

ENGL 102: Composition II  
Theme: "Write in Place"  
University of Nevada, Reno Spring 2011

Instructor: Will Lombardi  
Email: wlombardi@unr.edu  
Phone: 775-682-6391  
Office Hours: 9:30-11 M; and by appointment

Office: FH 024  
Section: 003  
Class Time: 8-850AM, MWF  
Class Location: FH 227

### Description

Why is writing about place important? This process based, inquiry driven writing and research course will focus on writing about the places we inhabit in our everyday lives. What do we notice about our surroundings? What do we ignore? Are we aware of the patterns we follow in our daily living? Are we aware of the impact certain environments have on us? We will investigate both urban and rural settings, beginning with writing indoor spaces, both private and public, before moving to an examination of outdoor spaces, their relations and meanings. Our topic is the local: we will consider the way homes, neighborhoods, and narratives compose the city of Reno and its relationship to the surrounding landscape.

Based on our readings and writings we will develop individual inquiry projects grounded in argument and rhetorical analysis that may range from subjects as diverse as architecture, art, advertising, geography, history, city planning, literature, food, and / or a variety of local and environmental issues. Your personal experience of Reno, your interests, and your areas of expertise will guide your research choices. Your final writing assignment will amount to a representation of the city as you know it.

This is a reading and writing intensive course that will require extensive use of the Knowledge Center. In addition, you will be required to perform ethnographic and / or fieldwork in the environs you encounter.

### Required Texts

From Inquiry to Academic Writing (FIAW), Stuart Greene and April Lidinsky  
They Say / I Say (TSIS), Gerald Graff and Cathy Birkenstein

*Thematic Readings:* (posted on Webcampus)

From: Vitek, William and Wes Jackson, Eds. *Rooted in the Land: Essays on Community and Place*. New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1996. Print.

- ✓ **David Ehrenfeld "Pseudocommunities"**
- ✓ **Wendell Berry "Conserving Communities"**
- ✓ **Jack Kloppenburg, jr, John Henderson, and G.W. Stevenson "Coming in to the Foodshed"**
- ✓ **John B. Cobb, jr "Defining Normative Community"**

From: Bruch, Patrick and Richard Marback, Eds. *Reading City Life*. New York: Pearson Longman, 2005. Print.

- ✓ **Jim Burklo "Houselessness and Homelessness"**

- From: Durrell, Lawrence. *Spirit of Place: Letters and Essays on Travel*. New York: Dutton, 1971. Print.
- ✓ **Lawrence Durrell “Landscape and Character”**
- From: Stegner, Wallace. *Where the Bluebird Sings to the Lemonade Springs: Living and Writing in the West*. New York: Penguin, 1992. Print.
- ✓ **Wallace Stegner “The Sense of Place”**
- From: Lopez, Barry. *Arctic Dreams: Imagination and Desire in a Northern Landscape*. New York: Vintage, 1986. Print.
- ✓ **Barry Lopez “The Country of the Mind”**
- From: Tuan, Yi-Fu. *Topophilia: A Study of Environmental Perception, Attitudes, and Values*. New York: Columbia University Press, 1974. Print.
- ✓ **Yi-Fu Tuan “Ethnocentrism, Symmetry, and Space”**
- From: Hallowell, Christopher and Walter Levy, Eds. *Listening to Earth*. New York: Pearson Longman, 2005. Print.
- ✓ **Henry David Thoreau “Walking”**
  - ✓ **Aldo Leopold “The Land Ethic”**
  - ✓ **Rebecca Solnit “The Orbits of Earthly Bodies”**
- From: Agnew, John A. and Jonathan M. Smith, Eds. *American Space / American Place: Geographies of the Contemporary United States*. New York: Routledge, 2002. Print
- ✓ **Benjamin Forest “A New Geography of Identity? Race, Ethnicity, and American Citizenship”**
- From: Ford, Larry R. *Cities and Buildings: Skyscrapers, Skid Rows, and Suburbs*. Baltimore and London: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1994. Print.
- ✓ **Larry Ford “The Downtown Frame: Buildings in Transition”; “Inventing and Selling the Idea of the American House”; “Housing Cycles and Technology”; “Domestic Science and the Bungalow”; “The Diffusion and Modification of the Bungalow”; “Merging House Type and Census Information”; “House Types and Social Change in the City”; “Conclusions”**
- From: Snyder, Gary. *The Practice of the Wild*. San Francisco: North Point Press, 1990. Print.
- ✓ **Gary Snyder “The World is Places”; “Bioregional Perspectives”**
- From: Mitchell, William J. *City of Bits: Space, Place, and the Infobahn*. Cambridge and London: MIT Press, 1995. Print.
- ✓ **William J. Mitchell ““Electronic Agoras”; “AD 2K: The Bitsphere”**

