**FIQWS:**

The **F**reshman **I**n**q**uiry

**W**riting **S**eminar

**Faculty Handbook**

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# Welcome

Welcome to the FIQWS program! This handbook is intended as a teaching resource for instructors. In it are guidelines for the required elements of all FIQWSs, including explanations of Midterm Assessments, Library Instruction, grading, and strategies for maintaining strong collaborations between instructors. Please review this handbook while preparing your syllabus and return to it throughout the semester to make sure that the goals of FIQWS are being met.

# ****FIQWS Overview****

By pairing Topic and Writing instructors and placing students in learning communities that meet for six hours a week, the Freshman Inquiry Writing Seminar (FIQWS) provides incoming students at CCNY with additional academic support and a communal learning experience. The FIQWS program encourages participation, discussion, and critical engagement with challenging material—classroom elements that students don’t always experience sufficiently in their beginning semesters. Close interaction among students and with instructors is an important part of each FIQWS.

# Goals

The goals of the FIQWS are to provide students with:

* A first major step in developing the reading and writing skills necessary for college study.
* An environment to further their analytic writing and critical thinking.
* Experience writing research (source-driven) essays.
* A learning community in the form of 6 hours spent with the same group of students and the same team of instructors.
* An understanding of college readiness skills (attendance, handing in work on time, and academic integrity).
* Close contact with faculty (class size is capped at 26)

# Collaborative Teaching

The FIQWSs are taught collaboratively by a Topic and a Writing instructor; instructors are equal partners in the relationship. At the beginning of the summer, Topic and Writing instructors meet to plan the courses that will be taught in the fall. Topic and Writing instructors are invited to decide their level of collaboration. At a minimum, the instructors should collaborate on a Research Essay, deciding in advance how they will share the responsibilities for this assignment.

# Syllabus and Grading

Instructors should develop two linked syllabi or (if collaborating more closely) a single double-column syllabus. Either way, syllabi should make clear the connection between both sections (e.g., joint assignments). Since at the end of the semester students are assigned separate final grades for the Writing and Topic sections, the syllabus for each section should specify the grade breakdown. Ultimately, the level of participation the FIQWS team decides on will determine whether they will assign the same or different final grades. If instructors give different final grades, the grade breakdown on the syllabi will naturally differ. If instructors give the same grade, the same breakdown should appear on both syllabi. See more on collaboration below.

# Topic Instructor Responsibilities

* Teach the class topic through a combination of lecture and seminar-style discussions;
* At their discretion, incorporate low-stakes and no-stakes writing assignments to further develop students’ understanding of the topic-based reading assignments and that might serve to support students as they work through the process of drafting their essays;
* Dedicate class time to building critical thinking, communication, and participation skills through small-group and class discussions;
* Develop/assess students’ oral communication skills through presentations, recitation of texts (e.g., in a FIQWS on poetry), performance of scenes (e.g., in a FIQWS on theater);
* Keep in mind the types/timing of writing assignments in the Writing section so that scheduled readings/discussions can provide meaningful material for those assignments.
* Work with the Writing instructor to collaboratively design, provide feedback on, and assess at least one Research Essay (see “Shared Responsibilities,” below);
* Collaborate with the Writing instructor to guide students in identifying a topic for the Research Essay and in situating their own writing within a larger discourse. Consider providing research materials that students can use as sources for the Research Essay.

# Writing Instructor Responsibilities

* Follow the same guidelines for English 110 described on the [Writing Program website](https://ccnywriting.commons.gc.cuny.edu/).
* Design assignments in ways that invite students to draw on the content of the FIQWS Topic section. Consider incorporating reading assignments from the Topic section;
* Work with the Topic instructor to collaboratively design, provide feedback on, and assess at least one Research Essay (see “Shared Responsibilities”).

# Shared Responsibilities

Effective collaboration between instructors is an important part of a successful FIQWS team. Every collaboration has its own chemistry; instructors should explore what particular arrangements work best for them. We strongly encourage instructors to meet to discuss the course, graded assignments, and student performance. In this context, it is especially important for instructors to identify and reach out to students who are struggling.

