

**Brent D. Chappelow,**  
**Ph.D.**  
(he/his/him)

SECTION 64770  
TUES & THURS  
2:00-3:20 PM.  
GFS 218



**OFFICE HOURS**  
TUES & THURS  
9:30-10:30 A.M.,  
3:30-4:30 P.M.,  
& BY APPT.

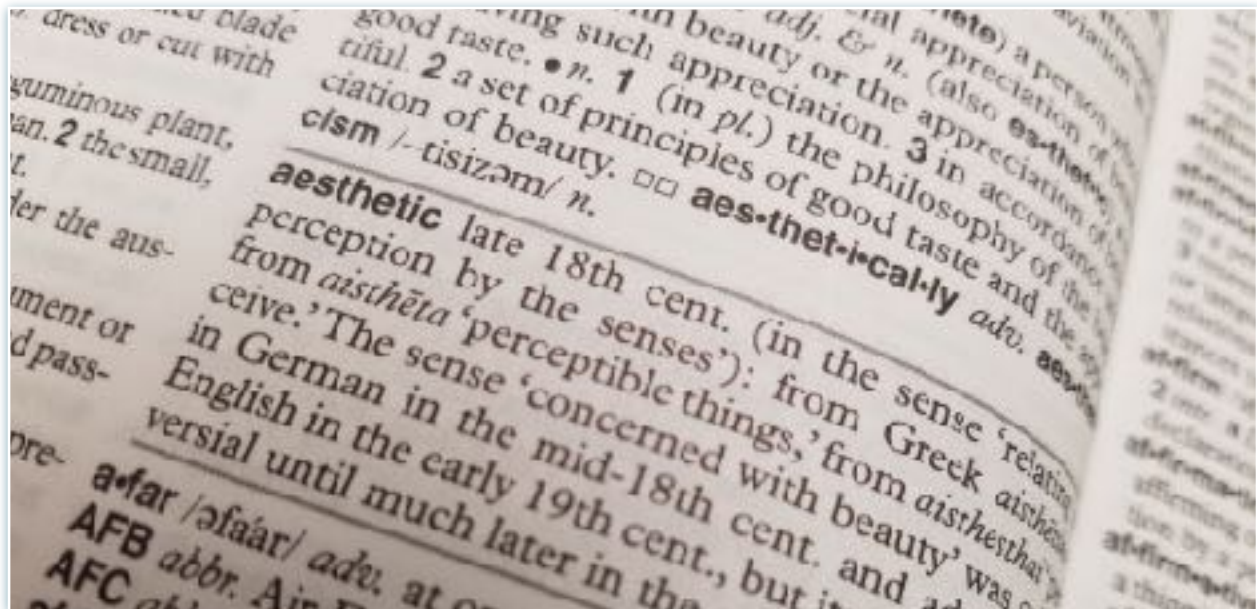


**OFFICE LOCATION**  
JEF 210A



**CONTACT**  
CHAPPELO@USC.EDU  
(213) 821-4836

## WRIT 150: WRITING AND CRITICAL REASONING: THEMATIC APPROACHES: ISSUES IN AESTHETICS



### Course Description and Objectives

Most people write to do something—to enter the “conversations” of a variety of communities, and to share ideas and perspectives that may shape or change what is already known. In WRIT 150, we will analyze and practice the different skills and strategies that writers use to fulfill such writing goals in several different argumentative and analytical contexts. Instead of focusing only on the final texts that are produced, we will also focus on exploring developing processes of writing, including how to find and develop new ideas that might be of interest and values to certain communities (invention strategies, research strategies, and audience analysis); how to explore these ideas and “write to learn,” experimenting with a variety of writing features and techniques (drafting); how to adjust or change our drafts and ideas based on others’ responses to our texts (revision); and how to present our ideas in the forms that our readers expect and value (style, documentation, editing and proofreading). We will discuss and practice these skills

and explore how such processes of writing and critical reasoning overlap, double back, and repeat. By the end of this course, you should have a better idea of the writing process broadly as well as a clearer articulation of what “works” for you in your own writing process.

