**FIQWS:**

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

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

**Faculty Handbook**

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# Welcome

Dear Instructor,

Welcome to the FIQWS program! This handbook is intended as a teaching resource for instructors (writing instructors will also be receiving handbooks from the English department). 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.

The General Education Committee

# ****FIQWS Overview****

By pairing Topic and Composition 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 a research paper.
* 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 composition 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 the research essay, deciding in advance how they will share the responsibilities for this assignment.

# Topic Instructor Responsibilities

Topic instructors should:

* Teach the class topic through a combination of lecture and seminar-style discussions of assigned readings;
* 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 and assess students’ oral communication skills through oral presentations, recitation of texts (in a FIQWS focusing on poetry, for example), performance of scenes (in a FIQWS class focusing on theater, for example);
* Assign a summary and response essay;
* Guide students, in collaboration with the writing instructor, in identifying a topic for a research paper and in situating their own writing within a larger network of public discourse. Consider providing research materials that students can use as sources for the research paper;
* Collaborate on the researched critical analysis essay (see “Shared Responsibilities,” below).

# Composition Instructor Responsibilities

In addition to the responsibilities associated with the stand-alone sections of English 110 (see the course guidelines at https://ccnywriting.commons.gc.cuny.edu/), composition instructors should

* Use the subject of the FIQWS partnership to design a theme-based course;
* Consider incorporating reading assignments from the topic section;
* Ask students to write in a variety of formats--in-class writing, explication, summary, and analysis--in response to the topic section’s reading assignments;
* Collaborate on the researched critical analysis essay (see “Shared Responsibilities,” below).

# Shared Responsibilities

Effective collaboration between instructors is an important part of a successful FIQWS team. Topic and writing instructors should

* Submit a Midterm Progress Report to every student during weeks 6-8 of the semester (see page 8 for more on Midterm Progress Reports);
* Keep in email contact with students, communicating with them about missed assignments and attendance;
* Consider collaborating on all of the writing assignments and to use the essays as the basis for grades in the topic section. In this model, instructors might read the assignments for separate criteria and give separate grades, or they might develop criteria with each other (guided by the collaboration framework for writing assignments which appears below) for giving one grade that will be used to calculate a final grade in both classes. **If instructors decide to limit their collaboration on the essay assignments, topic instructors will need to develop their own assignments to assess student learning.**
* Devise separate, informal writing assignments for the topic section (such as Blackboard discussion forums, blogs, reflections, or other low-stakes, informal writing assignments) and rely only on the research essay as the focus of the collaboration;
* Keep in mind the types and timing of writing assignments in the composition section so that their readings and class discussions can provide meaningful material for those assignments.

Each 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.

