

WRIT 1133: Writing and Research

Section 9: MW 10:00 – 11:50 am, Towers 131

Section 26: MW 12:00 – 1:50 pm, Sturm 251

Office Hours: MW 2-4 pm, F 9 am – 3 pm

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WRITING THE AMERICAN WEST



The Class

This section of WRIT 1133 focuses on the rhetoric of the American West, which will allow you to sharpen your research and writing skills by immersing yourself in Denver's cultural history and geography, especially those histories of race, gender, and sexuality that often have been overlooked by traditional accounts of the region. As you progress through the course, you'll blog about *The Laramie Project*, conduct your own archival research, learn about Denver's local publics, and design your own cultural map of some aspect of our city. These assignments will help you hone your ability to analyze artifacts, work with scholarly sources, and frame your research for both academic and community audiences.

Goals

I've designed this course with you, as first-year students, in mind, and I hope it will offer you a meaningful experience with rhetoric, writing, and multiple research traditions. You can expect it to be interdisciplinary in scope and to engage in with different public, academic, and popular discourses. You'll write in a number of new and different writing situations and in ways that you probably haven't encountered in other writing classes. As we begin, I'll presume that you're familiar with basic concepts of rhetoric, including rhetorical situation (audience, purpose, and role); types of persuasive appeals (logos, ethos, and pathos); and composing strategies and processes (invention, revision, editing, and delivery). Even so, we'll enhance this understanding with instruction in rhetorical theory over the course of the quarter, and you'll apply these concepts to a broad range of texts that will help us work within our focus on Denver and the North American West. You'll also become familiar with the myriad research tools and resources available on the DU campus. Over the course of the quarter, you'll produce 20-25 pages of polished writing.

(Go to <http://www.du.edu/writing/first-year.htm#AcademicResearch> for more information on our course.) By the end of the course, you'll:

- Demonstrate practical knowledge of academic research traditions (for example, text-based/interpretive; measurement-based/empirical; and observational/qualitative) through effectively writing in at least two of those traditions;
- Demonstrate an understanding of rhetorical/conventional differences among various academic disciplines or groups of disciplines;
- Demonstrate practical knowledge of rhetorical differences between writing for academic audiences and writing for popular audiences, through both analysis and performance;
- Demonstrate proficiency in finding, evaluating, synthesizing, critiquing, and documenting published sources appropriate to given rhetorical situations.

Assignments

🔗 Course Blog

Two or three times a week you'll post to our course blog, where as a class, we will elaborate on the connections between our reading, class discussion, and your writing and research. This blog will also serve as a repository for our daily writing exercises, as well as being a place where you will post parts of your research for each of our projects.

🔗 Peer Response Letters

As a part of each peer review workshop, you will write a 250-350 word letter to two of your peers about their drafts. These letters are formal assignments and should describe in depth what you found effective about the draft and specific observations about how to improve it.

🔗 Blogging about *The Laramie Project*

In your first formal assignment, you will create a post about *The Laramie Project* for our course blog. In 1000-1250 words, you will explain the significance of this film or craft a persuasive argument about it to an audience of your choice and enhance this discussion by drawing on a select number of appropriate secondary sources.



🔗 Inquiry into Western Rhetorics

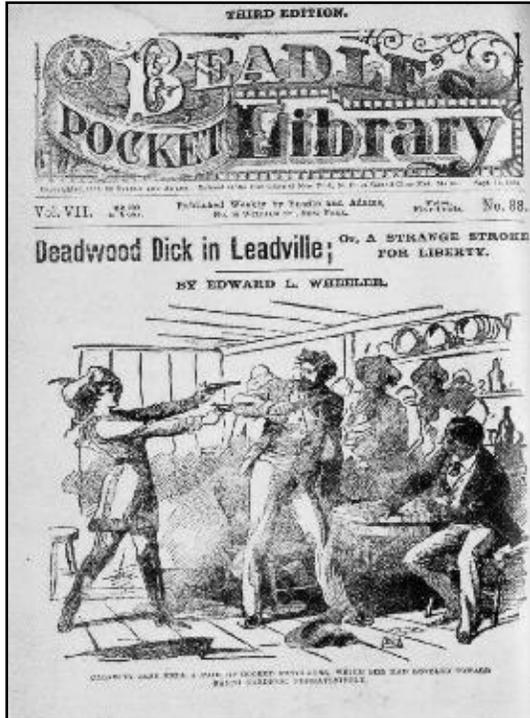
In this sequence of assignments, you will develop your own inquiry into the rhetorical history of the North American West. You will select an issue that interests you and identify a primary text or an artifact that you think deserves closer analysis. Drawing upon additional scholarly research, you will write a 5-7 page essay that presents your research to a scholarly audience.

🔗 Mapping Denver Project

For this project, you will explore Denver's cultural geography and identify some aspect of our local culture that interests you. Using observations of the people and places related to this culture (and brief interviews, too), you will develop your own qualitative map of our city.

🔗 Final Portfolio

During finals, you will compile a portfolio that includes four pieces of your writing from this course. Three of these pieces can be revisions of earlier assignments from our course. You will introduce this portfolio with a reflective essay that explains how this writing illustrates your development as a writer and researcher. Your final portfolio must contain at least 20 pages of polished writing.



