**Instructor: Jason Tougaw |** [jason.tougaw@qc.cuny.edu](mailto:christopher.williams@qc.cuny.edu)

**Class Location: Digital Writing Studio | Kiely Hall 061**

**Class Hours:**

**Office Hours:**

**Office Location:**

**COURSE DESCRIPTION**

The mysteries of memory have inspired centuries of writing. Much of this writing is shaped by the main features of academic writing—inquiry, argument, and style. In this course, you will learn expectations and strategies of academic writing through an exploration of memory. “Memory is essential not only for the continuity of individual identity,” writes Nobel-Prize winner Eric Kandel, “but also for the transmission of culture and for the evolution and continuity of societies over time.” Memory is at the core of personal identity and culture, and yet it is notoriously imprecise and fallible. Contemporary memory research emphasizes the idea that memory is a creative process, recreating the past rather than recording or retrieving it—much like writing. What does it mean that personal identity and the evolution of culture are rooted in memories whose accuracy is so questionable? How do theories of memory by Aristotle and Proust compare to those of twenty-first-century thinkers? How might memory be changing in the digital age? In this course, we will examine debates that address these questions, including writers from psychology, neuroscience, philosophy, literature, history, and sociology.

Academic writing takes many forms. Because memory is the subject of academic inquiry in so many different fields—and across time—it will give us an opportunity to discuss the range of writing you’ll be asked to do in college. A psychologist is likely to use very different conventions from a literary theorist or a historian, for example. Nonetheless, certain key elements of inquiry and argument are common in nearly all disciplines—for example, analyzing evidence or defining key terms. In College Writing I, you will learn and practice a dependable, manageable, and reproducible writing process that allows you to find and develop your own strong ideas and also express them clearly and persuasively. Over the course of the semester, you will read and discuss texts from a number of fields, complete regular informal reading and writing exercises, and write three longer essays in which you make arguments about memory. To do so, you will pay special attention to the practices of close reading and analysis, research, collaboration, and revision. My hope is that you will learn to see writing as a means of **discovery**, a process of continual refinement of ideas and their expression. Rather than approaching writing as an innate talent, we will understand writing as a skill that anyone can learn and improve through hard work.

Catalogue Description

**ENGL 110. College Writing**. 4 hr.; 3 cr. The arts and practices of effective writing and reading in college, especially the use of language to discover ideas. Methods of research and documentation will be taught, along with some introduction to rhetorical purposes and strategies. Students will spend one hour per week conferring with each other or with the instructor about their writing.

This course satisfies the college requirement for College Writing 1 (CW1).

Course Goals

The goal of this course is to teach you to use the conventions of scholarly writing in all of your General Education courses. College writing looks different in different disciplines, and we’ve designed this course to help you meet the variety of challenges you’ll face as a writer at Queens and beyond. To achieve that goal, this course is organized around an interdisciplinary topic—Writing Memory—meaning it is not an “English” class in the usual sense, although there are literary texts among our readings.

We’ll discuss the ways that writers use textual evidence across the curriculum to advance their thinking in conversation with one other. My goal is to teach you how to enter the scholarly community we share by:

* Drafting and revising your work with regularity and seriousness;
* Developing arguable theses in conversation with your peers and with published scholars;
* Supporting your theses with close analysis of the evidence;
* Citing your evidence professionally;
* Conducting independent research.

Required Course Texts

Joe Brainard, *I Remember* (Granary Books)

Ann Raimes and Susan K. Miller-Cochran, *Pocket Keys for Writers* (Cengage Learning)

[For instructors: *Memory in the Twenty-First Century* edited by Groes]

*\**Additional short readings will be available on our class website: **URL here**.

**COURSE POLICIES**

Student Expectations

To receive a passing grade (D or above) in this course, students must at minimum:

* Submit a final draft of the three essays ranging from 4 to 10 pages (size 12 font with standard page margins), each accompanied by at least one formal draft. **Students must submit all three final essays in order to pass the class.**
* Attend and participate in classes and the conference hour.
* Prepare reading and writing exercises as assigned.
* Submit all of your writing assignments via our WordPress/Blackboard site by stated deadlines.

Participation

Since English 110 is first and foremost a writing course, your participation will be measured via the writing completed in class and for homework. Only through producing and revising a significant quantity of writing will you improve the quality of your writing. The writing work you do will form the basis for the discussions and group work that comprise every class. Therefore,

10% of your final course grade will come from your on-time completion of pre-draft blogs, and 10% of your final course grade will come from your completion of in-class writing assignments.

