and outside your discipline. Collaboration through written, oral, and digital communication is how we engage with, and implement change in, the world. Whether or not your goals are to work in an energy field, communicating your ideas to people inside and outside of your field, and listening to people inside and outside of your field, is critical to professional and civic success.

And so, in ERS 2500 you will continuously create, interpret, and share your writing, research, and thinking about how energy impacts what we think, what we do, and how we do it. Throughout the course, you will push the boundaries of your creativity and critical thinking; assets for any professional.

At the end of the semester, you'll have at least two major products that will demonstrate your communication skills - an audio recording and a multi-media project. These will be powerful portfolio pieces you can use to demonstrate to potential employers, collaborators, and funders just how you're able to integrate traditional and 21st-century communication skills to make energy issues accessible and interesting to a non-specialist audiences.

What we're going to work on together won't make for the easiest class you've been in. But that's okay. We believe that authentic learning requires that we take risks, make mistakes, and learn from our experiences. Learning also requires flexibility, repetition, and exploration on our way to mastering skills and knowledge. For this class, we will all strive to contribute to a positive and comfortable learning environment for one another. This includes respecting and actively engaging with the people, ideas, topics, and issues in our course.

We really can't wait to get started! Thank for collaborating with us as we all together use ERS 2500 to explore an innovative and empowering way to enhance energy-related communication skills!



COURSE GOALS & LEARNING OUTCOMES

Why an SER communications course like this?

This is the third year SER has offered a discipline-specific COM 2 course to ensure you will come out better prepared to communicate within and beyond your discipline. ERS 2500 was established in collaboration with the MFA in Creative Writing Program, because SER is committed to providing SER students with a communication experience that truly prepares you for communicating across topics, disciplines, and perspectives in energy. There are a lot of kinds of energy, as the program's diverse student body and program specialties demonstrate. And, there are a lot of perspectives on how energy is (and has been) involved with historical and modern developments in fields as disparate as wildlife management, resource extraction, urban development, warfare, telecommunications, photography, and space exploration. SER and the Creative Writing Program select MFA students to teach this course deliberately. Your instructors this semester are trained in compelling nonfiction communication, which is an essential skillset for SER professionals-in-training about to enter a rapidly changing field. In particular, you need to be able to communicate productively with non-specialists, even about contentious topics. And, you need to be able to do that in a wide range of forums. As a result, ERS 2500 has been revised. The curriculum takes into account student feedback from the past two iterations, and the course now emphasizes cross-disciplinary writing, public speaking, and professional email communication skills. In ERS 2500, SER and your instructors are committed to offering you real-world communication experience and training that will result in marketable skills.

Learning Outcomes

ERS 2500 meets the USP 2015 COM2. Students in the course will develop skills in written, oral, and digital communication as appropriate to an ERS 2000-level class. Through classroom instruction, student practice, and peer and instructor feedback, this COM2 course emphasizes and progressively develops transferable skills for students' general academic work and future professions. As a course developed for students in any major, ERS 2500 emphasizes generalist academic conventions in writing, oral, and digital communication, though it introduces academic conventions specific to the field of energy studies.

By the end of the course we hope that you will achieve these goals as writers:

- Purposefully use and understand the composing process and appreciate the importance of revision.
- Develop an awareness of yourself as a communicator in written, oral, and digital forms so that you can navigate future communicative situations in your field and life.
- Know how to provide and use constructive feedback on a variety of tasks.
- Create a body of personal work which elaborates how energy relates to aspects of daily life, civic engagement, the environment, and/or other topics of interest to you.

By the end of the course we hope that you will achieve these goals as SER majors:

- Confidently apply written, oral, and digital communication towards a wide spectrum of needs within the study of Energy Systems/Sciences.
- Develop professionally; gain a valuable, marketable skill set that will be required for leadership in your professional future.
- Develop intellectually and deepen your critical intuition towards complex energy issues and the rhetorics that surround them

DISABILITY STATEMENT

If you have a physical, learning, sensory or psychological disability and require accommodations, please let us know as soon as possible. You will need to register with, and provide documentation of your disability to University Disability Support Services (UDSS) in SEO, room 330, Knight Hall.