Texts

- *Quick Access: Compact*, Lynn Quitman Troyka and Douglas Hesse (available in the bookstore).
- Texts on Blackboard: Go to <http://blackboard.du.edu/> and click on “Login.” Use your DU id and password to access the site. Under “My Courses,” click on WRIT 1133, and on the left hand side of the page, find “Course Documents” and look for the assigned reading.
- Laptop: Please bring it to class every day.

Policies

- **Attendance**

Because interaction with your classmates and me is a vital part of learning to write, I expect you to attend every class meeting and participate actively in discussions, writing exercises, and revision workshops. Any absence will affect your performance in this class, and multiple absences (except those affiliated with official university events) are likely to have a dramatic negative effect on your grade. You are allowed two absences, no questions asked. If you miss more than two class meetings, your final grade will be lowered a third of a grade (e.g., from a B+ to a B, or a B to a B-) for

every day you miss. If you miss more than four class meetings, I will recommend that you drop the course; if I determine that excessive absences—more than four—have compromised your ability to meet the goals of the course, you may fail the course. If you do miss a class, it is your responsibility to find out what you missed from classmates or from Blackboard.

- **Student Engagement & Participation**

I expect you to be an active and engaged learner in this class, committed to the material, your own writing, and your peers. Your engagement will be visible through your participation in classroom discussions, conferences with me, peer review sessions, formal group projects and informal group work, and general efforts to improve not only your own learning but the learning of the entire class. I will evaluate your engagement and participation according to these guidelines:

“**Superior**” engagement means that you are always prepared, often adding additional insights to a class or online discussion and providing extensive feedback to writing. You demonstrate active learning via consistently perceptive and energetic engagement with the material, your peers, and me.

“**Average**” engagement means that you seem prepared, although you sometimes need to be prompted to participate. Generally, your participation in discussion and your feedback on your peers’ writing seem to encourage and support others in the class. Your presence is productive.

“**Weak**” engagement means that you come to class, but you do not seem to be prepared or your presence detracts from the quality of the class experience for others. Your participation is listless, lackluster, or only intermittent.

- **Late Work**

Assignments are due when they are due. I will accept late work only if you have cleared the lateness with me in advance, and then only under the most extenuating circumstances. An assignment that is turned in late without advance clearance will be graded down a third of letter (e.g., from a B+ to a B, or a B to a B-) for each day it’s late.

- **Civility and Tolerance in the Classroom**

The Writing Program supports DU's "Code of Student Conduct," which in part "expects students to recognize the strength of personal differences while respecting institutional values." Because writing courses rely heavily on interactions between all members of the class, students and faculty must act in a manner respectful of different positions and perspectives. A student who behaves in an uncivil or intolerant manner will be asked to stop and/or formally reprimanded and/or subject to action by the Office of Citizenship and Community.

Becoming educated requires encountering new ideas and information, some of which may conflict with an individual's existing knowledge or perspectives. I expect students to engage such materials thoughtfully, in ways that reflect the values and mission of the University of Denver.

Finally, I expect you to respect the classroom environment. In class, all cell phones and electronic devices shall be turned off; you are not allowed to text, send email, or instant message; and engaging in other activities (reading non-course materials, engaging in private conversations and so on) that disrespect the classroom environment and learning conditions for others is strictly prohibited. A student who fails to show such respect will receive a lowered grade and may fail the course.



- **Plagiarism and the Honor Code**

The Writing Program follows the Council of Writing Program Administrators definition of plagiarism, which states, "In an instructional setting, plagiarism occurs when a writer deliberately uses someone else's language, ideas, or other original (not common-knowledge) material without acknowledging its source." Go to <http://wpacouncil.org/node/9> for further discussion.

DU's Honor Code also maintains that all members of the University must use the work of others in good faith. Students who have plagiarized an assignment will receive an F on that assignment, and the instructor will inform the Director of Writing and the office of Community and Citizenship Standards. As a result of these communications, further action may be taken. Any subsequent documented acts of plagiarism may be subject to more severe actions, including suspension or dismissal from the university. (For more information, go to <http://www.du.edu/ccs/honorcode.html>.)



- **University Writing Center**

As a DU student, you are able to visit the University Writing Center to consult one-on-one with a trained staff member on any writing assignment, at any stage of the project. To schedule an appointment, log in to "My Web" at <http://myweb.du.edu>, select "Student and Financial Aid" tab, and click on the "Writing and Research Center" menu. You can also call (303) 871-7456.

- **Students with Disabilities**

If you have a documented disability that will impact your performance in this class, please inform me during the first two weeks of the course and provide documentation from DU's Disability Services Program. I will make every reasonable accommodation for you so that you are able to succeed in this course. For more information, go to <http://www.du.edu/disability/dsp/index.htm>.