Topic and Writing instructors should work together to

* Submit a Midterm Progress Report to all students during weeks 6-8 (see pg. 8);
* Communicate regularly with students about missed assignments and attendance;
* Collaborate on designing and assessing assignments. Rather than limit collaborations to designing, giving feedback on, and assessing just one assignment (the Research Essay), consider collaborating on all of the writing assignments and use the essays as the basis for grades in both the Writing *and Topic* sections. In this model, instructors might assess the assignments for separate criteria to determine/average a single grade, or they might develop a single shared set of evaluation criteria and give one grade that will be used to calculate a final grade in both classes. Alternatively, Topic and Writing instructors might choose to devise separate major assignments and rely only on the major Research Essay as the focus of the collaboration. **If instructors decide to limit their collaboration on the essay assignments, Topic instructors will need to develop their own assignments to assess student learning.**

# Required Writing Assignments

***Research Essay***

A Research Essay is required for both Topic and Writing sections. Instructors will collaborate on designing, giving feedback on, and assessing at least one source-driven essay. Students should work to narrow down a research topic or question, gather and evaluate a range of sources using the library’s databases, use sources to explore, analyze, and/or argue about their topic, and integrate and cite their sources using a disciplinary-specific convention style (e.g., MLA, APA, Chicago). Several of the recommended assignments listed below under “Suggested Writing Assignments” could be extended to have a focus on research (especially the Exploratory, Argument, and Critical Analysis essays). Instructors should determine the specific length and source requirements. The Research Essay can be designed together from scratch or borrowed and adapted from [models available](https://ccnywriting.commons.gc.cuny.edu/english-110-freshman-composition/english-110-assignments/%29.) on the [Writing Program website](https://ccnywriting.commons.gc.cuny.edu/).

***Digital Portfolio***

The Digital Portfolio is required for the Writing section, but Writing and Topic instructors are encouraged to assign it as the final project for both sections. Students will develop a Digital Portfolio to showcase revised versions of their major essays, as well as other examples of “best” assignments. As part of their portfolio, students will also write a (3-4-page) Self-Assessment Essay wherein students reflect on and assess their semester’s work. In addition to students discussing the extent to which they achieved *each* of the course learning outcomes in this essay, students should draw on and demonstrate their understanding of rhetorical terms (genre, audience, purpose, stance, rhetorical situation, media/design, and exigence). All portfolios will be collected by the first-year writing program for research purposes, so all must be in a digital format. Writing instructors are strongly encouraged to have students create an online (WordPress) portfolio using CUNY’s Academic Commons, a free site. If you assign an online portfolio, please be sure to explain the available privacy protections. A simpler (though discouraged) method is for students to create their portfolio by collecting their body of work into a single .pdf document. Both the Portfolio and final Self-Assessment should carry a substantial grade weight. See [model assignment prompts](https://ccnywriting.commons.gc.cuny.edu/english-110-freshman-composition/portfolio-assignment-for-english-110-and-fiqws-writing) on the [Writing Program website](https://ccnywriting.commons.gc.cuny.edu/).

***Short Post-Assignment Reflections***

Short post-assignment reflections are required for the Writing section, but Writing and Topic instructors are encouraged to collaboratively assign and respond to them. These (2-3-page) reflections, which can be formal or informal, should follow the submission of each major writing assignment. The goal of each is for students to reflect on the extent to which they achieved one or more of the course learning outcomes and to name and introduce their own essay’s genre, exigence, purpose, audience, and context. While the post-assignment reflections do not necessarily need to carry a grade weight, they are important for building up to the final reflection. See a [sample assignment prompt](https://ccnywriting.commons.gc.cuny.edu/english-110-freshman-composition/english-110-and-fiqws-writing-assignments/.) on the [Writing Program website](https://ccnywriting.commons.gc.cuny.edu/).

# Suggested Writing Assignments\*

It is up to each FIQWS team whether major assignments will be assigned collaboratively or separately. In addition to the Research Essay, Digital Portfolio, and Self-Assessment Essay, instructors are encouraged to assign two writing assignments. Some options are listed here. See also some [model assignment prompts](https://ccnywriting.commons.gc.cuny.edu/english-110-freshman-composition/english-110-assignments/) on the [Writing Program website](https://ccnywriting.commons.gc.cuny.edu/).

***Language and Literacy Narrative***

This assignment asks students to reflect on the reading, writing, and language experiences that shape a part of who they are today. Rather than trace their learning from struggle to triumph, students should zoom into a particular moment from their life when language and literacy impacted them, for better or worse. The specific moment students write about forms the basis of their narrative, though analysis and reflections may be added to help readers make sense of the moment’s significance and implications.

