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

Class Sessions: **Mondays & Wednesdays 1:40pm – 3:30pm | Kiely 061**

Office Hours: **Mondays 12:00 pm – 1:00 pm and by appointment| Klapper 635**

**Blackboard**: login | [tutorial](http://www.cuny.edu/about/administration/offices/cis/core-functions/cuny-blackboard/user-guides/student/)

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

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

*Peter Elbow*

\* \* \*

**COURSE DESCRIPTION aka “What this Course is All About”**

**About the course:** In this course, you will learn and practice strategies for composing academic essays by writing about monsters! English 110 (College Writing 1) fulfills the English Composition 1 Pathways requirement and is the first of four required writing classes you will take in Queens College. Therefore, I do not hope or expect that you will become a master writer only after a single semester. Instead, the goal of the course is to help you *improve* as a writer by better understanding how you write well and by experimenting with new writing strategies that can serve you throughout college and beyond.

**Tip**: No matter how confident or anxious you might be about writing essays, fully commit to the learning process of the class to maximize your own growth and development.

**About the topic:** “Hic sunt dracones. Here be dragons.” On ancient maps, one would often find this warning. Dragons were thought to exist at the edge of the known world, where they thrived in the vast and often terrifying unknown. Despite great advances in science and technology, such monsters of long ago persist in modern entertainment: zombies continue to lumber across dystopian landscapes; King Kong and Godzilla still run rampant through New York and Tokyo; vampires and werewolves remain undetectable among us. Monsters can even be found in our news and politics since it seems as if anything and anyone can be “monsterized” or portrayed as a monster: immigrants, foreigners, homosexuals, Muslims, atheists, welfare programs, the poor, the rich, the list goes on. But, why? Why, in our current age of the Internet and seemingly unlimited access to information, do monsters still exist? To terrify us? To titillate us? To teach us? Where do monsters come from? What, if anything at all, do monsters represent? These are some of the questions you will explore in order to learn and practice academic writing this semester.

**About the semester’s work:** Academic writing itself might seem monstrous to many college students, but it is crucial to participating in the many conversations that exist in our intellectual communities at QC and beyond. Therefore, in English 110 (College Writing 1), you will learn and practice a dependable, manageable, and reproducible writing *process* that allows you to find and develop your own strong ideas and 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, research and vet peer-reviewed sources in QC Libraries, and write three formal essays in which you analyze the many monsters all around us. In doing so, you will pay special attention to 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 aka “What You’ll Learn to Do (and Do to Learn)”**

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 monsters** in their own analytical projects.

**Student Expectations aka “What to Know and Do to Pass the Course”**

To maximize your chances of receiving a passing grade (i.e. D or higher) in this course, you should:

* Submit a final draft of the three essays ranging from 1400 to 2100 words by stated deadlines. **Per the policy of the First Year Writing program, students who do not complete these three final drafts cannot earn a passing grade in the course.**
* Consistently attend and actively participate in classes on Mondays and Wednesdays.

**Tip**: If you know in advance of the start of the semester that you will be unable to or do not plan to attend class regularly, strongly consider switching to a different section of English 110. It will be virtually impossible to earn a good grade in my course without consistent attendance and active participation.

* Consistently attend and actively participate in your assigned conference hour session throughout the semester.
* Complete process work (i.e. all the work you must complete in the process of creating each essay) as assigned and by stated deadlines.
* Submit all writing assignments via Blackboard as assigned and by stated deadlines.
* Contact me as soon as possible – and within working hours – if you believe you will be unable to meet a deadline (for whatever reason) and need to request an extension. (See the last page of this syllabus for instructions how to use your four no-questions-asked late passes.)

**Tip**: In general, students who consistently participate in class, diligently complete and submit assignments on time, and regularly use my office hours and the Writing Center to get additional help with their work gain the most from the course and earn B range grades or higher by the semester’s end.

**Required Course Texts aka “The Stuff You’ll Read”**

No textbook is required for this course. The syllabus, course calendar, essay readings, assignments, and links to resources are accessible online via Blackboard.