## Objectives

English 102 students will:

- ✓ Continue and improve the writing practices learned in 101; prewriting, composing, revising, responding, editing, attending to language and style, and writing with audience and purpose in mind;
- ✓ Engage in critical reading and interpretation of a wide range of texts;
- ✓ Be able to summarize, analyze, synthesize, evaluate, and communicate what they read;
- ✓ Frame complex research questions or problems;
- ✓ Demonstrate awareness of their own beliefs, concepts, and biases;
- ✓ Be able to produce a coherent, well-supported argument that shows critical thinking and careful consideration of alternative viewpoints;

- ✓ Recognize, evaluate, and use a variety of information sources: expert people, publications of information agencies, popular and specialized periodicals, professional journals, books, and electronic resources;
- ✓ Conduct research that shows evidence of the ability to synthesize, use fairly, and credit the ideas of others using the appropriate citation style;
- ✓ Write coherently, drawing from diverse sources, assimilating information and ideas and producing work that represents the student's position on the material

### **Course Policies Grading:**

**A: Superior Work:** A level of achievement so outstanding that it is normally attained by relatively few students

**B: Very Good Work:** A high level of achievement clearly better than adequate competence in the subject matter / skill

**C: Adequate Work:** A level of achievement indicating adequate competence in the subject matter / skill

**D: Minimally Acceptable Work:** A level of achievement that meets the minimum requirements of the course

**F: Unacceptable Work:** A level of achievement that fails to meet the minimum requirements of the course

#### **Scale:**

A (100-95%)	A- (94-90%)	
B+ (89-87%)	B (86-84%)	B- (83-80%)
C+ (79-77%)	C (76-74%)	C- (73-70%)
D+ (69-67%)	D (66-64%)	D- (63-60%)
F (59% and below)		

### **Attendance, Participation, and Classroom Etiquette:**

Since a great deal of writing and discussion will occur in class, I expect everyone to be present and actively involved each day. I also expect that you will have not only read the assigned readings, but will have taken steps to understand them: identifying points you agreed or disagreed with, concepts that might help you in writing course papers, and / or interesting points of departure for further research and reflection. This is not a lecture course, so your comments and questions to some extent determine the shape and direction of the course. Therefore, a lack of participation on your part, in group work or in class discussions, will round your final grade down, while engaged participation will round it up!

I will take roll every day. You have three excused absences in this class. If you miss more than three classes your grade will drop by ½ a letter grade for each additional absence; if you miss six classes you will receive a failing grade for this class. *If you must miss more than the allowed number of classes contact me as soon as possible.*

Please arrive on time for class. Two late arrivals will equal one absence. Please turn off your cell phone during class. Texting during class is not permissible. If special circumstances exist and you must keep your cell phone turned on, please inform me at the beginning of the semester. Please do not leave the room during the class period unless absolutely necessary. Habitual mid-

class exits will be treated the same as tardiness. I expect our writing classroom to be supportive and respectful. Disrespectful behavior will not be tolerated.

Do not disappear! Your best policy will be to check in with me when you are absent.

### **Late / Missed Work Policy:**

*Late work may not be accepted at instructor's discretion.* Late work will be assessed a penalty for each day it is late and may not receive instructor feedback. Late work, even if it was not accepted, if it is a required element in *either* the Unit Portfolio or Final Portfolio, must be included in those documents. Missed work included in portfolios is still eligible for final, graded revision.

### **Students with Disabilities:**

If you have a documented disability and may need accommodations in this class, please speak with me as soon as possible or visit the Disability Resource Center in Thompson Building Suite 101.

### **Academic Honesty / Plagiarism:**

“Cheating, plagiarism, or otherwise obtaining grades under false pretenses” constitute academic dishonesty according to the code of this university. Academic dishonesty will not be tolerated and penalties may include cancelling a student’s enrollment without a grade or giving an F for the course or for the assignment. More detailed discussion of UNR policies is available online: <http://www.unr.edu/stsv/acdispol.html>.

We will be covering how to cite sources in this class. If you are unsure about whether or how to properly cite sources, please ask me.

You may not use essays written for other courses or instructors to fulfill the requirements of this course. To do so constitutes a violation of academic honesty and will be treated as plagiarism.

