RWS 305W: Writing in Different Settings

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Office Hours: MW 3-3:30 in SH 112A

Required Texts and Materials:
1. Ability to print various documents from Blackboard
2. Reliable and daily access to e-mail and internet
3. Reliable printer and stapler

Course Description: According to the Department of Rhetoric and Writing Studies’ published “learning goals,” 305W will help students to analyze writing in different contexts by introducing them to the concept of rhetorical situations: the complex interplay among writer, audience, subject, and context. 305W will provide students with strategies to understand the function of reading and writing in cultural, academic, and professional communities. 305W will enhance students’ abilities to develop writing processes that reflect invention, inquiry, revision, and editing. And it will provide students with strategies to analyze the writing conventions of different discourse communities and to begin to write effectively within these communities.

Student Learning Objectives for RWS 305W

Rhetorical Knowledge

RWS 305W will help students to analyze writing in different contexts by introducing them to the concept of rhetorical situations: the complex interplay among writer, audience, subject, and context. Students will learn how to
• Respond effectively in writing to issues and arguments raised in a variety of disciplinary, popular, and professional texts and/or contexts
• Identify individual discourse communities and find and analyze their characteristic texts, evaluate their credibility and principles, and apply relevant aspects of their information to other contexts and arguments
• Analyze the details of a wide variety of writing situations (textual elements such as tone, evidence, organizational patterns, diction, even visuals) according to the author’s purpose as well as the audience’s needs and tastes
• Understand the concept of rhetorical situations: the relationship among writer-audience-subject-context

Critical Thinking and Reading

RWS 305W will provide students with strategies to understand the function of reading and writing in cultural, academic, and professional communities. Students will learn how to
• Use “language about language” that enables a writer to reflect on the use of rhetorical strategies as well as strengths, difficulties, and progress as a working writer
• Apply critical reading strategies to a variety of publicly and individually produced texts
• Work with demanding readings and learn to interpret, incorporate, and evaluate these readings
• Use writing as a way to learn—to think about, question, and communicate ideas
• Understand the relationships among language, knowledge and power

Writing Processes

RWS 305W will enhance students' abilities to develop writing processes that reflect invention, inquiry, revision, and editing. Students will learn how to
• Develop successful, flexible strategies for generating, revising, and editing texts
• Understand the collaborative and social aspects of the writing process
• Critique their own and others’ texts

Knowledge of Conventions

RWS 305W will provide students with strategies to analyze the writing conventions of different discourse communities and to begin to write effectively within these communities. Students will learn to
• Understand the ways various discourse communities use different strategies for conveying information, researching information, and evaluating and analyzing information
• Analyze audience expectations about conventions and address them in critical ways
• Effectively integrate a variety of sources into their writings
• Practice appropriate means of documenting their sources
• Sustain reasonable correctness in grammar and mechanics to perform well in a variety of writing contexts and professional settings

Attitudes, Values, and Preparation for Life Beyond the University

RWS 305W reflects the values of a liberal arts education, namely,
• Working cooperatively with others to achieve mutually defined goals, face-to-face in the classroom and in other settings
• Respecting the diverse voices and perspectives that characterize life in a multi-cultural classroom and society
• Applying critical reading strategies to a variety of publicly and individually produced texts
• Valuing free expression and the ability to participate confidently in public discussion on issues of importance to the workplace and the community
• Showing initiative in problem solving situations

Plagiarism: Plagiarism is a serious offense and will result in a grade of F (zero) on any project containing it. In addition, the university requires that “after action has been taken by the faculty member, the faculty member shall complete a form that identifies the student who was found responsible, the general nature of the offense, the action taken, and a recommendation as to whether or not additional action should be considered by the campus judicial affairs office” (Executive Order 969, issued by the Office of the Chancellor and effective January 30, 2006). Sometimes students don’t realize they are plagiarizing when they fail to properly document the
ideas, concepts, words, phrases or longer passages they have taken from other sources. As part of this course, we will review what needs to be documented and how to do it correctly.

**SDS:** If you are a student with a disability and believe you will need accommodations for this class, it is your responsibility to contact Student Disability Services at (619) 594-6473. To avoid any delay in the receipt of your accommodations, you should contact Student Disability Services as soon as possible. Please note that accommodations are not retroactive, and that accommodations based upon disability cannot be provided until you have presented your instructor with an accommodation letter from Student Disability Services. Your cooperation is appreciated.

