

English 226-001: Writing about Writing

Spring 2020



TTH 12:30-1:45
Room: LIB 117

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Office Hours:
M 3:00-4:00 (Tilly 320)
TH 11:00-12:00 in CMA
(RCC 101)
T/ TH 8:15-9:15 (Tilly
320)

COURSE DESCRIPTION:

The origins of writing are credited to the Sumerians in Mesopotamia who developed a cuneiform script around 3,500-3,000 BCE. In the Western tradition, rhetoric is said to have begun in the 5th century B.C.E. in Greece. Some of you may have heard of Plato and Aristotle. We also know that the Greeks were not the only culture engaged in rhetoric and writing, but Aristotle wrote *The Art of Rhetoric*, and thus, this rhetoric is in many ways the basis for how writing gets taught in academia today. Further, the writing course as we know it was developed at Harvard in the late nineteenth century. One reason for developing such a course still holds forth today: students coming into the university cannot write—or so many (including teachers) will claim. Those coming to college in the 1900s were no longer just the elite few, but rather a boom in enrollments brought in students with different literacy skills. Thus, a placement exam was initiated, and writing was linked to a canon of literature. As English A and B courses became filled with students, teachers were overwhelmed with three hundred themes a week to grade. During this time a few graduate programs developed that focused on writing and rhetoric.

To say that history repeats itself is an understatement. In the 1970s, the colleges in New York began open admissions, meaning that anyone—returning veterans, immigrants, non-native English speakers, adults-- who wanted to enroll in college could. Once again, colleges found themselves trying to deal with the writing issues they saw in papers done by these “non-traditional” students. Composition studies became part of many more graduate programs.

Today we look at writing and a variety of rhetorics coming from many different spaces. Racial and ethnic groups claim and perform their own rhetorics, and Aristotle now must share the stage. Feminist Rhetorics, Queer Studies, and Disability Studies scholars are all contributing to the discussions of *whose* writing counts. There are embodied rhetorics, visual rhetorics, performance rhetorics and creative writing, business writing, professional writing, museum rhetorics, technical writing, digital rhetorics, cultural rhetorics, makings—and more. Certainly, today’s technology has brought changes to the writing classroom that fascinates and frustrates teachers (and always has done so). Because of social media, some claim that students are writing much more than they did in the past, and others lament the effects texting is having on a student’s ability to write a paper in standard written English (SWE). Even SWE is a complicated issue. The point is, literacy (the ability to read, write, and communicate) takes many forms. To me, it is

Class Assignments and Projects:

Reader's Response: Readings are one of the most important aspects of this class. If you do not do the reading, you will have little to contribute. These responses will all be the jumping off point for most of our discussions. For each set of readings, you are responsible to write 500 words which demonstrates that you have read all the readings assigned completely (not just the first page). First, you should provide a concise summary with key points of what we are reading. Second, provide a reaction that engages with the argument(s) made by the author. Consider what the reading is about, what your reactions are to the author, what else have you read that connects to this piece, or how this reading is relevant to your experiences. In the end, this is informal writing in the sense that you don't need to develop a thesis, but you do need to apply your critical literacy skills. I will collect these and spec grade them (see handout on spec grading), and you will include them in your portfolios.

WWSBlog: As part of this course, we will all participate in a class blog. The blog will offer information on careers in Writing and Writing Studies. We will take turns posting and responding, and this blog will be useful to faculty in WWS as well as students who are looking for what to do with their degree. We will discuss this during our second week and sign up.

Composition Rhetoric Studies: (This assignment may change) This project requires you to map out an area in composition rhetoric that has you curious. This can be one of the following (but not limited to): writing instruction (at various levels of schooling), rhetorical analysis, histories and policies of literacy and literacy instruction, second-language writing, "alternative" rhetorics, gatekeeping in academic writing, feminist rhetorics, queer rhetorics, writing across the curriculum, cultural rhetorics, ...and more. (See *Keywords in Composition Studies* for more ideas). You will not be writing an entire paper, but rather doing research to find 8-10 scholarly articles and annotate them (we will discuss how in class). You will then write a proposal for a research project and give a 5-minute summary of it in class. We will have time to work on pieces of the assignment in class. This project will be due in its final form in your mid-term portfolio.

