Writing as Exploration

Course Number
WREX-UF 9101 F03

Brightspace course site  https://brightspace.nyu.edu/d2l/home/206968

Fall 2022
Please contact florence.academicsupport@nyu.edu if you have trouble accessing the Brightspace site.

Syllabus last updated on: 08-20-2022

Lecturer Contact Information
Elisa Biagini

Units earned
4

Course Details

- Tuesday and Thursday from 10:30am to 11:45am
- All times are Central European Time (CET). Please note that in Europe, Daylight Saving Time ends Sunday, October 30th 2022 and clocks will be set one hour earlier.
- Location: Rooms will be posted in Albert before your first class.
- COVID-related details: In the interest of protecting the NYU Florence community, we are closely following CDC and local guidance around COVID-19 and adjusting our recommendations and policies accordingly. Your health and well-being are our top priority.

Course Description

This writing course will guide students to find their own voice in responding to the idea of place, (specifically Florence but not only). Place is a defining aspect of who we are that affects how we understand the world and how we communicate that understanding to others. Florence and Tuscany have always provided inspiration for a large number of writers (poets, novelist and travel writers): after reading and discussing their work we will add our
voices to theirs. Assignments, in the form of three essays (3 pages each) and a variety of shorter pieces, will focus on helping the student to find an individual voice and on developing ideas and honing them through revision and drafting. Emphasis will also be placed on the students’ ability to evaluate and critique their own work and that of others. Walking tours of the city and on-site writing exercises will be an important part of the course.

Course Objectives

On completion of this course, students should:

- Have improved their ability to think critically, engage in complex reasoning and express their thoughts clearly through their written work
- To initiate, research and write short pieces of original writing
- To analyze critically their own and other’s work
- To stimulate creativity in an academic environment and become aware of the connections between creativity, structure and discipline

Assessment Components

- Attendance and Participation**: 20%
- Essays (3 page essays): 25%
- Midterm Exam (in-class exam): 10%
- Assignments (approx 1/2 page each): 25%
- Final Portofolio (4 revised assignments): 20%

Failure to submit or fulfill any required course component results in failure of the class.

**NB: Commitment:** A student’s commitment will be evaluated based on active participation, involvement and contribution in the course either remote or in-person. (This may include, but is not limited to, presence at synchronous class sessions, timely submission of predetermined course assignments to the instructor, collaboration with peers in group course work both during class time or independently outside of class time, individual oral or written contributions to synchronous course time through the chat function, in person discussion, or in individual office hours with the instructor. In an asynchronous format this academic engagement may take the form of written contributions to course forums, adding comments to posted work on Google Drive shared docs.)

Assessment Expectations:

- **Grade A:** The student’s work demonstrates an understanding of the subject that goes beyond assigned course readings. The student writes essays/exam questions that are an original synthesis of source materials, demonstrating the ability to evaluate source material critically. Written arguments are clear, well-organized and well-presented; oral
presentations are concise, incisive and supplemented by appropriate visual materials. The student has distinguished himself/herself throughout the course of the semester for his/her contributions to class discussion.

- **Grade B:** The student’s work shows a clear understanding of assigned readings and materials covered in class. The student writes clear, well-organized and well-presented essays/exam questions; oral presentations are concise, incisive and supplemented by appropriate visual materials. The student is prepared in class and asks relevant questions.

- **Grade C:** The student’s work shows a basic understanding of the subject treated in assigned readings and covered in class. However, written and/or oral work is deficient in one or more of the following areas: clarity, organization or content. The student’s work is generally in need of improvement.

- **Grade D:** The student’s work shows occasional understanding of the subject treated in assigned readings and covered in class. Written and/or oral work is deficient in one of more of the follow areas: clarity, organization or content. The student does not participate in class discussion and has not frequented the instructor’s office hours.

- **Grade F:** The student’s work does not demonstrate understanding of the subject treated in assigned readings and covered in class. Written and/or oral work are either insufficient or are not submitted. The student appears unprepared in class and has not frequented the instructor’s office hours.