### **Additional Information:**

Disability Resource Center 784-6000. <http://www.unr.edu/stsv/slservices/drc/>  
 Counseling Services 784-4648. <http://www.unr.edu/stsv/cs/>  
 Intensive English Language Center (IELC). 784-6075 <http://www.unr.edu/ielc/flash/index.html>  
 Campus Escort 742-6808. <http://www.unr.edu/stsv/studentactivities/services/escort.html>  
 University Writing Center 784-6030, Room 108 [http://www.unr.edu/writing\\_center](http://www.unr.edu/writing_center)  
 Mathewson-IGT Knowledge Center <http://www.knowledgecenter.unr.edu>

### **Readings**

Additional required readings can be found on our Webcampus page

### **Required Assignments and Percentages**

- **Reading:** You will be assigned readings from our required texts for homework most class periods. You will be expected to have completed the readings and be prepared to discuss

them in class the following period. You will be expected to be able to apply these readings to your own writing.

- **Walking Journal:** You will keep a walking journal throughout the semester. You will be expected to produce 3-5 pages of informal writing, sketching, etc per week. Most weeks I will give you a writing prompt to guide your journal entries. The journal will serve many purposes: to get you out into the world; to develop techniques of observation; to habituate you to writing on a regular basis; to orient you to our theme; to help you reflect on your formal writing; and most importantly, to help you find topics for your formal writing projects. You will develop research projects based on your firsthand experiences, on the things you find, see, or encounter while in the field
- **Mandatory Student / Teacher Conference:** I will try to make sure I am as available to you as possible throughout the semester. However, **you will have 1 mandatory conference with me during the semester to talk in detail about your writing and research project.** This conference will be 10-15 minutes in length. Additionally, you may meet with me during office hours or by appointment to discuss your work as often as you see fit.
- **(2) Mandatory Peer Group Meetings at University Writing Center:** Your peer group will be **required** to schedule an appointment for a 30 minute workshop with a tutor at the Writing Center **twice** during the semester. This is your group's responsibility. Find a date and time that works for everyone and schedule early. Try to schedule around one of the drafting sequences so that you get the most bang for your buck. **Consult the tentative course schedule at the end of this syllabus for the final day to complete each of these meetings for credit.** Contact information for the Writing Center is located under "Additional Information" in this syllabus.
- **Synthesis Essay (3-5 pages):** You will produce a synthesis of (3) articles you find based in your chosen area of inquiry. A rubric sheet will be made available to you at the beginning of this sequence.
- **Argument Essay (3-5 pages):** You will develop an argument based on your chosen area of inquiry. A rubric sheet will be made available to you at the beginning of this sequence.
- **Final Project:**
  - **Interview:** You will be required to interview an expert participating in your area of inquiry, and formally compile your notes. You will incorporate this source into your final essay
  - **Presentation:** You will be required to present the preliminary findings of your inquiry to the class using Powerpoint
  - **Final Paper:** You will produce a **6-8 page** paper based on the findings of your inquiry
- **Final Portfolio:** You will be required to compile a final portfolio. This portfolio **must** contain the final draft of your Inquiry Project essay. This draft will be graded separately. You must also include the final drafts of the Synthesis essay and Argument essay. You will be required to include at least two other pieces of writing you produced for this class, either formal or informal.

**Tentative Schedule** (Please note this schedule is subject to change at instructor's discretion)

## SECTION 1: Theme and Theory

### Week 1: Campus Community

- 1/19: *Discussion:* Introduction; Bioregional Quiz  
*Homework:* Photo analysis
- 1/21: *Discussion:* Bioregional Quiz results; Photo analysis  
*Homework:* Find / analyze a text from campus

### Week 2:

- 1/24: *Discussion:* Discussion of found text; Intro to Places and Spaces  
*Homework:* Read Durrell and Stegner; *FIAW* Ch1; page 14, #2
- 1/26: *Discussion:* Durrell and Stegner; Walking Journal Intro  
*Homework:* Walking Journal #1; *FIAW* Ch 2; page 35 #1
- 1/28: *Discussion:* Steps to forming Inquiries; Rhetorical analysis  
*Homework:* Read Thoreau; Tuan and Lopez; Walking Journal #2

## SECTION 2: Rhetorical Analysis; Synthesis Paper #1

### Week 3:

- 1/31: *Discussion:* Thoreau, Tuan, and Lopez; Finding / choosing a topic for analysis  
*Homework:* *FIAW* Ch 6; page 113 #3 and 4; Walking Journal #3
- 2/2: *Discussion:* **Knowledge Center Instruction Day**  
*Homework:* Find 3 related articles on your topic; Walking Journal #4
- 2/4: *Discussion:* Evaluating sources  
*Homework:* *FIAW* 121 Practice Sequence; Walking Journal #5