Writing as Art: For this project, you will conduct a similar writing experience from "Thirteen Ways of Looking at an Egg." Each of you will be given a yet-to-be-determined object which you will reflect on and write about culminating in a poem, short creative nonfiction or fiction piece, or other artful writing. This assignment calls for you to hand in all reflective writing about our object along with the final creative piece in your midterm portfolio.

Writing in the Professions: For this project, you will be working in teams (even though that can be difficult) to create one of the following, the subject of which needs to be run by me before you start. You will also create a poster to present at the STARs Symposium on April 27 (a Monday):

- 📌 A Public Service Announcement Campaign which includes multi-genre/multimodal materials. Your materials must be in 4-5 different forms, but contain the same message. **This project allows you to prepare some message that will be beneficial to the public and create 4-5 forms of broadcasting it. An example would be a campaign on healthy eating where you would create a newsletter, a brochure, a logo for a t-shirt and water bottle, and a bookmark with healthy eating tips.**
- 📌 Marketing and instruction materials for a new electronic device. Your device can be one that is already in play, but your materials must take on a new direction. Use 4-5 different materials.

This project allows you to develop a new electronic device or version of an existing one. You then creating advertising and instructions for it. An example would be a new version of a smartphone where you would create an image of the design, brief instructions of the features, a full-page ad for a magazine, and a you-tube video or radio advertisement or a brochure.

- A print and e-magazine on a subject of your choice (just no pornography). Create 4-5 layouts.

This project allows you to develop a magazine on a subject of your choice featuring 4-5 layouts. An example would be a health magazine which has a short article on the benefits of walking, a new diet, an exercise routine, and an advertisement for running shoes. Your magazine should have a cover and table of contents.

- A journalistic series which included visuals and hyperlinks. Use 4-5 different entries.

This project allows you to develop a journalistic series with inserted pictures and hyperlinks to help readers understand concepts or history, etc. An example would be a series on four areas of access to water and can include a short piece on Flint, Michigan, a piece on the Dakota Pipeline, a piece on river pollution, and a piece on clean-up of water. Embedded in these are links to further the reader's understanding.

We will discuss further options and details. You will also have time to work on this project in class. This project will be due in its final form with your final portfolio.

Portfolios: At both the mid-semester and at semester's end, you'll submit a portfolio of your work for me to read, critique, and grade. The mid-semester portfolio must contain an Introduction or cover piece; the pieces you worked on in the first half of the semester: your CR assignment and your WA assignment as well your Reader's Responses. The final portfolio must contain an Introduction or cover piece the pieces you worked on in the second half of the semester: your response to the tutoring session, and your PW assignment as well your Reader's Responses.

Your cover pieces for each portfolio (ideally 3-4pages) should critically reflect on the work you have been doing and how this work informs you about Writing and Writing Studies. Talk specifically about readings, your reactions, your interactions, and your engagement. What have you learned? What surprised you and why? Talk about the assignments and how they help you understand this area of Writing Studies. In the final portfolio discuss your future in Writing and Writing Studies.

Attendance, Academic Honesty, and Other Suggestions

1. In Native communities, we talk about the four Rs: Reverence, Reciprocity, Respect, and Responsibility. I make every attempt to conduct my personal and professional life under these four Rs. I hold great admiration for each of you and for the work we will do together. We are in a space of sharing gifts of learning with one another. As with any endeavor, there are responsibilities that we take on and expectations that need to be fulfilled. It goes without saying that respectful behavior is expected from all of us. Respecting one another includes coming to class on time and prepared as well as being present and engaging in deep listening as well as contributing. While we may disagree, and I hope we will, there are ways to challenge and ask difficult questions in ways that do not devalue anyone in the room.
2. **You must come to class regularly and on time and being present in class.** Being in class demonstrates your responsibility to your studies and your peers. While things happen such as illness, car troubles, unplanned events, it is to your benefit to make every class. If something serious happens let me know, so you keep up with the work. However, if it seems that you just are not taking the class seriously, your grade will be affected. Thus, **three** or