In addition to developing writing skills and processes, this course also focuses on the ways in which we conduct critical analysis. As part of a university academic community, we are challenged to delve deep into the issues that we encounter in the world. We will use a variety of approaches for developing critical reasoning skills in this class, including participating in scholarly conversations with multiple sources and perspectives in order to make new knowledge

### Issues in Aesthetics

As the image on the first page indicates, the word “aesthetics” comes from the Greek verb **αἰσθησθαι**, to perceive. Etymologically, aesthetics is the field concerned with “perceivable things” in the world. As the word has been used in the past 2,500 years or so of Western history, it has adopted a further focus on perceiving and classifying things that are not only perceivable but more specifically “beautiful.” What is beauty? Who determines what is beautiful? These are questions that relate to aesthetics. Similarly, we should consider beauty as more than a binary classification—things can be more or less beautiful (or pleasing to the viewer), and questioning how those classifications are made is also important to the conversation of aesthetics.

The scale of beauty may be determined using objective or purely preferential standards. Do we look to symmetry, ratio, proportion, structure, arrangement, etc. for determining beauty? What is gained through those classifications? What is lost? This thematic focus of exploring concepts of beauty as well as the systems and constructs that inform cultural understanding of beauty will inform the persuasive writing that we explore in this course. As we do so, we will also consider how one can engage in critical reasoning surrounding a topic that has a tendency to drift toward personal opinion. We will explore and develop approaches to arguing about aesthetics that will hopefully contribute to our understanding of the thematic but also supply approaches to employ a broader range of persuasive argument on other topics for the future.

### Required Books and Materials:

- WRIT 150 Course Book, 2017-2018 (available in the University bookstore)
- Assigned readings, posted on Blackboard (Bb)
- Laptop or tablet for in-class drafting and revision

### Email Policy

Generally speaking, I try to respond to student emails within 24 hours of receipt during the typical work week. If you email me during the evening or on weekends, I probably will not respond until the next weekday (an email on Friday night might not get a response until Monday).

Please be mindful of the emails you send. For example, “I wasn’t in class today. Did I miss anything?” is a sure-fire way to irritate your professors. Please consult the syllabus and/or assignment sheets prior to emailing with policy or due date questions.

Final Grades will be calculated based on six components:

- Class Participation (5%)
- Ancillary Work (15%)
- Writing Project 1 (10%)
- Writing Project 2 (15%)
- Writing Project 3 (20%)
- Writing Project 4 and Final Portfolio (35%)

### Attendance

- If you miss more than 2 classes, you may begin to lose points from your participation grade.
- Being more than 5 minutes late will count as late—2 late days equals 1 absence.
- Missing more than 15 minutes of class (whether at the beginning or end) will also count as an absence.
- Missing more than 6 classes for any reason is cause for real concern, and students may find it advisable to withdraw from the course.

## Class Participation and Attendance

As active members of a writing community, it is essential to be involved and active during every class period.

**Attendance in this class is mandatory.** Because this course incorporates frequent small- and large-group activities into lessons, students who are absent affect not only their own learning, but that of their fellow students.

Absences hurt your learning because they deprive you of lessons designed to help you write better. I expect you to attend all classes and to arrive on time prepared to participate in the course discussions and tasks.

Attendance does not equal participation. However, absences in excess of two missed classes may affect your participation grade. **If you are involved in a University-sponsored event that will cause your absence or will be absent in observance of a religious holiday, please provide one week's advance notice prior to that absence to have it be excused (and written verification for university events); late notification does not guarantee that the absence will be excused.**

Any student accruing more than three week's worth of absences (6 absences) raises strong doubts regarding the question of whether they have derived benefit of the course, and such students may be advised to withdraw in order to avoid a failing mark.