**My Teaching Philosophy:** This is a college writing class, which means that you are here to write and write often. Also, because this is a college course, I assume that you have chosen to be here, which means that you want to learn. I am not here to force-feed you information. I am here to guide your path and facilitate your learning goals. Therefore, by taking this class, you agree to do the work I assign with the intention of becoming a better writer. I do not assign busy work; Homework, rough drafts, revision, editing, brainstorming, and discussion are all part of the writing process. Each assignment is designed to help you complete a larger project. This also means you must be an active participant in your education. If you come to class expecting to simply listen to me lecture, you will not learn anything. I rely on you to contribute to each class period.

**Attendance:** The most important aspect of the class will be attendance.
- Poor attendance negatively affects your participation grade. After 4 absences, each additional absence lowers your participation grade by 10 points.
- Similarly, tardiness is extremely disruptive. Therefore, 3 late arrivals = 1 absence. Arriving more than 15 minutes late = 1 absence. You will be dropped if you are regularly/excessively late.
- In-class work, quizzes, and journals you miss due to an absence cannot be made up.

*A note on Life’s Unforeseen Craziness: I am fully aware that terrible events can happen outside of our control, whether it is illnesses, deaths, work schedules, etc. I am not insensitive to these issues. BUT, in order to help you succeed in this class when these things happen, you must COMMUNICATE with me before, during, and after. Furthermore, I cannot, in good conscience, give you credit for a class that you were not able to attend or work you were not able to complete. Even if you have excellent reasons for your inability to complete coursework, giving you a grade for work you did not do will not help you at all in your academic future. Any university recognized exceptions must be cleared with me prior to the class session when the assignment in question is due. If you have issues that are interfering with your progress and success in school, drop me an email and we can discuss your options.

**Preparation:** Students should always have read the assigned material and completed any written work before coming to class. Being fully prepared means reading the assigned material more than once to ensure that you are ready for discussion. **An absence from the previous class does not excuse you from being prepared for class.** Refer to the calendar and your notes regularly as they will guide you through the course. If you miss class, you should contact Blackboard and/or a
classmate for information. I will not respond to emails that say, “What did I miss? I was absent.” If, after talking to a classmate, you have a specific question, I will be happy to answer it for you.

**Essays:** All assignments must be typed, double spaced, with 1-inch margins, in MLA format with proper headings, and spell checked. Some essays will be submitted both in hard copy and to Turnitin via Blackboard. Turnitin is a fickle mistress – all work is due by the beginning of class time, and Turnitin will lock you out at the stroke of the deadline on the stated due date. Plan your use of technology accordingly and give yourself sufficient time to upload your work. For any assignment, there is no late work, no partial credit, no retroactive excuses. I will always accept work early so you may turn work into my box in the RWS dept. office or discuss other options with me beforehand. Plan ahead.

**Tutoring:** DRWS offers free drop in tutoring for all students; this is a valuable resource of which I encourage you to take advantage for any class where you are struggling with the writing process. I may also require you to see a tutor if you are having difficulty on the major, graded assignments. The tutoring office is located in _____ . Hours and location will be announced on Blackboard.

**Homework:** All homework should be completed on time and to the best of your ability. Print it out and bring it to class with you. **I do not accept homework via email for any reason–do not try.** Failure to complete one or two homework assignments over the course of the semester will not have a severe impact on your grade; however, never doing your homework will severely harm your grade. Make sure you keep up with the assignments. No make-up homework will be allowed.

**Workshops:** Writing workshops are a crucial part of the revision/editing process. Your classmates will read your work, make suggestions, edit, and discuss your essay with a group. One learning objective is to be able to effectively critique your own and your peers’ work. For this to be effective, you must be prepared to give and receive honest, constructive feedback. Also, you must have a complete draft. Incomplete drafts will receive partial credit. **Anything less than 75% complete will not be eligible for peer editing and you will not receive any points for that day’s activities.** You may, in fact, be asked to leave class if you are not able to contribute to the class activity.

