

### **Course Information**

This is a writing course designed to foster habits and practices of written inquiry. To that end, all writing assignments provide students with multiple opportunities to engage in integrative, critical, and original thinking, and the writing process will involve interactive processes of thinking, drafting, and revising in light of instructor feedback and peer-reviewing. Through the close reading and detailed study of different types of essays, students familiarise themselves with a variety of structures and stylistic strategies by which to develop their analytical, critical, and creative skills. By the end of the course, they will have identified and practiced a range of strategies by which to present multiple topics or issues across disciplines.

### **Learning Outcomes**

- Reading and analyzing complex written material
- Conceptualizing an idea
- Selecting evidence to substantiate and develop an idea
- Reflecting on that evidence to deepen a reader's appreciation of the idea
- Developing and substantiating that idea within the form of an essay
- Integrating and documenting multiple sources according to accepted disciplinary conventions
- Using bibliographies appropriately
- Attending to grammar, style, and proper usage
- Attending to readership and audience

### **Required Texts or Materials**

\*Selections from the *Digital Anthology for Writers*: [bit.ly/ewp-reader](http://bit.ly/ewp-reader)

\*Selections from Mercer Street: you can access the text by creating an account at <https://redshelf.com/> and entering the assigned code where it says "Redeem your RedShelf access code" at the top of "My Shelf," which will be accessible from the top right-hand navigation bar by clicking on your name after the account has been created. A personal code will be provided by your professor.

\*[https://owl.purdue.edu/owl\\_exercises/index.html](https://owl.purdue.edu/owl_exercises/index.html) for grammar and other exercises, and <https://owl.purdue.edu/> more generally for basic exercises including citation, argumentation, rhetorical situations, logic, etc. ; it does have grammar or other exercises.

\*Oxford English Dictionary online : <https://guides.nyu.edu/az.php?a=o> (online free access via NYU Libraries Databases)

### **Additional Resources**

Please use <http://cas.nyu.edu/ewp/writing-resources/electronic-resources.html>

\*The Moses Center for Students with Disabilities

\*Academic Resource Center

\*NYU Library

\*MLA Style Center

### **Course Requirements**

This expository writing course is divided into 3 units, called *progressions*. A *progression* is an interconnected sequence of reading and writing exercises, some of which happen in class and some of which happen outside of class. Each progression is sequenced to lead students from less to more complex work

over the term, toward the creation of a formal graded essay. Within each progression the same logic applies : students are led through a sequence of reading and writing exercises which are based on either full texts or excerpts from the list of selected essays. Individualized instructor feedback is provided for roughly one-half of the exercises in the progression, and students are expected to revise substantially in light of that feedback (additional drafts can receive peer feedback). At the end of the semester, students are expected to submit all minor and major assignments of the semester in an e-portfolio, and will have the option of revising one of the earlier essays, and of having the revised grade averaged with the original grade.

The 3 final assignments make up approximately 20 pages of graded writing in total, and students are also expected to hold a writer's journal throughout the course, completing an entry for each reading and writing exercise, recording what they have learned, what they feel they can use for future writing, and what they think they could improve in the preparatory phase, the actual writing, and the reviewing.

Bringing a laptop or tablet to each class meeting to facilitate the development of the journal and portfolio is recommended.

**Please note that passing the course requires completing the work of all the progressions.**

### ***Expectations and Grading Standards***

The description below provide a general sense of grading standards.

**A range:** applies to work that develops an interesting problem and idea ; that is very well argued and structured; that gives evidence both of close reading and of extensive knowledge; that handles its sources ethically, but also with skill and elegance ; that shows imaginative flair and originality.

**B range:** Applies to work that is ambitious but only partly successful ; that demonstrates an ability to conceptualize the key issues and debates and to formulate relevant points or questions yet may need to be more thorough ; better structured ; provide more or better evidence to support its insights, and/or show more independent thinking and originality.

**C range:** Applies to work which has significant problems articulating and developing its idea and argument, and is therefore difficult to follow. The work may not be sufficiently motivated by an intellectual problem : the argument may remain too superficial, or undeveloped, or poorly structured, and/or show insufficient grasp of the subject or material, or else exhibit problems in its use of sources.

**D range:** An essay which does not engage concepts or sources. Presents incorrect or confused information, misunderstandings of the subject or text, lack of coherence, lack of editing and structure or absence of development, an inability to make proper use of references and quotations, and serious inadequacies of expression (syntax, grammar, vocabulary).