WRITING SUPPORT

University of Wyoming data indicates students who seek additional support for their coursework tend to do better. As instructors, we are here to support your writing efforts. We will be actively engaged in your work throughout the course, in class and in response to assignments. We will meet with you several times during conferences dedicated to discussing your work as you progress throughout the semester. We are also available for additional meetings during office hours or by appointment. We will provide regular feedback on your writing, and we will bring in resources, suggest additional readings, etc., as we think you may find them useful.

Additionally, the UW Writing Center (in Coe Library room 302) helps writers at any stage of the writing process. With a focus on teaching and learning, the Writing Center is not a "fix-it shop," but they help writers identify, articulate, and implement improvements and corrections to their writing. We strongly encourage you to take advantage of this free top-notch writing support. You can drop in to see if a consultant is available and/or schedule an appointment online at uwyo.edu/writing-center.

REQUIRED MATERIALS

All course texts will be provided. Most material will be posted on WyoCourses, apart from some items provided by the UW Art Museum. Make sure to bring a writing utensil and your printed readings to class every day, as well as something to take notes on. You are welcome to bring your computer/tablet for class-related work. **ALWAYS BRING A PRINTED CURRENT DRAFT OF YOUR WRITING TO CLASS.** We will use YOUR writing every day for full-class activities, small-group workshops, and individual revision. **Most importantly, bring your enthusiasm, curiosity, and good will to class every day.**

COURSEWORK

Coursework will often build upon previous work, so that you can create final projects and prepare for oral presentations. Because thinking and communicating go hand-in-hand, and because revision is an essential aspect of the composition process, most assignments will involve a combination of drafts, peer reviews, and instructor feedback. Demonstrated engagement in the composition process will be a key component of how your work is graded.

In this course, you will focus on two projects, one for each half of the semester. You will receive rubrics and explanations of specific expectations, along with numerous brainstorming, research, drafting, and revision assignments, at appropriate stages of each project.

1. Participation and Informal Assignments (20% of final grade, divided between Midterm and Final by 10% each)

Every day, you will be responsible for engaging in class discussion as an informed, thoughtful, and respectful classmate. In order to get the most out of class, and to be a valuable addition to your classmates' experiences, please arrive in class having read and engaged with the material assigned. Similarly, because much in-class work will depend upon the writing, revision, and research you do outside of class, please come to class with assigned writing, revision, and research work completed and printed.

We will have one-on-one student-instructor conferences on your work. They are, among other things, an opportunity to speak with us about any concerns or ideas you have for your work in progress. These conferences are mandatory and count as your attendance and participation for that week. Showing up, on time, with a complete draft of your paper in hand will help you find these conferences productive and meaningful. An electronic version of your draft will be due at least 12 hours before your conference so we can review it before meeting with you. You will turn in an electronic copy (via WyoCourses) *and* a print copy of major assignments and full and final drafts of essays.

Informal assignments may include, but are not limited to: drafts, emails, designs, reflections, analyses, proposals, peer-feedback, and practice presentations.

3. Audio Script and Report (40% of final grade): Due 3/9

The Audio Script and Report is the culminating mid-term project. You will first develop a report on an art piece included in the course's wall in the UW Art Museum Teaching Gallery. You and your classmates together will decide which students work on which pieces. You will work individually but will likely be in conversation with the others working on your piece. Your report will include a) the background of the piece and b) the way(s) that you have chosen to explore how energy intersects with the piece.

To create this report, you will conduct research, work with UW Art Museum professionals, and communicate by email with an energy-related professional and an art-related professional (two individual people) associated in some way with your chosen art piece. This report will then be distilled into a brief (max. 3-min.) publicly accessible audio guide for UW's Art Museum. The report and audio guide will prepare you to address in-person questions on your chosen art piece during a community event. This event will be held during class time and will take place at the museum right after Spring Break.

4. Multimedia Project and Presentation (40% of final grade): Due 5/2

The Multimedia Project is the culminating project for the second half of the term. You will create this project by selecting an idea, topic, or issue to explore related to energy. Then you will create *something* to communicate about that idea, topic, or issue. For example, you might draw a set of comics, produce a short video, design a video game, develop an interactive website, or create artwork or music, write lesson plans, or who knows what else! We will provide lots of ideas and examples, as well as facilitate project brainstorming, planning, and connecting you with resources, etc. But ultimately, you get to decide upon your own project. Thus, this project is a significant opportunity to pursue a theme, topic, or question, relating to energy, that most interests you.

