

WR 121: College Writing

Winter 2019
 Online (006 43945)
 Google Classroom
 Class code: c29p52

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 303 Stratford; @keribehre
 1-1:50 p.m. T/Th & by appt.

This syllabus is our agreement, and you are responsible for knowing all the information it contains. Please take time to read it carefully, mark it up for your own reference, and ask any questions you may have.

About this Course

This course will encourage and enable students to engage in a lifetime of writing both within and beyond the classroom. This course is *process* oriented. We will focus on the process of writing, including prewriting, drafting, revising, workshopping, and copyediting. To this end, the class will be structured as a place for sharing and discussion. We will seek to cultivate critical thinking skills essential to success in the academic world and in life. We will explore writing both as a mode of thinking that invites discovery, and as a means of communication. Reading and writing are interconnected; therefore, we will be sharing and reading our own work as well as the works of outside writers as a means of improving writing, thinking, and speaking skills. We will work from internal sources of information such as memory and observation and from external sources of information such as texts, interviews, and outside research. Substantive revision will be emphasized throughout the course as an important part of the writing process.

Required Texts and Materials

- *Ways of Writing: A Guide to College Composition*, Third Edition, by the Writing Center at Portland State University. ISBN 978-0-9825101-1-7
- Regular access to Google Classroom (classroom.google.com) for course readings, writing workshops, and discussions. You will need our unique class code – c29p52 – to enroll when you initially log in.
- Ability to print course readings as needed.
- Regular access to e-mail.

Evaluation

Your final grade for the course will be calculated based on the values below.

Unit 1 Writing Project	
Process	10% (100 points)
Final Product	15% (150 points)
Unit 2 Writing Project	
Process	10% (100 points)
Final Product	20% (200 points)
Unit 3 Writing Project	
Process	5% (50 points)
Final Product	15% (150 points)
Attendance/Participation	
Regular Twitter Chats	10% (100 points)
Journals	<u>15% (150 points)</u>
TOTAL	100% (1,000 points)

Major Unit Assignments 1-3 – You will be given specific guidelines for each of the major assignments early in each unit. Your grade will include both your process activities and your final product.

Attendance/Participation

- *Weekly Twitter Discussions* – You are required to post at least **two tweets per week** for at least six weeks of our class. These tweets might be questions, check-ins, or supportive responses to another student. They could also be replies to any prompts I tweet. Full instructions and details will be provided in Week 1 of our Google Classroom.
- *Journals* – This is a place where you can try out paper topics, respond to the readings, and process course content without censoring yourself. Be conscientious about keeping this journal: write at least 500 words each and every week (for a total of at least 5,000 words during the term), plus any additional assignments. I will check journals and assign points periodically. I only skim journals for engagement and do not evaluate your work; the goal is to engage with the course material and not to produce polished content. If you are up-to-date and generally on-topic when I grade journals, you will receive full credit.

Office Hours

Because I teach both online and on campus, and because students' lives are busy, I hold my office hours simultaneously in my campus office (303 Stratford) and on Twitter @keribehre. For those who are available to tweet during my office hour, I enjoy engaging synchronously with students; otherwise, you may tweet me anytime and I will respond during office hours. When you tweet, include the designated hashtag for your class (#wr121kb or #wr323kb). My past students (especially those more reluctant to get on Twitter!) have told me repeatedly that knowing how engage on Twitter has given them a career boost, as many people are afraid of this more “primitive” – but still widely utilized – form of social media technology. Of course you may always email me anytime, but Twitter gives an opportunity for quick, real-time interaction and exchange that is missing from most forms of online communication. **Note:** If you would prefer not to use your real name publicly on Twitter, that is absolutely fine! Just set up your account using a pseudonym of your choice. Since I monitor hashtags for all my classes (#wr121kb and #wr323kb), just be sure to use the correct hashtag so I know which class you're in and can respond to questions appropriately.

