

# English 226-001: *Writing about Writing*

Fall 2016



Thursday (TH) 2:00-4:40  
Room: Harrington Hall 213

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Office Hours:  
M 3:30-4:30 (Tilly 320)  
T 11:00-12:00 in CMA (RCC 101)  
T/ TH 8:15-9:15 (Tilly 320)

## COURSE DESCRIPTION:

In the Western tradition, rhetoric is said to have begun in the 5<sup>th</sup> century B.C.E. in Greece. Some of you may have heard of Plato and Aristotle. The latter wrote a book on the art of rhetoric, and 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 “big Daddy A” (as my colleague has renamed Aristotle) no long holds the only key. 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



### **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 no more than two double-spaced pages. You should provide a concise summary of what we are reading, and then begin to engage with 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 comment on them, and you will include them in your portfolios.

**WWSBlog:** As part of this course, we will all participate in a class blog. We will take turns posting, but before we do, we will need to decide what the blog will be about. That decision will take place during our second class meeting.

**Composition Rhetoric Studies:** 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...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

**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:

-  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.

- 📌 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.
- 📌 A print and e-magazine on a subject of your choice (just no pornography). Create 4-5 layouts.
- 📌 A journalistic series which included visuals and hyperlinks. Use 4-5 different entries.

We will discuss further options and details, and you will be given a handout on the particulars of each option. 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, two or more absences (equally two 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:

Reader’s Response	15%
WWSBlog	10%
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:** Because this class is once per week, it will seem that there is a lot to do in between our meetings. This is a reality, so I suggest you do a little of this homework every other night rather than trying to do it all the night before. It is your responsibility to read materials before coming to class and to prepare any assignments.

**WEEK 1: September 8**

We meet for the first time today, so introductions are necessary. For this introduction, tell us what your bio would say on your book cover; you should tell us the title and genre of your book, too.

In-class conversations: What is this class about? What should this class be about?

Go over syllabus and assignments. "The Writer"- Richard Wilbur

**Prepare for next class:** Please read the excerpts from *Essential Rhetoric*, Brereton and Connors. Browse the excerpt from *The Rhetorical Tradition*. On your own, if you wish, you might look up Aristotle's *The Art of Rhetoric*.

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

**Add Drop ends on September 14**

**WEEK 2: September 15**

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

Watch the YouTube video <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BYMUCz9bHAs>

Discussion of Brereton and Connors. Composition

Groups: Check on this composition rhetoric timeline:

[http://www.english.ohiou.edu/cifer/cifer\\_theory/](http://www.english.ohiou.edu/cifer/cifer_theory/) What did you learn/find interesting on the timeline?

Co-creating the WWSBlog

Mini-presentations on blogs—sign-up sheet

**Prepare for next class:** Please read Royster, Villanueva and Anzaldúa. Complete your Reader's Response and bring copy to class. Begin to gather materials for Composition Rhetoric (CR) assignment.

**WEEK 3: September 22**

Discuss Royster, Villanueva, and Anzaldúa

Writing groups to discuss Composition Rhetoric (CR) assignment.

In-class time to work on CR assignment

**Prepare for next class:** Prepare your CR assignment for an in-class workshop. Please read the introduction to *Errors and Expectations*, "Errors: Windows to the Mind," "The Art of Styling Sentences" Browse through some articles in magazines or journals to see what examples of these sentences you find and bring them to class. Complete your Reader's Response and bring copy to class. 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: September 29**

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

Share grammar pet peeves.

Discussion of *Errors and Expectations*, “Errors: Windows to the Mind,” “The Art of Styling Sentences”

Share sentences. Practices with sentences

In-class time to work on CR assignment

Introduction to Writing as Art (WA). Handing out objects

**Prepare for next class:** Please read “Thirteen Ways of Looking at an Egg,” “The Art of Revision,” and [http://www.huffingtonpost.com/seth-abramson/six-myths-about-the-creat\\_b\\_705279.html](http://www.huffingtonpost.com/seth-abramson/six-myths-about-the-creat_b_705279.html), Look up information on MFA and AWP programs. Complete your Reader’s Response and bring copy to class. Write some journal entries (at least 3) about your object and bring that to class to share.

#### **WEEK 5: October 6**

Discussion of “Thirteen Ways,” “Art of Revision,” Myths about CW, MFA programs.

Share information on MFA and AWP programs. What surprised you?

Groups to discuss WA assignment and journal entries.