Finally, because this course is a writing workshop and we will be looking at drafts and process elements of your work, **I will not accept papers with which I have had no involvement in the writing process. You must submit a rough draft in order for your final draft to be considered.**

## Conferences

At multiple times in the semester I will cancel classes to hold individual conferences in my office. These conferences are an opportunity for us to meet one-on-one and discuss your work in a more focused setting. **If you miss your scheduled conference or fail to sign up for a conference at all, you will be counted absent for the day(s) that class was cancelled for your meeting.** Hence, if two class periods are cancelled for conferences, it will count as two absences. **You may make up a missed conference during regular office hours, but that does not negate your absence.**

## Office Hours

Office hours are offered primarily for your benefit. If you have any questions about the course, are having difficulties with an assignment, or would just like to chat, you are welcome to visit at any point during scheduled office hours. My office is JEF210A, and my office hours are Tuesdays and Thursdays from 9:30-10:30 a.m and also from 3:30-4:30 p.m. Office hours are first come, first serve. I am available by appointment at other times if you are not able to meet during scheduled office hours. I may ask that you meet with me by phone or video chat for those appointments instead of meeting in my office based on my availability.

## Public Nature of Writing and Class

Please consider every piece of writing you do for this class to be “public.” Remember that you will be expected to share your writing with others in the class, so avoid writing about things that you may not be prepared to subject to public scrutiny, or things you feel so strongly about that you are unwilling to listen to perspectives other than your own. This does not mean that you are not entitled to an opinion but that you adopt positions responsibly, contemplating the possible effect(s) on others. This course may contain content (assigned readings, in-class discussions, etc.) deemed offensive by some students. If you have concerns about any course content, please bring these concerns to my attention.

## Safe Spaces

Because we represent a broad spectrum of identities and perspectives, I endeavor to make my classroom and office a safe space for students of all gender and sexual identities, all ages and life experiences, and all cultural, religious and social backgrounds. I welcome our returning veterans to the USC community, and I strive to make all students feel accepted and included in the classroom. While I deeply value open and earnest debate, I require all students to closely adhere to the Student Code of Conduct and maintain respectful, civil modes of discourse. Our differences are valuable, and they are source of vibrancy and creativity in our USC community. If a student feels uncomfortable at any point, they should contact me privately as soon

### 24-Hour Rule

I welcome the opportunity to discuss your work at any stage of the writing process. However, I maintain a 24-hour rule after you have received your grade on a final draft.

You should refrain from contacting me to discuss your grade for a FULL 24 HOURS after you receive your grade. Instead, use that time to consider my comments carefully and reflect on your work.

If, after 24 hours, you would still like to discuss your grade, please contact me to schedule an appointment to discuss your work.

### Technological Distractions

I am open to students using laptops or tablets during class sessions in which we are writing or discussing readings.

However, please refrain from using your devices for purposes other than the class. If I feel that students are distracted by technology access, I will ask the class to put devices away.

Improper use of technology in class will impact your class participation grade.

as possible so that we may address any concerns together. I will ask any student to leave the classroom who does not heed my call for respect.

## Final Grading Scale

All final drafts of writing projects will be evaluated in terms of the "Writing Program General Evaluation Rubric" provided in the *Writing 150 Course Book*.

The final semester mark will be determined by six components (also listed on page 3 of this syllabus):

- 5%: Class Participation
- 15%: Ancillary Work—smaller writing assignments throughout the semester that relate to the Writing Project or course theme
- 10%: Writing Project 1 (4-6 page essay)
- 15% Writing Project 2 (5-7 page essay)
- 20% Writing Project 3 (5-7 page essay)
- 35% Writing Project 4 and Final Portfolio (6-8 page essay [25%] and revised draft of WP1, WP2, or WP3 with accompanying revision letter [10%])

## Ancillary Writing Activities

You will be assigned multiple smaller tasks throughout the semester to facilitate the pedagogical goals of the course. These include the first-day diagnostic essay; prewriting activities for your Writing Projects; responses to assigned readings; reflections on the thematic and/or your writing process; and other assignments as identified during the course. You will be expected to submit these ancillary assignments—both process writing and assignments related to the thematic—to Blackboard. All of these individual assignments will be graded and will determine your final grade for Ancillary Work (15%).

**Unless otherwise specified, Ancillary Writing assignments must be submitted by the beginning of class on the day they are due.**

Ancillary Work is divided into two distinct categories: Process Writing and Ancillary Writing.

Assignments classified as process writing (PW), including drafts prior to the final submission and prewriting/invention documents will be graded on a scale of

complete/incomplete/late.

