

Fall 2019 Syllabus

Writing 340: Social Sciences

Fall 2019

Instructor: Dr. Dissinger

Email: dissinge@usc.edu

Office Location: JEF 215A (second floor)

Office Hours: TBD

Office Phone: (213) 740-0138

Introduction:

You're here now. This is the start of a new journey. You're the scholar. You're the expert. You'll lead the discussion, challenge canonical ideas, and contribute to the discourse. This is your chance to say everything you might have held in as a writer, a thinker, and/or a student. So be ready to make mistakes. Be ready to be challenged. Be ready to get frustrated, to collaborate, and push against hegemony.

This course is not the same as Writing 150. Expectations are higher. Your participation in class is even more necessary. And, just to be up front with you, projects are going to be longer.

Now, you're all following different and unique intellectual journeys. This class is a collection of differing passions, majors, and intellectual curiosities. We're all going to have different opinions, and sometimes we'll get into heated discussions. Good. Let it happen, be empathetic, and embrace exploration.

Allow yourself to know nothing.

Acknowledging that you know nothing, that all of human existence can be both chaotic and filled with patterns traversing generation upon generation, will help you be successful in this course. Social Science is this curiosity: uncovering the complexities humanness. You are not trying to solve anything. You are uncovering:

"The function of sociology, as of every science, is to reveal that which is hidden" - Pierre Bourdieu

We're going to search for what is hidden, what is curious, and what intersects with these spaces. What happens at this moment of collision is our concern, the fragments, the rubble, and the reasons.

The Social Sciences are complex and fragmented, made up of intersecting curiosities and human patterns. Affect and Effect. Speculation. Phenomena.

Qualitative. Quantitative. This is just the beginning of the terms we are going to need and use as our tools for examination.

Following your questions, the “What you want to find out?” will be your argumentative compass; this is where you’ll develop your analysis, contextualize your research, and build upon theoretical and philosophical readings.

Course Requirements:

1. Four carefully written assignments (WP1-WP4). Think of each one of these assignments as projects with a huge audience. We’ll write for general, scholarly, and professional audiences. These projects will ask you to, at times, engage in qualitative or quantitative research. Details for each project (length, format etc.) will be specified on project sheets.
2. Two carefully revised essays for final portfolio accompanied by a cover letter.
subject to change
3. Various ancillary writing assignments.
4. An oral presentation. We’ll come up with a strategy for these together.
5. You **may** need to upload one or two of your essays to USC’s Critical Thinking Study site. If this is the case, you will receive an email from me during finals week (don’t worry about till then!).

Participation and Attendance:

Be in class. You’re all adults, so you should realize that if you want to do well in this class, or any class for that matter, you need to be in class to participate.

We’ll read and discuss a variety of readings, videos, Hip Hop albums, movies, etc. in class, doing peer review sessions, and having writing workshops. You will be responsible for responding to your peers’ writing; accountability is part of the social contract of this course.

Also, participating in class discussions isn’t just to “collect” participation points. You’ll be expected to unpack complex analytical ideas in your writing projects. Practicing this sort of analytical skillset in discussion will help you do it when you write.

Arriving Late:

Be on time. That’s it. Every minute you miss of class is just more opportunity to work on your projects, ask questions, and writing practice you’ll miss. I don’t get angry anymore about your lateness, it’s your education. Have integrity.

Respect whoever's paying for you to be here, and if it's you, then don't throw your money away. If you continue to be late, your grade will reflect this pattern.

Absences:

Here's the deal. After 3 absence your grade is going to take a hit. If you get to 9 absences, you automatically fail the course per the Writing Program Policy. (Check the workbook). Each class you miss is just more work, peer-review, and opportunity to practice your writing skills. We'll do a ton of writing in class. Be there. Lastly, you or someone is paying for you to be here. Have some (self)-respect and integrity. At the same time, I'm not chasing you down. If you want to skip class and fail, no problem. Like I said, you're an adult and will be treated like one.

*Now, there are extenuating circumstances, so be professional about them and email me if you know you'll be late or absent.