- more absences (equally 1.5 weeks of class) means you should not expect to pass the course. Please notify me on the day you are absent by phone or email (listed at the top of this document). When absent, you must bring documentation such as a doctor's note. If you are absent, you are responsible for getting and completing the assignment. Further, two times late equals one absence. If you are late, enter and take your seat without disrupting the class. Likewise, if you must leave class to use the facilities, do so without interrupting. Being late on a consistent basis and/or continually leaving the classroom will bring down your grade
3. **Use of Electronic Devices:** Sometimes it seems we must be available to others 24/7, which leaves no time for anything else. Yet this “on-call status” does not allow for us to be attentive to other things. While I may not say anything to you, I (and other students) do take note of your attentiveness in class. In this class cell phone use is only for emergencies—put them on silence and keep them out of sight. Likewise, while you may bring laptops or other devices to class, they should be used only for class-related tasks. Websurfing, viewing Facebook and other social media, or checking email are not part of the work at hand. Finally, earphones, unless they are for purposes of hearing-impaired students, are not to be in your ears. I do not care to waste my time and the time of the class monitoring your use of electronic devices. Your inappropriate use of such devices is disrespectful to me and to your peers; violation of this policy will result in your being marked absent for the class.
 4. **Academic Dishonesty and Plagiarism**— Plagiarism—we all know that this is intellectual theft. Bottom line, don't do it. It's a serious offense that could not only jeopardize your grade, but has other serious consequences. This is a link to BSU's Academic Integrity Policy: <http://catalog.bridgew.edu/content.php?catoid=10&navoid=970>
 5. **Participation:** Attendance and participation are not the same things. Participation means that you are physically, mentally, and vocally present in class. Much of our work is based on work you have done in your reading responses or through your observations. You should come to class prepared and ready to work. Each person should respond thoughtfully and carefully to the discussion. Participation is a major player in your final grade, so I urge you to fully engage in the class.
 6. **Feel challenged**—While the work load is heavy at times, there is still so much more to contribute. If you find something that looks interesting, bring it in or discuss it in your responses. Speak and ask questions in class. Do your homework and come to class prepared to work. While it seems like a lot, stick with it. Enjoy the learning, work hard at it, and open yourself to thinking in challenging ways.
 7. **Special Accommodations:** Any student who needs special accommodations due to a documented disability must register with the Disability Resources Office in the Academic Achievement Center (Maxwell Library, ground floor). A letter will be provided for you which needs to be delivered to me before the add/drop period. At that time, we can discuss your specific needs.
 8. The Writing Studio and Second Language Services are also located in the AAC
 9. **Talk to me**—I make myself available in multiple ways. My office hours are listed at the top of the syllabus and I can always find other times to meet with you. Let me know if there are any issues before they grow. Please do not feel intimidated by my “rules” or the course materials; they are designed to help you become a stronger reader, writer and learner. I am also interested in what you have to say as a member of our classroom community; I am involved in helping you say what you want in the context of your assignments and will respectfully respond to your work.
 10. Have a sense of humor.
 11. Be creative. Take risks.

Evaluating Your Work

I will not be grading individual pieces for this class, but I will be making comments on them. Your grade for this course will be based on your two portfolios—one at mid-term and one at the semester's end. While not receiving grades on individual projects can be frustrating, a portfolio system offers room for you to develop as a writer. Your two letter grades for these portfolios include

- Meeting all the requirements in each project and for the portfolio;
- Assessing the quality of your written work, including your thoughtful revisions;
- The quality of your effort in class, in workshops, in class discussions, in general;
- How you demonstrate your willingness to try new things, think in new ways, and explore different perspectives.

Breakdown of assessment percentages:

| | |
|----------------------------|-----|
| Participation | 10% |
| Reader's Response | 10% |
| WWSBlog | 5% |
| Writing in the Professions | 15% |
| Writing Studies | 15% |
| Writing as Art | 15% |
| Two Portfolios | 30% |

You should, from your efforts and my comments, know how you are doing in the class. At any time during the semester you are unsure, come speak with me.



Tentative Schedule (Like any piece of writing, this is a draft and will undergo revision.)

