**Instructor: Christopher John Williams |** [**christopher.williams@qc.cuny.edu**](mailto:christopher.williams@qc.cuny.edu)

**Class Location: Powdermaker Hall Room 351**

**Class Hours: Tuesday & Thursday 1:40 p.m. – 3:30 p.m.**

**Office Hours: Tuesdays 12:00 p.m. – 1:00 p.m.| Klapper 635**

*“Writing is a way to end up thinking something*

*you couldn’t have started out thinking.”*

*Peter Elbow*

\* \* \*

**course description**

In this course, you will learn the expectations and strategies of academic writing by thinking and writing about how we use and are affected by language. How and why we use languages in the ways that we do – or don’t – has been and remains an important topic of research in many academic fields. Psychologists, sociologists, linguistics, anthropologists, philosophers and more have long investigated the relationships between our languages and our identities. It’s also no surprise that our relationships to language are also explored in popular culture. For example, the successful 2016 sci-fi film *Arrival* is premised on the Sapir–Whorf hypothesis, which suggests that the language you use influences how you think! This semester, you will learn and practice academic writing by exploring some of these questions about language and literacy. To do so, you will carefully consider not only relevant academic theories about language and literacy but also reflect deeply on your own literacies and experiences with language.

It might be helpful to think of academic writing as another language, one that is initially challenging to many college freshmen. However, your ability to write and understand academic writing is crucial to participating in the many conversations that exist in the intellectual communities at QC and beyond. Therefore, 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 analyze topics related to language and literacy. 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.

Learning Objectives

In learning to compose academic arguments over the duration of this course, students will:

1. Produce writing that **responds** appropriately to a **variety of rhetorical situations** with a particular focus on academic argumentation.
2. Learn reading strategies to **summarize, synthesize, analyze, and critique other people’s arguments and ideas fairly**.
3. Learn **research practices** that will help strengthen their writing and thinking.
4. **Produce writing that shows how writers may navigate the diverse processes of composing** including revision and collaboration.
5. Produce writing that strategically employs **appropriate language conventions** in different writing situations.
6. **Take ownership of their work** and gain an understanding oftheir own voice, style, and strengths.
7. Utilize authoritative theories about language and literacy in their own analytical projects.

REQUIRED COURSE TEXTS

The required textbook is *The Little Seagull Handbook, 3rd Edition* by Michal Brody, Richard Bullock and Francine Weinberg. To sign up for InQuizitive, the online quiz program that is offered with *The Little Seagull Handbook, 3rd Edition*, follow the following steps:

a) log onto <https://digital.wwnorton.com/littleseagull3>

b) click on "InQuizitive for Writers"

c) enter this Student Set ID number: TBA

The syllabus, course description, requirements, other readings, assignments, and links to resources are accessible online via Blackboard

**COURSE POLICIES**

COURSE 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 (60%)**

Essay 1: Critical Reflection (1500+ words) 15%

Essay 2: Lens Analysis (1700+ words) 20%

Essay 3: Researched Argument (1900+ words) 25%

**WRITING PROCESS GRADE (40%)**

Final Portfolio with Reflective Letter (1500+ words) 15%

Homework (HW) 10%

In-class writing (ICW) 10%

In-class participation (ICP) 5%

STUDENT EXPECTATIONS

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

* Submit final drafts of the three essays by their deadlines. **NB** **Failure to submit final drafts of all three essays automatically results in failure of the course.**
* Submit a final portfolio with reflective letter.
* Complete reading and writing homework assignments.
* Complete in-class writing exercises when assigned.
* Attend and participate in 95% of classes.
* Submit all writing assignments via Blackboard by stated deadlines.

ESSAY Assignments

The course is organized primarily around three graded essay assignments. For each essay assignment, you will submit and receive feedback on a zero draft and formal draft before you submit the final draft for a letter grade.

**Essay 1: Critical Reflection**

Write an essay critically reflecting on how and why the languages or dialects you use (or don’t use) influence – or are influenced by – your sense of identity in the communities to which you belong. You will draw on ideas from Tan, Anzaldúa, or Chin to help you analyze your personal experience(s) and complicate your thinking about language and identity.