To ensure your Multimedia Project meets course expectations and is feasible within the time allotted, you will create a proposal first. Upon receiving instructor approval, you will use writing and research processes, along with other multimedia processes appropriate to your proposal, to realize your project. During the last week of classes, you will present your Multimedia Project to the class and invited viewers from within and beyond SER.

NOTE: Your Multimedia Project will be text in the broad sense, meaning it should be able to communicate *without you saying or doing anything*. Don't worry - this does not preclude pre-recorded audio. While you will be present, but your audience should be able to access/understand the project without you presenting or explaining it *in person*.

GRADING

Scale:

Participation and Informal Assignments (20%)
Audio Script and Report (40%)
Multimedia Project (40%)

90-100 = A
80-89 = B
70-79 = C
60-69 = D
Under 60 = F

You should turn in drafts of assignments on the dates they are due. Failure to do so can result in a reduction in your grade on that assignment and/or in your final course grade. In extreme circumstances, failure to turn in assignments can result in failure of the course. If you anticipate needing a deadline extension, you should make such arrangements at least one week prior to the due date.

TECHNOLOGY REQUIREMENTS AND RESTRICTIONS

You need consistent access to a working computer and printer for this course. In the event your computer or printer is not functioning, plan ahead so you are prepared to arrange for your own access to university equipment. If you wish to use e-versions of course readings, you may use personal technology in class, but do not allow yourself to be distracted by email or the Web during class time. Students whose excessive in-class use of electronic devices distracts themselves, other students, or the instructor will receive lower participation grades, request to leave the classroom (which will result in an absence), etc., as the situation warrants.

ATTENDANCE/PARTICIPATION POLICY

Your participation in class exercises and discussion is critical to the quality of your experience in the course and the success of your fellow students. You should attend each class session prepared to actively participate in class discussions. If you anticipate being absent, please make arrangements with your instructors *prior* to your absence, in order to turn in assignments due, in-class work which takes place the day you are absent, etc.

We will keep track of attendance and your participation in class discussion. As this is a Tuesday/Thursday class, you will be allowed a maximum of two unexcused absences before additional absences severely affect your final grade. For each absence after two, you will be penalized by 10% from your total potential course grade.

Unexcused absences are counted against your participation in the class. Reasons for anticipated absences must be cleared with an instructor before the absence. The University of Wyoming does not accept doctor's notes. Excuses for emergency absences must be reported to an instructor as soon as possible, but not more than one week after returning to class. We will grant excused absences according to the university policy. University-sponsored absences are cleared through the Office of Student Life. See the University Student Absence Policy (6-713) at <http://www.uwyo.edu/generalcounsel/info.asp?p=3077>

ACADEMIC HONESTY

UW Regulation 6-802: The University of Wyoming is built upon a strong foundation of integrity, respect and trust. All members of the university community have a responsibility to be honest and the right to expect honesty from others. Any form of academic dishonesty is unacceptable to our community and will not be tolerated [from the UW General Bulletin]. Teachers and students should report suspected violations of standards of academic honesty to the instructor, department head, or dean. In keeping with UW's Honesty Code, ERS 2500 prohibits acts of plagiarism, which for the purpose of this course is defined as presenting the work of others as one's own without appropriate attribution and/or citation. Plagiarism ranges from submitting a paper written by someone else, to copying partial paragraphs or sentences without proper attribution, to duplicating sentence structures, ideas, images, or information from any source (books, periodicals, the Internet, or others) without proper permission and attribution. Other University regulations can be found at: <http://uwadmnweb.uwyo.edu/legal/universityregulations.htm>

COURSE SCHEDULE

Everything in this schedule is subject to change. ☺ Please be flexible; we will provide as much notice as possible if anything changes. Course readings, assignments, and contents will be adjusted to your needs as we move through this together. *Such changes may include guest speakers as relevant and possible; guest speakers will be scheduled based on the projects and research that you develop.*