**Technology Requirements aka “The Tech You’ll Need”**

To successfully complete this course, you will need:

1. access (outside of class times) to a laptop or desktop computer that is connected to high-speed Internet. If you need to loan a laptop from QC for the duration of the semester, email [KeepLearning@qc.cuny.edu](mailto:KeepLearning@qc.cuny.edu) to request one.
2. Microsoft Word installed on the laptop or desktop computer you will be using for this class, because all your work must be submitted as Word documents. Queens College provides Microsoft Office 365 (which includes Microsoft Word) to students free of charge. It can be installed on your personal computer(s), smart phones, and also accessed and used online. Click [here for instructions](https://support.qc.cuny.edu/support/solutions/articles/15000019459-how-to-download-office-365-as-a-student) how to access and download your free copy.

If technological questions and issues arise, please contact the QC IT Department as soon as possible by emailing [helpdesk@qc.cuny.edu](mailto:helpdesk@qc.cuny.edu).

**Course Grading aka “How the Grade is Made”**

In English 110, you will learn and practice a reflective, recursive, and collaborative writing process that will help you develop strong 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: Rhetorical Analysis (1400 – 1600 words) 15%

Essay 2: Lens Analysis (1600 – 1800 words) 20%

Essay 3: Researched Argument (1800 – 2100 words) 25%

**WRITING PROCESS GRADE (40%)**

Process Work 25%

Peer Review & Evaluation 15%

**Essay Assignments aka “The Required Essays”**

The class is primarily organized around the three following essay assignments.

*Essay 1: Rhetorical Analysis (1400 – 1600 words, plus 1 illustration)*

**Why does Jeffrey Jerome Cohen make certain writing choices in his essay “Monster Culture (Seven Theses)”? How might his writing choices help us understand the intended or target audience for his essay? What do they reveal about his stance (i.e. the role he takes with respect to his reading audience and his essay topic)?**

In this essay, you will analyze specific writing choices Jeffrey Jerome Cohen makes in “Monster Culture (Seven Theses)” as he presents and develops his argument about monsters for his reading audience. Your goal is to make a clear and persuasive argument about Cohen’s intended or target audience for his essay and to explain his stance or position in the larger conversation within which he is participating. A strong essay will identify and carefully analyze three to four writing patterns or excerpts from Cohen’s essay. Your essay must also include one carefully constructed diagram or carefully chosen image or photograph that helps communicate your ideas and insights to your readers.

*Essay 2: Lens Analysis (1600 – 1800 words, plus 2 illustrations)*

**What explicit and subliminal messages does your selected advertisement communicate to its target audience? How do the writing and visual choices made by the creators of the advertisement help communicate these messages to the target audience? Who is the target audience for your selected advertisement?**

Use ideas from “Monster Culture” by Jeffrey Jerome Cohen and “Masters of Desire” by Jack Solomon to analyze the visual aspects and text in a static visual advertisement of your choosing. Your goal is to make a clear and persuasive argument about 1) what the advertisement is saying to its target audience, and 2) how it creates these messages and communicates them that audience. In addition to a copy of the advertisement you’ve chosen to analyze, you must also incorporate an additional illustration (diagram, photographs, or image) that helps communicate your ideas to your audience.

*Essay 3: Researched Argument (1800 – 2100 words, plus 3 illustrations)*

**What are existing opinions about your selected film? What kinds of scholarly ideas can help you to analyze specific aspects of the film yourself and offer your own scholarly opinion in response?**

Research and use a variety of contextual, theoretical, and argument sources to produce a clear and persuasive argument about the meaning and significance of a single “monstrous” exhibit (i.e. 1 film, or a set of 3 related memes, or a set of 3 related public photographs) of your selection. You should aim to explore a specific interpretive problem evident in your chosen exhibit by 1) carefully analyzing aspects of the exhibit itself, and 2) critically engaging with existing opinions about the film and relevant scholarly theories. To help your audience understand your ideas and be persuaded of your argument about the film, you must also include three illustrations (film stills, diagrams, photographs, or images) in your essay.

You will be guided and receive feedback from me – and your peers – as you write three consecutive drafts of each essay:

* **a zero draft** that helps you to decide on a promising direction for your essay;
* **a formal draft** in which you attempt the analyses required to develop strong ideas; and
* **a final draft** in which you revise your work from earlier drafts into a well-constructed and adequately developed argument for the target reading audience for that essay.