- Assignments completed to minimum specifications and submitted on time will receive a 'Y' grade, which counts as 3 points.
- Late or incomplete submissions will receive half credit 'L' (1.5 points) if submitted before the final draft is due.
- Assignments that are not submitted by the end of the assignment cycle will receive a mark of 'N' (0 points).

Assignments classified as ancillary writing (AW), including reading responses, feedback given during peer review feedback, and ancillary essay assignments, will be graded on a scale of three points.

- If an assignment is completed to satisfaction, it will receive 2 points (the "default" AW grade).
- If an assignment represents exceptional work, it will receive 3 points.
- If the assignment is done poorly or turned in late, it will receive 1 point.
- If the assignment is not submitted by the end of the project cycle during which it is assigned, it will receive 0 points.

Ancillary Writing (AW and PW) assignments must be submitted during the project cycle in which they are assigned. That is, **a reading response assigned during WP1 cannot receive credit if turned in after final drafts of WP1 are due.**

## Peer Review

You must be present on peer review days and actively conduct and post your peer review in order to receive credit for that activity. **If you are absent on peer review days, you will not be able to "make up" the credit unless your absence is due to a University-sponsored event or religious holiday observation.** If you will be absent on peer review day due to one of these reasons, you must contact me one

### Academic Conduct

Plagiarism – presenting someone else's ideas as your own, either verbatim or recast in your own words – is a serious academic offense with serious consequences.

Please familiarize yourself with the discussion of plagiarism in *SCampus* in Part B, Section 11, "Behavior Violating University Standards" (<https://policy.usc.edu/scampus-part-b/>). Other forms of academic dishonesty are equally acceptable. See additional information in *SCampus* and university policies on scientific misconduct (<http://policy.usc.edu/scientific-misconduct>).

## Important Dates and Deadlines from the Academic Calendar

**Mon., Jan. 15**

Martin Luther King's Birthday, no classes

**Mon., Feb. 19**

President's Day, no classes

**Friday., Feb. 23**

Last day to drop a course without a mark of "W" on transcript

**Fri., Apr. 6**

Last day to drop a class with mark of "W" on transcript

**Sun.-Sun., Mar. 11-18**

Spring Recess, no classes

**Fri., Apr. 27**

Classes End

**Sat.-Tues., Apr. 28-May 1**

Study Days

**Wed.-Wed., May 2-9**

Final Exams

week in advance in order to make alternative arrangements to receive peer review credit. While the submission of peer review feedback on Blackboard is the primary method of assessment for receiving ancillary writing credit, I will also make note of students who are actively engaged in the review process—providing written feedback is important, but you must also converse with your peers about your work and theirs to earn full credit for the activity.

## Instructor Feedback

The primary method for receiving feedback from me prior to your final draft submission is through the individual conferences that I hold during each assignment cycle. I will adopt various approaches to those conferences with each assignment, but it is in your best interest to attend each conference with me with a set agenda in mind.

If you would like additional feedback on a draft prior to final draft submission, you must meet with me during office hours or establish a meeting to discuss your draft. I will not respond to emails where a draft is attached with a request to review and offer feedback. You must first attempt to meet with me to discuss your concerns.

## Late Papers and Extensions

Final drafts of writing projects will be submitted online via Blackboard. On the day that the assignment is due, be sure to post your work to Blackboard by the specified time. **If no time is specified on the assignment sheet or course calendar, you should consider that work due at the beginning of class.**

Late papers will be penalized one step (e.g., C+ to C) for each calendar day that the assignment is late. **The Final Portfolio cannot be submitted late.**

Assignment due dates are determined based on a number of factors including my own scheduling for grading. You may choose to hand in one Final Draft from Writing Project 1-3 up to one calendar week late, without penalty, but you may only do so if you submitted a rough draft of the project on time. You may use this extension only once, and I will not be available to give you any additional feedback or guidance on the project during that extension period. Extensions are for final drafts only, and extensions do not push back any subsequent deadlines for the projects that follow. You must continue to submit all

ancillary and process work on time for the project that follows.