If you will miss classes due to religious observance or QC sport activity, please inform me of the dates during the first week of classes. If you miss class due to medical reasons, you must provide an official doctor’s note at the start of the next class. It is your responsibility to catch yourself up with any learning you miss; I suggest contacting peers and reviewing posted materials as a first step. If you want to further discuss class materials or topics covered, you are welcome to visit me during office hours. Please do not write me requesting that I summarize a missed class for you over email.

The Conference Hour

The last 30 minutes of each class – the conference hour – is dedicated to small group workshops in which you work closely with a designated writing group of your peers on your developing essays. Writing groups will be decided during the first week of class. Each writing group will meet every 4th class. Attending these small group workshops is mandatory. They provide you with invaluable opportunities to give and receive personalized feedback and instruction that can enhance your learning. During conferences, we will often use Ann Raimes’ and Susan K. Miller-Cochran’s *Pocket Keys for Writers* to talk about sentence-level style, usage, and grammar.

Use of Electronic Devices

Writing will be required during every class. For this, you can use either a dedicated writing notebook or an electronic device with word processing software like Microsoft Word. Laptops, tablets, and other similar electronic devices can also be used in class during freewriting or revision activities. You can bring your own devices or use the laptops housed in the Digital Writing Studio. However, personal electronic devices should not be open or in use if not required for the current class activity. **If unsure, ask first before starting to use an electronic device**. Lastly, practice professionalism and do not text during class.

Assignments

You’ll address three questions in three essays over the course of the semester. In the first essay, you’ll make an argument about the practical implications of an influential theory of memory—how understanding this theory might illuminate personal life or cultural practices. In the second essay, you’ll make use a theory of memory as a lens for making an argument about the representation of remembering (or forgetting) in a work of narrative. Your third essay will be a research project that uses scholarly sources to develop an argument the social significance of memory—for example, memory in the digital age, the popularity of memoir, or the impact of collective memory on a political controversy. You will write all of these essays in stages, including in-class writing, homework, blog posts, and experiments with composing with digital tools, with visual communication, and audio recording. If you choose, you could integrate or supplement your essays with these experiments.

**ESSAY 1** *The Practical Implications of a Theory (4-6 pp.)*

Make an argument about the practical implications of an influential theory of memory—how understanding this theory might change individual behavior, cultural institutions, or social policy.

Texts:

Aristotle, “On Memory and Reminiscence”

ASAP Science, [“Can You Remember This?”](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hvu4D1jngCY) (video)

Max Branson, [“The Science of Memory”](https://killerinfographics.com/blog/the-science-of-memory.html) (infographics)

Eric Kandel, *In Search of Memory*, Chapters 8 and 9

Patricia Pisters, “Memory Is No Longer What It Used to Be” (Groes, ed., *Memory in the Twenty-First Century*)

Reader’s Digest, [“The Five Types of Memory and Why They Matter”](https://www.rd.com/health/wellness/memory-types/)

Daniel Schacter, “Building Memories: Encoding and Retrieving the Present and Past” (Chapter 2 of *Searching for Memory*)

Pre-drafts: Blogs #1-4 (see schedule)

**ESSAY 2** *Lens Essay (6-8 pp.)*

Use one or more works of memory research or theory we’ve read as a lens to frame an argument about Joe Brainard’s explorations of memory (or forgetting!) in *I Remember*.

Texts:

ASAP Science: “[Are You More Forgetful than a Fish?”](https://www.youtube.com) (video)

Joe Brainard, *I Remember*

Paul Connerton, “Seven Types of Forgetting”

Toni Morrison, [“The Site of Memory”](https://blogs.umass.edu/brusert/files/2013/03/Morrison_Site-of-Memory.pdf)

Pluralsight, [“How We Forget and Why”](https://www.pluralsight.com/resource-center/infographics/discover-the-science-behind-forgetting-and-conquer-it) (Infographic)

Larrry Squire and John T. Wixted, “Remembering”

Pre-drafts: Blogs #5-7 (see schedule)

**ESSAY 3** *Research Essay (8-10 pp.)*

Drawing on your own research and on any sources we’ve read this semester, make an argument about the social significance of a particular aspect of memory.