Tuesday	Thursday
<p>1/24 In class:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Introductions to instructors, class, each other ● Discussion: What makes energy interesting to you? ● Authentic learning discussion + assignment ● SER intro to intent of course 	<p>1/26 Due: 250 words outlining a) your strengths and weaknesses as a writer, and b) what you want to get out of the class (in terms of writing skills) In class:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Discuss assignment ● Discuss syllabus ● Email assignment & overarching expectations for the semester/email workshop ● Explain meeting at museum, parking, etc.
<p>1/31 Due: Complete office hours doodle poll In class: 1st UW Art Museum session</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Introduction to the ERS 2500 course's wall in the Teaching Gallery. See link for more information about the Teaching Gallery: https://goo.gl/jC6Kh4. ● Deep Looking and Thinking workshop facilitated by UW Art Museum curators 	<p>2/2 Due: 250-500 words about your impressions of the pieces we viewed at the museum. In class:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Multi-faceted discussion of museum experience and pieces ● Intro to "energy interpretation audio guide" assignment (incl. email component) ● Draft email to Pam (3 sentences) about your experience in the museum.
<p>2/7 Due: Rank your preference for which piece to research (top 3), along with ~1 paragraph justification for your preferences In class:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Student-led process to assign pieces, ending in one piece assigned to each student (max. ~3-5/piece, depending on course enrollment) ● Invention/facilitated brainstorming to determine energy theme(s) to pursue in project ● Preliminary research and project planning 	<p>2/9 Due: ~250 words describing your initial ideas for how you are going to pursue this project. Remember, the focus is explicitly on the connection between the piece and some form/issue/question related to energy. In class:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Short (max 3-min) informal presentations of your initial ideas. Your classmates will provide feedback (via note cards) on your ideas. Your instructors will meet with you individually later in the class period. ● Primary research: brainstorm/identify 2 individuals you can approach (by email) to learn/explore connections you're researching for your project. One will be an art-related person, the other an energy-related person. ● Draft and send emails.
<p>2/14 Due: Outline of Part 1 of report: Background In class:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Annotated Bibliography review ● Brief in-class conferences ● Working on Part 1 of report 	<p>2/16 Due: Annotated bibliography for 3-5 references for this part of report In class: 2nd museum visit</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Deep Looking discussion <i>with</i> SER faculty; facilitated by UW Art Museum curators
<p>2/21 Due: Part 1 of report: artist, material, art movement, historical context (of piece, artist, time period it was created, social/technological significance, etc.)</p>	<p>2/23 Due: Outline of Part 2 of report: Energy Connections, plus annotated bibliography for 1-3 references for this part of report</p>

<p>In class:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● 1-3 paragraphs reflecting on experience with faculty; email Pam 1-3 sentences re the same. ● Outline plans for Part 2 of report, which deals with the relationship between the piece and energy (ex: metaphor, energy consumption/production, social/historical implications, etc.) 	<p>In class: Start finalizing Part 2 of report</p>
<p>2/28 Due: 1st Draft of Full Report: Background and Energy Connections In class:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Draft Audio Script 	<p>3/2 Due: by end of class submit audio script to WyoCourses. In class:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Workshop audio scripts with classmates ● In-class conferences ● Submit audio script to WyoCourses. Bethann & Kevin will compile and email to UW Art Museum Curators.
<p>3/7 Due: Printed copy of audio script + at least 1 question for the curators In class: 3rd museum visit</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Work-in-progress discussion of audio guide script drafts with UW Art Museum curators ● Keep notes on your script re feedback from curators. What will you change? What was good? Where do you have options? 	<p>3/9 Due: Copy of audio script draft annotated with the revision notes from discussion with curators; revised audio script In class:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Finalize & record audio scripts; record audio scripts ● Send email invitations to at least 3-5 people. ● Start group planning for public Q&A event. Focus on commonalities and differences in how group members handled interpreting the piece in their individual research projects and audio guides)
<p style="text-align: center;">Friday, 3/10 Due: Text of Final Audio Script + Final Report + Print-out of Email Exchanges with 2 primary sources</p>	
<p style="text-align: center;">3/12-3/29: Spring Break -- no class & no homework! Enjoy! <i>Of course, if you want to work on your group work for the gallery event, you're absolutely welcome to do so. It would be a good idea, but it's not required. :)</i></p>	
<p>3/21 Due: Group plan/outline for ~3-minute presentation In Class:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Listen & take notes (to everyone else's audio guides). ● Take 10 min. to come up with 1 question for each person. ● In small groups, practice discussing the interpretation and pieces; each cycle of students on the spot for ~5 min. ● Finalize group plans. 	<p>3/23 In Class Museum Event:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Students will stand by their pieces, poster-session style, prepared to talk about their pieces with visitors. 2) This assignment will be graded as complete/incomplete. 3) Refreshments will be provided by SER; the event is open to the public! :)
<p>3/28 Due: 250-500-word reflection on the event; how did it go, what did you do, what did you appreciate, what would you do differently? In class:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● 1-3 sentence emails to Pam ● Whole class reflection/discussion ● Introduce Research-based Multimedia Project 	<p>3/30 Due: Reading on design thinking TBA In class:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Invention for Multimedia Projects (writing/brainstorming) ● Small group discussion to draft constraints & expectations of the project assignment ● Large group discussion to develop a master rubric for the project