Weekly Routine

Our class will have a predictable weekly rhythm that will include engagement with readings and multimedia materials, group discussion, and writing assignments or peer-review workshops. I will post materials for the coming week on Fridays, though readings will usually be posted a full week in advance. I use my weekends for screen-free restoration and am thus not usually present online on Saturdays and Sundays; some students may wish to follow my lead on this while others, depending on schedules and commitments, may wish to use the weekends to work ahead. Information about your tasks and my expectations will be up front and clear each and every week. I am available to you for support and help with any aspect of the course.

Learning Outcomes

- Engage in the writing process, including drafting, revising, editing, and proofreading, considering clarity, purpose, audience, and style.
- Work with other students to provide feedback, critiquing the work of others and revising based on suggestions of others.
- Use composing processes and tools as a means to discover and reconsider ideas.
- Understand how genre conventions shape and are shaped by readers' and writers' practices and purposes.
- Practice expository writing utilizing a variety of rhetorical strategies.
- Compose and read for inquiry, learning, critical thinking, and communicating in various contexts.
- Develop knowledge of linguistic structures, including grammar, punctuation, and spelling, through practice in composing and revising.

- Understand why genre conventions for structure, paragraphing, tone, and mechanics vary.

Grades

Because writing often comes about through an intensely introspective and personal process, it is important to remember that your writing is not “you;” therefore, any criticism you may receive is not in any way meant as an evaluation of you as a person. Consider adopting a growth mindset. According to Carol Dweck:

"In a fixed mindset, people believe their basic qualities, like their intelligence or talent, are simply fixed traits. They spend their time documenting their intelligence or talent instead of developing them. They also believe that talent alone creates success—without effort. [...] In a growth mindset, people believe that their most basic abilities can be developed through dedication and hard work—brains and talent are just the starting point. This view creates a love of learning and a resilience that is essential for great accomplishment."

Ideally, you are here to *learn* rather than to *document your skills*, and learning must necessarily involve improvement. If you believe you have nothing to improve, then it's worth considering what you're hoping to accomplish in college!

Please resist the unprofessional impulse to request a specific grade. I am obliged, both professionally and ethically, to assign student work the grade it merits. In other words, if your paper deserves a B, it will receive a B regardless of whether you tell me that you are “hoping” or “aiming” for one in order to get into grad school or maintain a scholarship; if it does not, it will not. I take evaluation very seriously, and that includes taking an objective stance on every paper I grade. For example, I grade with my gradebook closed so that your past scores don't influence my evaluation of your current work. I adhere to the standard PSU grade scale. Honor grades (A, A-, B+) *are reserved for outstanding work and outstanding effort.*

A = 94-100
A- = 90-93
B+ = 87-89
B = 84-86

B- = 80-83
C+ = 77-79
C = 74-76
C- = 70-73

D+ = 67-69
D = 64-66
D- = 60-63
F = <60

Late Work

In the case of an online class, participating in conversations late, or submitting work late, is the same as not attending class. During weeks we do peer-review workshops, your classmates will rely on you for feedback and discussion, and if you don't turn in work you will forfeit the process points and the learning experience of the workshop. Please make every effort to be on time for these. For major projects, I generally enforce a late penalty of one letter grade per business day. This keeps you from falling too far behind. I will consider exceptions on a case-by-case basis; whenever possible, please check in with me *before* a paper's due date when you anticipate needing more time.

Regrade Policy

If you would like to discuss the grade you have earned on an assignment, please wait 48 hours from the time the assignment was returned to you before contacting me about it. This gives you time to read my comments, reread your own work, and reflect on the assignment. After 48 hours, you may contact me either to 1) discuss the work so that you may better understand your grade *or* 2) submit the paper for a re-grade on the grounds of unfairness. Papers submitted for a re-grade must include the original, graded copy, a clean copy, and a rationale (why you think the grade was unfair based upon the standards discussed in class). I will reconsider and assign a new grade to all regrade requests in consultation with at least one other faculty member from the English department. The new grade – whether higher or lower than the original grade assigned – will replace the old grade permanently.

Format and Documentation

Final drafts of the major unit assignments you complete for this class should adhere to the manuscript format guidelines below.