**F grade:** For non- or late submission of work without a valid medical excuse, or for work which is unintelligible, illegible, or wholly irrelevant; for work which uses unattributed material, or plagiarized work.

### ***Final Grade Breakdown***

**Progression 1** Essay #1 = 20%

**Progression 2** Essay #2 = 30%

**Progression 3** Essay #3 = 30%

**Writer's journal** = 10%

**Participation** = 10%

### ***Formatting and Submission Procedures***

All major writing assignments must use the Modern Language Association (MLA) style. Submitted drafts and revisions must be typewritten, using a standard, reasonably-sized 11 or 12-point font, double-spaced,

with a proper margin on the left, stapled or paper-clipped. They must include the student's full name, the course name, the section, and the name of the instructor. Please note that xeroxed copies (usually 2) will often be required for peer reviewing.

## ***Course Policies***

### ***Attendance***

Attendance is mandatory. Because we work collaboratively to improve the thinking and writing of each member of the class, everyone's participation is always necessary. Also, because writing classes proceed by sequential reading, writing, and thinking work, consistent and on-time attendance is essential.

Students who miss significant time during a progression often have difficulties completing that progression successfully. Unexcused absences, lateness, and failure to prepare for class will adversely affect students' grade. If a student misses 2 classes in a row, or any 3 out of a possible 8 classes, both myself and the advisor will have to intervene. Regardless of a student's performance on the progressions, 5 unexcused absences will result in the lowering of the final grade by a full letter (e.g. from a B+ to C+). And with 7 unexcused absences, the student will not be able to pass the course.

Religious observance and documented illness or family emergency are grounds for an absence to be excused.

In all cases of absence, students should communicate with me as soon as possible (preferably by letting me know before the missed class session), and they are fully responsible for making up the class session + any written work due.

### ***Conferences***

During the semester, each student is required to meet twice with me outside of class. This provides the opportunity to discuss work-in-progress in detail, and to offer guidance towards the next stage(s) of the current assignment. Missing a scheduled conference without advance notification or appropriate excuse counts as an absence from class.

### ***Academic Integrity***

Even though this course is a place for free and open discussion and inquiry, and for familiarizing oneself with various conventions, academic dishonesty or plagiarism remain a serious offense. Academic dishonesty can result in a report to the dean, the failure of the essay, or the failure of the course. This means that a student may not submit work written (even in part) by someone else as though it was written by him or her; and it also means that the student may not submit work written for this course in or from another course (unless permission is received by both professors).

Please review both the NYU Policy and EWP Statement on Academic Integrity for further detail : <http://cas.nyu.edu/ewp/writing-resources/statement-on-academic-integrity.html>

### ***Course Schedule***

We will be meeting on Tuesdays and Thursdays from 4 Feb to 19 May for a total of 29 sessions.

**Section 1** : Tues-Thurs 2 :15-3 :45 (classroom 413)

**Section 2** : Tues-Thurs 4 :00-5 :30 (classroom 413)

**Reception hours** : Tues-Thurs 5 :30-7 :00 pm, and by appointment.

***Progression 1 Comparative explication of a concept (approx. 6 pages)***

Students put into conversation with one another 2 to 3 conceptually related essays chosen from 4 thematic clusters. They provide a detailed commentary on how each text represents and discusses the concept, followed by a comparative commentary that pinpoints ways in which the explicit and/or implicit conversation between those texts deepens and complexifies our understanding of that concept. We practice doing this together in the first two weeks by closely reading 2 conceptually related student essays, acquiring the critical categories and vocabulary for making sense of the different interactions between content (the argument) and form (point of view, structure, use of sources, rhetorical strategies, choice of vocabulary, tone, etc.) in each text, and for assessing which is most effective. Through putting essays in conversation with each other, students are made aware of how one text can illuminate what may be presupposed, taken for granted, left out, or omitted in another. They familiarize themselves with the basic techniques they will be required to use in the next 2 progressions to either « deepen » a concept, by revealing and developing new aspects of it ; or « complicate » it, by qualifying, challenging, or refuting it.

Exercises include comparing dictionary definitions ; summarizing core arguments; identifying different levels of argumentation and rhetorical strategies ; examining different uses of sources and examples ; comparing different types of openings and endings, and learning to organize a comparative commentary around those key critical points.