***Summary (and Response Essay)***

A summary is a concise paraphrase of all the main ideas in an essay. It summarizes the rhetorical situation (author, audience, text title, context, purpose), the essay's thesis, and the supporting evidence. Most summaries also present the overall structure and organization of the argument or major points. Some summary assignments might also call for a response. A response calls for students’ perspectives on the subject of the text (or the quality of the content) and students’ experiences in support of their points.

***Rhetorical Analysis Essay***

The aim of a rhetorical analysis is for students to share their interpretation ofone text’s argument through an analysis of select rhetorical features. Rather than focusing their attention on critiquing and evaluating the text, students’ task is to examine how the text is rhetorically constructed, why, and to what effect on the intended audience. The text being analyzed should be introduced and summarized, but the focus should be on analyzing what the text is *doing*, and *why*. An interpretation should be asserted (thesis), and claims should be supported with evidence in the form of examples and short quotations from the text.

***Critical Analysis Essay***

A critical analysis essay tasks students with introducing, describing, and analyzing a specific example, artifact, or topic. It breaks down for readers what’s happening in the example/artifact/topic *and* how the student came to such conclusions. Analysis should follow [David Rosenwasser](https://www.chegg.com/authors/david-rosenwasser) and [Jill Stephen](https://www.chegg.com/authors/jill-stephen)’s rule of “10 on 1”—that is, it is better to make ten observations or points about a single representative issue or example (10 on 1) than to make the same basic point about ten related issues or examples (1 on 10). This essay is a good candidate for extending to be a Research Essay (“Researched Critical Analysis Essay”).

***Exploratory Essay***

This essay invites students to interpret, summarize, and synthesize ideas across several sources without having to take a strong stance on the issue. It also introduces students to research and citation practices. While it is less concerned with argument or analysis, the separation between analysis/interpretation (a neutral interpretation) and analysis/argument (an interpretation with a stance attached) is hard to find. This essay is a good candidate for extending to be a Research Essay (“Researched Exploratory Essay”).

***Argument Essay***

The aim of an argument essay is for students to assert and support a particular stance in a way that may be persuasive to a specific intended audience. Key for an argument essay, then, is a clear understanding of the topic *and* of the audience (e.g., their knowledge of the topic; their values; what will persuade/dissuade them). The relationship between claims, evidence, and rhetorical appeals are carefully crafted. This essay is a good candidate for extending to be a Research Essay (“Researched Argument Essay”).

\*Pick from this list to design major writing assignments. Smaller writing assignments are, of course, also encouraged. See a sampling of [supplemental writing assignments](https://ccnywriting.commons.gc.cuny.edu/english-110-freshman-composition/english-110-and-fiqws-writing-assignments/) on the [Writing Program website](https://ccnywriting.commons.gc.cuny.edu/).

# Timing and Spacing Assignments

Particularly in a Writing course, timely feedback is essential for student progress; in short, the student needs to receive Essay A back with comments and a grade before embarking on Essay B (with the possible exception of the research paper, the early stages of work for which may overlap with work on other assignments). Both the Writing and Topic instructors should take an active role in providing students with feedback. The Writing instructor’s feedback may focus more on composition and critical thinking, while the Topic instructor’s feedback may center on content and critical thinking. Although it is tempting to leave students a few weeks to “settle in” before beginning with the major assignments, this usually results in insufficient time for the work planned for the latter part of the course. It is therefore recommended that the first formal essay be assigned no later than the second week of class.

# Writing Assignment Checklist

|  |
| --- |
| When you write the assignment sheet for your students, does it contain the following important information?  |
| Is the **purpose** behind the assignment clear (i.e., Why are they doing it? What skill or knowledge are they to demonstrate or gain from doing this?)? |  |
| Are the **course learning outcomes** mentioned in the assignment? Have you considered outcomes for writing, critical thinking, information literacy, and content area of the course when designing the assignment? (See outcomes on pg. 12-15) |  |
| Is the **rhetorical mode** clear? For example: description, narration, synthesis (of sources), analysis, or argument. Do the directions suggest conflicting modes?  |  |
| Are there **explicit command words** designed to make it easier for students to understand what they're supposed to do? Common command words include: analyze, compare, contrast, synthesize, critically evaluate, define, describe, discuss, evaluate, examine, explain, illustrate, interpret, narrate, outline, state, summarize. |  |
| **Do you lay out a scaffolding process** for the students to follow (i.e., a suggested process they should go through to successfully complete the assignment)? |  |
| Is the **type of research** that is expected explained to the student (i.e. primary vs. secondary sources, scholarly articles vs. journalism, blogs, etc.)? Do you specify **how much** research is needed? |  |
| Do you make the **length requirements** and **due date(s)** clear? |  |
| What are the **rubric/grading criteria** for the assignment? Has the criteria been shared with students ahead of time? Will it be used to guide assessment? |  |
| Are there superfluous directions which inhibit student engagement? Does the tone of the assignment **cultivate a positive learning environment**? |  |