Grades

For every formal writing assignment, you will have the chance to draft, workshop, and revise your writing based on feedback that you will receive from me and your classmates. At the end of every unit, you will submit a final draft, which I will evaluate according to specific guidelines that we will go over in class. These grades count, but you will be encouraged to revise your assignments for the final portfolio. Here's how I will calculate your final grade and what each letter grade means:

Grade Calculation	
Engagement & Participation (including Course Blog)	15%
Peer Review Letters	10%
Final Drafts of Major Assignments	15%
Final Portfolio	65%

☞ **A Excellent**

Your writing lucidly responds to the rhetorical situation in a sophisticated and original way; is exceptionally well organized with clear and logical transitions; maintains coherent focus throughout; if appropriate, seamlessly integrates judicious use of other sources or textual evidence and analysis; and achieves stylistic elegance and grace. Overall, it leaves a dazzling impression—the writing is fabulous and has either vividly narrated an experience, rigorously analyzed a text, or persuasively presented an intriguing idea.

☞ **B Good**

Your writing clearly and solidly responds to the assignment in an interesting, if not original, way; reflects strong organization and achieves coherence, even if there are momentary lapses in these areas; if appropriate, includes textual evidence and competent analysis; and stylistically, it is clear but may include occasional errors, imprecise phrasing, or unnecessary wordiness. Overall, a solid performance that gets the point across—you're doing interesting work that shows you're engaging productively with the assignment.

☞ **C Acceptable**

Your writing adequately responds to the rhetorical situation but in a rudimentary fashion. It may implicitly suggest an argument rather than state it explicitly, appear mostly organized but inconsistently use topic, transition, and conclusion sentences and phrases, work for coherence, but may falter occasionally, gesture to the text, but may not use or analyze it as effectively as it might, show a fundamental grasp of style, but may not do so consistently, and contain more than the occasional error. Overall, you fulfill the basic goals of the assignment, but there's room for improvement.

☞ **D Serious Flaws**

Your writing responds inadequately or inappropriately to the rhetorical situation. It may lack a thesis, vivid narration, organizational logic, paragraph coherence, and/or textual evidence or analysis. It may also include a number of grammatical or mechanical flaws that impede effective delivery of ideas. Overall, you've written something that completes the assignment, but it misses the mark in a few significant areas.

☞ **F Unacceptable**

Essay does not respond to the assignment and meet its basic requirements, such as purpose, topic, genre, use of text, or page length. Overall, your response makes me think you didn't read the directions, didn't do your own writing, or didn't bother to spend enough time to complete the assignment.

Grading Scale								
		B+	88-89	C+	78-79	D+	68-69	
A	93-100	B	83-87	C	73-77	D	63-67	
A-	90-92	B-	80-82	C-	70-72	D-	60-62	
							F	0-59

Course Schedule

- M Mar. 22** Introduction to the course and each other.
- W Mar. 24** Read Don Shewey, "Town in Mirror," and Moises Kaufman, "Into the West" (Blackboard). Start viewing *The Laramie Project* in class.
- M Mar. 29** Read Jim W. Corder, "Argument as Emergence, Rhetoric as Love," and finish viewing *The Laramie Project* in class.
- W Mar. 31** Read Amy L. Tigner, "The Laramie Project: Western Pastoral" (Blackboard).
- M Apr. 5** **Peer Review Workshop:** Bring to class three copies of a complete draft of your assignment.
- W Apr. 7** **Blog post on *The Laramie Project* due at the beginning of class (along with hard copy).** Read Frederick Jackson Turner, "The Significance of the Frontier in American History," and Patricia Nelson Limerick, "The Real West" (Blackboard).
- M Apr. 12** Read documents about Japanese American Internment (Blackboard).
- W Apr. 14** Read Gary L. Roberts & David Fridtjof Halaas, "Written in Blood: The Soule-Cramer Sand Creek Massacre Letters" (Blackboard). Bring to class a primary text or artifact (and a 250 word summary or description of it) that you will use for your second assignment.
- M Apr. 19** Find at least five scholarly sources and post a practice works cited page to our course blog. Read at least two of them and post summaries of each to our course blog. Continue to compile your annotated bibliography.
- W Apr. 21** Post your annotated bibliography (of at least five sources) to our course blog. Start drafting your essay.
- M Apr. 26** **Peer Review Workshop:** Bring to class three copies of a complete draft of your research essay.
- W Apr. 28** **Inquiry into Western Rhetorics Research Essay due at the beginning of class.** Read Barry Lopez, "Losing Our Sense of Place" (Blackboard).
- M May 3** Read Cattell et al, "Mingling, Oberving, and Lingering" (Blackboard).
- W May 5** Read DeLyser, "Authenticity on the Ground" (Blackboard).
- M May 10** No Class.
- W May 12** Reading TBA; post first set of field notes to our course blog before class starts.
- M May 17** Post second set of field notes to course blog before class starts. Drafting workshop.
- W May 19** Post third set of field notes to course blog before class starts. **Peer Review Workshop:** Bring to class three copies of a complete draft of your mapping project.
- M May 24** **Mapping Denver Project due at the beginning of class.** Start drafting reflective essay.
- W May 26** **Peer Review Workshop:** Bring to class a draft of your introductory essay for your portfolio.

**Upload portfolio by 5:00 pm on Thursday, June 3.
Also, drop off a hard copy at Prof. Bateman's office at Penrose 344.**