

College Writing II  
42.101 – 214  
9:30-10:45 TR, PA 412

Fall 2012  
Professor Thomas Hersey  
Office Hours: TR - 11:00 - 12:00, and by appointment  
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Office Location - FA 301-A

“*What we do our best or most perfectly is what we have most thoroughly learned by the longest practice, and at length it falls from us without our notice, as a leaf from a tree.*”

-- H.D. Thoreau

### **Texts and Contexts - Course Goals and Overview**

**College Writing II** will build on the skills developed in College Writing I, with students now fully engaging in the research process, enhancing writing skills that will encourage success throughout their college careers and beyond.

The learning objectives for College Writing II include the following:

#### **Process**

- Students will engage in the writing process, including:
  1. Drafting, revising, editing, and proofreading, while considering clarity, purpose, audience, and style
  2. Students will explore the research process, including:
    - Generating topics, ideas, questions, and problems
    - Developing and supporting a thesis statement
    - Finding, assessing, and analyzing primary and secondary sources of information
    - Managing various research tools such as the library, the Internet, and databases
    - Proper documentation methods
    - Academic honesty, and how to avoid plagiarism

#### **Rhetorical Knowledge**

Students fashion texts that integrate their own thoughts with the words and ideas of others, practicing documentation skills and entering into the academic conversation.

#### **Critical Thinking**

Students will continue to sharpen their analytic skills by writing analytical essays.

#### **Conventions**

- Students will review and employ relevant grammar, mechanics, and style.
- Students will be expected to practice academic honesty and avoid plagiarism.

### **Self-Assessment**

- Students will exit with an awareness of their strengths and weaknesses as writers, and the self-assessment tools necessary to continue on successfully in their writing careers.
- Students will write consistently in various forms, including short responses, summaries, drafts, peer responses, and revisions, culminating in a portfolio of at least four formal essays.

### **Project Overview: “Deliberate Intentions - Travel”**

The primary purpose of *this* course is to provide you with a solid foundation in the art and science of research and scholarship, and to do so in as comprehensive a manner as possible during our time together. In support of this objective, I have selected a blended thematic approach, as this will afford you with an opportunity to enter the conversation of research with the aid of current, relevant inquiries, set against the background of perennial human concerns. In order to garner the most optimal results from this method, I have organized the course material conceptually according to the phenomenological account of "intentionality," which allows us to ask just what is happening when we are being “mindful of” things on various levels and stages of experience. I have also woven the idea of living "deliberately" as practiced by H. D. Thoreau into this thematic approach, as taken together, the terms "deliberate" and "intentions" will allow us to explore ideas and just what these entail on several fronts.

We will begin by looking at The “Loneliness of the Project,” by Boris Groys, and we will then move through the assigned texts and our own research projects with his insights in mind for the entirety of the course. This will be a wonderful way to engage in extremely close reading and appropriation of a text. All of the work that we do together will be fully explored through daily journal entries and exercises. By engaging in this important activity, you will be able to learn about relevant themes, become familiar with important research skills, and examine your personal impressions of the course materials. In this regard, I will post messages on the wiki to *initiate* discussion, and to provide you with a forum to explore new ideas. Here I will include some thoughts about each of the assigned readings, class discussions, and the films that we will explore together. I will also include daily guidelines for your journal entries in keeping with our progress in class. Please feel free to *initiate* your own discussion threads. Just be sure that your subject headings are clear, that your ideas are not redundant, and that all entries are course related. Also, please initiate new discussion threads from the appropriate wiki pages, as to do otherwise would become very confusing. For example, if you would like to address a theme from *News from Home*, you would do so by navigating directly from the page titled “Book I - Sides” as this is where this work will be encountered and addressed. I would recommend that you explore concepts and themes as they arise in class, as this should help your writing, both within your journals and ultimately in your various research activities. New ideas will be introduced each week, so your opportunities for discussion will be many!