- Double space throughout – title, headings, body, quotations, works cited list (if applicable).
- In the upper-right corner of your pages (one-half inch from the top and aligned with the right margin), include a *header* with your last name and the page number, no comma: Lastname 2.
- In the upper-left corner of the *first* page of your paper, include your double-spaced, four-line heading: your name, your instructor's name, the course/time, and the date.
- Set your margins at 1 inch (top, bottom, and sides). Please note that 1.25-inch margins, default for many word processing programs, are not standard manuscript format.
- Use a single, readable black font in a consistent size throughout your paper, including the title.
- Do not justify margins or use a title page.

All essays should adhere to MLA documentation format for both in-text citations and works cited lists. Failure to adhere to these guidelines will impact your essay's grade.

Writing Center

The Writing Center is a free, on-campus resource located in Cramer Hall 188. Students may bring in any writing assignment for a thirty-minute or hour-long consultation, for up to an hour per week. Your consultant can assist with revision and offer techniques for improvement. Writing Center consultants do NOT proofread essays, so please do not schedule your appointment for directly before your assignment is due. Writing Center appointments are available online or by calling 503-725-3570. The Writing Center is an amazing resource staffed by incredible writers. Every Writing Center consultant is also a PSU Writing Instructor. Take advantage of it!

Plagiarism

Plagiarism is a serious form of academic dishonesty that occurs when a student uses information or material from outside sources without proper citation. Some specific examples of actions that constitute plagiarism include pasting together uncredited information or ideas from the internet or published sources, submitting a paper partially or entirely written by someone else, and copying another student's work (even with the student's permission). In order to avoid unintentional plagiarism and to represent your work honestly, you will need to be meticulous about giving credit to any and all sources, whether directly quoted (even a few words) or paraphrased. Because one of the goals of this course is to help you improve your writing, plagiarism hurts you as much as it does anyone. If you plagiarize another's work, you will not be receiving the needed feedback to improve your own writing. Plagiarism is grounds for disciplinary action at Portland State University, and it is a student's responsibility to understand plagiarism and its consequences. If you plagiarize in this class, you will be required to attend a mandatory conference with me, then revise and resubmit the work in question. We will discuss potential consequences, including receiving an F on the assignment and a report of academic misconduct to the Dean of Student Life's Conduct Office.

E-mail Etiquette

E-mail is an excellent way to get in touch with me. For practicality's sake, I ask that you keep a few e-mail guidelines in mind. First, please *read the assignment carefully* before asking me a question about it! About 50% of the questions I get are already answered, clearly, on the assignment. Second, do not send me complex questions about a paper the night before it's due. For obvious reasons, I am not able to sit at my computer and re-explain the assignment thirty times or help fifteen students with large-scale organization issues the entire evening before a paper is due. For similar reasons, I do not conference entire papers over e-mail. If you would like me to take a look at more than a paragraph of a draft, please bring it by or call during office hours, or make an appointment. Remember that when you contact your

instructors, it is important to be professional. Often, students do not realize that their e-mail communications reflect on how their instructors perceive them. Professionalism always matters.

Common Sense/Courtesy Classroom Directives

Comments, questions, and opinions about the topics covered in class are encouraged; however, they should be expressed in respectful and appropriate language. It is essential that we maintain a constructive learning environment. This means no one is permitted to make offensive, intimidating, or malicious comments; use racist, sexist, homophobic, or other bigoted language; or behave in a disruptive manner.

Self Care

College can be hard on your body and brain. If you expend the effort to take care of yourself, you'll learn and perform better. In our culture of social media, "self care" has become problematically synonymous with spa days and indulgent purchases. In reality, though, self-care is a lot less glamorous and a lot more achievable: going to bed on time, considering personal boundaries, packing a lunch, picking up the phone to make a doctor or therapy appointment, keeping a calendar and to-do list for your responsibilities, setting an alarm so you remember to take prescribed medications. Take advantage of campus resources to keep you sane and strong: Students have access to all kinds of free and confidential services via Student Health and Counseling Center (SHAC) in University Center Building (UCB) 200. For resources for those with dependents, please visit PSU's Support for Students with Children. If you see a peer in distress, PSU's C.A.R.E. program can help you help them.

