Writing 340: Advanced Writing in the Arts and Humanities
Race, Freedom, Subjectivity and Time
Section 65145 | Spring 2022

"I can't think about that now, I'll go crazy if I do – I'll think about that tomorrow!"
-Scarlett O'Hara, *Gone with the Wind*

"History, I contend, is the present – *we*, with every breath we take, every move we make, *are* history – and what goes around, comes around." - James Baldwin, *Evidence of Things Not Seen*

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Office Hours: By Appointment

Class Dates: M-W-F
Time: 11:00-11:50am
Location: Online & GFS 218

Course Objectives

Writing 340 provides an opportunity for you to acquire a set of interrelated skills:

- The development of critical reading skills that will enable you to employ vital conceptual tools from relevant theoretical texts in the Arts and Humanities
- The ability to extend your thinking beyond surface-level ideas to offer thought-provoking, original, and pertinent arguments on pressing issues of our day
- The capacity to engage, persuade, and communicate cogently to various audiences
- The cultivation of sound rhetorical judgment, including the ability to identify consequential issues and ground your writing in a significant purpose
- Facility with grammatical, style, and genre conventions

Advanced Writing in Arts and Humanities: Focus on Race, Freedom, Subjectivity, and Time

Via an engagement with submerged histories, this course provides an opportunity to consider how freedom has been tethered to servitude via the requirements of liberal subjectivity in America. Affirming James Baldwin's sense that "history - is the present," we will move beyond surface-level, sentimentalist narratives such as *Gone with the Wind* in search of a fuller picture of the historical present in America as it relates to race, subjectivity, and freedom. Toward this goal we will watch the critically acclaimed documentary *13th* by the artist Ava DuVernay, read groundbreaking work by leading humanities scholar Professor Saidiya Hartman, and revisit USC's own suppressed ties to white supremacy and eugenics.

In the first half of the semester students will have a chance to engage a diverse range of course materials and discuss them intimately with one another. We will use WP-1 and 2 to first grasp vital theoretical concepts and then write an open letter to our university community about what we have just read. In the second half of the semester students will have a chance to turn directly to a topic of their own choosing with WP-3 and 4. In particular, you will be invited to select a contemporary, pressing social issue and then create two, inter-related argumentative essays about this urgent issue for the wider Arts and Humanities academic discourse community.

Course Components

Learning Communities: A Place to Have Deeper Discussions and Hold Group Conferences

Early in the semester students will be placed in smaller "learning communities" which will periodically occur *in place* of our whole class meeting as indicated on the course schedule. During the weeks that we meet in LCs, students are only required to attend class for their specific Learning Community session. The goal, in creating these smaller groups, is to allow more intimacy and deeper conversations to develop between students around course readings and topics. These communities will also be the place where students who know one another more closely can offer valuable peer-review on one another's writing as well as the place where we can hold meaningful group conferences later in the semester. In the weeks we do not meet for LCs, we will meet together for our regularly scheduled "whole class" sessions (so be sure to check the schedule to stay up to date!).

If your particular learning community is not scheduled to meet during a class time, do not attend zoom that day and use this time to complete your other course assignments.

Writing Projects

You will be asked to complete four writing projects during the course of the semester. These projects build upon skills developed across the course such that later projects will be weighted more fully than earlier ones. I will pass out a prompt for each writing project which will include the specific rubric I will use to assess that particular project.

Final Portfolio

At the end of the semester, you will be asked to submit a Final Portfolio. The Final Portfolio will consist of a revision of Writing Project #2 and Writing Project #4. We will focus class time at the end of the term on these revisions and preparing the final portfolio.

Reading Materials

The required reading materials for this course are located on USC Library's Electronic Course Reserve system "ARES," which can be accessed at: https://reserves.usc.edu/ares/ To gain entry to the above link, you will need to log-in using your USC NetID (username) and Password. Once you have accessed the ARES link/system at USC, you should search by Instructor Last Name (i.e. "Kruse") to find the specific reserve materials for this course.

Grading

I will evaluate each writing project based on a specific rubric tailored for the purpose of that assignment. The specific grading allotments and page length expectations of the overall components of the course are:

Participation	20%	
Writing Project 1	10%	
Writing Project 2 (draft)	15%	
Writing Project 3	20%	
Writing Project 4 (draft)	5%	
Final Portfolio	30%	(Revision of WP-1 or 2 & WP-4)

Course Policies

Class Participation: Quality participation and active reading are at the heart of our course.