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Not a presentation, but a “stand-alone” “object” or text (which includes audio such as a “podcast” episode, videos including commercials or explainers or documentary, illustration, photos or photojournalism, music, video game, Prezi, website, or blog, etc. Could be a PPT, but if it is, it needs to be recorded and/or auto-advanced with recorded narration) 	<p>*The UW Art Museum recommends that you dress like you’re at an interview.</p>
<p>4/4 Due: Multimedia Proposal Draft Due (500 words min.):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● What is the purposes of your project? ● What medium(s) will you use to achieve this purposes, and why? ● Who is your target audience? ● Describe <i>at least</i> one example (“model”) to which you can compare your project and from which you can learn/borrow ideas. <p>In class:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Proposal workshop to finalize project plans ● Action Plan: planning the Multimedia Project 	<p>4/6 Due: Multimedia Proposal Final which includes answers to questions due 4/4, the Action Plan, and an Annotated Bibliography of 3-5 sources related to your subject and planned approach. In class:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Oral Presentation of Project Plans
<p>4/11 Due: Multimedia Project Prototype</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Bring a prototype to class that shows progress on your project... (bring your computer, take a photo/screenshot of work, etc.) <p>In class:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Email updates to Pam (1-3 sentences) ● Workshop and reflect on projects ● Critique of energy-related multimedia examples 	<p>4/13 Due: Keep working on your project. In Class</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Craft an invitation with individual project “blurbs” and “abouts” which you will email out to invite people to your final multimedia presentations.
<p>4/18 Due: Project in progress (ideally at least half-way completed) In class:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Individual conferences on Multimedia Project ● Bring project 	<p>4/20 Due: Project in progress (ideally at least half-way completed) In class:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Individual conferences on Multimedia Projects ● Bring project
<p>4/25 Due: An original “How-To” article with your project as the example; explain one or more of the tools or processes involved in producing your project (300 words w/ images) In Class:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Small group share/feedback 	<p>4/27 Due: Presentation Prep Worksheet In class:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Practice presentations
<p>5/2 & 5/4 - Final Presentations of Multimedia Projects (in UW Art Museum Resource Room) Due: Multimedia Project Presentations (to audience of class members, UW curators, and the people you invited) In class: Presentations must be stand-alone, and take no longer than 3 minutes to watch, listen to, or interact with to a meaningful level. Each presentation will be followed by a 2-5 min. Q&A discussion with your audience. <i>Your presence and participation in all presentation sessions will be expected and appreciated by classmates, invitees, and instructors alike.</i></p>	
<p>5/8-5/12: Finals Week <i>If necessary, an additional presentation session will take place during the time allocated for the course final.</i></p> <p>Due by Thursday at 12:15 p.m.: Research portfolio (including proposal drafts, documentation of your work process, and reflection on how your project and presentation turned out vs. what you intended)</p>	
<p>5/18: Final grades will be posted by noon.</p>	