Note: It is your responsibility to read materials **before** coming to class and to prepare any assignments.

WEEK 1: January 23

T We meet for the first time today, so introductions are necessary. For this introduction, give a social media profile.

Discuss: What is this class about? What should this class be about?

Prepare for next class: Please read “The Rhetorical Situation” and “Rhetoric is Synonymous with Empty Speech”(in *Bad Ideas*). Watch the YouTube video

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BYMUCz9bHAs>

Complete your Reader’s Response and bring copy to class.

WEEK 2: January 28 and 30

T Rhetoric—What the heck is it? Introduction to section on Composition Rhetoric

Discussion about WWSBlog

Mini-presentations on blogs—sign-up sheet

Prepare for next class: Please read Brandt (literacy), “America Is Facing a Literacy Crisis” (in *Bad Ideas*), and Yancey (21st Century) . Check on this composition rhetoric timeline:

http://www.english.ohiou.edu/cifer/cifer_theory/ Complete your Reader’s Response and bring copy to class.

TH Inkshedding and discussion

Prepare for next class: Please read Royster and Villanueva. Complete your Reader’s Response and bring copy to class.

WEEK 3: February 4 and February 6

T Discuss Royster and Villanueva

What did you learn/find interesting on the timeline?

Writing groups to discuss Composition Rhetoric (CR)assignment.

Prepare for next class: Please read Anzaldúa. Complete your Reader’s Response and bring copy to class.

TH Discuss Anzaldúa. How is her rhetorical style different?

Prepare for next class: Prepare your CR assignment for an in-class workshop. Also, please write 1-2 paragraphs on your grammar pet peeve—that is, what is one grammatical mistake that just drives you crazy? Why?

WEEK 4: February 11 and 13

T In-class workshop and time to work on CR assignment.

Share grammar pet peeves.

Prepare for next class: Please read the introduction to *Errors and Expectations* and “Errors: Windows to the Mind.” Complete your Reader’s Response and bring copy to class. As a fun activity in honor of Valentine’s Day, write a love poem that takes place in the kitchen.

TH Share Poems. Discussion of *Errors and Expectations* and “Errors: Windows to the Mind.”

Prepare for next class: Please read 3 selections from the section *Bad Ideas* about Style, Usage, and Grammar in *Bad Ideas* Complete your Reader’s Response and bring copy to class.

WEEK 5: February 18 and 20

T Discussion of Style, Usage and Grammar

Introduction to Writing as Art. Handing out objects

Prepare for next class: Please read “Thirteen Ways of Looking at an Egg” Complete your Reader’s Response and bring copy to class.

TH Inkshedding Discuss “Thirteen Ways” WA assignment and time in class to work on it.

Prepare for next class: Please read “Creative Writing is a Unique Category” in *Bad Ideas*

WEEK 6: February 25 and 27

T Discuss “CW is Unique Category” Time in class to work on WA assignment

Prepare for next class: http://www.huffingtonpost.com/seth-abramson/six-myths-about-the-creat_b_705279.html Look up information on MFA programs. Complete your Reader’s Response and bring copy to class . Continue working on your WA assignment and bring that to class to share.

TH Discussion of the MFA. Writing groups to discuss WA assignment.

Prepare for next class: http://www.huffingtonpost.com/ronald-h-balson/bestseller-success-storie_b_4064574.html ;
<http://www.vqronline.org/blog/2012/10/15/literary-press-selfpub/#.Utw58RMo6P8>
Complete your Reader’s Response and bring copy to class . Bring your object descriptions to workshop.

Week 7: March 3 and March 5

T Discussion of publishing. Workshop of WA assignment.

Prepare for next class: Begin preparing your mid-term portfolio. Write a draft of your cover piece to share with writing groups.

TH Share cover pieces in writing group. Time in class to continue working on them.

Prepare for next class: Please read “The Art of Revision” and “How to Read a Poem.” Also read poems from handout. Write a response and bring it to class. Bring a poem to class—your own or one you enjoy. Ready your mid-term portfolio to turn in next class.