All drafts for each essay assignment will be submitted via Blackboard in a single Microsoft Word document labelled:

**[Student Last Name][First Initial]-Essay[Number].docx**

For example, I would name my document for all my drafts of Essay 2: **WilliamsC-Essay2.docx**. Therefore, my zero draft, formal draft, and final draft will all be submitted in the same Word document.

**Final Draft Grading aka “How to Get that ‘A’!”**

Each final draft 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 (i.e. not obvious to the reading audience) 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 or interpretive problem the essay intends to address and offers a clear and well-developed thesis in response. The writer also deeply analyzes pertinent evidence and sources to develop cogent reasons that 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 uses sources efficiently, but not always in sophisticated ways. “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. The arguments in such essays often lack clarity and the writer uses evidence and sources 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 most of 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 engage or present relevant ideas, evidence, or sources. It is often unfocused or incoherent, or may be a competently written essay that does not address the topic or expectations of the assignment.

**Process Work aka “The Work You’ll Do to Produce Strong(er) Essays”**

Only your final draft of each essay receives a letter grade; however, 25% of your final grade will reflect your commitment to the writing process taught in the course. Process work is composed of pre-draft exercises like in-class writing, homework exercises, zero and formal drafts, and revision work that is assigned throughout the semester. Process work is marked based on the level of completion; your goal should not be to find the “right answer” but instead to provide a complete response (per assignment guidelines) that demonstrates careful and logical thinking.

**Tip**: It is very difficult to submit a strong final draft of an essay without doing your best to complete all the process work for that essay. Therefore, it is virtually impossible to earn a final grade of B or higher if you do not consistently complete – and submit – process work by stated deadlines.

All process work – except for essay drafts – will be submitted via Blackboard in a single Microsoft Word document labelled:

**[Student Last Name][First Initial]-ProcessWork.docx**

For example, I would name my document: **WilliamsC-ProcessWork.docx**. When starting a new assignment, go to a new page in the Word document and write the title of the assignment at the top of the page. For example, when attempting Process Work 2.3, I would go to a new clean page in the Word document in which I complete all assigned Process Work, and write “**Process Work 2.3**” at the top of the page before starting the assignment.

If an exercise is listed as an in-class writing exercise, it means that you will develop your response during the class session. If you have a laptop or electronic tablet in class, you can use it to write your response. However, this is not necessary – you can use pen and paper. The most important thing to note here is that your response must be uploaded to the submission folder in Blackboard by 9pm that night.

**Peer Review and Evaluation aka “Workshopping and Peer Grading”**

You will be required to deeply revise and substantially develop your early essay drafts before submitting a final draft. To do so, you will practice how to seek out and provide feedback in peer review workshops. Each student must carefully read, comment on, and then discuss the peer draft(s) assigned to them. I expect your feedback to develop critically over the course of the semester; attempt to respond with sensitivity, precision, and acuity to everything you read in this class, especially the work of your peers.

Additionally, once during the semester, you will be required to evaluate a peer’s draft using the evaluation rubric provided for that essay. Why? This gives you the chance to practice “reading like a writer” and “responding like a seasoned reader.” The more you can identify and explain the successful writing choices and opportunities for improvement in others’ draft, the better equipped you will be to evaluate and revise your own writing.

**! Formatting Your Submissions !**

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

* be **double-spaced**, using a **12-point common font** (i.e. not a “fun” font like Comic Sans) on a page with **one-inch margins**
* specify the date it was submitted
* include a title on the first page
* have page numbers on each page of the document
* be left-aligned and not justified (i.e. do not set each line to end at the right margin of the page)
* follow the MLA format for citations

**! Regarding 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 – and receive a good grade in the course – since you miss the opportunity to receive (written or video) feedback that will help you effectively revise and develop your writing into strong arguments. “Life happens,” so every student is provided with 3 no-excuse late-submission passes (see the last page of this syllabus) to submit work up to 24 hours after the submission deadline and still receive feedback without penalty; I advise you to save these for later in the semester and to use them for essay drafts.

