

## WRITING 150 – TECHNOLOGY AND SOCIAL CHANGE

Stephanie Renee Payne - Fall 2016  
Section: 64825 MW 2:00 – 3:20 – GFS 112

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Office Hours: MW 1:00-1:30 pm; and 5:00-5:30 pm  
(by appointment)

### **Course Description and Learning Objectives:**

WRIT 150 – Technology provides students with instruction in writing, critical reasoning, and analytical and rhetorical skills through the lens of science, technological innovation, and the impact these forces have on the human experience. We often take for granted that technological developments have had an overwhelmingly positive impact on human life. What is often more difficult to see, though, are the various and subtle ways that technology has changed us: our societies, our daily comforts, and even our ways of thinking about and defining ourselves. From our daily cup of coffee, to modes of transportation and the Internet, to the ways the ways we confront and contemplate death and look to the future, science and technology have interwoven themselves into every facet of our lives—in ways that are both exciting, and terrifying.

After taking this course, you should have stronger writing and critical reasoning abilities, and you should have a deeper understanding of the ‘academic discourse community’—that is, you should have a better familiarity with the techniques, methods of appeal, and modes of thinking that are used by well-trained and well-educated writers. You will also understand the writing as a process and writing as discovery that will enhance your ability to become critical thinkers, as well as effective writers. Additionally, you should come away from the class with a more finely-tuned understanding of the course theme: technology and social change.

### **Required Text and Items:**

The *Writing 150 Course Book*, which is available at the University Bookstore (Bring to class daily)  
Composition Notebook  
Printer

### **Writing Workload:**

1. Three standalone essays, at least 1500 words long (5-7 pages), plus a somewhat longer essay to be included in the Final Portfolio.
2. The Final Portfolio, which will serve as the “final” for this class. A handout discussing the portfolio will be given to you in the 10<sup>th</sup> week of the semester. Page count for the portfolios varies, though they typically amount to around 15-25 pages.
3. Ancillary writing exercises, usually a couple of pages in length. This is work that’s meant to supplement the work you’re doing for the main essay, and also to give you practice in the writing techniques we’ll be covering. This is in addition to your writing journals, which will be discussed in class.

### **Important Information for Success:**

You need to make an effort to attend every class, and to arrive to class on time. I grant you 2 absences before your grade is affected. I recommend that you reserve these for times when you really need them, for example when you are sick, or if an emergency arises. **Absences can only be excused if you bring me formal documentation from a medical professional, or for University-sanctioned events or holidays.**

- Attending class late three times will count as an absence. The definition for “late” is five minutes past the start of class.
- If you have to miss class, for whatever reason, it is your responsibility to find out what you missed. Please feel free to email me, or you can email one of your classmates.
- I will meet with each of you individually for conferences on your work. Writing is a highly individualized activity, and it is important that you get tailored instruction to help you find your best way forward when prewriting and revising your essay for the best result. **Conferences are required**—they will take the place of our normal class meetings and will count as an absence if missed.
- **Do not turn in your work late.** Due dates and times are clearly specified on the Semester Calendar. Essays that are late will be down-graded one grade step (e.g., from a ‘B’ to a ‘B-’) for each day they are late. Ancillary writing work that is late **will not be accepted**. Always make sure that your work is done 24 hours prior to the due date to avoid computer, and other unforeseen problems.
- All of your essays will be uploaded to Blackboard and will be fed into Turnitin’s database. Turnitin is a plagiarism database. We will discuss this process, and what you want to do to avoid your papers being tagged as plagiarized. Good communication is key. If you have questions about plagiarism or any other concerns about your paper, please ask me.
- Professionalism constitutes 10% of your overall grade, and this includes things like showing up to class on time, alacrity of bearing, proactive participation in class discussions and activities, and so on. It also means **not** engaging in “unprofessional” behaviors: looking at Facebook, text-messaging in class, asking if you can still turn in work that is late, and so on.
- If you would like to rewrite and resubmit your essay for a new grade, you need to type up a written analysis that breaks down, ranks, and discusses the revised essay according to the six Rubric elements (see the *Course Book*, pgs. 132-136). You also need to have attended all the classes during the assignment arc, and you need to have come fully prepared for your conference.
- Formatting: Unless otherwise noted, all your work should be in Times New Roman 12-pt. font, and it should be double-spaced, paginated, and collated. Margins should be set at 1”. Citations should be done in MLA format, and **you should always include a Works Cited page if you cite any outside texts**. In the upper-left-hand corner of the first page of your own text, you should include the following info:

Your Name  
Writing 150: Section #  
Instructor Name  
Date  
Assignment number (e.g., Essay 1, or Reflection 3)

### **Grading:**

In this course we will practice many different kinds of writing beyond the four major Writing Projects (Essays 1-3) that you must complete to pass the class. Regarding essays, please note that you will be graded on the final product. Below are the weights given to each component of the course when determining your final grade.