# Midterm Progress Reports

The Midterm reports are a chance for students to meet with instructors and discuss their progress within the course. Instructors have an opportunity to commend students on their good work, discuss with students where they are struggling in the course, and recommend or require tutoring if they feel it will benefit students. While it is important to reach out to a struggling student as early as possible, it is also important that enough coursework / homework has been assigned to provide an accurate gauge of the student’s performance thus far in the semester. Therefore, we ask that the midterm progress reports be conducted during the **weeks 6-8** of the semester. Instructors can alert Ana Vasovic avasovic@ccny.cuny.edu at any point earlier in the semester if a student is endangering his/her successful completion of the course by not attending, not doing the work, doing poorly, etc.

Midterm progress reports are available online: <https://enrollment.ccny.cuny.edu/midtermCUNYF> .

Instructors should fill out the forms online, print them and give to each student individually during the Midterm meetings. Classes can be canceled on the day that Midterm evaluations are held.

The report will invite you to recommend interventions. Any number of recommendations can be selected; instructors have an option to require students to follow through. *Referral to tutoring* is for any student who may benefit from it, not only those in danger of failing. *ESL support* is for students struggling with English language issues. *Seeing an advisor* is for students in danger of failing the course. The College will follow up with flagged students (Writing Center staff for those referred to tutoring and/or ESL, and advisors for those who need to see them).

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Midterm Progress Report – sample

Student Name:

Course & Section: FIQWS 100XX; section XXXX

Instructors: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Estimated grade to date: \_\_\_

Number of Absences to date: \_\_\_

Class participation: Excellent Good Average Fair Poor NA

Performance on exams/quizzes: Excellent Good Average Fair Poor NA

Performance on written

assignments/homework: Excellent Good Average Fair Poor NA

Time Management and Attendance: Excellent Good Average Fair Poor NA

Recommendation: Attend tutoring sessions

 ESL support

 Improve attendance

 Keep up the good work

 No recommendation

 See academic advisor

 Your work is satisfactory but could be improved (see comment section for specific information)

Comments/Concerns/Recommendations:

Date:

# Library Information Literacy Classes

Each FIQWS Topic course will have a library information literacy classes during the semester, and it is strongly encouraged that Writing instructors schedule a follow-up session (especially if they are not able to guide students themselves in continuing to build on their information and library database practices). Trevar Riley- Reid​, the Information Literacy Librarian at CCNY Libraries, will e-mail faculty to schedule a date during the summer (for fall courses) or winter (for spring courses). Faculty should respond promptly with three preferred dates because the e-classroom calendar tends to fill up quickly. If faculty do not hear from Prof. Riley-Reid they may contact her directly (trileyreid@ccny.cuny.edu).

The required information literacy class typically provides a general introduction to the library and its services, including instructions on finding journals and books, but it should be structured to respond to the students’ research needs. It is held during the Topic section’s class time and should be scheduled before week 5. Additional information literacy classes should take place during the Writing section’s class time and can be tailored to the research question(s) students are working on. Thus, any additional session should be held once the students have decided on the topic of their Research Essay, which is often around week 7, and students’ research problems should be conveyed to the library instructor before the session. This schedule of visits is somewhat flexible, and you should work with the librarian to make the best use of the time.

Prof. Riley-Reid will confirm class reservations and assign a library instructor familiar with the subject of the class. Instructors are encouraged to send their syllabi and establish contact with the library instructor assigned to them to discuss any concerns or requests. Instructors are required to accompany their classes to the library information literacy class as experience indicates that students are more attentive when the instructor is present. Experience also indicates that the second session is beneficial to students only if they are actively pursuing a research problem, which makes it imperative to schedule the second session after students have been able to decide on a Research Essay topic.