**Participation:** Showing up to class is essential, but attendance does not make up the bulk of participation; it is merely a prerequisite of participation. Reading the required materials is also a prerequisite for participation. Although we all have different comfort levels with talking, I expect everyone to interact with class discussions, group activities, etc. This class is an open forum and a place to exchange ideas and questions without fear. If you do not ask questions, I cannot answer them. If you do not discuss the assignments and readings are about, I cannot gauge where we need more work. Even if you are not speaking, show that you are engaged by staying focused on the conversation, raising your hand when asked, and by always taking notes. If you are not engaged in the class (i.e. having side conversations, texting, sleeping, etc.), you will receive no credit for that day.

**Respect:** We will be dealing with sensitive topics of all sorts. I encourage everyone to express
themselves freely; this is not a place for censorship, but I do expect this to be done *respectfully*. Be aware of your audience and under no circumstances use hateful language. Similarly, as an audience, recognize we all come from different social locations and many opinions will not coincide with yours. If you find yourself offended do not hesitate to discuss the matter with me.

**Technology Policy:** Please check your email regularly and be prepared to print various emails and attachments that you receive. There is no course reader or formal textbook for this class – our textual relationship is electronic – hence, you should have access to a printer, ink and paper and consider this cost in lieu of payments to the bookstore. Put those cell phones on SILENT (not vibrate!) before entering class unless discussed with me. Do not leave the class to answer or make a phone call. Do not text during class. DO NOT take pictures of the board or projector with your cell phone. You need to write these things down. If you would like me to make an exception to this rule, ASK me.

Since many of your reading are available online, laptops and tablets are acceptable for reading and referring to the articles during class. However, if I suspect any sort of distraction (Facebook!) I will tell you to put away your laptop and get out paper and pencil. Some days I simply will not allow you to use your laptop; be prepared for this by ALSO bringing paper and a writing tool. Do not engage in any activity not related to this class while in the classroom. This means you, people with laptops! If it becomes a frequent problem, I will ask you to leave the class for that day. Also, please not record lectures without discussing it with me first.

**Email Policy:** When emailing anyone, especially your English professors, please write in complete sentences and with professionalism. Essentially, they should follow the same format as a letter: a greeting, a body, and a "signature." Please indicate your name and what class you're taking in your email. If I do not know who you are, I will not answer. Also, I will not respond to emails that are written without regard to spelling, grammar, propriety (it's not a text message!). I will not respond to emails that ask me questions that can be answered by this syllabus. Lastly, once again, I do not accept ANY assignments through email.

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<tr>
<th>Grading Scale</th>
<th>Assignment</th>
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<th>Your Points</th>
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<tr>
<td>A: 94%-100%</td>
<td>Paper 1: Analysis of Media</td>
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<td>A-: 90%-93%</td>
<td>Paper 2: Photo Essay</td>
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<td>B+: 86%-89%</td>
<td>Paper 3: Narration</td>
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<td>B: 83%-85%</td>
<td>Paper 4: Letter</td>
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<td>B-: 80%-82%</td>
<td>Paper 5: Career Preparation Project</td>
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<td>C+: 76%-79%</td>
<td>Homework (Journals, Reading Responses, quizzes etc.)</td>
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<td>C: 73%-75%</td>
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Paper 1: Explore the rhetoric of media using a relevant media theory. Read and analyze a theoretical article a media theory, choose an example of current media, and show this example reveals or uncovers a deeper meaning.
Paper 2: Create and present an analysis of public space through images and words. Guide your audience to view this space through your interpretation. This should avoid being purely an example of tourist propaganda.

Paper 3: Choose a genre of literature. Looking at your life through the lens of this genre, narrate the story of one day in your life. Make sure to include all elements of plot.

Paper 4: Write and send a letter demonstrating the interaction between self, purpose, audience, and written word.

Paper 5: Prepare a resume and cover letter for a job that you would actually apply for with your degree. Research the company and a relevant debate/controversy/problem in your field. Create a presentation using PowerPoint or Prezi that constructs an evaluation or argument about the problem and present it to the class.

**Classmate Contact Info:** Below there are spaces for you to write down the email address and/or phone number of three of your classmates. Please contact them to find out what you missed or anything unexpected that may have happened in class before asking me.

NAME:________________________________ CONTACT:________________________________

NAME:________________________________ CONTACT:________________________________

NAME:________________________________ CONTACT:________________________________