Essay #1: 10%  
Essay #2: 15%  
Essay #3: 15%  
Final Portfolio: 35%  
Supplementary Writing: 15%  
Professionalism: 10%

**Important Course Policy Statements** (Please read this entire section for your success in class!)

**Cell Phones and Other Electronic Devices:** Each meeting of our class will be dense with activities and information. The use of laptops, tablets, cellphones, or any other electronic communication device is not allowed during class unless I specifically designated an activity using electronic devices.

**Emailing Me:** Good communication is key to your success. Please feel free to email me with questions and concerns. I will do my best to respond to your emails within 24 hours Sunday - Thursday, with a response more likely to be a bit longer (48 hours) Friday-Saturday. For responding to specific questions regarding your essays, it is best to come to office hours.

**Blackboard:** All assigned readings (other than those in our Course Book) will be available on our Blackboard site. PDF copies of all handouts I give you will be up on the site as well. It is your obligation to print out and bring readings to class when I tell you to. Also, our Blackboard site is where you will upload the electronic copies of your essays.

**Recommended Reading:** I highly recommend (and no, you're not required to get these) a reference-style book to aid you with both grammar and citation. Two texts which have been of particular value to me are:

*The Little English Handbook* (Corbett)

*MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers* (Most Recent Edition, which is the 8<sup>th</sup> as of this writing)

The Corbett book is especially useful for answering any grammatical or usage questions you might have. You can find either of these at the book store, or you can always order them via Amazon.com, or some other online resource.

You are expected to abide by the University's guidelines for academic integrity, which means more than anything, **don't cheat or plagiarize**. The penalties for these types of infractions are extremely severe—

namely, an 'F' for the course. Further details regarding disciplinary sanctions can be found in *SCampus* or in the *Course Book*. **While we will go over the parameters of plagiarism in class, it is your responsibility to understand what constitutes plagiarism or inappropriate use of outside materials.** If you have any questions or doubts, please do not hesitate to ask; **ignorance is NOT an acceptable defense.**

**The Writing Center.** You might want to take advantage of the many helpful assistants at USC's Writing Center (located on the 2<sup>nd</sup> floor of Taper Hall). What's nice about this is that the assistance and appointments are absolutely free, and the people working there will be able to help you with everything from grammar and structure to argumentation and revision. If you do choose to utilize the Writing Center, it's important that you come prepared with *something*—that is, don't simply show up and say, "Can you fix my paper?" The Writing Center's technicians are there to help you *improve* your writing, not to do your writing for you. Appointments can easily and conveniently be made via the Writing Center's Web site: <http://dornsife.usc.edu/writingcenter/>

**Disability Services and Programs:**

Any student requesting academic accommodations based on a disability is required to register with Disability Services and Programs (DSP) each semester. A letter of verification for approved accommodations can be obtained from DSP. Please be sure this letter is delivered to me as early in the semester as possible. DSP is located in GFS 120; the phone number is (213) 740-0776.

**Writing Projects:** Please keep in mind that for many of you this writing course will push beyond the boundaries of your writing experiences to date. Please keep an open mind as we explore writing as a process. The standard five paragraph essay will not be used here. The standard summary and analysis of text will be enhanced by your own thoughtful examinations (critical thinking and reasoning). You will be asked "why" quite often. Be prepared to understand your responses, not just give them. When choosing a topic, be prepared to ask yourself: Why does this matter? Why did this seem worth writing about? Your Writer's Notebook entries will help in the process, and is an important part of your grade, as it constitutes one-third of your Ancillary Writing grade. It is worth 5% of your total course grade. Remember, curiosity, engagement, and a willingness to push beyond your boundaries will go a long way toward your successful in this course.