## The Writing Center

The Writing Center (<http://dornsife.usc.edu/writingcenter>) is located on the second floor in Taper Hall on campus. The center is open to all students of the university and offers free consultations for any type of writing assignment. The Writing Center is a terrific resource. You are encouraged to visit the center throughout the semester for any additional guidance on the assignments for this course (or for any other course). To make an appointment, create an account through their online system (<http://mywconline.usc.edu>). Be sure to bring the relevant assignment sheet, your draft, and prepared questions to your session.

## Support Systems

*Student Counseling Services (SCS)* (213) 740-7711 - 24/7 on call  
Free and confidential mental health treatment for students, including short-term psychotherapy, group counseling, stress fitness workshops, and crisis intervention. (<https://engemannshc.usc.edu/counseling>)

*National Suicide Prevention Lifeline* 1-800-273-8255 - 25/7 on call  
Provides free and confidential emotional support in suicidal crisis or emotional distress 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. (<http://www.suicidepreventionlifeline.org>)

*Relationship and Sexual Violence Prevention Services (RSVP)*

(213) 740-4900 - 24/7 on call  
Free and confidential therapy services, workshops, and training for situations related to gender-based harm. (<https://engemannshc.usc/rsvp>)

*Sexual Assault Resource Center*

For more information about how to get help or help a survivor, rights, reporting options, and additional resources, visit the website: <http://sarc.usc.edu>

*Office of Equity and Diversity (OED)/Title IX Compliance*

(213) 740-5086

Works with faculty, staff, visitors, applicants, and students around issues of protected class (<http://equity.usc.edu>)

*Bias Assessment Response and Support*

Incidents of bias, hate crimes, and microaggressions need to be reported allowing for appropriate investigation and response. (<https://studentaffairs.usc.edu/bias-assessment-response-support/>)

*The Office of Disability Services and Programs*

Provides certification for students with disabilities and helps arrange relevant accommodations. (<http://dsp.usc.edu>)

*Student Support and Advocacy* (213) 821-4710

Assists students and families in resolving complex issues adversely affecting



their success as a student. EX: personal, financial, and academic. (<https://studentaffairs.usc.edu/ssa/>)

#### *Diversity at USC*

Information on events, programs, and training, the Diversity Task Force (including representatives for each school), chronology, participation, and various resources for students. (<https://diversity.usc.edu/>)

#### *USC Emergency Information*

Provides Safety and other updates, including ways in which instruction will be continued if an officially declared emergency makes travel to campus infeasible (<https://emergency.usc.edu/>)

*USC Department of Public Safety* (213) 740-4231 (UPC) and (323) 442-1000 (HSC)  
For 24-hour emergency assistance or to report a crime. Provides overall safety to USC community. (<http://dps.usc.edu/>)

### **Provisional Course Dates**

To aid in your semester planning, I have listed the anticipated draft due dates (first and final) as well as dates for individual conferences for the semester. Please keep in mind that **these dates are subject to change**, and I will announce these changes in class and via Blackboard.

#### **Writing Project One**

- Tuesday, January 23: First Drafts of WP1 Due by beginning of class
- Wednesday, January 24-Friday January 26: Individual Conferences in my office (JEF 210A)
- Thursday, February 1: Final Draft of WP1 Due by beginning of class

#### **Writing Project Two**

- Tuesday, February 13: First Drafts of WP2 Due by beginning of class
- Wednesday, February 14-Friday, February 16: Individual Conferences in my office (JEF 210A)
- Thursday, February 22: Final Draft of WP2 due by beginning of class

#### **Writing Project Three**

- Tuesday, March 20: First Drafts of WP3 Due by beginning of class
- Wednesday, March 21-Friday, March 23: Individual Conferences in my office (JEF 210A)
- Thursday, March 29: Final Drafts of WP3 Due by beginning of class

#### **Writing Project Four and Final Portfolio**

- Tuesday, April 17: First Drafts of WP3 Due by beginning of class
- Wednesday, April 18-Friday, April 20: Individual Conferences in my office (JEF 210A)

- Thursday, April 26: Final Draft and Portfolio Due Thursday, April 26