

WRITING 340 – Advanced Critical Thinking and Writing for the Visual and Performing Arts

SECTION 65380D
TTH 3:30 - 4:50 pm, CPA 155
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213-821-6489

Robert Waller
Office: JEF 115
Office hours: T 11:30am - 1:30pm
and by appointment

REQUIRED TEXTS AND MATERIALS

-- All course readings will be available electronically as PDFs. No text needs to be purchased.

COURSE DESCRIPTION

Welcome. This course proposes to teach advanced writing to students of the arts through the rich rhetorical models of critical writing by artists who have theorized their own aesthetics. We will consider the way creative work may lead to academic, public, and professional writing by developing analogies between artistic practice and the writing process.

Your chief task in Writing 340 is to improve your ability to produce clear, thoughtful, and effective academic writing; closely allied to this is the need to become more familiar with the expectations and commitments of diverse, specific discourse communities. In this class we will work together to refine your expertise in writing for the sake of upper-division course work, graduate study, and career paths that you might take in the arts or elsewhere.

ASSIGNMENTS

You will be assigned three full length essays as well as several shorter writing assignments during the semester. The specific requirements for each essay will be detailed on an assignment sheet. All drafts and final papers must be typed, stapled, double-spaced, paginated, set off by one-inch margins, and must meet the page requirement set forth in the assignment. The font used must be size 12 in standard fonts. Be sure to include all pertinent information in your heading; i.e., your name, my name, the assignment number, and the date. Always be sure to keep a personal copy of drafts and final papers. Late papers may be penalized.

WRIT 340 students are also required to submit prewriting materials (any plans, notes, brainstorming) as well as rough drafts. You may also be required to submit copies of or links to secondary sources referenced in your essays.

You will also be asked to complement your written work with an in-class presentations. Along with quizzes and homework assignments, this component constitutes part of your final grade.

PLAGIARISM AND ILLEGITIMATE ASSISTANCE

Plagiarism is a major problem in universities around the country and here at USC. It usually occurs when a writer does not credit authors for their quotes or specific ideas. We will discuss proper citation methods throughout the semester. Illegitimate assistance involves submitting someone else's work (such as a bought or borrowed paper) as your own.

You should be aware that the penalty for plagiarism and illegitimate assistance in any course at USC is the same: it is grounds for a failing grade and expulsion from the University. Do not risk your academic career by failing to cite your sources or submitting a paper that you did not write.

DOCUMENTING YOUR WRITING PROCESS

Because plagiarism is such a problem, you will often be required to provide evidence documenting each stage of your writing process. A key component of each assignment is the writing process. If you cannot show the process involved in writing your essay (notes, rough drafts, sources), you may not receive credit for the essay.

PORTFOLIO

At the end of the term you will choose two essays to revise. These will be submitted to me as your final portfolio.

WORKSHOPS

Each student will have one of their papers workshopped by the class. A week in advance of the scheduled workshop the author will email a draft to the class. Students will complete a one-page response and then we will discuss the paper in class. We will go around the room with each student contributing their constructive criticism. Often, we will engage in a discussion of the topic, debating ideas, generating potential areas for development in order to help the author clarify and expand upon the paper.

CONFERENCES

You will have the opportunity to meet with me one-on-one to discuss each assignment. This semester individual conferences will meet over Zoom. These meetings are designed to help improve the writing and thinking you are doing and to catch potential problems before they end up in a final draft submitted for a grade. As a result, I recommend that you come to conferences prepared with questions and a rough draft.

ATTENDANCE AND PARTICIPATION

The Writing Program departmental policy regarding attendance is again in place with the return to campus. The policy states that a student may miss no more than 20% of class (five or more classes) and still pass the course. Please let me know ahead of time or as soon as possible after missing class. This class is built around thoughtfully engaging in discussions. An attendance and participation grade, based on how well you meet this requirement, will be counted as 10% of your final grade. Missing class or scheduled conferences can impact this grade.

However, with the unpredictable nature of the on-going pandemic, some students, the instructor, or the entire class may need to pivot to digital learning at some or several points in the semester. The university advises that “anyone with symptoms of COVID-19 must immediately self-isolate...and are advised to seek medical attention...until...all symptoms have resolved for at least 3 days and 10 days have elapsed from the onset of symptoms.” In that case, some class sessions may switch to asynchronous modalities and attendance policies adjusted to reflect these necessary adaptations.

COVID PROTOCOLS

Students are expected to comply with all aspects of USC's COVID-19 policy. Failure to do so may result in removal from the class and referral to Student Judicial Affairs and Community Standards. At this time, that includes indoor masking. Students will be expected to wear a properly fitting mask covering both nose and mouth while in class. Eating is no longer permitted in class. Briefly drinking for hydration is okay, but immediate re-masking is required.

USC Covid Hotline (213 740 6291) covid19@usc.edu or coronavirus.usc.edu
TrojanCheck (<https://we-are.usc.edu/health-and-safety/trojan-check/>)
Digital Campus Student Toolkit (<https://keepteaching.usc.edu/students/student-toolkit/>)

THE WRITING CENTER

Now available both online and in person on the 2nd floor of THH, the Writing Center is available to offer individual help on specific writing problems or skills you wish to develop. In addition to individual consultations on writing from WRIT 095 to doctoral dissertations, it offers workshops on specific grammatical and stylistic issues throughout the semester. Contact them to make an appointment for an individual session or reserve a seat in one of the workshops: 213-740-3691. More information can be obtained at <https://dornsife.usc.edu/writingcenter/>

GRADING

The following is the breakdown of how your grade will be determined this semester:

<i>Essays 1 (Narrative)</i>	15.0%
<i>Essay 2 (Analysis)</i>	15.0%
<i>Essay 3 (Interview)</i>	5.0%
<i>Essay 4 (Review)</i>	15.0%
<i>(subtotal)</i>	<i>(50%)</i>
<i>Attendance and Participation</i>	10%
<i>Presentation, Quizzes, Short Assignments, Workshops</i>	20%
<i>Final Portfolio</i>	20%

ACADEMIC ACCOMODATIONS

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 the letter is delivered to me as early in the semester as possible. Located in the STU 301, DSP is open from 8:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., Monday through Friday. The phone number is (213) 740-0776.