WEEK 8: March 10 and March 12—Spring Break. Enjoy and be safe.**WEEK 9: March 17 and March 19**

T Mid-term Portfolios Due. Discuss Poems, “The Art of Revision” and “How to Read a Poem.” Share poems.

Prepare for next class: Please read “Multimodal” “Resume Guide” and the website on Technical Writing. Write a response and bring it to class.

TH Introduction to Technical and Professional Writing. Discussion of readings. Choose groups for collaborative project. In class project.

Prepare for next class: Please read the following: “Digital Immigrants/Digital Natives,in *Bad Ideas*” “Can We Teach Digital Natives?” Pecha Kucha <http://www.pechakucha.org/>
“We Have Met the Enemy...”
http://www.nytimes.com/2010/04/27/world/27powerpoint.html?_r=0
C.R.A.P. Information: http://www.presentationzen.com/chapter6_spread.pdf
?” Complete your Reader’s Response and bring copy to class .

WEEK 10: March 24 and March 26

T Discussion of readings and Presentation Styles.

Prepare for next class: Please read an online manual for your phone or other electronic device. Look specifically at the sections that describe your device and the settings. Try following one of the directions to try something you have not done or known about. How usable are the directions? Also, please read “Usability over Time.” In your response discuss both these readings. Finally, look at “Crochet 101.”

TH Discussion of usability. In class we will be practicing with directions.

Prepare for next class: Write directions for making your favorite meal or craft or something else you make. (Do not look up the directions, but rather write your directions from your memory). Bring to class to share with writing group. Also, please view “Laws that Choke Creativity”: http://www.ted.com/talks/larry_lessig_says_the_law_is_strangling_creativity.html and Check out Malik William’s website: <http://www.liptunesmusic.com/>. Complete your Reader’s Response and bring copy to class .

WEEK 11: March 31 and April 2

T Share directions with writing group.

Discussion of copyright and fair use.

Malik Williams visit.

Prepare for next class: Please read “Bound by Law” and check out US copyright laws.

Complete your Reader’s Response and bring copy to class .

TH Discussion of “Bound by Law” and check out US copyright laws.. Preparing Professional Writing (PW) assignment. **Creating Posters.**

Prepare for next class: Please read “The Sticky Embrace of Beauty”

and read around on the following websites:

<http://www.users.muohio.edu/romanots/assignments.htm> and

<http://writing.colostate.edu/gallery/multigenre/introduction.htm>

<http://multimodalcomposition.wordpress.com/2011/02/06/defining-multimodal-composition/>

and <http://www.ncte.org/governance/MultimodalLiteracies>

Complete your Reader’s Response and bring copy to class . Bring your PW assignment to date.

WEEK 12: April 7 and April 9

T Discuss “*Sticky*” and *multimodal*. **In-class project.** Writing groups to share PW assignment.

Prepare for next class: Prepare your part of PW assignment for in-class work.

TH In-class work on collaborative project

Introduction to Embodied Rhetorics and Cultural Rhetorics

Prepare for next class: Please read excerpts from *Rhetorical Bodies* and Levy on bodies

Complete your Reader’s Response and bring copy to class .

WEEK 13: April 14 and 16

T HOLIDAY—No class

TH Discussion of *Rhetorical Bodies* and *Levy* Continued work of PW assignment

Prepare for next class: Please read “U.S. Memorials...” Complete your Reader’s Response and bring copy to class .

WEEK 14: April 21 and 23

T Discussion of “U.S. Memorials” Work for PW assignment **and posters**

Prepare for next class: Please read “Land-based Pedagogies.” Complete your Reader’s Response and bring copy to class .

TH Discussion of “Land-based..”. Workshop for poster presentation

Prepare for next class: Finish Posters for symposium

Monday, April 27 STARs Symposium Poster Session. Be on time!

WEEK 15: April 28 and April 30

T

Prepare for next class: Please read the introduction to *Legible Sovereignities* Prepare 1-2 questions for Lisa King

TH Speaker Lisa King—meet in room_____

Prepare for next class: Prepare your final portfolio to hand in on Monday.

Classes end Monday, May 4th. May 5th is Reading Day. Finals are May 6th-12th