# Academic Dishonesty/Plagiarism

Academic dishonesty is a serious offense; however, FIQWS instructors are encouraged to show understanding with FIQWS students, who may be unfamiliar with academic norms. Students should have the school’s policy on plagiarism/cheating made clear to them before the first major essay is due. A student brochure on academic integrity is available from the Office of Academic Standards, and students may also be directed to review the CUNY Policy on Academic Integrity on the college website (https://www.ccny.cuny.edu/academicaffairs/integrity-policies). A recommended course of action for a first offense would be to address the matter with the student to determine if the violation was intentional or due to the student’s lack of understanding. If the student acknowledges violating the policy, the instructor may either permit the student to redo the assignment or decide to penalize the student’s grade on the assignment. If you believe more serious action should be taken (failing the student or filing a report with the Office of Academic Standards, using the Faculty Report Form, FRF), please contact Professor Missy Watson at mwatson2@ccny.cuny.edu or Ana Vasovic at avasovic@ccny.cuny.edu. A student’s second offense should be reported to Academic Standards. If, in any alleged instance of plagiarism, the student does not concede error, the instructor must complete the FRF and refer the student to appeal to the Office of Academic Standards before administering any kind of academic sanction (such as a lowered or a failing grade). If a student disputes an allegation of Academic Dishonesty, and the dispute involves the final work of the semester, he or she must be assigned a final grade of “PEN” while the matter is appealed.

# Film Viewing Policy

Instructional time should not be used for the screening of full-length films though it is appropriate to screen brief excerpts for purposes of discussion or illustration. iMedia (NAC 5/220) can assist with setting up screenings at other times. The Library also has a large collection of CDs and videos that can be placed on reserve for student use. Students also have access to films through Netflix, Itunes, Amazon, etc., often at reasonable or no cost.

# Support Services offered to students

There are a number of Support Services available for CCNY students (visit https://www.ccny.cuny.edu/academics/tutoring for a complete list):

1. *Gateway Academic Center (GAC)*, 1/219– advises freshmen and transfer students in their first year at City College who have not yet decided on a major or are fulfilling requirements to apply to one of the College's professional schools;
2. *Samuel Rudin Writing Center*, NAC 3rd floor plaza – offers writing assistance to all CCNY students through one-on-one tutoring and group workshops (ESL tutoring is also available through the Writing Center);
3. *AccessAbility Center Tutoring Services*, NAC 1/218 – provides one-on-one tutoring and workshops to all registered students with learning or physical disabilities;
4. *SEEK Peer Academic Learning Center*, Location: NAC 4/224–offers counseling and peer tutoring for students in need of academic and financial support who have registered for the SEEK Program;
5. *SSSP Academic Resource Center*, Harris 03 – offers tutoring in most core subjects and group workshops in Math and Biology for students who meet financial qualifications and have interviewed for the program.

# Assessment in FIQWS and General Education

FIQWS is the first of a series of writing intensive courses that are part of the General Education Requirement. In addition to FIQWS, students take 5 additional writing intensive General Education courses (from among the Flexible Core offerings). All of these courses are designed to develop the mastery of key General Education proficiencies: Writing and Communication Skills, Critical Thinking Skills and Information Literacy Skills. Learning outcomes and scoring rubrics have been created to assess student development in these areas as well as the overall effectiveness of the General Education Curriculum.

# General Education Learning Outcomes Benchmarks for FIQWS

Students will compose essays such as personal narratives/reflections, summary and response, and critical analysis accomplishing the following:

Writing:

* Present context of and state purpose for writing
* Develop appropriately organized essays containing a clear thesis statement and credible, relevant evidence
* Use appropriate language that conveys meaning and is grammatically correct

Critical Thinking:

* Clearly state issue/problem
* Analyze and/or synthesize evidence derived from appropriate sources
* Develop logical conclusions based on evidence

Information Literacy:

* Demonstrate a clear understanding of information needs and ability to search efficiently (within assigned texts and/or by source search)
* Demonstrate an understanding of scholarly sources (library visit)
* Articulate credibility of sources or as appropriate to the discipline
* Use information ethically by citing sources and not plagiarizing

# Writing Section Learning Outcomes

Students successfully completing a FIQWS composition course will demonstrate ability to:

* Explore and analyze in their own and others’ writing a variety of genres and rhetorical situations
* Develop strategies for reading, drafting, revising, and editing
* Practice systematic application of citation conventions
* Recognize and practice key rhetorical terms and strategies when engaged in writing situations
* Develop and engage in the collaborative and social aspects of writing processes
* Understand and use print and digital technologies to address a range of audiences
* Locate research sources (including academic journal articles, magazine and newspaper articles) in the library’s databases or archives and on the internet and evaluate them for credibility, accuracy, timeliness, and bias
* Compose texts that integrate the student’s stance and language with appropriate sources, using strategies such as summary, critical analysis, interpretation, synthesis, and argumentation

# Topic Section Learning Outcomes

Under Pathways General Education requirements, each FIQWS Topic section falls into one of the Flexible core categories and will address the learning outcomes pertinent to that category.

# A. World Cultures and Global Issues

*All Flexible Core courses must meet the following three learning outcomes. A student will:*

* Gather, interpret, and assess information from a variety of sources and points of view; Evaluate evidence and arguments critically or analytically;
* Produce well-reasoned written or oral arguments using evidence to support conclusions.

*A course in this area must also meet at least three of these additional learning outcomes. A student will:*

* Identify and apply the fundamental concepts and methods of a discipline or interdisciplinary field exploring world cultures or global issues, including, but not limited to, anthropology, communications, cultural studies, economics, ethnic studies, foreign languages (building upon previous language acquisition), geography, history, political science, sociology, and world literature;
* Analyze culture, globalization, or global cultural diversity, and describe an event or process from more than one point of view;
* Analyze the historical development of one or more non-U.S. societies;
* Analyze the significance of one or more major movements that have shaped the world's societies;
* Analyze and discuss the role that race, ethnicity, class, gender, language, sexual orientation, belief, or other forms of social differentiation play in world cultures or societies;
* Speak, read, and write a language other than English, and use that language to respond to cultures other than one's own.

# B. U.S. Experience in its Diversity

*All Flexible Core courses must meet the following three learning outcomes. A student will:*

* Gather, interpret, and assess information from a variety of sources and points of view;
* Evaluate evidence and arguments critically or analytically;
* Produce well-reasoned written or oral arguments using evidence to support conclusions.

*A course in this area must also meet at least three of these additional learning outcomes. A student will:*

* Identify and apply the fundamental concepts and methods of a discipline or interdisciplinary field exploring the U.S. experience in its diversity, including, but not limited to, anthropology, communications, cultural studies, economics, history, political science, psychology, public affairs, sociology, and U.S. literature;
* Analyze and explain one or more major themes of U.S. history from more than one informed perspective;
* Evaluate how indigenous populations, slavery, or immigration have shaped the development of the United States;
* Explain and evaluate the role of the United States in international relations;
* Identify and differentiate among the legislative, judicial, and executive branches of government and analyze their influence on the development of U.S. democracy;
* Analyze and discuss common institutions or patterns of life in contemporary U.S. society and how they influence, or are influenced by, race, ethnicity, class, gender, sexual orientation, belief, or other forms of social differentiation.

# C. Creative Expression

*All Flexible Core courses must meet the following three learning outcomes. A student will:*

* Gather, interpret, and assess information from a variety of sources and points of view;
* Evaluate evidence and arguments critically or analytically;
* Produce well-reasoned written or oral arguments using evidence to support conclusions.

*A course in this area must also meet at least three of these additional learning outcomes. A student will:*

* Identify and apply the fundamental concepts and methods of a discipline or interdisciplinary field exploring creative expression, including, but not limited to, arts, communications, creative writing, media arts, music, and theater;
* Analyze how arts from diverse cultures of the past serve as a foundation for those of the present, and describe the significance of works of art in the societies that created them;
* Articulate how meaning is created in the arts or communications and how experience is interpreted and conveyed;
* Demonstrate knowledge of the skills involved in the creative process;
* Use appropriate technologies to conduct research and to communicate.

# D. Individual and Society

*All Flexible Core courses must meet the following three learning outcomes. A student will:*

* Gather, interpret, and assess information from a variety of sources and points of view;
* Evaluate evidence and arguments critically or analytically;
* Produce well-reasoned written or oral arguments using evidence to support conclusions.