Be Respectful:

This class is about engaging ALL ideas in discourse. We'll touch on controversial topics, listen to stand-up and music that will offend someone (maybe you) this semester, and not everyone will agree or have the same experiences in the world. But, we will respect each other, listen to each other, and lead with EMPATHY. Class discourse is not for being right. Discourse is a collaborative experience to dig beneath a topic to understand the root of the discourse.

Essays:

You'll write four projects. Each one will have a maximum word count. For each project, I'll distribute a specific prompt/assignment, writing guidelines, and a schedule of relevant readings and assignments. On essay due dates, please submit your work electronically. (We'll talk about this process in class).

Essay Format:

All Essays should be in MLA, APA, Chicago, or etc.

Remember:

- **Always** include the following information in the top left of the cover page:

Your Name

Dr. Dissinger

WRIT 340, Class time (e.g., WRIT 340 MWF 9am)

Assignment # (e.g., Writing Assignment 1)

- **Title:**
Title is centered, just below the header. No extra space after the title. No fancy stuff with the titles (larger fonts, bold, underlining, or clip art). Just plain text.
- **Font:**
Font should be 12 point Times New Roman.
- **File Format:**
Word doc OR pdf. THAT'S IT!!!!
- **Margins:**
One inch (that is, one inch between text and edge of page on all 4 sides)
- **Spacing (between lines):**
Double-spaced (2.0)
- **Spacing between paragraphs:**
NONE!!!!

Late Essays:

Unless otherwise noted on the assignment descriptions, essay due dates refer to 11:59PM of the day agreed upon. Late essays will automatically be penalized one grade step (e.g., from a B+ to a B) for each day it is past due. I will not accept essays for which you have completed little or no preparatory work (process writing, invention activities, rough plans, rough drafts, and/or did not do a conference for).

If a paper is more than one week late, it will receive no credit. Failure to hand in ANY Writing Project will result in an F for the semester. Refer to the course book an explanation on this policy.

Grading for Ancillary Writing:

Each assignment will be given one of four possible grades, from 0 to 3. At the end of the semester, your overall Ancillary grade will calculated from the best 15 grades your earned:

- **3:**
Excellent, complete, cogent; presents a unique perspective not just a report on the information.

- **2:**
Competent, complete, but is an info dump with a buried perspective/analysis of the argument.
- **1:**
Unsatisfactory, complete assignment/incomplete, no effort to argue anything or present a perspective.
- **0:**
Unsatisfactory; incomplete.

Grade Breakdown:

Assignment	Assignment Requirements	%
Writing Assignment 1		15%
Writing Assignment 2		10%
Writing Assignment 3		20%
Writing Assignment 4		10%
Final Portfolio Supplemental	Two revise essays + cover letter + Oral Presentation	25%
Ancillary Writing	Smaller writing assignments completed in and out of class.	10%
Participation	Attendance, class discussion, and in-class activities	10%

Paper Conferences:

I hold office hours... However, because I believe this will be a difficult and demanding class, I want you to come see me whenever you feel the work is becoming too daunting. DO not wait until it is too late. It will help you think & write well, I promise!

In addition, each writing project will have a mandatory one-on-one paper conferences. I'll cancel one class in order to accommodate everyone. In general, student conferences prepare you to perform significantly better on the final draft. However, remember a conference is too short to address all the ways you can improve your draft; I encourage you to revise even those elements of your essay that we do not have time to discuss in our meeting.

Email & Office Hours:

I do not give email comments on written work, nor can I discuss grades via email. If you would like feedback on an assignment, or if you would like to discuss your grade, please come see me in office hours or make an appointment. I love talking to students, so please don't be afraid to come by

and say hello or discuss any aspect of the course with me. If you see my office door is closed, make sure to knock first before leaving.

You can, of course, email me with general questions about the assignments, the homework, or anything else course-related (anything you can't find the answer to on Blackboard). I generally get back to students within 24 hours (usually faster), with the understanding that I may be slower to respond on weekends and holidays. I will not be answering any emails after 10pm, so try to get your emails in before then or wait till the next day.