**Grading Guidelines**

A=94-100
A minus=90-93
B+=87-89
B=84-86
B minus=80-83
C+=77-79
C=74-76
C minus=70-73
D+=67-69
D=65-66
F=below 65

**Attendance Policy**
Studying at Global Academic Centers is an academically intensive and immersive experience, in which students from a wide range of backgrounds exchange ideas in discussion-based seminars. Learning in such an environment depends on the active participation of all students. Since classes typically meet once or twice a week, even a single absence can cause a student to miss a significant portion of a course. To ensure the integrity of this academic experience, class attendance at the centers is expected promptly when class begins. Attendance will be checked at each class meeting. Unexcused absences may be penalized with a two percent deduction on the participation component of the final grade for every week's worth of classes missed. Four unexcused absences in one course may lead to a Fail in that course.

As soon as it becomes clear that you cannot attend a class, you must inform your professor and/or the Academics team by e-mail florence.academicsupport@nyu.edu immediately (i.e. before the start of your class). Absences are only excused if they are due to illness, Moses Center accommodations, religious observance or emergencies. For two or more consecutive days of absences due to health reasons, a doctor's note must be submitted in person or by e-mail to the Academics team.

*Please note that remote attendance will only be considered by the Office of Academic Support if for health reasons you are unable to attend class in person after two consecutive days of absence.*

Regardless of whether an absence is excused or not, it is the student's responsibility to catch up with the work that was missed by getting notes from a classmate or meeting with your faculty member during office hours.

Exams, tests and quizzes, oral presentations, and/or important deadlines that are missed due to illness always require a doctor's note as documentation.

For a detailed explanation of the global attendance policy, see the NYU Florence Attendance Policy Flowchart.

The Global Attendance Policy is posted in the Academic Policies tab in Brightspace, on the NYU Florence Student Portal website, and is posted around campus.

After you have read and reviewed the policies, if there is anything that still needs further clarification or raises a question, please reach out to florence.academicsupport@nyu.edu.

Final exams
Final exams must be taken at their designated times. Should there be a conflict between your final exams, please bring this to the attention of the Academics team. Final exams may not be taken early, and students should not plan to leave the site before the end of the finals period.

Late Submission of Work
Please refer to Academic Policies in Brightspace

Required Text(s)
All readings are available online on the NYU Brightspace course site. Hard copies of some textbooks are available for consultation and semester-long loans in the Villa Ulivi Library.
Please email florence.library@nyu.edu to reserve a copy. To request scans from books on reserve please fill out the Ulivi Library Book Scan Form.

Supplemental Text(s) (not required to purchase)

Additional Required Equipment

One notebook for free-writing, journal entries, note-taking, and writing exercises

Session 1

Sept 1
Introduction to the course.

ASSIGN: Take yourself somewhere new that you have never been to before and write about it. Use your pen as if it were a paintbrush. Notice everything you can about this place, the sights, the sounds, the smells. What it makes you think of. (free genre)

Session 2

Sept 6
Presentation of students’ work and discussion.

READINGS: Tisdale “The first time I saw Florence” + McCarthy from “The stones of Florence”

Sept 8
The gaze of the foreigner: readings’ discussion. About Florence and its history.

ASS: Can your hometown be ‘summed up’ or evoked using an object you could hold in the palm of your hand? (poem)
Session 3

Sept 13
Presentation of students' work and discussion

Sept 15
In class writing exercise REMOTE mode

Session 4

Sept 20
No class- Make up day: Friday 10/14/2022


Sept 22
Readings discussion. In class exercise.

ASS: First draft essay 1 (FREE TOPIC, details in class)

Session 5

Sept 27
Presentation of students’ first drafts and discussion 1
Sept 29

Presentation of students' first drafts and discussion 2

ASS: Is there a word used where you live which doesn’t ‘travel’, which would seem strange or attract blank looks when used or spoken elsewhere? Write a poem using this word as your title

READINGS: Leavitt from “Florence, a delicate case” ch.4+ Benjamin from “The work of art in the age of mechanical reproduction”

Session 6

*DUE: Final version first essay (Oct 4)

Oct 4

Readings’ discussion. Presentation of students' work and discussion.