University Policies

Sexual/Gender Harassment, Sexual Assault, Dating/Domestic Violence, and Stalking

Portland State is committed to providing an environment free of all forms of prohibited discrimination and sexual harassment (sexual assault, domestic and dating violence, gender or sex-based harassment and stalking). If you have experienced any form of gender or sex-based discrimination or sexual harassment, know that help and support are available. PSU has staff members trained to support survivors in navigating campus life, accessing health and counseling services, providing academic and on-housing accommodations, helping with legal protective orders, and more. Information about PSU's support services on campus, including confidential services and reporting options, can be found on PSU's Sexual Misconduct Prevention and Response website at: <http://www.pdx.edu/sexual-assault/get-help> or you may call a Confidential Advocate at 503-725-5672 or by scheduling on-line: psuwrc.youcanbook.me. You may also report any incident of discrimination or discriminatory harassment, including sexual harassment, to either the Office of Equity and Compliance or the Office of the Dean of Student Life. Please be aware that all PSU faculty members and instructors are required to report information of an incident that may constitute prohibited discrimination, including sexual harassment and sexual violence. This means that if you tell me about a situation of sexual harassment or sexual violence that may have violated university policy or student code of conduct, I have to share the information with my supervisor, the University's Title IX Coordinator or the Office of the Dean of Student Life. For more information about these matters that include Title IX, please complete the required student module Creating a Safe Campus in your D2L.

Access and Inclusion for Students with Disabilities

PSU values diversity and inclusion; we are committed to fostering mutual respect and full participation for all students. My goal is to create a learning environment that is equitable, useable, inclusive, and welcoming. If any aspects of instruction or course design result in barriers to your inclusion or learning, please notify me. The Disability Resource Center (DRC) provides reasonable accommodations for students who encounter barriers in the learning environment.

If you have, or think you may have, a disability that may affect your work in this class and feel you need accommodations, contact the Disability Resource Center to schedule an appointment and

initiate a conversation about reasonable accommodations. The DRC is located in 116 Smith Memorial Student Union, 503-725-4150, drc@pdx.edu, <https://www.pdx.edu/drc>.

- If you already have accommodations, please contact me to make sure that I have received a faculty notification letter and discuss your accommodations.
- Students who need accommodations for tests and quizzes are expected to schedule their tests to overlap with the time the class is taking the test.
- For information about emergency preparedness, please go to the Fire and Life Safety webpage (<https://www.pdx.edu/environmental-health-safety/fire-and-life-safety>) for information.

A Final Note

This is a class, a community of learners. Membership has its privileges, as I think you will discover, but it also comes with certain responsibilities, all of which can be grouped together under one overarching rule: help me, in your own unique way, to make this class work. The responsibility for making this course exhilarating and inspiring rests on both me as teacher and on you as participant. Keeping up with the reading, completing assigned work, and participating in class are absolutely essential to your success – do not expect to pass the course if you do not do these things. Please don't ever hesitate to talk with me about your standing in the class or anything else; **helping you is what I'm here for!** I'm looking forward to a great term.

Fall 2018 Course Schedule (subject to change)

Detailed readings and assignments will be posted in our Google Classroom weekly.

Week	Posting Date	Description
Week 1	Posted 1.7	Welcome and Course Overview Writing as a Process; Journals Assignment
Unit 1		
Week 2	Posted 1.11	Writing Project 1 Assignment
Week 3	Posted 1.18	Writing Project 1 Peer-Review Workshop
Week 4	Posted 1.25	Writing Project 1 Due
Unit 2		
Week 5	Posted 2.1	Writing Project 2 Assignment
Week 6	Posted 2.8	Writing Project 2 Peer-Review Workshop
Week 7	Posted 2.15	Individual Conferences
Week 8	Posted 2.22	Writing Project 2 Due
Unit 3		
Week 9	Posted 3.1	Writing Project 3 Assignment
Week 10	Posted 3.8	Writing Project 3 Peer-Review Workshop
Finals Week	(No new materials)	Writing Project 3 Due