*A course in this area must also meet at least three of these additional learning outcomes. A student will:*

* Identify and apply the fundamental concepts and methods of a discipline or interdisciplinary field exploring the relationship between the individual and society, including, but not limited to, anthropology, communications, cultural studies, history, journalism, philosophy, political science, psychology, public affairs, religion, and sociology;
* Examine how an individual's place in society affects experiences, values, or choices.
* Articulate and assess ethical views and their underlying premises;
* Articulate ethical uses of data and other information resources to respond to problems and questions;
* Identify and engage with local, national, or global trends or ideologies, and analyze their impact on individual or collective decision-making.

# ****E. Scientific World****

*All Flexible Core courses must meet the following three learning outcomes. A student will:*

* Gather, interpret, and assess information from a variety of sources and points of view;
* Evaluate evidence and arguments critically or analytically;
* Produce well-reasoned written or oral arguments using evidence to support conclusions.

*A course in this area must also meet at least three of these additional learning outcomes. A student will:*

Identify and apply the fundamental concepts and methods of a discipline or interdisciplinary field exploring the scientific world, including, but not limited to: computer science, history of science, life and physical sciences, linguistics, logic, mathematics, psychology, statistics, and technology-related studies;

* Demonstrate how tools of science, mathematics, technology, or formal analysis can be used to analyze problems and develop solutions;
* Articulate and evaluate the empirical evidence supporting a scientific or formal theory;
* Articulate and evaluate the impact of technologies and scientific discoveries on the contemporary world, such as issues of personal privacy, security, or ethical responsibilities;
* Understand the scientific principles underlying matters of policy or public concern in which science plays a role.

# FIQWS Fast Facts

**Learning Community**

* Decide together on appropriate topics and due dates for writing assignments; give students the same/common guidelines for shared assignments; remember that assignments should address/reflect course learning outcomes.
* Communicate with your partner instructor (meet, email, talk on the phone, whatever works) to keep him/her informed about activities happening in your section and to discuss student progress; don’t let your partner’s calls or emails go unanswered; collaboration is key to the success of this course.
* Conduct your classes as seminars, encourage dialogue and discussion, give opportunities to students to work in small groups – help them establish relationships and build a community of scholars.
* Take advantage of FIQWS enrichment opportunity funds (~$10/student) to organize a class trip. (Contact Ana Vasovic at avasovic@ccny.cuny.edu beforehand.)

**First Year Experience**

* Help students acquire/master college readiness skills: class attendance, timely submission of assignments, time management, study skills, how to communicate with instructors via email, familiarity with campus resources available to students, including academic advisement, the writing center, and counseling services.
* In the first 2-3 weeks: Refer struggling students for interventions ([Early Alert](http://enrollment.ccny.cuny.edu/earlyalert/)).
* Week 6-8: Dedicate one class time each for Midterm conferences and conduct them together if possible to inform each student about his/her progress in class ([Midterm Progress Reports](https://enrollment.ccny.cuny.edu/midtermCUNYF)).

**Academic success**

* In your syllabus be sure to include: course learning outcomes (Pathways or related), the Gen Ed category your course addresses, grade breakdown, schedule and assignment deadlines, academic integrity policy.
* Course expectations should be in line with an introductory course geared toward first-year students who are not always prepared for college-level work; the focus should be on development of critical thinking and communication skills through immersion in an academically-defined topic; students should not be overwhelmed with excessive information and facts, but rather guided to think, analyze and synthesize information and to form and communicate an opinion or argument based on evidence.
* Conduct library visits during regular class time: one with Topic instructor and any additional sessions with Writing instructor.
* Remember there are NO FINAL EXAMs in FIQWS.
* Research Essay: Topic instructors should provide students with clusters of materials to be used as possible sources (learning how to thoroughly analyze and use a source rather than just to find it). All instructors should familiarize themselves with Gen Ed Rubrics for [writing](https://www.ccny.cuny.edu/sites/default/files/communication%20rubrics%20CCNY%20plus%20AACU.pdf), [critical thinking](https://www.ccny.cuny.edu/sites/default/files/gened/upload/CriticalThinking.pdf) and [information literacy](https://www.ccny.cuny.edu/sites/default/files/gened/upload/info-literacy-rubric-gen-ed.pdf) and [FIQWS benchmarks](#Benchmarks) for these proficiencies in order to provide best guidance. Instructors are also asked to review [assessment reports](https://www.ccny.cuny.edu/sites/default/files/FIQWS%20assessment%202007-2015.docx) in FIQWS in terms of Gen Ed proficiencies and to take into account findings and recommendations of the assessment teams when planning and delivering course materials.