

Critical Thinking & Writing Odyssey Project Fall 2017

Instructor: Logan Middleton
Please Call Me: Logan (Gender Pronouns: He/His/Him)
Class Location: UAEC (211 N. Race St.)

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Wednesdays: 4.45p-8.00p

Course Description:

Critical Thinking & Writing is designed to help you develop academic literacies, skills that will help you succeed in your coursework at the college level. That is to say, this course is designed to help you learn to participate in ongoing, lifelong conversations with each other and the world we live in—as enacted through reading and writing, listening and speaking.

During our weekly sessions, then, we will focus our writing, thinking, and discussion on the act of writing itself. That means we'll be engaging with research from the field of Writing Studies to better understand and articulate what you say (content), how you come up with ideas (invention), how you think through writing (process), and whether or not what you've communicated achieves your goals in the first place (rhetoric). In sum, we'll be working together to develop a more full and rich understanding of how writing works both to make meaning and get things done in the world.

This class will be serve as a place for you to explore and practice using your writing as a tool for engaging meaningfully with your own thoughts, other people, and your surroundings. Throughout the course, we will be thinking critically about the writing we engage with and produce in the classroom, work collaboratively with our peers to grow as writers in our own community, and consistently reflect on—and be active agents in—our own growth as readers and writers.

Student Learning Outcomes for Critical Thinking & Writing:

After completing this course, students will be able to:

- 1.) Understand writing as a complex and dynamic process that functions beyond commonly held ideas of writing as translating thoughts to paper, editing grammar mistakes, etc.
- 2.) Compose cogent, effective arguments in academic writing and support said arguments with evidence, analysis, and attention to audience.
- 3.) Thoughtfully read, engage with, analyze, and respond to scholarship and other texts that present ideas about composition, rhetoric, and literacy.
- 4.) Better comprehend your own identity, process, and work as a writer in order to more effectively write in your social world (whatever that might look like).
- 5.) Demonstrate knowledge of writing as a process by revising your written work in accordance with peer comments, instructor feedback, and/or class readings.

Course Texts:

All course readings and materials will be available online, passed out in class, or made available to you free of charge; you shouldn't need to purchase any items for the class.

It is imperative, though, that you do have access to course readings and related texts during our class meetings. Whether you print these materials out or access them via a laptop, tablet, or other electronic device is up to you.

Participation:

To me, participation means coming to class prepared to talk about the assigned readings, having completed the required work for that week's session, discussing you and your peers' works-in-progress, and actively engaging with in-class activities. In class, I expect you to listen attentively to your peers and to challenge, respectfully, the source material as well as the assertions of your classmates.

While I am your instructor this semester, I am also a student myself. As such, I look forward to learning with and from you all over the course of the term.

Digital Course Components:

***E-mail:** On occasion, I will send brief e-mails to your UAEC e-mail addresses with reminders, resources, and/or clarifications on assignments. I check my e-mail daily and usually respond within one business day. Please do your best to respond to any e-mails that I send as promptly as possible. If you can't access e-mail regularly—or if you're not completely sure how to set up or use such an account—let me know, and we can make arrangements to communicate through a different channel.

***Google Classroom:** Google Classroom is an online service that provides a central hub for our learning this semester. It acts as an Internet-based portal where class readings, assignments, and other materials related to our session can be posted. We may or may not be using this service depending on your comfort with and regular access to the Internet. We'll talk a bit more about this as we make our way into the semester.

Assignment / Homework Submission Policy:

Should I assign homework assignments, these texts and related submissions can be turned in either digitally (through e-mail) or as a hard copy—either typed or handwritten (so long as your writing is legible). For any assignments or texts / pieces of writing I ask you to bring to class in the coming weeks, I'll provide more specific instructions for you all when given assignments come up throughout the semester.

Attendance:

Your presence and active participation in this course is critical to your success in this class since most of the course consists of in-class discussion, peer feedback, and workshopping your writing. I expect your full participation and engagement at all class sessions. If you're unable to attend, however, please get in touch with me and let me know, either by e-mail or phone.

Per UAEC guidelines, you're also required to self-report any absences by calling UAEC's student attendance number at 779.232.9774. When you call this number, you'll be asked to leave a voicemail leaving your name, date, what class you're missing, my name, and a return phone number.

