MCNR 302:
McNair Graduate Application Preparation

Fall 2018  Instructor: Dr. Cheryl Fortner-Wood  Credit Hours: 1

Section 600 (13810) Meets Fridays at 2-3:30 pm in Dinkins 230B

Prerequisites: Senior standing and current status as a Winthrop McNair Scholars Program Participant

Office Hours: Fridays 1-1:45 pm (before class) in Dinkins 104 and by appointment @ calendly.com/cfw. McNair Scholars can reach Dr. Fortner-Wood at fortnerc@winthrop.edu, 803/323-2125, or by texting her personal cell phone.

Course Description and Purpose.
This course is specifically designed to address the third mandatory objective of the Winthrop McNair Scholars Program which states: *50% of bachelor’s degree recipients will enroll in a post baccalaureate program by the fall term of the academic year immediately following completion of that degree.* With support from the instructor, Writing Coach, and program staff, students in this course will prepare applications for graduate programs in the discipline of their choice and prepare for graduate program interviews.

Student Learning Outcomes – Each Student Will…
1. Identify at least 4 appropriate graduate programs to which to apply
2. Complete satisfactory application materials for at least 4 of those graduate programs, including statements of intent specific to each program
3. Secure commitments to serve as a reference from at least 3 individuals who have supervised their work at the university level, at least two of whom are faculty members
4. Successfully complete at least one mock interview (online or in person)
5. Identify at least one fellowship, scholarship, or other funding mechanism that will support their graduate study
6. Demonstrate effective and professional electronic, phone, and written communication such as they should use with graduate program personnel

Syllabus Change Policy
The instructor reserves the right to make modifications to this syllabus when doing so facilitates student learning. Students will be notified of any modifications in class, via Remind101, through email and/or Blackboard announcements as early as possible. All students are responsible for the consequences of modifications once they are announced, regardless of class absences or failure to check/read email.

Grade Basis: S/U
To earn a grade of S (Satisfactory) in this course, students must attend class, fully participate in class activities, and complete classwork and homework assignments as per instructions and by the time and date specified by the instructor.
Readings and Resources


Don Asher’s Website: [www.DonaldAsher.com/](http://www.DonaldAsher.com/)


Our 207-18 GA, Ashley Watson, shared the following thoughts about *Eye on Graduate School.*

- Does reference psychology a lot in beginning chapters (1-2), but I think in most cases, scholars could replace “psychology” with their field of study and info will still apply
- Really like section about journals—finding schools that publish in journals w/ high impact factors (Ch. 3, pg 45)
- Good tips about organization/timeline for applications and finding good fit—especially in emotional sense (Ch. 4)
- Chapter 8 is very psych specific
- Like how they compare LOR & personal statements—how they can be complementary (Ch. 12)
- Good resource on pg. 269 when thinking about preparing a personal statement—good jumping off point
- Possible questions to ask during an interview may be helpful to some (Appendix)

*Supplemental Recommended Reading*


**Writing Coach** – Stephanie Bartlett ([bartletts@winthrop.edu](mailto:bartletts@winthrop.edu)); Stephanie will announce her office hours and also be available via email

[http://mcnairscholars.com/](http://mcnairscholars.com/)

**BlackBoard**

**Winthrop Graduate School Open House:** Thursday, September 13 from 5:30PM-7:00PM [see](https://www.winthrop.edu/graduateschool/default.aspx?id=12222)

**Student Learning Activities - Class Participation, Reading, Interviews, & 4 Applications**

All assignments in this course are designed to help students successfully complete the graduate application process, therefore a significant portion of each student’s work in the course will be completed outside of class time. Students will research and choose appropriate graduate programs, complete application materials for those programs, ask faculty to serve as references, and participate in activities that will help them prepare for interviews at graduate programs.
In addition to weekly reading and small homework assignments, students are required to provide proof of completing at least one mock interview through Winthrop’s CCE (https://www.winthrop.edu/cce/default.aspx?id=18619). Students are also expected to participate in at least two McNair applicant interviews Friday 10/26. For the culminating student learning activity, students will submit four distinct, complete application packages in a meeting with Dr. Fortner-Wood before or during final exam week.