ASS. Training the eye: choose a place that you particularly like. Then go there 3 times at different hours and write about it.

READINGS: Dante from “The Divine Comedy: Paradise” + Boccaccio “Calandrino goes in search of the magic ellioptrope

Oct 6

Readings' discussion. Presentation of students' work and discussion.

READINGS: E. Bishop “Questions of travel”+ B. Collins “Consolation” +J. Stern “The lonely planet guide of my apartment”

ASS: What does ‘home’ really mean? Is it where you grew up, where you live now, where the people you love are, where you ‘feel at home’, or does it lie ahead, waiting to be discovered? Write about where home is. (free genre)

Session 7
Oct 11
Readings' discussion. Presentation of students' work and discussion.

ASS: ASS: The senses and the city: go to the nearest market and write a poem using all your senses

Oct 13
Presentation of students' work and discussion.

+ Oct 14
9:30 am Meet at La Pietra gate: Stibbert park. About landscape (elaborate on what you think a landscape is –natural, man made etc.- also referring to its various traditional and historical definitions. In the form of a short philosophical reflection)

Session 8

Oct 18
Midterm exam (in class)

Oct 20
Presentation of students' work and discussion.

READING: M. Butor “Travel and writing”

Session 9

Oct 25
Readings' discussion. In class writing exercise
ASS. Giving voice. Look at the “Last Supper” scene of Cenacolo di S. Apollonia and give voice to one of the apostles in the form of a short theatrical monologue

(*Visit Cenacolo Santa Apollonia by yourself or https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=v14yyBWuXP8)

READING: Inturrisi “The last supper, seen six ways”

Oct 27

Presentation of students’ work and discussion.

ASS: Be inspired by Stevens’ poem!

READING: W.Stevens “Thirteen Ways of Looking at a Blackbird”

Session 10

Nov 1

NO CLASS. Site Holiday. Make up, Friday 11/05/2022

Nov 3

Presentation of students’ work and discussion

+Nov 5

930 am: Meet in front of the church of Santa Croce

ASS. Write a short story set in the Church (1 page).

READINGS: Ruskin from “Mornings in Florence”+ Forster from “Room with a view”+ Begley “Florence, then and now”

Session 11
Nov 8
Presentation of students’ work and discussion. Readings’ discussion.

ASS: Response to Orsanmichele (“Visit Orsanmichele by yourself or https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bJeNVfGbQz4). What is spirituality? (free genre)

READING: E. Wharton from “The fullness of life”

Nov 10
Presentation of students’ work and discussion

ASS.: First draft essay 2 (topics TBD)

Session 12

Nov 15
Presentation of students’ first drafts of second essay and discussion 1

Nov 17
Presentation of students’ first drafts of second essay and discussion 2

READINGS: R.W. Lewis “Medici country”+ S. Dunant from “The birth of Venus”

ASS: Identify the very last place in the landscape you think you can write about – a recycling plant, a bus stop, a lake with no name – and write about it (free genre)

Session 13

*DUE: final version second essay (Nov 22)
Nov 22
Readings’ discussion. Presentation of students’ work and discussion

ASS. First draft of essay 3 (topics TBD)

Nov 24
Presentation of students’ first drafts of third essay and discussion 1

Session 14

Nov 29
Presentation of students’ first drafts of third essay and discussion 2

ASS: Free topic poem (in couple!)

Dec 1
Presentation of students’ work and discussion

ASS: Goodbye poem/reflection

Session 15

Dec 6
Presentation of students’ work and discussion

Dec 8
No class: Site holiday
Session 16

+Dec 12

Classes meet according to Tuesday Class Schedule

Individual meetings

+DUE: final version third essay (Dec 13)

Dec 13

Reading day

Dec 15

Final project: Portfolio due (4 revised assignments)

Suggested Co-Curricular Activities

Suggested optional co-curricular activities will be announced in class and/or via email by the professor throughout the semester.