**Prepare for next class:** [http://www.huffingtonpost.com/ronald-h-balson/bestseller-success-storie\\_b\\_4064574.html](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. Also, look up a publisher in a genre that interests you: Prepare a mini-presentation (5 minutes) to discuss what this publisher looks for. Bring your WA project to workshop.

#### **WEEK 6: October 13**

Discussion of publishing.

Mini presentations on publishing

Workshop of WA assignment.

Preparing the midterm portfolio

Introduction to tutoring and revision.

**Prepare for next class:** Please read “Responding to Student Writing” and watch the video “Beyond the Red Ink: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XluNo599LMY> . Also read “What a Writer Wants.” Complete your Reader’s Response and bring copy to class Find a paper and take it to the Writing Studio to work with a tutor. Prepare your cover letter for your midterm portfolio to workshop.

#### **Week 7: October 20**

Discussion of “Responding to Student Writing” and “Beyond the Red Ink”

Excerpts from “Beyond the Borders” in class

Your experiences in the Writing Studio

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

**Prepare for next class:** Please read the following.

Pecha Kucha <http://www.pechakucha.org/>

“We Have Met the Enemy...”

[http://www.nytimes.com/2010/04/27/world/27powerpoint.html?\\_r=0](http://www.nytimes.com/2010/04/27/world/27powerpoint.html?_r=0)

C.R.A.P. Information: [http://www.presentationzen.com/chapter6\\_spread.pdf](http://www.presentationzen.com/chapter6_spread.pdf)

“Usability over Time” and “Crochet 101.”

Complete your Reader’s Response and bring copy to class. Prepare your midterm portfolio to hand in.

### **WEEK 8: October 27—Midterm Portfolios Due**

Discussion of Presentation Styles.

Introduction to Professional Writing (PW).

Groups: In class reading of 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?

Practice 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](http://www.ted.com/talks/larry_lessig_says_the_law_is_strangling_creativity.html) and

read “Bound by Law” and check out US copyright laws. Complete your Reader’s Response and bring copy to class .

### **WEEK 9: November 3**

Discussion of copyright and fair use.

Continued practice with directions.

Share your directions with group.

Preparing Professional Writing (PW) assignment.

**Prepare for next class:** Please read “Digital Natives and Digital Immigrants” and “Is Google Making Us Stupid” Check out Malik William’s website <http://www.liptunesmusic.com/> . Complete your Reader’s Response and bring copy to class. Bring your PW assignment to date.

**Last day to withdraw from classes is November 18**

**WEEK 10: November 10**

T Discuss “Digital Natives and Digital Immigrants” and “Is Google Making Us Stupid”  
Palmeri’s *Remixing Composition*.

Writing groups to share PW assignment.

Malik Williams visit.

**Prepare for next class:** Please read the chapter from Palmeri’s *Remixing Composition*.

Please read around on the following websites:

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

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

Complete your Reader’s Response and bring copy to class. Continue work on PW assignment.

**WEEK 11: November 17**

Discuss Palmeri’s *Remixing Composition*. Multigenre and multimodal writing

Sample multigenre assignments—What do you notice? Why are these effective?

Continued work of PW assignment

**Prepare for next class:** Prepare your PW assignment for in-class workshop. Please read “U.S. Memorials...,” the excerpts from *Rhetorical Bodies*, *Levy’s presentation*, and “*Embodied Rhetoric*”. Complete your Reader’s Response and bring copy to class Continued work of PW assignment Also prepare cover piece for your final portfolio to workshop in class.

**WEEK 12: November 24 \*Fall Feast Holiday Break—no class today**

**WEEK 13: December 1**

Discuss What is embodied Rhetoric? “U.S. Memorials...,” the excerpts from *Rhetorical Bodies*, *Levy’s presentation*, and “*Embodied Rhetoric*”.

**Prepare for next class:** Please read *Practices of Looking* and “The Sticky Embrace of Beauty.” Prepare your PW assignment for workshop. Prepare you Final Portfolio cover piece for workshop.

**WEEK 14: December 8**

Discuss *Practices of Looking* and “The Sticky Embrace of Beauty.”

Workshop for PW assignment. Workshop for portfolio cover piece.

General discussion and Celebration of your good work.

**Classes end Monday, December 14. Reading Day is December 15. Finals are December 16-22**

**Final Portfolio Due December 19 by noon in my office (Tillinghast 320).**