Texts:

Maud Casey, [“The Man Who Walked Away”](http://californica.net/2014/08/18/the-man-who-walked-away-a-conversation-with-novelist-maud-casey/)

Suzanne Corkin, “Preface” to *Permanent Present Tense*

Nell Greenfeld-Boyce, [“Study: Drug Can Erase Fearful Memories”](https://www.npr.org/templates/story/story.php?storyId=100754665) (Radio Show)

Maurice Halbwachs, *Collective Memory*, Chapter 1

Maxine Hong Kingston and Michael Krasny, [“Confronting Memories”](https://www.kqed.org/forum/610231000/confronting-memories-with-maxine-hong-kingston) (Radio Show)

David Manier, “Is Memory in the Brain?: Remembering as Social Behavior”

Listening: Radiolab, [“Memory and Forgetting”](https://soundcloud.com/radiolab/memory-and-forgetting) (podcast)

Oliver Sacks, “The Lost Mariner”

Jason Tougaw, “Amnesia and Identity in Contemporary Literature” (Groes, ed., *Memory in the Twenty-First Century*)

Pre-drafts: Blogs #8-13 (see schedule)

All drafts must be submitted as Microsoft Word documents to the appropriate folders on our WordPress/Blackboard site. Use the following protocol to name the files you post:

**[Student Last Name][First Initial]\_E[Essay Number]\_[Assignment Name].doc/x**

For example, if Jane Student were posting her final draft for Essay 1, she would name her file: **StudentJ\_E1\_FinalDraft.docx**.

Evaluation

In English 110, you will learn and practice a reflective, recursive, and collaborative writing process as you develop final drafts of your writing for a public audience. Therefore, your final course grade will be a combination of your final draft grades and your writing process grade:

**FINAL DRAFT GRADES (75%)**

Essay 1: The Practical Implications of a Theory (4–6 pages) 15%

Essay 2: Lens Essay (6—8 pages) 35%

Essay 3: Research Essay (8—10 pages) 35%

**WRITING PROCESS GRADE (20%)**

Pre-draft blogs 10%

In-class writing 10%

Essay Grading

Each final essay for the progression will receive a letter grade from A (or A+) to F. Your final course grade will be computed on the 4.0 scale. Each letter grade signifies the following:

In an “A” essay, the writer has found something insightful and compelling to write about and has taken great care to attend to his or her language, argumentation, and form. The writer clearly introduces the relevant intellectual problem the essay intends to address and offers a complex, insightful and original thesis in response. The writer also deeply analyzes pertinent evidence and carefully develops cogent reasons to support and complicate the thesis. Furthermore, the writer organizes his or her ideas in well-sequenced and logically structured sentences, paragraphs, and sections, using appropriate transitions to guide readers though the argument.

A “B” range essay is one that is ambitious but only partially successful, or one that achieves modest aims well. A “B” essay must contain focused ideas, but these ideas may not be particularly complex, or may not be presented or supported well at every point. It integrates sources efficiently, if not always gracefully. “B” essays come in two basic varieties: the “solid B” and the “striving B.” The solid “B” is a good, competent paper. The striving “B” may excel in certain areas, but it is sufficiently uneven to preclude it from receiving an A.

“C” essays reflect struggle in fulfilling the assignment’s goals. This kind of essay may show a fair amount of work, but it does not come together well enough to be a competent paper. A “C” range essay has significant problems articulating and presenting its central ideas, though it is usually somewhat focused and coherent. Such essays often lack clarity and use source material in inaccurate or simple ways, without significant analysis or insight.

A “D” range essay fails to grapple seriously with either ideas or texts, or fails to address the expectations of the assignment. A “D” essay distinguishes itself from a failing essay by showing moments of promise, such as emerging, though not sufficiently developed or articulated ideas.

“D” essays do not use sources well, though there may some effort to do so.

An “F” essay does not grapple with either ideas or texts. It is often unfocused or incoherent, or may be a competently written essay that does not address the expectations of the assignment.

Late and Missed Assignments, Drafts, and Final Essays

Submitting work late and failing to submit work at all make it much harder for you to do well on your essays since you miss the opportunity to receive timely feedback that can guide your revisions.

* Late homework exercises and formal drafts will not receive written feedback. However, you are always welcome to come visit me in office hours to discuss your submissions.
* For late final drafts, your draft grade will be lowered by 1/3 (e.g. from a B- to a C+) beginning the minute after the deadline. The grade will continue to go down by a third of a letter grade every 24 hours until the essay is submitted. Final drafts will not be accepted if more than 6 days late.
* All work must be submitted via WordPress/Blackboard by the deadline in order to be considered “on time.” (If, for some reason, you cannot submit your work to WordPress/Blackboard, email me your work before the deadline with a brief explanation of the issue you encountered.)
* I do not typically give extensions for problems such as computer crashes, conflicts with other course assignments or extracurricular activities, oversleeping or other personal difficulties. I strongly advise you to keep backups of your works-in-progress.

