

English 101 Writing About Our World
Fall 2011 Mon./Wed. 3:30 p.m. – 4:50 p.m. Meneely 104

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Course Description:

This course is an introduction to critical writing at the collegiate level. It is organized around an exploration of the idea of reading and writing in a world that, everyone says, is dominated by “new media.” What role does writing have in this new world? What kinds of topics are being considered in critical writing of the late twentieth and early twenty-first century? We will examine a range of contemporary issues—including gay rights, fashion trends, political revolution and armed conflict, and “magic”—to introduce ourselves to the skills and conventions of expository writing at the college level and to create some sense of whether this type of writing is valuable or not to this new world.

Required Texts:

Jon Krakauer, *Into the Wild* (New York: Anchor Books, 1997; 2007 ISBN 0385486804)
[Please order a copy of this book; you may plug in the ISBN above and find the exact copy in Amazon, Barnes+Noble, or ABEbooks]

The majority of the essays we will be reading for this class are available on our course website as Adobe Acrobat documents.

Attendance and Participation: This course is driven by your ideas about reading and writing; therefore, coming to class prepared to discuss the readings is an essential part of this course. Please be sure to read all of the assigned materials before you come to class. Students may be asked to read aloud and discuss the literature in class. **More than *four* absences may result in failing the course.** I take this seriously and I take attendance before every class (even if you don’t hear me call the roll). Excessive lateness or leaving early may be counted as absences, so be sure to come to class on time. You will only receive four absences, so you should plan your life accordingly. This also means you do not need to tell me why you were absent for a particular day.

Papers: During this course you will be required to write **five original papers** for the course. Each paper will be **four to six pages in length** (double-spaced) and will go through a drafting and revision process. I will provide paper topics for each paper that will advance a question or topic and identify a series of concepts. This paper topic will also indicate requirements and outline goals for the paper. Students will then compose a rough draft, which will be examined and critiqued by their fellow students in a process called “peer review.” This paper will then be revised for a final grade. Students should

also feel free to meet with me in office hours to further discuss topics, ideas and themes, and writing. .

Grading: Your grade for the course will be calculated according to the following formula: **the first paper will account for 10% of your grade. The next two papers will account for 15% each (for a total of 30%). The final two critical papers will account for 25% each (for a total of 50%). Attendance and Participation in class discussion will make up the final 10% of your grade.** This formula allows final grades to reflect a student's ability to become more comfortable and successful with the critical writing of this course. It also means, however, that as the course progresses the papers become more valuable. There is a lot of writing in this course so be sure to remain vigilant with the reading and with the drafting process. Please note you must complete all of the written work for the course to receive a passing grade.

Course Website:

The syllabus, the majority of our readings, and other useful links are available on our course website. You can find it at: oncourse.wheatoncollege.edu. There you will see a link to our English 101 section. You should have permission to access the website automatically once you are registered and enrolled in the course. If you do not have access to the website, you must contact the Registrar's Office to get the proper permissions.

*****Please note that while the course readings are available on our website, I expect you to print out, read, mark up, and bring these marked up copies of the readings to class.*** DO NOT** come to class with your laptop and expect to look at the readings onscreen. Feel free to save a .pdf copy if you like, but having hardcopies of the readings is essential to the teaching mechanics of this class.

Plagiarism and the Honor Code: Plagiarism will not be tolerated in this class. You should always cite your sources; references are an essential part of critical thinking and academic writing, so don't be afraid to use other people's ideas to develop and advance your own. If you are unsure about any aspect of the policy on plagiarism, please come and speak with me.

Below is a copy of the Wheaton College Honor Code. Please be sure to read it and follow it throughout this course.

As members of the Wheaton community, we commit ourselves to act honestly, responsibly, and above all, with honor and integrity in all areas of campus life. We are accountable for all that we say and write. We are responsible for the academic integrity of our work. We pledge that we will not misrepresent our work nor give or receive unauthorized aid. We commit ourselves to behave in a manner which demonstrates concern for the personal dignity, rights and freedoms of all members of the community. We are respectful of college property and the property of others. We will not tolerate a

lack of respect for these values. I accept responsibility to maintain the Honor Code at all times.

Syllabus

[Please note that dates and documents on the syllabus are subject to change. Documents available on the course website are noted with an *.]

W	Aug. 31	Hurricane Irene!
M	Sep. 5	Labor Day, No Class
W	Sep. 7	Introduction
M	Sep. 12	Malcolm Gladwell, “The Power of Context: Bernie Goetz and the Rise and Fall of New York City Crime”*
W	Sep. 14	Malcolm Gladwell, “The Power of Context: Bernie Goetz and the Rise and Fall of New York City Crime”*
M	Sep. 19	Rough Draft #1 Peer Review #1
W	Sep. 21	Writing Workshop #1: Working with Quotations; Close Reading and Analysis
M	Sep. 26	Susan Faludi, “The Naked Citadel”* Visit the webpage of The Citadel, and explore their presentation. Also look at the explanation of the symbolism of The Citadel ring. Optional: Look at The Citadel’s “Revised Plan for the Assimilation of Female Cadets”: http://externalaffairs.citadel.edu/97assim
		Final Draft #1
W	Sep. 28	Susan Faludi, “The Naked Citadel”*
M	Oct. 3	Rough Draft #2 Peer Review #2
W	Oct. 5	Writing Workshop #2: Making Connections
M	Oct. 10	Fall Break, No Class
W	Oct. 12	David Abram, “The Ecology of Magic”* Final Draft #2
M	Oct. 17	David Abram, “The Ecology of Magic”*

W	Oct. 19	Rough Draft #3 Peer Review #3
M	Oct. 24	Writing Workshop #3: Theses and Arguments
W	Oct. 26	No Class, Mid-Semester Conferences
		Final Draft #3 [Place Folders in my office mailbox, Meneely #317]
M	Oct. 31	No class, Mid-semester Conferences
W	Nov. 2	Jonathan Boyarin, "Waiting for a Jew: Marginal Redemption at the Eighth Street Shul"*
		As you read, look up terms that are unfamiliar to you.
M	Nov. 7	Jonathan Boyarin, "Waiting for a Jew: Marginal Redemption at the Eighth Street Shul"*
W	Nov. 9	Rough Draft #4 Peer Review #4
M	Nov. 14	Writing Workshop #4 Paragraphs and Organization; Works Cited, Sentence-Level Errors
W	Nov. 16	Final Draft #4
M	Nov. 21	Jon Krakauer, <i>Into the Wild</i> , 1-102
W	Nov. 23	Thanksgiving Break, No Class
M	Nov. 28	Jon Krakauer, <i>Into the Wild</i> , 103-207
W	Nov. 30	Rough Draft #5 Peer Review #5
M	Dec. 5	Writing Workshop: Double-checking Citations, Bibliographies, MLA Formatting
W	Dec. 7	Final Draft #5, with complete folders, due in class