Rhetoric and American Cultures
College Writing 201

Instructor Information
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Course Description
The purpose of WRIT 201 is to help you develop your abilities as a writer and reader to encourage you to think critically and communicate effectively in the world. Throughout the semester you will learn to engage rhetorical habits of mind in order to write confident, graceful, research-based academic essays that explore topics vital to your life. We’ll explore the range of this genre, from the traditional academic essay to personal essays to essays that blur personal and academic writing. I’ll also help you develop flexible reading, writing, and research processes to help you develop as a college writer. Much of your work will involve different kinds of collaboration, including small group workshops and discussions. Because writing development is an important process that takes place over time and across different writing situations, all WRIT 201 classes use portfolio evaluation as the primary means to assess your work in class.

Writing is enacted in the betweens or the frontiers. How do we come to “know our terrain” (Dobrin, “Writing” 20) as it pertains to the self and our cultural landscape? During class we will approach writing in a metaphysical sense as actively “carving out time and space.” We begin by mapping experiences, memories, and the moments that either define or unsettle our sense of self. Later in the semester we will read essays on contact zones or borderlands, and analyze where writers must encounter opposition and be bold in order to establish a “common ground.” You will research issues and form arguments on topics that pertain to place-making; but our topics will be broad—virtual reality and space travel, Native resettlement and Hollywood, college campuses and colonialism, sites of resistance and shopping malls. This class will ask you see writing as a spatial practice and view the essay as a site of transformation.

We’ll be supplementing our course text with excerpts from books by Janice Lee, Ta Nehisi-Coates, Aisha Sabatani Sloan, Zadie Smith, Rebecca Solnit, James Baldwin, among others.

Required Course Texts

College Writing II
Course website (Moodle)

Other
➢ Working folder
➢ Notebook for in-class writing
➢ Binder for final portfolio

Major Projects
Expect to write and revise three different projects and one reflective theory of writing over the course of this class, in addition to other informal writing in and out of class. I will give you a detailed assignment sheet as we begin each of these major assignments.

- **Major Assignment 1**— Personal Narrative (4-5 pages) DUE
* Major Assignment 2—Response Essay (4-6 pages) DUE
* Major Assignment 3—Persuasive Research Essay (5-7 pages) DUE
* Major Assignment 4—Final Proposal, a letter for change DUE

Your major inquiry projects will give you the opportunity to compose in a range of genres for a range of academic and civic situations. You'll have opportunities to use observations and experience as evidence, as well as learn strategies for composing effective arguments and conducting academic research.

You will have the chance to develop all of your major projects through a process of inquiry and drafting. You'll compose papers in and out of class, alone and with your small group. All inquiry projects must be completed for you to pass the course. I will respond to these projects with written comments focused on suggestions for revision, but I will also mark them using a check system to help you know where you stand on a specific project.

**Common Policies and Procedures**

**General Class Expectations**

* All reading assignments will be completed by the assigned date.
* All reading assignments must be printed, annotated, and brought to class if necessary.
* All writing assignments must be turned in on time.
* All homework must be typed AND uploaded to Moodle.
* Attend class.
* Actively, vocally, and appropriately participate in class discussions.
* Any individual assignments (including requests for conferences) will be completed by the assigned date
* Demonstrate respect for the voices and opinions of peers.

**Grading**

Since University Writing classes grade based on a check system I encourage you to talk with me at any time to better understand my comments or to discuss your overall progress and success in the class. It is your responsibility to visit me in office hours if you are concerned about your grade in the class.

* Participation (including Journal Entries) 50%
* Final Portfolio and Major Assignments 50%

**Students must earn a C- in this class to be awarded credit**
**Students must turn in portfolio and complete all major papers by their deadlines in order to receive credit for this course.**

**Grading Policy**

Students enrolled in WRIT 101 are graded by the traditional letter grade A, B, C, D, F or are given NC for no credit. The NC grade does not affect grade point average. It is reserved for students who have worked unusually hard, attend class regularly and completed all assignments but whose skills are not at a passing level at the end of the semester.

**Attendance**

If you miss the first two classes, you will need to drop the course on Cyberbear and enroll in another semester. This is university policy and the reasoning behind it is that important groundwork for the semester is put in place in the first few class meetings. Students without that foundational framework are better served by taking the course when they can give it the attention it deserves.