That said, I understand that attendance guidelines and policies are inherently ableist insofar that they're prejudiced against students with mental, physical, and other sorts of disabilities that might prevent them from making it to class, on time, or at all. If there's something going on in your life that's regularly making it difficult to participate—whatever that means to you and whether disability-related or not—please let me know and we can figure out a system of accommodations that'll work for you.

As mentioned above, this course is structured in a way that's discussion heavy; it can only work when you're actively participating in class. So please do be present in the ways that you can since it'll make our learning better for everyone.

Personal Technology Policy

It is abundantly clear that we live in an increasingly technology driven and enabled world. Of course, you may bring your own laptop / tablet to class in order to read, annotate, write, and/or search for materials relevant to the course.

For many of us, our laptops, tablets, and phones are an integral part of our lives, and of course, we (unconsciously) check them dozens of times per day. I recognize these habits and urges, in part, as informed by literacy practices, especially in a class like this where you might be very well using your phone as a media technology in its own right. As such, I do not wish to police cell phone use during class. If you feel like you might be inclined to use your phone briefly during class, all I ask is that you leave your device on your desk and be acutely aware of when, how, and how much you use it during class.

That is not to say that you are permitted to tune out on your device during class. If I notice that you are more engaged with your phone, tablet, laptop, or other technology more than course activities, I will speak with you personally and ask you to put your device away. If the technology distraction persists, I'll take further action, and we'll come up with a solution to the problem together.

Classroom and Course Etiquette

In this course, you will undoubtedly work with students who differ from you in terms of identity, whether that's in terms of gender, race, nationality, language background, age, or beyond. Regardless of these differences, you must absolutely respect the attitudes and contributions of your classmates, even if their perspectives differ from your own. As such, (cis)sexist, racist, ableist, homophobic, transphobic, and/or xenophobic remarks or behavior will not be tolerated, nor will any additional form of harassment. These attitudes are not only counterproductive to safe and inclusive learning, but they're simply unacceptable and have no place in this classroom, much less anywhere else. So please be respectful of your peers' verbal contributions to class and their work, as we will all be working together to promote a rich, comfortable learning environment.

It follows that I envision our class environment—both in its physical and digital iterations—as a safer space in which everyone feels welcome to participate. Should we encounter material that might be emotionally challenging or potentially traumatic, I will provide a trigger or content warning in advance. If you find yourself having difficulty dealing with a particular class discussion or reading, feel free to step out of the classroom and/or speak to me about it in person.

As noted above, classroom etiquette also extends into networked spaces, specifically with regard to e-mail communication and blog activity. In your e-mails to me and to your peers, please be sure to include a title explaining the subject of the message, a greeting (“Hi Logan”), a clear explanation of your question/concern, and a signature.

Please allow at least 24 hours for an e-mail response from me. By no means do I consider e-mail correspondence an appropriate substitute for one-on-one conversations (in-depth discussions about readings, talking through writing processes, etc.).

Academic Integrity Policy (Plagiarism)

All written work submitted in this course is expected to be your own, with any wording and/or idea taken from any other source fairly attributed. To use phrases and/or ideas from any other source as if they were your own, whether accidentally or deliberately, constitutes plagiarism. Submitting your own work for more

than one course without permission of both instructors can also constitute plagiarism. The Student Code sets out possible consequences of plagiarism ranging from failure on the assignment to suspension or dismissal from the University, and it specifies that ignorance of these standards is not an excuse.

I realize that defining academic integrity might be complicated given your (re)entry into academic learning environments; what counts as plagiarism isn't always clear-cut or obvious. Please contact me before you turn in a project if you have any questions about academic integrity as it relates to plagiarism or citation.

Students Requiring Accommodation:

Everyone learns differently and benefits from different kinds of support. Please get in touch with me if you would like to discuss your individual learning style and/or needs and how this course can best accommodate them, whether you have a disability or not.

Changes to Syllabus / Course Schedule:

This course syllabus and its corresponding schedule are subject to change. You will be notified of any such changes in class and/or in writing.

