

WRIT 340 – Advance Writing in the Social Sciences

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Office Hours: M/W 5:00 –6:00 pm

F 3:00-4:30 on
(by appointment)

Course Time/Days: M/W-3:30-
4:50pm

Course Location: GFS 205

[Shepard Fairey's](#) *This Land is Your Land*



Course Description and Objectives – Welcome to the Sandbox!

This course develops the reading and writing skills of advanced college students through the lens of the social sciences.

This course is experiential, as you will engage in [fieldwork](#) using the city of Los Angeles as an extended campus, collaborate with peers, and develop a heightened awareness of your values and the world around you.

As a professional, it is essential to understand the nature of writing to construct convincing and even inspiring arguments within your field.

This course will help you locate the ethical and moral dilemmas, and emerging trends in your field to determine which stylistic, substantive, and argumentative decisions best service your writing for a public, professionals, and academic audience.

We will emphasize critical analysis, clarity, style, voice, and the use of solid academic evidence. We take a multi-modal approach (visual, auditory, spatial, and multi-linguistic—using multiple languages within a text to heighten communication).

Each assignment focuses on a different rhetorical goal to deepen your writer's toolbox with an emphasis on writing as process.

Requirements: Our class environment is a safe, respectful, vibrant and academically explorative space for rich and diverse discourse. Full participation in class discussions, peer review, and fieldwork activities is expected. There are two supplementary ancillary assignments. Completion of all 4 assignments plus the portfolio is required to pass the course. The analytical paper and the research argument (the 1st and 3rd assignments) are portfolio eligible.



Papers

Analytical Paper: This paper will be inspired by the review of topical issues for a general audience that raise questions about societal groups and movements both in the US and globally. Inter-global perspectives are encouraged.

Op-Ed Letter: This paper is designed to find a detailed and focused area of interest for a professional, community, or academic audience by voicing your informed opinion in a convincing and compelling style.

Capstone Project: This project is a culmination of your exploration of social issues or workplace trends by constructing an informed proposal for change.

Personal Mission Statement: This paper will serve to inform the Statement of Purpose Letter for graduate school, or a detailed cover letter for employment, but will transcend those practical texts by delving deeper into your character. You will be required to conduct a formal interview with a person whom has intimate knowledge of who you are (a parent, partner, sibling, etc.) to gain a more expansive view of who you are.

Late Paper Policy: You will be granted without penalty ONE five-day grace period for any self-selected paper except the Final Portfolio. Otherwise, late papers incur the following penalty: 1-5 days late one-half letter grade; 6-13 days late one full letter grade; papers more than two weeks late will not be accepted without prior accommodations for emergencies.

Paper Due Dates

This schedule is tentative. Actual due date may be changed to better accommodate class needs. You are responsible for keeping track of any changes to this schedule. All papers are due before midnight on the due date uploaded to Turnitin.

Analytical Paper	Tuesday, January 29
Op-Ed Letter	Tuesday, February 12
Capstone Project	Tuesday, March 12
Personal Mission Statement	Tuesday, April 2
Portfolio	Wednesday, April 26 (Last Day of Class)

Class Preparation and Participation

Because this is a writing workshop, attendance and active class participation are crucial both in class and online. **Plan on completing all reading assignments before class periods.** You are expected to come to class prepared for class discussions. You also are expected to contribute to the course by participating in workshop sessions and posting to Blackboard (Bb) in a timely fashion. We will also be using Bb to facilitate access to reading materials.

Paper Format

All assignments (including drafts) should be typewritten in 12-point font. We will use our online platform to turn in work, nevertheless be sure to include the [proper format](#): your name, the professor's name, the course name, the assignment, the date, etc., on the first page in the upper left-hand corner. While MLA 8 Style is preferred, you may use either APA style (or the Name-Year style), or MLA Style. You DO NOT need to worry about APA pagination rules.



Text

Reading material will be provided on Bb and in Class. Main Text: [The Sociological Imagination](#) by C. Wright Mills

Final grades are based on the product that is produced: (papers 1-4 and the portfolio revisions), along with participation and ancillary writing assignments.

Assignment 1: The Analytical Paper	15%
Assignment 2: Op-Ed Letter	10%
Assignment 3: Research Argument	25%
Assignment 4: Personal Mission Statement	15%
Portfolio (Two Revisions A-1 and A 3)	25%
Ancillary Writing Assignments	5%
Participation	5%

Enrollment and Attendance

More than two (2) unexcused absences or a persistent habit of tardiness will lower your participation grade. A persistent pattern of absences (missing 6 classes or more) is grounds for failure in the course. Excused absences can only be granted for university obligations (with verification) and illnesses (with a doctor's note). Absences that do not meet the criteria as stated are considered

unexcused. Good communication is key to your success in this course. I appreciate prior notification, when possible, if you will miss a class for any reason. You are responsible for all work due, assigned, or discussed in your absence. Please arrange with another student to obtain any homework or class notes you may have missed, and make sure you consult our Bb online course for information.

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 unacceptable. See additional information in *SCampus* and university policies on scientific misconduct, <http://policy.usc.edu/scientific-misconduct>.

Campus 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

Provides free and confidential emotional support to people 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.edu/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.

<https://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/>

Plagiarism

Plagiarism is understood to be presenting someone else's work as your own. It is also the use of someone else's words or ideas without proper acknowledgment, in other words, without either directly quoting or citing the source. This can mean an entire essay is substituted for the writer's own work, however it is more commonly seen in the use of unacknowledged sources and/or quotations

within an essay. You must cite any secondary sources from which you have culled ideas for your paper, including course reading materials, academic essays, journal articles, even lecture notes from another class. Plagiarism is increasingly more easily detected and it has serious consequences. Do not do it! If you require further clarification, please review the Academic Dishonesty policy in *SCampus* and the "Writing 150 Handbook."

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, <http://emergency.usc.edu>

USC Department of Public Safety – 213-740-4321 (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>

Music as Social Commentary

[BTS](#) to the left and [Kendrick Lamar](#) to the right have erected a social narrative through music.



Q&A Resources, Policies, and Advice

What is the course policy on technology use in class? We will be busy in every class session and don't need any electronic distractions. Silence cell phones before you enter the classroom and refrain from texting in class. Laptops are welcome, but please confine your laptop work to taking notes or accessing relevant course materials, not for internet surfing, email, updating social media, etc. These activities will definitely jeopardize your class participation grade and they distract not only you, but your classmates from the work at hand. If an emergency arises and you need to text, please step out of the classroom to do so.

What if I need a disability accommodation? If you have a documented disability (learning or otherwise) and you need an accommodation made for you in this course, please consult with me immediately at the beginning of the semester so together we can design a plan for successful in the class.

What should I do if I am feeling lost or overwhelmed in this class? First, speak up in class. Cultivating a space for every voice in this course is a priority. You may not be the only person with the same concern, and we benefit from working questions out together.

Second, schedule an office-hour visit. If my stated office hours are incompatible with your schedule, please let me know and I will do my best to make accommodations. You are welcome to email me anytime. I generally respond within 24 hours. Feel free to email me again if you do not hear from me in 48 hours. Sometimes emails are lost. Many questions and issues can be easily resolved this way.

Third, spend extra time on Blackboard. I offer a bevy of resources. "Writing Tools," and "Readings," are particularly rich with additional information.

What other campus resources might help me succeed in this class? Visit [The Writing Center](#) (Room: THH 216, Phone: 213-740-3691, Email: <mailto:writing@usc.edu>) for free help at any stage of the writing process.