DIVERSITY, EQUITY, AND INCLUSION

In regard to classroom conduct, respect for others' racial, ethnic, and class backgrounds, nationalities, immigration statuses, religious and political beliefs, sexual orientations, and gender expressions is expected as the norm and standard. Together, we will work to create a classroom environment that reflects diversity, equity, and justice. We will strive to support each other and make it safe to be fully ourselves in class.

TENTATIVE SCHEDULE FALL 2021

Many of these dates will likely change. This Tentative Schedule is given only for general planning purposes. Please double check all dates on actual assignment sheets as well as against day-to-day class announcements and do not rely on this document alone.

Week One

- T 8/24 Introduction to course. Read Tolstoy. Discuss "Anna Karenina" excerpt.
HW: Complete Diagnostic Essay. Read "The Art of Failure" & "The Chosen One."
- TH 8/26 Collect & Discuss Diagnostics. Discuss "Art of Failure" and "The Chosen One." Begin "What Makes Good Writing Good?" Discussion. Imitations Part One.
HW: Complete Imitation Exercise. Bring in a sample of "good writing". Read Ono, Lewitt, and Smith.

Week Two

- T 8/31 **Reading Questions #1.** Discuss Ono, Lewitt and Smith. Continue "Good Writing" discussions. Imitations Part Two. **Introduction of Assignment #1 (Narrative).** **HW:** "'Autobiographical Statement'" by John Cage, "In Praise of Boredom" by Brodsky, and "Serpents of Paradise" by Abbey.
- TH 9/2 Listen to Cage. Discuss Cage, Abbey, Brodsky. **Readings Questions #2. Goldberg Writing Exercise.** Whole class workshop sign-up.
HW: Read "The Turning Point of My Life" by Mark Twain. Work on rough drafts.

Week Three

- T 9/7 **Rough Draft Due.** In-class **Peer Review** and Troubleshooting. Discuss Twain. **Reading Questions #3.** Sign-up for conferences. Discuss Workshop guidelines and schedule. **HW:** Continue work on drafts.
- TH 9/9 **Class Canceled for Conferences.** **HW:** Prep for Workshop.

Week Four

- T 9/14 **Whole Class Workshop #1.** Peer Critiques Due: One for Author, One for Me. **Presentation sign-up.** **HW:** Final Drafts
- TH 9/16 **Assignment #1(Narrative) Due. Introduce Assignment 2 (Analysis).**
HW: Read Orwell.

Week Five

- T 9/21 Discuss Orwell. Orwell Quiz. Begin Presentations. Introduce Economy and Vigor. **HW:** Read Simplicity and Clutter handout. Complete Economy and Vigor Exercises.
- TH 9/23 Presentations. Economy and Vigor due. Introduce Analysis Writing Exercise One. **Introduce Interview Assignment. HW:** Read Kerouac interview and complete Analysis Writing Exercise One.

Week Six

- T 9/28 Presentations. Transitions. Analysis Writing Exercise One due. **HW:** Read "Spiral Jetty" by Smithson.
- TH 9/30 Presentations. **HW:** "Against Interpretation" by Susan Sontag and complete Sontag Exercise.

Week Seven

- T 10/5 Presentations. Sontag Exercise due. **HW:** "The US is still segregated – but is out democracy up to the challenge?" by Wynton Marsalis.
- TH 10/7 Presentations. **HW:** Complete Interview Assignment

Week Eight

- T 10/12 **Interview Assignment Due.** Presentations. **HW:** Analysis rough drafts (5 pgs).
- TH 10/14 **Class cancelled for Fall Break**

Week Nine

- T 10/19 **Analysis Rough Drafts due.** Peer Review Worksheet due.
- TH 10/21 **Whole Class Workshop #2.** Peer Critiques Due: One for author, one for me.

Week Ten

- T 10/26 **Whole Class Workshop #3.** Peer Critiques Due: One for author, one for me.
- TH 10/28 **Class Canceled for Conferences.**

Week Eleven

- T 11/2 **Analysis Assignment Due. Introduce Review Assignment.**
- TH 11/4 Sample Reviews Discussion. Finding Sources. MLA Citation. Sentence Revision.

Week Twelve

- T 11/9 **Class Canceled for Review Assignment Conferences**
- TH 11/11 **Review Rough Draft due.** Paragraphing. Transitions. Peer Review for **Review Assignment.**

Week Thirteen

- T 11/16 **Whole Class Workshop #4.** Peer Critiques Due: One for author, one for me.
- TH 11/18 **Review Assignment due.** Introduce Portfolio. **HW:** Bring in a clean copy of one the essays you plan to use for portfolio.

Week Fourteen

- T 11/23 **Class Canceled for Portfolio Conferences.**
- TH 11/25 **Class cancelled for Thanksgiving**

Week Fifteen

- T 11/30 Portfolio Self Review. Verb concision.
- TH 12/2 **Whole Class Workshop #5.** Peer Critiques Due. One for author, one for me. Last day of class. Please complete Course Evaluations.
- T 12/7 **Portfolio Due by 5 pm.**