### ***Progression 2 Deepening essay (approx. 6 pages)***

For this next stage, students borrow an idea, an issue, or a question from another thematic cluster of texts and come up with a prompt that invites further development. The work for this second essay consists in identifying basic assumptions about the chosen idea and then expanding on it, opening up new perspectives, making new connections, or coming up with a new theoretical frame, all of which will reflect students' awareness of the larger implications of the chosen prompt and help them articulate their own point of view. For this second essay, opening up new perspectives requires lateral thinking, i.e. also finding a text or excerpt that is not explicitly or even obviously connected to the chosen prompt, either from my list or elsewhere.

Exercises include questioning definitions, assumptions and received opinions; deciding what needs researching and how ; evaluating external sources and evidence, and learning to incorporate them according to academic conventions; outlining and mapping different structural possibilities ; addressing the question of intended readerships...

### ***Progression 3 Argumentative essay (approx. 8 pages)***

This final essay is a continuation of the previous progression. It combines the ability to expand on a chosen issue or question with that of qualifying, challenging, or refuting existing representations of it in order ultimately to develop a clear and coherent argument in the form of a fully-developed academic essay. In associating 3-4 essays to substantiate but also to challenge the chosen issue or problem, students are also invited to further explore analogical thinking and research across disciplines and modes of representation, and to acquire effective techniques for incorporating varied material into an argument without detracting from its clarity and rigour.

Exercises include a number of the above, + incorporating different types of material ; broadening and improving vocabulary for precision and effect ; varying sentence structure and punctuation ; and working on bibliography.

### ***Primary texts selected from the Digital Anthology for Writers, and Mercer Street essays***

#### Mental explorations

\*Elizabeth Makris, « If The Shoe Doesn't Fit » (Mercer Street)

\*Edouard Glissant, « For Opacity »

\*Sarah Peng, « The Empathy Machine » (Mercer Street)

\*Garnett Keizer, « Penumbra : What is Privacy ? »

\*Stephen Marche, « Is Facebook making us lonely ? »

\*Oliver Sacks, « The Lost Virtues of the Asylum »

\*Malcolm Gladwell, « Late Bloomers »

Representing the « other »(race/culture)

\*Nicole Li, « Broad Brushstrokes » (Mercer Street)

\*David Batchelor, « Whitescapes »

\*Chimamanda Adichie, « The Danger of a Single Story »

Representing the « other » (gender)

\*Ehrlich Gretel, « About Men »

\*Rebecca Solnit, « The Mother of All Questions »

Literary and art criticism

\*Alice Munro, « What is Real ? »

\*Salman Rushdie, « Is Nothing Sacred ? »

\*Mathew Goulsh « Criticism »

**Course Schedule and Assignments**

<b>Week/Date</b>	<b>Topic</b>	<b>Reading</b>	<b>Assignment Due</b>
Week 1 1)Tues 4 Feb 2)Thurs 6 Feb	Progression 1	Makris, “If the shoe doesn’t fit”; and Peng, “The Empathy Machine”	Exercises
Week 2 1) Tues 11 Feb 2) Thurs 13 Feb	Progression 1	Edouard Glissant, “For Opacity”	Exercises
Week 3 1)Tues 18 Feb 2)Thurs 20 Feb	Progression 1		Draft 1 for Essay #1 Draft 2 for Essay #1
Week 4 1)Tues25Feb 2)Thurs 27 Feb			Reviewing <b>Final draft for Essay #1 due</b>
Week 5 1)Tues 3 March 2)Thurs 5 March	Progression 2		Exercises
Week 6 1)Tues 10 March 2)Thurs 12 March	Progression 2		Exercises
Week 7 1)Tues 17 March 2)Thurs 19 March	Progression 2		Exercises
Week 8 Tues 24 March Thurs 26 March	Progression 2		Draft 1 for Essay #2 Peer-review
Week 9 1)Tues 31 Mars 2)Thurs 2 April	Progression 2		Draft 2 for Essay #2 Peer-review
Week 10 1)Tues 7 April 2)Thurs 9 April	<b>Spring Break</b>		
Week 11 1)Tues 14 April	Progression 3		<b>Final draft for Essay #2 due</b>

2)Thurs 16 April			
Week 12 1)Tues 21 April 2)Thurs 23 April	Progression 3	Texts 3&4	Exercises
Week 13 1)Tues 28 April 2)Thurs 30 May	Progression 3		Exercises
Week 14 1)Tues 5 May 2)Thurs 7 May	Progression 3		Draft 1 of Essay #3
Week 15 1)Tues 12 May 2)Thurs 14 May <b>Tues 19 May Exam Day</b>	Progression 3		Draft 2 of Essay #3 Reviewing <b>Tues 19 May: Final draft for Essay #3 due</b>