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Week One	Reading	Due Dates / Reminders
Wednesday, September 13 —Exploring Problem-Posing Education	Freire, “The Banking Concept of Education,” <i>Pedagogy of the Oppressed</i> Bernstein and Lowry, “The Five-Paragraph Essay Transmits Knowledge” <i>Bad Ideas About Writing</i>	---
Week Two	Reading	Due Dates / Reminders
Wednesday, September 20 —Introduction to Academic (Research-Based) Writing	Greene, “Argument as Conversation: The Role of Inquiry in Writing a Researched Argument,” <i>Writing About Writing</i> Graff and Birkenstein, “Ch. 1: They Say: Starting with What Others Are Saying,” <i>They Say, I Say</i>	---
Week Three	Reading	Due Dates / Reminders
Wednesday, September 27 —Writing Is Not / Does Not...	Wardle, “You Can Learn to Write in General,” <i>Bad Ideas About Writing</i> Carillo, “Writing Transfers Easily,” <i>Bad Ideas About Writing</i> Carr, “Failure is Not an Option,” <i>Bad Ideas About Writing</i> Dunn, “Teaching Grammar Improves Writing,” <i>Bad Ideas About Writing</i>	---

Week Four	Reading	Due Dates / Reminders
Wednesday, October 4 —Writing Is / Does...	Adler-Kassner and Wardle, “Metaconcept” and “Concept 1: 1.0, 1.1, 1.2, 1.3, 1.5, 1.6, and 1.9,” <i>Naming What We Know</i>	---
Week Five	Reading	Due Dates / Reminders
Wednesday, October 11 —Drafting and Process Writing: Part I	Graff and Birkenstein, “Ch. 2: Her Point Is: The Art of Summarizing,” <i>They Say, I Say</i> Graff and Birkenstein, “Ch. 3: As He Himself Puts It: The Art of Quoting,” <i>They Say, I Say</i>	---
Week Six	Reading	Due Dates / Reminders
Wednesday, October 18 —Providing Quality Writing Feedback + Revision	Giovanelli, “Strong Writing and Writers Don’t Need Revision,” <i>Bad Ideas About Writing</i> Lamott, “Shitty First Drafts”	---
Week Seven	Reading	Due Dates / Reminders
Wednesday, October 25 —Drafting and Process Writing: Part II	Graff and Birkenstein, “Ch. 4: Yes / No / Okay, But: Three Ways to Respond,” <i>They Say, I Say</i> Graff and Birkenstein, “Ch. 5: “And Yet: Distinguishing What You Say from What They Say,” <i>They Say, I Say</i> Graff and Birkenstein, “Ch. 7: “So What? Who Cares?: Saying Why It Matters,” <i>They Say, I Say</i>	---

Week Eight	Reading	Due Dates / Reminders
Wednesday, November 1 —Language, Power, and Writing (Technologies)	Pattanayak, “There is One Correct Way of Writing and Speaking,” <i>Bad Ideas About Writing</i> Cunningham, “African American Language is Not Good English,” <i>Bad Ideas About Writing</i> Alvarez, “Official American English is the Best,” <i>Bad Ideas About Writing</i> Warnock, “Texting Ruins Students’ Grammar Skills,” <i>Bad Ideas About Writing</i>	---

Week Nine	Reading	Due Dates / Reminders
Wednesday, November 8 —Histories of Literacy	Babb, “America is Facing a Literacy Crisis,” <i>Bad Ideas About Writing</i> Brandt, “Sponsors of Literacy”	---

Week Ten	Reading	Due Dates / Reminders
Wednesday, November 15 —Literacy and Linguistic Autobiographies	Read two of the following: Malcolm X, “Learning to Read,” <i>The Autobiography of Malcolm X</i> Anzaldúa, “How to Tame a Wild Tongue,” <i>Borderlands / La Frontera: The New Mestiza</i> Baldwin, “If Black English Isn’t a Language, Then Tell Me, What Is?,” <i>Rotten English</i> Tan, “Mother Tongue,” <i>Rotten English</i>	---

No Class on Wednesday, November 22 due to Fall Break—Have a great week off!

Week Eleven	Reading	Due Dates / Reminders
Wednesday, November 29 —Entering the Rhetorical Situation	Grant-Davie, “Rhetorical Situations and Their Constituents”	---

Week Twelve	Reading	Due Dates / Reminders
Wednesday, December 6 —Critical Thinking & Writing Fall Semester Wrap-Up	Reading TBD	---