Take careful note of the following:

* Process work submitted late will not be graded and will not receive feedback. However, you are always welcome to visit me in office hours to discuss your submissions and receive verbal feedback.
* For late final drafts, your draft grade will be lowered by 1/3 (e.g. from a B+ to a B) 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. Therefore, essays submitted a week late receive a failing grade.
* All work must be submitted via Blackboard according to the assignment requirements (e.g. as a Word document, not a PDF) and by stated deadlines in order to be considered “on time.” After submitting an assignment on Blackboard, take a moment to verify that your work has been submitted by checking “My Grades” and the automatic email notification that Blackboard sends every time you submit an assignment. Make sure to keep backups of all your work.
* If an emergency makes it impossible for you to submit your work on time, first consider using one of your no-excuse, late-submission passes if you will be able complete and submit the work within 24 hours after the deadline. If you are facing a genuine emergency (medical or mental health issues; family- or job-related issues, etc.) that makes it unlikely that you will be unable to submit your work within 24 hours after the deadline, email me immediately to explain the situation and to request a short extension. I always grant extensions for genuine emergencies.

**Tip**: Do your very best to start upcoming work early and plan to complete assignments in more than one sitting i.e. not all at once. It is always better to submit incomplete work on time that to submit work late.

**COURSE POLICIES**

**Participation**

One of the primary goals of this class is to help you to engage meaningfully with other scholars at Queens College and beyond. As a full participant in that scholarly community, you should raise questions whenever you have questions in mind and raise doubts whenever you have them, too. We all want to hear what you think, and we want you to listen well when others speak. At the same time, we all must strive to actively participate and contribute in ways that respect the diversity of identities, perspectives, and experiences in our classroom and wider community. You actively participate in each class session when you interact with your learning community (i.e. your peers and me) in respectful and productive ways.

If you will miss classes due to scheduled religious observance or QC sport activity, please email me to inform me the dates during the first week of classes. You are still expected to complete any homework required prior to a missed class. Keep in mind that most in-class work cannot be reproduced or made up, so do your best to always come to class on time. If you miss a class, it is ultimately your responsibility to catch yourself up with the learning that happened. A good start is to fontact peers and review all posted materials. If you want to further discuss class materials or the class lesson, 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 partner or a designated writing group of your peers on your developing essays. During the conference hour, you will also be able to ask specific questions about your work-in-progress and receive individualized feedback. Attending and participating in these small group workshops is **mandatory**. They provide you with invaluable opportunities to give and receive personalized feedback and instruction that can improve your drafts and enhance your learning.

**Communication and Availability**

I am generally on email during the week, Monday through Friday, between the hours of 10:00am EST and 5:00pm EST. I’m also in meetings during those hours, so I may need some hours to get back to you. My policy is to respond to messages within twenty-four business hours. (NB If you email me on a Friday, I will likely not get to it until Monday.) I try to respond quickly, and occasionally I respond more slowly. If you don’t hear from me within forty-eight hours, that means I am truly behind schedule or I missed your emails, so do not hesitate to reach out to me again to let me know.

When you write to me, use it as an opportunity to practice professional email writing, which is a skill that will serve you in college and beyond. Here is [a quick and easy guide](https://sparkmailapp.com/how-to-email-professor-template) to composing a clear, professional email to college professors.

**CUNY Policy on Academic Integrity**

College Writing will provide you with strategies for working ethically and accurately with the texts you engage. In particular, we will discuss source use practices that prevent plagiarism, a serious type of academic offense that runs counter to our academic community’s core values of honesty and respect for others. Academic Dishonesty is prohibited in The City University of New York and is punishable by penalties, including failing grades, suspension, and expulsion as outlined in the CUNY [Policy on Academic Integrity](https://www.cuny.edu/about/administration/offices/legal-affairs/policies-procedures/academic-integrity-policy/). Plagiarism in particular is the act of presenting another person’s ideas, research, or writings as your own. Internet plagiarism includes submitting downloaded papers or parts of 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. Drafts that contain plagiarism or are plagiarized will receive zero points and may result in failure of the course. Please note that as required by CUNY, every case of plagiarism will be reported to Queens College.

**Reasonable Accommodations for Students with Disabilities**

Students with disabilities needing academic accommodation should:

1. register with and provide documentation to the Special Services Office in Frese Hall, Room 111, and
2. bring a letter indicating the need for accommodation and what type.

This should be done during the first week of class. For more information about services available to Queens College students, visit the website or contact the Director of the Special Service Office: Miriam Detres-Hickey, Frese Hall, Room 111, 718-997-5870.

If you encounter any issues accessing or participating in any aspect of this course, please let me know as soon as possible and I will make all effort to ensure that you can participate fully.