**Cell Phone Policy**

Cell phones must be put away during class. If cell phones are used in class I will ask you to turn them off. If cell phone use is a frequent occurrence it will affect the student’s overall participation grade.
MWF classes
More than three absences from a T-R class will compromise your grade. 6 or more absences from a T-R class will result in a failing grade. Here’s the breakdown:

✶ 4th absence: final grade drops one letter grade
✶ 5th absence: final grade drops one letter grade
✶ 6th absence: final grade is an F

Here’s the reasoning behind the attendance policy. Without attending class, you cannot perform your role as a student involved in learning, planning, inventing, drafting; discussing reading and writing; learning and practicing rhetorical moves and concepts; or collaborating with your instructor and classmates. Personal situations and required university events may arise that, on a rare occasion, make it impossible for you to be in class. Remember, however, that’s why a few absences are allowed; please reserve allotted absences for emergencies.

I reserve the right to adjust the policy in cases of significant, documented illness or emergency. Please note that instances of poor time management on your part do not constitute extenuating circumstances. If you must miss class, you are responsible for obtaining any handouts or assignments for the class from a classmate. Make sure you talk with me in advance if you are worried about meeting a deadline or missing a class.

If you must miss class, you are responsible for obtaining any handouts or assignments for the class. Make sure you talk with me in advance if you are worried about meeting a deadline or missing a class.

Participation
Participation includes coming to class prepared and on time, taking part in class discussions, completing assigned readings ahead of time, asking questions, contributing your knowledge and insights in whatever form is appropriate, and striving to make all your contributions excellent. All homework must be printed and brought to class unless otherwise instructed. Emailed or late homework will not receive credit. Participation does not just mean being in the room. It also includes doing the required reading and writing for each class. Note: Please come to class on time. Lateness will hurt your grade because it is an unnecessary interruption and because latecomers are likely to miss valuable information. Please see Participation Grade Descriptors for more information.

Late Work
Your work needs to be typed, printed, and in class with you to be considered "on time".

✶ Late or handwritten homework does not receive credit.
✶ Emailed assignments are considered late.
✶ Late formal essays are unacceptable. They will receive no revision comments from me.
✶ If you miss class, the homework is due the next class period for partial credit.
✶ You are always welcome to complete assignments early if you will be missing class.

Academic Conduct
You must abide by the rules for academic conduct described in the Student Conduct Code. If you have any questions about when and how to avoid academic dishonesty, particularly plagiarism, please review the Conduct Code and talk with your instructor. The Council of Writing Program Administrators describes plagiarism as follows: “plagiarism occurs when a writer deliberately uses someone else’s language, ideas or other original (not common-knowledge) material without acknowledging its source.” Academic honesty is highly valued in the University community and acts of plagiarism will not be tolerated.
Composition Program Plagiarism Policy for WRIT 101

According to the University of Montana Student Conduct Code, plagiarism is “representing another person's words, ideas, data, or materials as one's own.” The Composition program recognizes that plagiarism is a serious academic offense, but also understands that some misuse of information can occur in the process of learning information literacy skills. Therefore, if student writing appears to have been plagiarized, in full or in part, intentionally or unintentionally, or due to poor citation, the following will procedure will take place:

- The student will be made aware of areas in the text that are not properly integrated or cited.
- The student will receive no credit on the paper; and it is up to him/her to prove that he/she turned in original work.
- The student will be asked to provide the teacher with copies of the research she/he used in writing the paper.
- The student and teacher will meet to discuss research integration.

In the case that the student is unable to provide evidence of his/her original work or in the case that the teacher has evidence that the student has repeatedly plagiarized his/her work, the teacher will consult with the Director of Composition for direction with further action.

In the case of blatant or egregious offenses, or in the case of repeated plagiarism, the Director of Composition will work with the Dean of Students to determine further disciplinary action.

Students should review the Student Conduct Code so that they understand their rights in academic disciplinary situations. The Student Conduct Code can be found here: http://www.umt.edu/vpsa/policies/student_conduct.php

Students with Disabilities

Qualified students with disabilities will receive appropriate accommodations in this course. Please speak with me privately after class or in my office. Please be prepared to provide a letter from your DSS Coordinator.

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Daily Short Assignments

I will be asking you to submit short writing assignments, or “Journal Entries,” every week or on a bi-weekly basis. This will depend on other ongoing assignments so the coursework is manageable. You will practice class concepts by writing 1-2 page, typed (12pt font, TNR, 1 inch margins) responses to assigned readings. We will use your Journal Entries as the basis for small group discussions, and as direct application of the rhetorical devices learned. These short responses will be submitted via Moodle, and printed and brought to class along with any relevant, supplementary materials. Proper MLA citation must be used in your responses with a complementary works cited page.