Students must successfully complete all of these activities in order to earn an S in the course. Instructions for each assignment will be shared in class.

**Attendance Policy**

Useful information will be shared during every class meeting. Students are required to participate in all class meetings for the entire class meeting. Having more than one unexcused absence will result (and has resulted) in a grade of U (Unsatisfactory) in the course. Missing more than half of any class meeting will be considered an absence.

Enrollment in this course is a privilege only allowed Winthrop’s McNair Scholars. Your continued enrollment after the first class indicates acceptance of the instructor’s discretion regarding timekeeping for the class and determinations of excused absences. If the instructor has granted prior approval, a student may substitute a graduate study preparation activity (e.g., an interview at a graduate program, participation in graduate fair, shadowing a professor for eight hours) or related activity for an absence from the section in which they are enrolled. Please note, the instructor may choose to substitute some class meetings for relevant out-of-class activities such as participation in graduate school fairs or additional one-on-one mock interviews with faculty members. Students will receive at least one week’s advance notice if in-class activities are to be substituted. Dr. FW will lead MCNR 302 discussions up to three times during the weeks indicated in the tentative schedule below. Students should commit to one of those times to participate throughout the semester. Students may use one of the other class meeting times to make up an absence.

**Instructor’s Expectations of Students**

1) You will prepare for, attend, and participate in every class.

2) You will be an active learner: raising questions, responding to instructor or peers’ questions or comments, contributing to discussions both in and out of class, taking accurate and complete notes, attentively reading assignments, and sharing relevant resources with your classmates. Being an active learner also means focusing on the discussions we are having in class and that you will not text, email, or talk on your cell phone or other device while in class or in meetings with the instructor.

3) You will complete all assignments according to the directions, honorably, and on time. This includes reading the text before the material is discussed in class.

4) You will contact me as soon as possible if you have concerns about understanding material, accessing course materials, completing assignments, or your performance in this class.

5) You will utilize me as a resource as early as possible in class, during office hours, by appointment, by e-mail, and/or via telephone.

6) You will listen and interact effectively and sensitively with fellow classmates and with me even when someone expresses a viewpoint that is very different from your own.

7) You will exhibit academic integrity at all times and follow the student conduct code found at: http://www.winthrop.edu/studentconduct/.
Campus Services

Students with Disabilities/Need of Accommodations for Access
Winthrop University is committed to providing access to education. If you have a condition which may adversely impact your ability to access academics and/or campus life, and you require specific accommodations to complete this course, contact the Office of Accessibility (OA) at 803-323-3290, or, accessibility@winthrop.edu, as early as possible to discuss your concerns.

Academic Success Center
ASC is a free resource for all undergraduate students seeking to perform their best academically. The ASC offers a variety of personalized and structured resources that help students achieve academic excellence, such as tutoring, academic skill development (test taking strategies, time management counseling, and study techniques), group and individual study spaces, and academic coaching. The ASC is located on the first floor of Dinkins, Suite 106. Please contact the ASC at 803-323-3929 or success@winthrop.edu. For more information on ASC services, please visit www.winthrop.edu/success. McNair Scholars are encouraged to serve as peer tutors for the ASC.

The Office of Victims Assistance (OVA) has expanded their services to provide direct services to survivors of major crimes including, but not limited to sexual assault, intimate partner violence, domestic violence, dating violence, stalking, bullying, and bias crime as well as campus-wide educational programming to prevent these crimes from occurring. The office is staffed with a fulltime Victim Services Coordinator and a full-time licensed counselor who provide on-going support to the survivor, male or female, from the time of initial reporting. The staff provides counseling services and assists with obtaining sexual assault forensic exams, STI testing/treatment, pregnancy prevention, housing options, legal prosecution, and access to other support services. Each case is handled individually, and the client is allowed to In the case of an after-hours emergency, please call Campus Police at 803/323-3333 or the local rape crisis center, Safe Passage, at 803/329-2800. select which services he or she wishes to pursue.