### **Notes, Discussions, & Assignments**

Each day certain students will be assigned to take notes for the class, and asked to post these on the collaborative lecture notes page of this wiki site. All students are asked to visit these class notes often, and to edit and review the work of their classmates. Please remember that these lecture notes pages should be an objective repository of information derived from my lectures. Wikis proper are not meant for discussion. The discussion threads are the place to express individual opinions and beliefs, and the proper outlet for voicing questions and concerns. **All assignments can be found by date on the course wiki.**

### **Grading, Class Etiquette, and Attendance Policy:**

Student’s grades will be determined by the quality of their portfolio work (60%), and their participation in class discussions and projects (40%). **Not attending class regularly will result in a failing grade.** Students are expected to come to class prepared to discuss all of the assigned readings and films, and to act in a respectful manner to others. Please do not leave phones on, or leave class without first asking for permission, as acting otherwise is extremely disruptive.

## Portfolio Work

Your work in this class will be assessed using a portfolio grading system. Rather than receiving grades on individual papers (or drafts of papers) throughout the term, you will receive a letter grade at the end of each of the four sections of the course, and a final grade for your complete and revised work at semester's end. This grade, which will necessarily reflect your attendance, homework, class participation, and formal essay writing ability, will give you a sense of your work in its entirety in a manner which will allow you to assess your own progression as a writer, and to adapt your efforts accordingly. You will be encouraged to revise your work to improve your grades, but must do so according to the following guidelines:

- The portfolio work for the first section of the course must be revised no later than the due date for the portfolio work for section two.
- The portfolio work for the second section of the course must be revised no later than the due date for the portfolio work for section three.
- Likewise, the portfolio work for the third section of the course must be revised no later than the due date for the portfolio work for section four.
- The portfolio work for the fourth section of the course can be revised if there is time, but students are encouraged to turn their work in early to be accommodating.
- Finals cannot be revised, but here too, I will be more than willing to look at your work ahead of time.

This method gives you the opportunity to be graded *after* you have received feedback and provides you with plenty of incentive and opportunity to revise your work. In order to succeed in this course, you **must turn in work on time and attend class**. You will be given points for all homework that meets pre-arranged standards, and these points will make up 20% of your grade. You will also be given points for class participation, comprising another 20% of your grade. The portfolio will receive a letter grade at the end of the term, and will account for a full one-half of your course grade. Honor grades (A, A-, B+) *are reserved for outstanding work and outstanding effort*.

Writing Portfolio 60%  
Class Participation 20%  
Journal and other Assignments 20%

### Numerical equivalence for letter grades:

A: 100-94; A-: 93-90; B+: 89-87; B: 86-84; B-: 83-80;  
C+: 79-77; C: 76-74; C-: 73-70; D+: 69-67; D: 66-64; F: 63-0

### Texts for Reading

*FieldWorking: Reading and Writing Research*, Sunstein & Chiseri-Strater  
“Walking,” Henry David Thoreau (selections to be assigned online)

### Texts for Viewing

*News From Home*, Chantal Akerman

### Plagiarism

Plagiarism is absolutely unacceptable and will result in immediate failure of the course. For additional information on the University policy, see ([http://www.uml.edu/catalog/undergraduate/policies/academic\\_dishonesty.htm](http://www.uml.edu/catalog/undergraduate/policies/academic_dishonesty.htm)).

**Accommodations:** Please see me during the first week of class if you have a documented disability and I will be happy to make accommodations. The Office of Disability Services (McGauvran 363, (978) 934-4338) will also assist in making arrangements. If you must miss class for religious observances please see me well in advance so we can coordinate what you will miss.



### First-Day Writing Sample:

30 Minutes

This semester, we will be basing our research methods on the artistic activities of Henry David Thoreau and Chantal Akerman. More specifically, we will be looking at their idiosyncratic manners of mapping personal growth in and through research and artistic activities based upon both travel and reflection.

In order to begin on a proper footing, and in your best prose, please write a brief essay about your own travel experience. In your essay, please address the following questions as specifically as possible:

- What types of travel do you most enjoy?
- Do you believe that local activities can be considered forms of “travel”?
- Do you travel primarily for enjoyment, education, or escape of some kind?
- Do you think more clearly when you travel?
- Do you feel more at peace when you travel?
- Do you keep a record of your travel, through either journal entries, photographs, or video?
- Do you prefer to travel alone or with others?
- Do you feel the need to be connected to “home” while you are away?
- Do you feel the need to share your travel experiences with others as they are occurring, or do you prefer to postpone these “reports” until you return from your journeys?
- Do you keep any of your travel experiences to yourself?

**Have fun, and use your imaginations!**