**Essay 2: Lens Analysis**

Using ideas from “Sponsors of Literacy,” analyze the literacy experiences of Sedaris, Douglass, or Díaz (or one of the authors we’ve read for Essay 1) along with a relevant, personal experience in which you gained or attempted to gain a specific type of literacy. You must also consider how your argument complicates or extends ideas from “Sponsors of Literacy.”

**Essay 3:** **Researched Argument**

Option 1: Conduct research in order to develop an analytical argument about an incident involving language or literacy that has been reported in the news. Your essay must:

1. research facts and contextual information about the incident
2. analyze this evidence using relevant, expert theories
3. consider and respond to existing arguments about the incident
4. acknowledge and address at least one significant counterargument

Option 2: Analyze and discuss the role of language or literacy in a contemporary feature film of your own choosing. What real-world issues with language or literacy does the film seem to explore? What is the film saying about language or literacy? How does this message reflect and resist expert theories and credible research about language or literacy?

**Final Portfolio**

At the end of the semester, you will compile all your zero, formal and final drafts into a single portfolio, which will be accompanied by a reflective letter on your writing process and development. You will receive more details on this assignment later in the semester.

ESSAY GRADING

Each final essay 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 or question 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 sections, paragraphs, and sentences, 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 minimum expectations of the assignment.

LATE AND MISSED ESSAY DRAFTS

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 drafts will receive minimal written feedback. However, you can come visit me in office hours to discuss your submissions further. **Zero and formal drafts more then 48 hours late will not be accepted.** **Final drafts more than a week late will not be accepted.**
* For late final drafts, your draft grade will be lowered by 1/3 (e.g. from a C+ 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.
* All work must be submitted via Blackboard by stated deadlines in order to be considered “on time.” It is your responsibility to double-check Blackboard after you submit assignments to confirm that your work has indeed been submitted. “I really thought I had submitted it!” will never be accepted as an excuse.
* 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 and to start composing drafts early and to revise them frequently.

HOMEWORK (HW)

You will also complete homework exercises that will help prepare you to submit strong final drafts. I will read all homework exercises submitted on time and at times will provide brief written feedback. **You receive one point for fully completing a homework exercise and zero points for incomplete or late submissions.** You are expected to complete all homework exercises, as they help you do the difficult work required to develop strong formal and final drafts.

SUBMITTING DRAFTS AND HOMEWORK

All assignments and homework, whether due on class days or not, must be submitted as Microsoft Word documents to the appropriate folders in Blackboard. 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 Junie Student were posting her final draft for Essay 1, she would name her file: **StudentJ\_E1\_FinalDraft.docx**. If I were posting my response to Exercise 2.1 (i.e. the first homework exercise towards Essay 2), I would name my file: W**illiamsC\_E2\_Exercise2.1.doc**

Unless I specify other guidelines, all writing you submit should:

* be double-spaced, using a 12-point common font on a page with one-inch margins
* include a header on the first page *only.* This should include your name, the course title, my name, the essay/exercise number, a word count (**only** **if an essay draft**) and the date
* include a title on the first page, if a draft of an essay
* have page numbers, *except* on the first page
* be right-ragged (not justified)
* be stapled (if required to be submitted in hardcopy)
* follow the MLA format for citations
* include a self-evaluation of your work at the end on a separate page. (NB **This is only required for essay drafts.**)

See the example of the first page of an essay draft submission below.

Junie Student

College Writing I

Professor Williams

Exercise 1.1

Word Count: 1,625

March 26, 2019

Original Essay Title

This is the beginning of an essay or response that would begin in this space. This is the second sentence…

Incorrectly formatted or named homework submissions will receive zero points and receive no feedback.