# Grading

Since students receive separate grades for the writing and topic sections of each FIQWS, the syllabus for each section should specify the grade breakdown. Each team will decide whether it wants to give the same or different 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.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| ColCollaboration Framework | | |
| Instructors should develop two linked syllabi or a double-column single syllabus that make(s) clear the connection between both sections (e.g. matching dates for joint assignments). The Composition Instructor is required to respond to and grade all of the assignments in this table with the exception of the Introductory Essay and the Summary and Response Essay. The Topic Instructor is required to respond to and grade the Summary and Response Essay and the Researched Critical Analysis Essay. Instructors should collaboratively develop an assignment for the Researched Critical Analysis Essay. The assignments here are keyed to *The Norton Field Guide to Writing.* | | |
| **Writing Assignments** | |
| **Assignment** | **Length** |
| ***Introductory Essay\**** | Low-stakes, informal, ungraded. 2-3 pages. |
| This assignment asks students to introduce themselves to the instructor. It should be given on the first or second day of class and collected during the second or third class session at the latest. This writing sample not only introduces the student to the instructor but can also alert him or her to any significant issues in the student’s writing. Usually, instructors ask students to describe their experiences with reading and writing, their command of languages other than English (including reading, writing and speaking), and their strengths and weaknesses as students. The student may also want to share information about an academic major, work experience, and special interests. Some instructors may wish to combine this assignment with the Literacy Narrative. **If in the Introductory Essay the student demonstrates substantial second language interference or other developmental issues, encourage the student to take advantage of the support provided by the Samuel Rudin Writing Center.** Please note, though, that every student can benefit from Writing Center support. | |
| ***Summary and Response Essay*** | Summary of or response to a reading assignment writing; 2-3 pages.  (Required for Topic) |
| A summary is a concise paraphrase of all the main ideas in an essay. It cites the author and the title (usually in the first sentence); it contains the essay's thesis and supporting ideas. Most summaries present the major points in the order that the author made them and continually refer back to the article being summarized. A response is a critique or evaluation of the author's essay. Unlike the summary, it is composed of the student’s opinions in relation to the article being summarized. It emphasizes points of agreement or disagreement and identifies the essay's strengths and weaknesses in reasoning and logic, in quality of supporting examples, and in organization and style. | |
| ***Exploratory Essay*** | 4-5 pages. |
| Analyzing Texts (Chapter 11) OR Reporting Information (Chapter 12) OR Abstracts (Chapter 14) OR Annotated Bibliographies (Chapter 15) OR Evaluations (Chapter 16).  This assignment has multiple purposes. It introduces students to research and citation practices and asks them to interpret and summarize the text. This essay is less concerned with critical analysis, though in practice (and in the examples that the text provides) the separation between analysis/interpretation (a neutral summary) and *critical* analysis (an interpretation with an opinion attached) is hard to find. Critical analysis is mainly located in the next assignment, but it’s almost inevitable (and may be desirable) for it to be a part of this essay. | |
| ***Researched Critical Analysis Essay*** | 5-7 pages. Required for Composition and Topic (grades may be collaborative or separate) |
| This assignment can be based on any of the chapters listed for Exploratory Essay assignment (except for Annotated Bibliographies); it could also be based on Arguing a Position (Chapter 13). This assignment extends the work of the Exploratory Essay. Students will have the opportunity to revise the exploratory essay again (after having already revised a first draft), and they will be able to develop and express an opinion about their subjects. They may also want (or you may want them to) expand their research. | |
| ***Reflection Assignments*** | 1-2 pages after each essay. |
| The goal of these assignments is for students to reflect on their writing in order to heighten their awareness of what they know about writing and develop a vocabulary for discussing it. In these reflections, students should make use of the rhetorical terms introduced in Part 2 (53-70) to describe their own work. For each reflective assignment, they should describe their own essays in terms of its genre (what are its characteristic features?), exigence (what need motivated the writer?), purpose (what did the writer hope to accomplish?), audience (who is the potential audience for the essay?), and stance (what is the writer’s perspective? what is the relationship between the writer, her audience, and the medium?). They should also describe how each assignment has helped them to achieve the course learning outcomes. These short reflections will prepare students to write the final self-reflection. | |
| ***Final Portfolio and Self-Reflection*** | 3-4 pages. Required for Composition; Optional for Topic |
| The Self-Reflection should be a rhetorical analysis of the student’s own work and include references to genre, audience, purpose, stance, rhetorical situation, media/design, and exigence. Students should also use this opportunity to demonstrate that they’ve achieved the course learning outcomes. The portfolios will be collected by the first-year writing program for research purposes, **so they must be in a digital format**. The simplest method for students to create the portfolio is to collect their body of work into a single .pdf document. A more comprehensive approach would be to ask students to create a Website using CUNY’s Academic Commons. a free site. If you assign a digital portfolio, explain the available privacy protections. | |

\* ***If the student does not appear to possess the English language skills necessary to pass FIQWS, the instructor should notify Ana Vasovic*** [***avasovic@ccny.cuny.edu***](mailto:avasovic@ccny.cuny.edu)***, who will follow up with the student’s advisor.***

# Timing and Spacing Assignments

Particularly in a writing course, timely feedback is essential for student progress; in short, the student needs to receive paper A back with comments and a grade before embarking on paper B (with the possible exception of the research paper, the early stages of work for which may overlap with work on other assignments). 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 third week of class.

# Suggested Writing Assignment Checklist for Instructors

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| 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. 3-6* |  |
| Is the **rhetorical mode** clear? For example: description, narration, analysis, compare and contrast, 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, 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? |  |
| 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](mailto: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. The meetings should be held with both instructors present. 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 ESL 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 course will have two library information literacy classes during the semester—one in each section. Daisy Domínguez, 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. Domínguez they may contact her directly ([ddominguez@ccny.cuny.edu](mailto:ddominguez@ccny.cuny.edu)).

The first information literacy class typically provides a general introduction to the library and its services. Students receive instructions on finding journals and books. It is held during the composition section’s class time, and should be scheduled for week 4 or 5. The second information literacy class is tailored to the research question(s) the students are working on and these research problems should be conveyed to the library instructor before the second session. This class is scheduled during the topic section’s class time and should be held once the students have decided on the topic of their Researched Critical Analysis Essay assignment, which is typically week 7. During the classes, students complete a short practice quiz that reinforces the library skills learned.

Prof. Domínguez 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. (The topic instructor should accompany the class for one session and the writing instruction for the other.) 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 Researched Critical Analysis 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 during the first week of class. 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, and 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 fail the student on the assignment (or in extreme cases, for the class) and file a report with the Office of Academic Standards, using the Faculty Report Form (FRF). 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. The College-wide Committee on Academic Integrity meets to resolve disputed allegations of academic misconduct several times a semester. Guidance on academic integrity issues can be sought from a department Chair or from the Office of Academic Standards (Administration Building 206/216).

# 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. *New Student Experience Center(NSEC)*, Marshak 053 – 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 the “W” 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

# Composition 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 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: one with Composition instructor and one with Topic instructor during regular class time.
* Remember there is NO FINAL EXAM in FIQWS.
* Researched critical analysis essay: Content 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.