Winthrop University’s Office of Nationally Competitive Awards (ONCA) identifies and assists highly motivated and talented students to apply for nationally and internationally competitive awards, scholarships, fellowships, and unique opportunities both at home and abroad. ONCA gathers and disseminates award information and deadlines across the campus community, and serves as a resource for students, faculty, and staff throughout the nationally competitive award nomination and application process. ONCA is located in Dinkins 222. Please fill out an online information form at the bottom of the ONCA webpage www.winthrop.edu/onca and email onca@winthrop.edu for more information.

Tentative Schedule for Fall 2018 MCNR 302 – Friday Meetings

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Fridays</th>
<th>Class Focus</th>
<th>Read this week (B+ class)</th>
<th>Assignment due</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Aug-24</td>
<td>Intro to course, Travel, Getting started; Asking for recommendations; Don’t forget funding</td>
<td>In class: DA Ch.8: Samples, Samples, Samples DA Ch.1: Should you go to Grad School</td>
<td>In class: Graduate programs short list, Identify 1 model statement &amp; 1 app</td>
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<tr>
<td>Aug-31</td>
<td>Getting ready to write</td>
<td>DA Ch.2: Choosing a School or Program DA Ch.5: Getting Ready to Write SIC Ch 3: Where should I apply? SIC Ch. 4: Finding your fit</td>
<td>Schedule an appointment with the Writing Coach to discuss your plans for your 4 statements</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fridays</td>
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<td>Read this week (B4 class)</td>
<td>Assignment due</td>
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| Sep-7   | Get organized early and often! | DA Ch.3: Planning and Managing your Application Process  
DA Ch.4: What Happens to your Application  
SIC Ch. 6: Avoid the Kisses of Death in the Grad App process  
SIC CH. 7: 7 Tips for preparing a successful application | Share your current list of graduate programs & current drafts with Writing Coach, GA, and Director |
| Sep-14  | - Watch Don Asher’s YouTube Pres. on Getting into PhD programs | DA Ch.6: Your First Draft  
DA Ch.7: Subsequent Drafts  
SIC Ch. 9: What does your transcript say about you [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kwks6-p12Qg](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kwks6-p12Qg) | Meet with Writing Coach  
Tell Dr. FW about your 3 reference asks |
| Sep-21  | Communicating with references & Grad Personnel | DA Ch.9: Letters of Recommendation  
SIC Ch. 11: Letters of Rec: Purpose, Prep, Procedure, and Paragons  
SIC Ch. 12: Link between Rec Letters & Your statement | Report on DA video lessons; Print/Email Dr. FW your graduate program organization document/ spreadsheet with (at least) program names, universities, deadlines, GRE expectations, number of refs req., web address, graduate faculty of interest, research areas, & funding opps |
| Sep-28  | – Work on apps in Dinks 107 | SIC Ch. 13. Writing the Personal Statement 1 paragraph at a time | Submit a comprehensive reference packet to Dr. FW |
| Oct-5   | – Work on applications in Dinks 107 | SIC Ch. 14: Writing a compelling personal Statement | Email Dr. FW your updated vita & revised statements, Meet with Dr. FW |
| Oct-9   | Interview Prep. w/Tom Injaychock (WUCCE) | SIC Ch. 15: The interview process  
SIC Ch. 16: Acing the Interview | Bring a statement and vita |
| Oct-26  | Participate in McNair Applicant Interviews | | |
| Nov-2   | Funding Graduate Study | [https://mcnairscholars.com/funding/](https://mcnairscholars.com/funding/) | Specify the funding you are pursuing & progress to date |
| Nov-9   | – Work on Funding applications in Dinkins 107 | Funding application guidelines for the fellowships and scholarships you have identified | Email at least one funding application draft to Dr. FW |
| Nov-16  | Dean Jones: Graduate School Budgeting Conversation | | |
| Nov-23  | Thanksgiving Break – Rest and Revive | | |
| Nov-30  | The finish line is the starting line | SIC Ch. 17: Finding the right mentor: Gaining adm to and succeeding in GS  
SIC CH. 18. Making the transition from UG to GS  
SIC Ch. 19: I got into GS! Now what? | Submit proof of having completed a 30-minute+ mock interview |
| Dec-6   | Meet with Dr. FW to Submit Final Assignment – Proof of 4 completed applications – to by end of Final Exam period (3-5:30 pm Thursday, 12/6) | | |