Keep in mind that **you must submit all graded assignments in order to pass the class.**

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

College Writing will provide you with strategies for working ethically and accurately with the texts you engage. We will discuss source use practices that prevent plagiarism, a serious academic offense that runs counter to our academic community’s core values of honesty and respect for others. According to the CUNY Policy on Academic Integrity (<http://web.cuny.edu/academics/info-central/policies/academic-integrity.pdf>):

Plagiarism is the act of presenting another person’s ideas, research or writings as your own. The following are some examples of plagiarism, but by no means is it an exhaustive list:

* + Copying another person’s actual words without the use of quotation marks and footnotes attributing the words to their source.
  + Presenting another person’s ideas or theories in your own words without acknowledging the source.
  + Using information that is not common knowledge without acknowledging the source.
  + Failing to acknowledge collaborators on homework and laboratory assignments.

Internet plagiarism includes submitting downloaded term papers or parts of term papers, paraphrasing or copying information from the internet without citing the source, and “cutting & pasting” from various sources without proper attribution.

Web sites and businesses set up to sell papers to students often claim they are merely offering “information” or “research” to students and that this service is acceptable and allowed throughout academia. **This is absolutely untrue.** If you buy and submit “research,” drafts, summaries, abstracts, or final versions of a paper, you are committing plagiarism and are subject to stringent disciplinary action.

**Final drafts that contain plagiarism will receive a zero, may result in failure of the course, and the case will be reported to Queens College.**

SPECIAL ACCOMMODATION

If you have or develop any condition that might require accommodation in this class—for example, a medical condition—you should immediately contact the Office of Special Services (OSS) in 171 Kiely Hall at 718-997-5870. OSS will ensure you receive any additional support needed to fully participate in and succeed at this course (and QC). You are welcome to inform me if you are comfortable doing so.

CAMPUS WRITING RESOURCES

If you need additional help (beyond my office hours) with your writing, you are welcome and encouraged to utilize any of the following on-campus writing resources:

* *The Writing Center*in Kiely Hall 229 (phone: 718-997-5676) provides free writing support services to all enrolled Queens College students.
* *The Language Lab*, a service offered by the Writing Center, provides one-on-one tutoring for multilingual/ESL/ELL students enrolled in English 110 and 130. Email: languagelab@qc.cuny.edu
* *The Tutoring Center* in Kiely Hall 127 (phone: 718-997-5677) provides free tutoring to students enrolled in many courses offered at QC.

**CALENDAR**

**Week 1, Day 1**

Introductions

In-Class: Gordon Harvey’s “Elements of the Academic Essay”; Video: Eric Kandel and Joseph LeDoux, [“How Do Our Brains Remember?”](http://blogs.scientificamerican.com/observations/how-do-our-brains-remember-video/); Video: ASAP Science, [“Can You Remember This?”](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hvu4D1jngCY)

**Week 1, Day 2**

Reading: Kandel, *In Search of Memory*, Chapters 8 and 9

Reader’s Digest, [“The Five Types of Memory and Why They Matter”](https://www.rd.com/health/wellness/memory-types/)

Blog 1: Discuss one of Kandel’s central questions about memory.

In-Class: What’s an “arguable thesis”?

**Week 2, Day 1**

Reading: Schacter, “Building Memories”; Bunn, “How to Read Like a Writer”

In-Class: Harvey’s Elements in our class readings

Blog 2: Reflect on an interesting writing technique in Schacter or Kandel (or both)

**Week 2, Day 2**

Aristotle, “Memory and Reminiscence”; Walk, “Motivating Moves”

Writing: Blog 2: Identify “motivating moves” in two of our readings

In-Class: Compare the relationship between thesis and evidence in Schacter and Aristotle; “Motivating Moves”

**Week 3, Day 1**

Reading: Pisters, “Memory Is No Longer What It Used to Be”; three grading rubrics; two sample essays

Blog 3: Write about a connection between one of our theoretical readings and some aspect of daily life, your experience, or culture.

In-Class: Make a diagram to represent a concept from our reading.

**Week 3, Day 2**

Writing: **Draft of Essay #1 Due**

Writing: Letters to student writers; Blog 3: Your plans for revising Essay #1

In-Class: Draft workshops

**Week 4, Day 1**

Blog 4: Reflect on your plans for revising Essay #1.

In-Class: Draft workshops

**Week 4, Day 2**

Reading: Morrison, “The Site of Memory”

Writing: **Revision of Essay #1 Due**

In-Class: Workshop on Strong Paragraphs and Progressive Structure

**Week 5, Day 1**

Reading: Brainard, *I Remember*

Writing: Blog 5: Compose your own “I Remember” list.