Students are expected to **print a hard copy of the assigned reading** and **carefully read and take notes on the assigned text** ahead of class so that they are prepared to thoughtfully discuss these materials with their colleagues.

I will assess participation based on *the quality of participation* more than its quantity.

By **quality participation** I mean: (1) printing off the assigned text, reading it carefully, and taking notes on it to prepare for a meaningful discussion of the text. I also mean (2) thoughtfully choosing one's words to speak in a way that adds to the collective discussion and/or raises vital questions that merit the entire group's focus. In short, rather than merely stating your own view as if it were an isolated "island," when speaking aim to connect it to those of your classmates. By "quality," then, I also mean (3) *actively listening to the views and experiences of others* and acknowledging how your own ideas intersect with their views rather than simply ignoring them.

Some of the readings for this course are difficult and theoretically challenging. Thus, you will need to employ a set of **active reading practices** to engage with them or you will not be ready to take part in a quality discussion about the course materials with your peers. Active reading practices can include: underlining main points, making marginal notes to record your reaction to/questions about the text, re-reading and lingering with difficult sentences or paragraphs, etc.

Practices for Active Reading to Enhance Quality Participation:

Print out a hard copy of the text and **actively engage with this text** in a way that allows you to wrestle with and appreciate the complexity of the text as well as answer the following questions: (1) What are the author's main points? (2) What key ideas or stylistic choices did you find to be thought provoking in this work? (3) What were 2-3 difficult ideas that you did not initially understand, but worked through? (4) What questions do you have about this text that you'd like to ask your peers in class?

Policy on Attendance

Good attendance is crucial. **You are allowed three absences without penalty or any need for explanation.** You should save these absences for times when you are unable to make it to class due to a scheduling conflict or because you are not feeling well. I do not need any explanation for these first three absences, you can simply take them without need for explanation. But after these three "free" absences, your grade will be impacted.

If you miss the equivalent of 2 weeks of class (or 6 class periods) you will be in danger of automatically fail the course, as per USC Writing Program policy.

Coming into the zoom room late and leaving early is disruptive so try not to engage in this behavior. Given that life happens, I allow students to arrive late **three times** without penalty for emergency situations. After this, coming to class late will count as an absence.

*If you have an emergency health needs due to Co-vid contact me and we can make a plan.

Policy on Writing Projects

- **Writing Projects are due to TurnItIn on the date indicated in the syllabus.** To be submitted on time, all WPs must be uploaded to Turnitin ***by the start of class on the date they are due*** **(i.e. by 11:00am for this class**), just as if I would collect it in class.

- If you are absent on the day a Writing Project prompt is *distributed* in class, it is your responsibility to go on Blackboard and download the prompt to get caught up.

- Late Writing Projects will be penalized one step-grade (B to B-) for each class session they are late.

- You will be allowed **one grace period** to use on any of the first three Writing Projects. This means that you can submit 1 essay 1 class session after it is due without penalty or need for explanation.

- Please note that grace periods do not apply to Writing Project 4 or the Final Portfolio.

Policy on Formatting

Include your name, section #, and Writing Project # at the top of the page. I prefer page numbers to be centered at bottom of page. Papers should be typed using a 12-point font and have one-inch margins. Also, all papers should follow MLA standards for grammar and citation (check *MLA citation rules* online if you have questions). To secure this formatting does not change please submit all files as a PDF to TurnItIn.

Deviation/experimentation in form is encouraged if it effectively serves your argument! bUT dON'T jUST pLAY wITH fOrM UnLeSs YoU hAvE a PoInT tO mAke ☺

Helpful Resources

Students with Special Needs

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. DSP is located in STU 301 and is open 8:30 a.m.-5:00 p.m., Monday through Friday. The phone number for DSP is (213) 740-0776.

The Writing Center

The Writing Center offers writing workshops, as well as one-on-one appointments with Writing Consultants. Scheduled appointments are recommended. The Writing Center is located in Taper 216 and they can be reached at (213-740-3691). You can visit their website at http://dornsife.usc.edu/writingcenter/**.**

Blackboard

I have set up a Blackboard site for our class. Here you will find a copy of our syllabus as well as the prompts for each Writing Project. If you miss class on the day a prompt is distributed, you can go to Blackboard to download it and get caught up. Blackboard is also where you will find the specific TurnItIn folders where you will be able to submit particular Writing Projects.

Email Assistance

Please check your USC email at least once a day M-F. I will try to make announcements in class but as we only meet twice a week it may be necessary for me to communicate with you via email. In turn, I will check my USC email account at least once a day M-F to see if you have any pressing questions for me.