Blackboard:

Blackboard is our "home page" for our course. All assignments will be submitted through Blackboard, and all materials needed for the course will also be posted there. I also post regular news/updates on our course page. That means you need to check Blackboard regularly (if not daily!). "I forgot to check Blackboard" is not an acceptable excuse for not doing your homework or submitting an assignment on time.

Electronic Devices:

Technology is impossible to avoid. I'm perfectly aware of this, so we are going to make every effort, AS A CLASS, to use it to the advantage of the class. This means, as adults (that's you), you have to be in control of yourself and your technology. We are going to be using audio, video, text, Blackboard, Google Doc, and much more this semester. Think of it this way, each time you look away from the class, you are missing something, just like driving and texting. The more you miss, the more in danger you will be of failing or crashing your car. Figure out how tech can EXPAND the scope of your intellectual curiosities.

Technical Difficulties:

USC has many computer facilities at your disposal, including a laptop loaner program (go to <https://itservices.usc.edu/spaces/computingcenters/> for more information). While I understand that technical issues do arise, I suggest all of you get into the habit of saving your documents to the cloud with a free program such as Dropbox (<http://dropbox.com>). I'll say it again: **back up your work to multiple locations, not just your hard drive**. Given that we live in a thriving metropolis with countless 24-hour computer facilities at our fingertips, "technical difficulties" is not an acceptable excuse for turning in late work. In the rare case that you are unable to access Blackboard, I will accept e-mailed copies of your papers (before the due date/time).

The Writing Center Is Your Friend:

Most of you will need a little extra help with your writing assignments. You're learning an entirely new way of writing, and it's not exactly easy. As your professor, I try to see everyone at least once, but let's face it: I don't have time to see all my students on a weekly basis. I'd have to sleep in my office. Not so with The Writing Center! You can have a consultation whenever you like—they'll talk to you about your paper, give you some helpful suggestions, and point you in the right direction. Are they going to edit your paper for you? Nope. Are they going to tell you what to write? Not at all. Can they help you? Absolutely. I recommend everyone see a consultant at least once per writing assignment. Bring the assignment prompt so they know what you're supposed to be doing. They do online appointments and walk-ins (Taper Hall, second floor). It's free! **Link here: <https://dornsife.usc.edu/writingcenter/>**

Plagiarism and Academic Misconduct:

Your work must be your own original work. This means that you must document all instances when you directly cite, indirectly paraphrase, borrow, or otherwise utilize someone else's words, ideas, or sundry intellectual materials while writing your stuff, unless you are dealing with a piece of common knowledge (e.g. Abraham Lincoln was a US president). This includes material from other courses you have taken, such as a professor's lecture **or other papers you have written or are currently writing** (the latter counts as punishable academic dishonesty).

You are responsible for abiding by the policies regarding academic integrity in the Writing 150 Course Book, the policies regarding Student Judicial Affairs and Community Standards (**www.usc.edu/student-affairs/SJACS/**), and the Campus Student Guidebook (**scampus.usc.edu/1300-academic-integrityreview/**).

***These penalties apply whether a paper is wholly or partially plagiarized. In other words, a paper that is 5% plagiarized nonetheless earns a 100% F.** Plagiarists and other cheaters are always caught. Do not risk it. Submit your own work. When in doubt, ask your professor about how to cite something, or whether you even need to. Just ask!

***Intentional cheating is different from the accidental misuse of sources, such as forgetting to cite a page number or specify an author.** The difference between intentional cheating and accidental misuse will be determined by the instructor on a case-by-case basis. If the instructor decides to levy a penalty for misuse, this will be discussed with the student.

Some MORE on 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/scientificmisconduct>.**

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 micro-aggressions 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>

Students who require special accommodations must register with Disability Services and Programs (DSP) each semester. **A letter of verification for approved accommodations can be obtained from DSP (located in STU 301, open 8:30AM–5PM, Monday–Friday). The phone number for DSP is (213) 740-0776.** Also, with regard to any accommodations or anything else along these lines, please do let me know how I can be of service to you

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,

<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>**