Your Lecturer

Elisa Biagini lives in Florence, Italy, after having taught and studied in the US for several years (Ph.D. Rutgers University). She has published eight poetry collections, most recently Filamenti (Einaudi 2020). Her poems have been translated into many languages, and she has published editions of her poetry in Spain, France and the US (“The guest in the wood”, Chelsea editions, 2013 - “2014 Best Translated Book
Academic Honesty & Plagiarism
As the University's policy on "Academic Integrity for Students at NYU" states: "At NYU, a commitment to excellence, fairness, honesty, and respect within and outside the classroom is essential to maintaining the integrity of our community. By accepting membership in this community, students take responsibility for demonstrating these values in their own conduct and for recognizing and supporting these values in others." Students at Global Academic Centers must follow the University and school policies.

NYU takes plagiarism very seriously; penalties follow and may exceed those set out by your home school. Your lecturer may ask you to sign a declaration of authorship form, and may check your assignments by using TurnItIn or another software designed to detect offenses against academic integrity.

The presentation of another person’s words, ideas, judgment, images, or data as though they were your own, whether intentionally or unintentionally, constitutes an act of plagiarism. It is also an offense to submit work for assignments from two different courses that is substantially the same (be it oral presentations or written work). If there is an overlap of the subject of your assignment with one that you produced for another course (either in the current or any previous semester), you MUST inform your professor.

For guidelines on academic honesty, clarification of the definition of plagiarism, examples of procedures and sanctions, and resources to support proper citation, please see:

NYU Academic Integrity Policies and Guidelines
NYU Library Guides

Inclusivity Policies and Priorities
NYU’s Office of Global Programs and NYU’s global sites are committed to equity, diversity, and inclusion. In order to nurture a more inclusive global university, NYU affirms the value of sharing differing perspectives and encourages open dialogue through a variety of pedagogical approaches. Our goal is to make all students feel included and welcome in all aspects of academic life, including our syllabi, classrooms, and educational activities/spaces.
Attendance Rules on Religious Holidays
Members of any religious group may, without penalty, excuse themselves from classes when required in compliance with their religious obligations. Students who anticipate being absent due to religious observance should notify their lecturer and Office of Academic Support in writing via e-mail one week in advance. If examinations or assignment deadlines are scheduled on the day the student will be absent, the Academics Office will schedule a make-up examination or extend the deadline for assignments. Please note that an absence is only excused for the holiday but not for any days of travel that may come before and/or after the holiday. See also University Calendar Policy on Religious Holidays.

Pronouns and Name Pronunciation (Albert and Zoom)
Students, staff, and faculty have the opportunity to add their pronouns, as well as the pronunciation of their names, into Albert. Students can have this information displayed to faculty, advisors, and administrators in Albert, NYU Brightspace, the NYU Home internal directory, as well as other NYU systems. Students can also opt out of having their pronouns viewed by their instructors, in case they feel more comfortable sharing their pronouns outside of the classroom. For more information on how to change this information for your Albert account, please see the Pronouns and Name Pronunciation website.

Students, staff, and faculty are also encouraged, though not required, to list their pronouns, and update their names in the name display for Zoom. For more information on how to make this change, please see the Personalizing Zoom Display Names website.

Moses Accommodations Statement
Academic accommodations are available for students with documented and registered disabilities. Please contact the Moses Center for Student Accessibility (+1 212-998-4980 or mosescsd@nyu.edu) for further information. Students who are requesting academic accommodations are advised to reach out to the Moses Center as early as possible in the semester for assistance. Accommodations for this course are managed through NYU Florence.

Bias Response
The New York University Bias Response Line provides a mechanism through which members of our community can share or report experiences and concerns of bias, discrimination, or harassing behavior that may occur within our community.

Experienced administrators in the Office of Equal Opportunity (OEO) receive and assess reports, and then help facilitate responses, which may include referral to another University school or unit, or investigation if warranted according to the University’s existing Non-Discrimination and Anti-Harassment Policy.

The Bias Response Line is designed to enable the University to provide an open forum that helps to ensure that our community is equitable and inclusive.

To report an incident, you may do so in one of three ways:

- Online using the Web Form (link)
- Email: bias.response@nyu.edu
● Phone: 212-998-2277
● Local Telephone: 055 5007277