IN-CLASS WRITING (ICW)

To develop as a writer, one must write frequently and reflectively. Therefore, you will complete in-class writing exercises in every class. ICW exercises will include low-stakes free-writing, reflective writing on your writing process and progress, revision of previous work, and peer feedback on drafts. **You receive one point for fully completing an ICW exercise and zero points for incomplete or late submissions.** ICW exercises cannot be made up and often will be assigned at the start of each class session; in other words, you must be present in class to complete an ICW exercise.

PARTICIPATION

More so than with most courses, class participation is critical to passing this course. Participation will be assessed according to the quality of your contributions to discussions and exercises, your preparation for daily class meetings, and the feedback you give in writing workshops and writing groups (written and verbal). Also, I will be considering factors such as attendance and punctuality. Therefore, lateness and repeated absences will make a high grade impossible.

I grade participation according to the following scale:

**A=daily, thoughtful participation in class discussion and groupwork**

**B=Frequent to occasional participation in class discussion and groupwork**

**C=Participation only when called on or prompted, some attendance problems**

**D=Refusal to participate even when called on, attendance problems**

**F=Consistent lack of preparation for class, severe attendance problems**

For example, an “A” participator comes to class almost all the time, has completed the required reading, volunteers to respond a few times each class, stays alert throughout class and the conference hour, and engages productively with his or her peers during group exercises. A “B” participator is partially engaged and alert, but misses more classes, talks less often, and shows less dedication.

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. 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. If you plan or expect to miss multiple classes this semester, then you should consider taking another section of English 110 since you will risk doing poorly in or failing this course.

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 Tuesday or Thursday. 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.

USING ELECTRONIC DEVICES

Writing will be required during every class. For this, you can use either a dedicated writing notebook or your own electronic device with word processing software like Microsoft Word. Laptops, tablets, and other similar electronic devices will be frequently used in class during freewriting, revision, and research activities. 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.

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.

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 tutoring 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.

**Course Readings**

Essay 1: Critical Reflection

“Mother Tongue” by Amy Tan

“How to Tame a Wild Tongue” by Gloria Anzaldúa

“How I Learned to Claim Space as a Multilingual Author” by YZ Chin

Essay 2: Lens Analysis

“Sponsors of Literacy” by Deborah Brandt

“MFA vs POC” by Junot Díaz

“Me Talk Pretty One Day” by David Sedaris

Chapter 7 of *The Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass* by Frederick Douglass

Essay 3: Researched Argument

“On Language; Dialects” by Margalit Fox

Readings on Writing

“How to Read Like a Writer” by Mark Bunn

“Motivating Your Argument” by Williams and Colomb

“Breaking into the Conversation” by Mark Gaipa

“Linking Evidence and Claims” by David Rossenwasser et al.

“Starting with What Others are Saying” by Gerald Graff et el.

“Acknowledgments and Responses” by Wayne Booth et al.

Handouts

Summarizing Sources Effective Introductions

Quoting and Paraphrasing Developing Strong Claims

Rhetorical Situation Transitions

Ethos, Logos, Pathos Section Titles and Signposting

Argumentation Lens Analysis

Effective Theses Effective Paragraphing

Functions of Sources Strong Research Questions

Developing and Structuring Your Argument Issues in the News

**Course Calendar**

*Date Reading due Writing due*

**ESSAY 1: CRITICAL REFLECTION**

**How to Succeed in this Course**

T 1/29 Syllabus None

*No Groups*

**How to Read Closely, Carefully and Critically I**

Th 1/31 “Mother Tongue” Exercise 1.1

*All Groups* “How to Read Like a Writer”

**How to Identify Intellectual Problems and Ask Intellectual Questions I**

T 2/5 “How to Tame a Wild Tongue” Exercise 1.2

*Group A*

**How to Use Sources I: Summarizing**

Th 2/7 “How I Learned to Claim Space…” Exercise 1.3

*Group B* Summarizing Sources Handout

T 2/12 \*\*\* Not a class day \*\*\*

**How to Analyze and Argue I**

Th 2/14 Rhetorical Situation Handout **Zero Draft Essay 1**

*Group C* Ethos, Logos, Pathos Handout

**How to Provide and Implement Feedback I**

T 2/19 Developing Strong Claims Handout None

**How to Use Sources II: Paraphrasing and Quoting**

Th 2/21 Paraphrasing and Quoting Handout Exercise 1.4

*Group D* Summarizing Sources Handout

**Submission Due**

F 2/22 \*\*\* Not a class day **\*\*\* Formal Draft Essay 1**

**How to Analyze and Argue II**

T 2/26 Argumentation Handout None

*Group A*Model Essay

**How to Introduce a Problem and a Thesis I**

Th 2/28 Effective Theses Handout Exercise 1.5

*Group B*  “Motivating Your Argument”