*DA Ch. = Asher (2012) required reading; SIC Ch. = Sleigh, Iles, & Cannon (2017) recommended reading*
Reference Packet Checklist

1. Letter of introduction
   a. Remind your professor what courses and/or research you’ve completed with that professor and major compliments the professor bestowed on you about your work
   b. List leadership, community service, shadowing, or other relevant experiences your reference may not know
   c. Mention particular things you hope your reference will speak about
   d. Include test scores (GRE, etc.) if you want the reference to know/mention/address/combat
   e. List the name of graduate programs at the Universities you are applying to
      i. Tell the reasons each individual program is a good fit for you and you for it
      ii. If appropriate, mention faculty and/or resources you’re interested in working with at the institution
      iii. Specify your deadlines (organize the list in order of deadline or program level, e.g. Master's/PhD)
      iv. Indicate the method of submission (e.g., online via email link or hardcopy via mail)
   f. Share your gratitude

2. Copy of at least one writing sample (e.g., a class assignment or research product)

3. Reprints of research presentation materials or manuscripts

4. Vita

5. Unofficial Transcript

6. FERPA Consent Release Form (e.g., http://www.winthrop.edu/uploadedFiles/recandreg/CONSENT-FORRELEASE-EDUC-RECORDS.pdf)

7. Draft of a statement of intent (optional)

8. If references are to be mailed vs. uploaded, include hard copies of required recommendation materials.
   a. If requesting recommendations for several places, separate materials by program and group materials for each institution together.
   b. If any graduate program requires hard copies of recommendation materials, organize the materials in a folder or envelope so all pieces stay together.
      i. Be sure to give a pre-addressed envelope for each program that requires a mailed form
      ii. Get McNair envelopes so the return address is already included
      iii. Be sure to put the correct name and full address for grad program recipient of the
      iv. Place appropriate postage on each envelope (if necessary).
      v. Use a post-it to indicate on each envelope the date the letter must be postmarked, faxed, emailed, or picked up by you
      vi. Write “re: your name” in the bottom left corner of each envelope just in case your materials are mixed up with others
   c. Complete all of questions the applicant should including your name, name of program/position to/for which you are applying, your decision to waive/not waive your rights to view the letter (if applicable), name of reference (e.g., Dr. Cheryl Fortner-Wood), Reference's e-mail (e.g., fortnerc@winthrop.edu), how long have you known you/the reference (in years)

9. Send a grateful message a week before your deadline. For example, send an email that says something like: "Dr. Fortner-Wood, I am writing to thank you again for agreeing to write letters of recommendation for me. I know your schedule is busy and I am grateful for you for taking the time to work on those this week." Or “Dr. Yeager, Again, thank you for writing letters of reference for my graduate applications. I am writing to let you know I submitted all of my materials this week” This will show appreciation and serve as a reminder.

10. As soon as you learn you’ve been accepted, let your reference know so they can celebrate with you. Send a “Thank you” note. We have “Thank you” cards and stamps for you in the McNair office.