Major Inquiry Projects

Over the course of the semester you will be completing five assignments. Three of these assignments will be “Major Assignments” and will respond to a variety of prompts. All Major Assignments must be turned in on the date assigned for credit, and formatted with TNR, 12pt font, double spaced, and one inch margins.

All Major Assignments, and Journal Entries, will be graded on a check system. To give you a sense of the check system I'll be using, please refer to the following descriptors. If you are unsure where you stand in relation to this system it is your responsibility to arrange a time to meet with me privately.

✶ Check: A project with a check generally meets its rhetorical goals in terms of purpose, genre, and writing situation without need for extensive revision. Written comments will elaborate on strengths, weaknesses, and strategies for focused revision.
Check minus: A project with a check minus meets the basic requirements, but would benefit from significant revision and a stronger understanding of rhetorical decision-making. Written comments will elaborate on strengths, weaknesses, and strategies for revision.

Unsatisfactory: A project with a U does not meet basic standards, and requires extensive development and attention. An unsatisfactory submission may be incomplete or inappropriate to the assignment. Such a submission may receive a request to rewrite within a week in order to receive teacher comments.
Portfolio Grade Descriptors for WRIT 101

A
Superior portfolios will demonstrate initiative and rhetorical sophistication that go beyond the requirements. A portfolio at this level is composed of well-edited texts representing different writing situations and genres that consistently show a clear, connected sense of audience, purpose and development. The writer is able to analyze his or her own writing, reflect on it, and revise accordingly. The portfolio takes risks that work.

B
Strong portfolios meet their rhetorical goals in terms of purpose, genre, and writing situation without need for further major revisions of purpose, evidence, audience, or style/mechanics. The writer is able to reflect on his or her own writing and make some choices about revision. The writer takes risks, although they may not all be successful.

C
Consistent portfolios meet the basic requirements, yet the writing would benefit from further revisions of purpose, evidence, audience, or writing style/mechanics (or some combination) and a stronger understanding of rhetorical decision-making involved in different writing situations and genres. The writer composes across tasks at varying levels of success with some superficial revision. The writer has taken some risks in writing and exhibits some style.

D
Weak portfolios do not fully meet the basic evaluative standards. Most texts are brief and underdeveloped. These texts show a composing process that is not yet elaborated or reflective of rhetorical understanding related to composing in different genres and for a range of writing situations. Texts generally require extensive revisions to purpose, development, audience, and/or style and mechanics.

F
Unacceptable portfolios exhibit pervasive problems with purpose, development, audience, or style/mechanics that interfere with meaning and readers’ understanding. Unacceptable portfolios are often incomplete. A portfolio will also earn an F if it does not represent the writer’s original work.
Participation Letter Grade Descriptors for WRIT 101

A
Superior participation shows initiative and excellence in written and verbal work. The student helps to create more effective discussions and workshops through his/her verbal, electronic, and written contributions. Reading and writing assignments are always completed on time and with attention to detail. In workshop or conferences, suggestions to group members are tactful, thorough, specific, and often provide other student writers with a new perspective or insight.

B
Strong participation demonstrates active engagement in written and verbal work. The student plays an active role in the classroom but does not always add new insight to the discussion at hand. Reading and writing assignments are always completed on time and with attention to detail. In workshop or conferences, suggestions to group members are tactful, specific, and helpful.

C
Satisfactory participation demonstrates consistent, satisfactory written and verbal work. Overall, the student is prepared for class, completes assigned readings and writings, and contributes to small group workshops and large class discussions. Reading and writing assignments are completed on time. In workshop or conferences, suggestions to group members are tactful and prompt, but could benefit from more attentive reading and/or specific detail when giving comments.

D
Weak participation demonstrates inconsistent written and verbal work. The student may be late to class, unprepared for class, and may contribute infrequently or unproductively to classroom discussions or small group workshops. Reading and writing assignments are not turned in or are insufficient. In workshops or conferences, suggestions to group members may be missing, disrespectful, or far too brief and general to be of help.

F
Unacceptable participation shows ineffectual written and verbal work. The student may be excessively late to class, regularly unprepared, and not able to contribute to classroom discussions or small group workshops. This student may be disruptive in class. Reading and writing assignments are regularly not turned in or are insufficient. In workshops or conferences, the student has a pattern of missing, being completely unprepared, or being disruptive.