**Submission Due**

Sa 3/2 \*\*\* Not a class day \*\*\* **Final Draft Essay 1**

*Date Reading due Writing due*

**ESSAY 2: LENS ANALYSIS**

**How to Read Closely, Carefully and Critically II**

T 3/5 “Literacy Sponsors” None

*Group C*

**How to Conduct Lens Analysis**

Th 3/7 “Literacy Sponsors” Exercise 2.1

*Group D* Lens Analysis Handout

**How to Engage Multiple Viewpoints I**

T 3/12 “Me Talk Pretty One Day,” “MFA vs POC,” Exercise 2.2

*Group A* *The Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass*

**How to Engage Multiple Viewpoints II**

Th 3/14 “Breaking into the Conversation” Exercise 2.3

*Group B*

**How to Analyze and Argue III**

T 3/19 “Linking Evidence and Claims” **Zero Draft Essay 2**

*Group C* Lens Analysis Handout

**How to Analyze and Argue IV**

Th 3/21 Developing Strong Claims Handout None

*Group D* “Linking Evidence and Claims”

**How to Develop and Structure Argument I**

T 3/26 Model Essay Exercise 2.4

*Group A* Effective Paragraphing Handout

**How to Provide and Implement Feedback II**

Th 3/28 Effective Paragraphing Handout **Formal Draft Essay 2**

*Group B*

**Developmental Workshop**

T 4/2 Lens Analysis Handout None

*Group C* Model Essay

**ESSAY 3: RESEARCHED ARGUMENT**

**How to Identify Intellectual Problems and Ask Intellectual Questions II**

Th 4/4 “On Language; Dialects” Exercise 3.1

*Group D*

**Submission Due**

Sa 4/6 \*\*\* Not a class day \*\*\* **Final Draft Essay 2**

*Date Reading due Writing due*

**How to Expand the Conversation I**

T 4/9 Strong Research Questions Handout Exercise 3.2

*Group A*  Issues in the News Handout

**How to Research Sources (Library Workshop in Rosenthal Library)**

Th 4/11 Model Student Introductions Handout None

*All Groups* Functions of Sources Handout

**How to Expand the Conversation II**

T 4/16 “Breaking into the Conversation” Exercise 3.3

*Group B* Functions of Sources Handout

**How to Craft Project Proposals**

Th 4/18 “Motivating Your Argument” **Zero Draft Essay 3**

*Group C* Strong Research Questions Handout

**\*\*\* SPRING BREAK \*\*\***

**How to Introduce a Problem and a Thesis II**

T 4/30 Effective Introductions Handout None

*Group D* “Starting with What Others are Saying”

**How to Develop and Structure Argument II**

Th 5/2 “Acknowledgments and Responses” **Formal Draft Essay 3**

*Group A* Developing and Structuring Your Argument Handout

**How to Analyze and Argue IV**

T 5/7 “Linking Evidence and Claims” None

*Group B* Lens Analysis Handout

**How to Provide and Implement Feedback II I**

Th 5/9 Effective Paragraphing Handout Exercise 3.4

*Group C* Developing and Structuring Your Argument Handout

**Submission Due**

Fr 5/10 \*\*\* Not a class day \*\*\* **Final Draft Essay 3**

**Developmental Workshop**

T 5/14 Transitions Handout None

*Group D* Section Titles and Signposting Handout

**Submission Due**

T 5/21 \*\*\* Not a class day \*\*\* **Final Portfolio**