Zoom

You should have received an ongoing zoom link for our class from USC Technology Services. Please use this to log-into class. Due to Omicron, we will start class online and move to some in-person classes if this becomes a safe and accessible modality for all students and the instructor.

Schedule (to be revised as needed)

Week #	Monday	Wednesday	Friday
1 **1.10 ~ 1.14**	Welcome to Writing 340 Introductions, Syllabus A: Watch *13th* for Wednesday	Announce Learning Communities (LCs) Discuss *13th*	Introduce Saidiya Hartman A: Read "Introduction" to *Scenes of Subjection* (pgs 3-14)
2 **1.17 ~ 1.21**	MLK DAY- NO CLASS	**LC 1&2:** Discuss Introduction to *Scenes of Subjection* A: Read "Fashioning Obligation" (pgs 125-163)	**LC 3:** Discuss Introduction to *Scenes of Subjection* A: Read "Fashioning Obligation" (pgs 125-163)
3 **1.24 ~ 1.28**	LC 1: Discuss "Fashioning Obligation" A: WP-1	LC 2: Discuss "Fashioning Obligation" A: WP-1	LC 3: Discuss "Fashioning Obligation" A: WP-1
4 **1.31 ~ 2.4**	**WP-1 Due** **Whole Class Meets: Lecture** A: Read VKC	No Class: Use time to read and take careful notes on "Eugenics and the State" by VKC	No Class: Use time to read and take notes on "Eugenics and the State" by VKC
5 **2.7 ~ 2.11**	LC 1: Discuss VKC A: Read *Wayward Lives*	LC 2: Discuss VKC A: Read *Wayward Lives*	LC 3: Discuss VKC A: Read *Wayward Lives*
6 **2.14~2.18**	LC 1: Discuss *Wayward Lives* A: Read Joseph Widney	LC 2: Discuss *Wayward Lives* A: Read Joseph Widney	LC 3: Discuss *Wayward Lives* A: Read Joseph Widney
7 **2.21 ~ 2.25**	Presidents Day, No class	Learning Community 1 & 2: Discuss Widney A: WP-2	Learning Community 3: Discuss Widney A: WP-2
8 **2.28 ~ 3.4**	Learning Community 1: Workshop WP-2 Rough Plans	Learning Community 2: Workshop WP-2 Rough Plans	Learning Community 3: Workshop WP-2 Rough Plans
9 **3.7 ~ 3.11**	**Whole Class Meets** **WP-2 Due** Introduce WP-3	**Whole Class Meets**: Discuss Possible Social Issues A: Choose a Social Issue	**Whole Class Meets:** Discuss WP-3 Sample / Rough Plan A: Create WP-3 Rough Plan
10 **3.14 ~ 3.18**	*Spring Break ~ no class*	*Spring Break ~ no class*	*Spring Break ~ no class*
11 **3.21 ~3.25**	LC 1 Workshop WP-3 Rough Plans	LC 2 Workshop WP-3 Rough Plans	LC 3 Workshop WP-3 Rough Plans
12 **3.28 ~4.1**	**Whole Class Meets** **WP-3 Due,** Introduce WP-4	No Class, use time to brainstorm artist for WP-4	No Class, use time to brainstorm artist for WP-4
13 **4.4~ 4.8**	**Whole Class Meets** Share Artists A: Read WP-4 Sample	**Whole Class Meets** Discuss WP-4 Sample/ Plan A: Read Another WP-4 Sample	**Whole Class Meets** Discuss WP-4 Sample / Plan A: Create WP-4 Rough Plan
14 **4.11 ~ 4.15**	Learning Community 1: Workshop WP-4 Plans A: Compose WP-4 Draft	Learning Community 2: Workshop WP-4 Plans A: Compose WP-4 Draft	Learning Community 3: Workshop WP-4 Plans A: Compose WP-4 Draft
15: 4.18~22	LC 1: WP-4 Drafts Due	LC 2: WP-4 Drafts Due	LC 3: WP-4 Drafts Due
16 **4.25 ~ 4.29**	LC 1: Share Feedback on Drafts for Final Revisions	LC 2: Share Feedback on Drafts for Final Revisions	LC 3: Share Feedback on Drafts for Final Revisions

***WRIT 340 Final Portfolios Due to Turnitin Sunday May 1st by Midnight PST**

Statement on Academic Conduct and Support Systems

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 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.

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

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. Goal is to Provide overall safety to USC community. http://dps.usc.edu