In-Class: Analyzing narrative

**Week 5, Day 2**

Reading: Brainard, *I Remember*

**Week 6, Day 1**

Reading: Brainard, *I Remember*; Larrry Squire and John T. Wixted, “Remembering”

In-Class: Gaipa’s “8 Strategies for Engaging Secondary Sources”; diagramming the ballroom for a conference on memory

**Week 6, Day 2**

Reading: Reading: Paul Connerton, “Seven Types of Forgetting”; Pluralsight, [“How We Forget and Why”](https://www.pluralsight.com/resource-center/infographics/discover-the-science-behind-forgetting-and-conquer-it) (Infographic); Rossenwasser, “Linking Evidence to Claims”

Blog 6: What have you learned so far? And how do you want to develop as a writer?

In-Class: Workshop on Using Sources

**Week 7, Day 1**

Writing: **Draft of Essay #2 due**

In-Class: Draft worknops

**Week 7, Day 2**

In-Class: Draft workshops

Reading: Sacks, “The Lost Mariner”

Blog 7: What are your plans for revising Essay #2?

**Week 8, Day 1**

Listening: Maxine Hong Kingston and Michael Krasny, [“Confronting Memories”](https://www.kqed.org/forum/610231000/confronting-memories-with-maxine-hong-kingston) (Radio Show); Nell Greenfeld-Boyce, [“Study: Drug Can Erase Fearful Memories”](https://www.npr.org/templates/story/story.php?storyId=100754665) (Radio Show)

Reading: National Institute for the Clinical Application of Behavioral Medicine, [“How Trauma Can Impact Four Types of Memory”](https://www.nicabm.com/trauma-how-trauma-can-impact-4-types-of-memory-infographic/) (infographics); “Sources and Stance” (handout)

In-Class: Workshop on Sources and Stance

**Week 8, Day 2**

Listening: Radiolab, [“Memory and Forgetting”](https://soundcloud.com/radiolab/memory-and-forgetting) (podcast)

Blog 8: Make an audio or video recording of an introduction and reflection on ideas about memory raised by one or more of the writers we’ve read. (If you want, your recording can be a conversation or interview.)

In-Class: Listening party and workshop on audio and video recordings.

**Week 9, Day 1**

Reading: Halbwachs, *Collective Memory*, Chapter 1

Writing: Blog 7: Identify the sociocultural contexts or affective communities that shape one of your memories. Quote one of the readings for today at least once.

In-class: Workshop on Orienting and Stance

**Week 9, Day 2**

Casey, [“The Man Who Walked Away”](http://californica.net/2014/08/18/the-man-who-walked-away-a-conversation-with-novelist-maud-casey/); Tougaw, “Amnesia and Identity in Contemporary Literature”; two sample research essays by students

Writing: Blog 9: Reflect on how one of our readings can help you interpret Brainard’s *I Remember*.

**Revision of Essay 2 due**

**Week 10, Day 1**

Library Visit: Research Workshop

Blog 10: What sources have you found? What do you still need?

**Week 10, Day 2**

Reading: Corkin, “Preface” to *Permanent Present Tense*;

In-Class: Workshop on sources and structure; diagram the structure of your draft

**Week 11, Day 1**

Jason Tougaw, “Aplysia californica”

In-class: Workshop on style

Blog 11: Write a fictional dialogue between Corkin and another writer on memory.

**Week 11, Day 2**

Reading: Heather Yeung, “Remembering and Forgetting Art”

In-Class: Workshop on writing analytical narratives

**Week 12, Day 1**

Reading: Graff, “Starting with What Others Say”; Gaipa, “8 Strategies for Engaging Secondary Sources” (again

Blog 12: Compose your own ballroom diagram—using Gaipa’s technique

Writing: Annotated bibliography workshop

**Week 12, Day 2**

Reading: Booth, et al., “Acknowlegments and Responses”

In-Class: Acknowledgments Workshop

**Week 13, Day 1**

In-Class: Workshop on structure, paragraphs, and sub-sections

**Week 13, Day 2**

**Drafts of Essay #3 due**

In-Class: Draft workshop

Writing: Letters to student writers

Blog 13: Describe your plans for revision

**Week 14, Day 1**

In-class: Draft workshop

Blog 14: How has your writing developed over the course of the semester? What aspects of it do you want to work on in your College Writing 2 course?

**Week 14, Day 2**

Screening: Film (instructor’s choice, possibly *Eternal Sunshine for the Spotless Mind*, [*Alive Inside*](http://www.aliveinside.us/#land), *Memento*, *Moonlight*, *2046*, or *Blade Runner*

**Revision of Essay 3 due**