**The QC Writing Center**

If you need additional help (beyond my office hours) with your writing, you are welcome and encouraged to use [*The Writing Center*](https://sites.google.com/qc.cuny.edu/qcwritingcenter/home), which provides free writing support services to all enrolled Queens College students.

**Tip**: Students who make the extra effort to use the Writing Center – and office hours – throughout the semester generally improve the most as writers and earn good or strong grades.

**English 115.1 and English 115.2**

I encourage you to sign up for English 115.1 or English 115.2 if you think you would benefit from additional support while taking English 110 this semester. Students who take English 115.1 along with English 110 meet for an additional hour each week with an English 110 instructor and a small group of no more than 10 students. By taking English 115.1, you are more likely to do well in English 110 since you get one-on-one help and specialized instruction to help you complete the work assigned in English 110. English 115.2 provides students with two hours of support each week. This course is intended for students whose home language is not English, who do not feel confident reading and writing in English, and who believe they will need more than one hour of additional help with English 110 each week.

These are the sections of English 115.1 offered this semester:

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Section** | **Code** | **Day** | **Time** | **Instructor** | **Classroom** |
| 01 | 25291 | W | 1:40pm – 2:30pm | Benavidez, Rachael | Online |
| FY01 | 25772 | W | 11:00am – 11:55am | Albracht, Lindsey | Kiely 173 |
| 03 | 25773 | M | 3:30pm – 4:20pm | Williams, Christopher | Kiely 061 |

This is the single section of English 115.2 offered this semester:

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Section** | **Code** | **Day** | **Time** | **Instructor** | **Classroom** |
| 01 | 27064 | M | 1:00pm - 2:50pm | Kim, Se Chong | TBD |

If you are a full-time, in-state student taking 12 or more credits, then there is no additional cost to take English 115.1 or English 115.2. Furthermore, English 115.1 and English 115.2 provide you with 1 and 2 general credits towards graduation, respectively. Please let me know before the end of our first week of class if you want to be enrolled in any of these sections.

**Tip**: If you think you would benefit from taking English 115.1 or 115.2 along with English 110, it is better to sign up now. You can easily drop the class (if you ultimately decide you do not need it).

**COURSE READINGS**

**Topical Readings**

*Essay 1: Rhetorical Analysis*

Monster Culture (Seven Theses)” by Jeffrey Jerome Cohen

*Essay 2: Lens Analysis*

“Monster Culture (Seven Theses)” by Jeffrey Jerome Cohen

“Masters of Desire: The Culture of American Advertising” by Jack Solomon

*Essay 3: Researched Argument*

"Black Monsters/White Corpses: Kanye's Racialized Gender Politics" by Latoya Peterson

"Monster" (music video) by Kanyé West

**Readings on the Craft of Writing**

“How to Read Like a Writer” by Mark Bunn

“Elements of the Academic Essay” by Harvey Gordon

“An introduction to library resources and research strategies for English 110” by the QC

Libraries

**Handouts**

Summarizing Sources

Understanding Analysis

Argumentation

Effective Theses

Lens Analysis

Effective Introductions

Quoting and Paraphrasing

Effective Paragraphing

Identifying Intellectual Problems

Functions of Sources

Structuring Scholarly Arguments

Effective Outlining

Section Titles and Signposting

Developing Strong Claims

**ONE-TIME NO-QUESTIONS-ASKED LATE PASS 1**

This is an official, one-time, no-questions-asked late pass that allows me to submit one written assignment up to 24 hours late without penalty.

**ONE-TIME NO-QUESTIONS-ASKED LATE PASS 2**

This is an official, one-time, no-questions-asked late pass that allows me to submit one written assignment up to 24 hours late without penalty.

**ONE-TIME NO-QUESTIONS-ASKED LATE PASS 3**

This is an official, one-time, no-questions-asked late pass that allows me to submit one written assignment up to 24 hours late without penalty.

**Using Late Passes**

If using a late pass, notify me by email me before the submission deadline for the assignment that you plan to use a late pass. In this email, specify which late pass you are using and the specific assignment you will be using it for e.g. “I will be using my first late pass for the formal draft of Essay 1.” When submitting the assignment, make sure to note that you are using a late pass by writing this under the title for the assignment in your Word document e.g.

Essay 1 Formal Draft

**Late Pass 1 used**

Janai Student

Essay Title