### Week 4:

- 2/7: *Discussion:* Evaluating sources; Summary, Paraphrase, Synthesis  
*Homework:* *FIAW* Ch 7 130 #1, 137 #1; Walking Journal #6
- 2/9: *Discussion:* Summary, Paraphrase, Synthesis  
*Homework:* *FIAW* 149 #1; Walking Journal #7
- 2/11: *Discussion:* **Knowledge Center Research Day**  
*Homework:* Draft #1 Synthesis essay

### Week 5: The City and Suburb

- 2/14: *Discussion:* **Draft #1 due**; workshop  
*Homework:* Revise Draft #1; Walking Journal #8; Read Berry
- 2/16: *Discussion:* Berry; Integrating quotations; using *TSIS*  
*Homework:* *TSIS* Part 1; Walking Journal #9
- 2/18: *Discussion:* Burklo; *TSIS* student samples; MLA formatting  
*Homework:* Draft #2;; Walking Journal #10; Read Cobb and Forest

### Week 6:

- 2/21: **President's Day, no class; Post Draft #2**
- 2/23: *Discussion:* Cobb and Forest; MLA formatting; draft workshop

*Homework:* Walking Journal #11

**2/25: Discussion: Final Draft Paper #1 Due**

*Homework:* FIAW Ch 3 page 53 Practice Sequence; Walking Journal #12; Ford (all)

### **SECTION 3: Argument; Paper #2**

#### **Week 7:**

**2/28: Discussion:** Identifying claims; Finding / choosing a topic; Built Environments

*Homework:* FIAW Ch 4; Walking Journal #13

**3/2: Discussion: Knowledge Center Research Day**

*Homework:* Read Burklo, answer questions 1-6; Walking Journal #14

**3/4: Discussion:** Burklo and Ford

*Homework:* FIAW page 76 Practice Sequence; Walking Journal #15

#### **Week 8:**

**3/7: Discussion:** Refining your topic

*Homework:* FIAW page 81 Practice Sequence; Walking Journal #16

**3/9: Discussion:** Formulating Issue-based Questions; group work

*Homework:* FIAW Ch 5 page 88 Practice sequence; Walking Journal #17

**3/11: Discussion:** TSIS 51-63

*Homework:* Rough Draft; Walking Journal #18

#### **Week 9: Spring Break**

#### **Week 10: The Natural World**

**3/21: Discussion: Rough Draft due;** Drafting Introductions, Paragraphs, and Conclusions

*Homework:* FIAW Ch 9, page 207 Practice sequence #1; Walking Journal #19; Read Kloppenburg

**3/23: Discussion:** Workshop draft

*Homework:* TSIS 64-73; Walking Journal #20

**3/25: Discussion:** Kloppenburg; **Final Draft Paper #2 due**

*Homework:* Walking Journal #21

### **SECTION 4: Inquiry; Final Paper and Presentations**

#### **Week 11:**

**3/28: No Class: Research and Development Conferences**

*Homework:* Gary Snyder “The World is Places”; “Bioregional Perspectives”

**3/30: No Class: Research and Development Conferences**

*Homework:* Aldo Leopold “The Land Ethic”

**4/1: No Class: Research and Development Conferences**

*Homework:* Rebecca Solnit “The Orbits of Earthly Bodies”

#### **Week 12:**

**4/4: Discussion:** Readings

*Homework:* Walking Journal #22

- 4/6:** *Discussion:* **Knowledge Center Research Day**  
*Homework:* Find / choose a topic; Walking Journal #23
- 4/8:** *Discussion:* Walking Journal #22 and 23 entries  
*Homework:* Find 3 articles; develop working thesis; Walking Journal #24

**Week 13:**

- 4/11:** *Discussion:* Interviewing  
*Homework:* *FLAW* 261-265; schedule interview; begin drafting Inquiry essay; Walking Journal #25
- 4/13:** *Discussion:* Using Chambers of Commerce, Historical Societies, University Archives  
*Homework:* Begin drafting presentation; Walking Journal #26
- 4/15:** *Discussion:* Presentation Rubric, student samples  
*Homework:* Design Presentation; Walking Journal #27

**Week 14: Cosmopolitanism and the Internet**

- 4/18:** *Discussion:* Presentations  
*Homework:* Continue drafting; Walking Journal #28; Read Ehrenfeld
- 4/20:** *Discussion:* Presentations  
*Homework:* Continue drafting; Walking Journal #29; Read Mitchell “Electronic Agoras”
- 4/22:** *Discussion:* Presentations  
*Homework:* Continue drafting; Walking Journal #30; Read Mitchell “AD 2K: The Bitsphere”

**Week 15:**

- 4/25:** *Discussion:* Presentations  
*Homework:* Continue drafting
- 4/27:** *Discussion:* Presentations  
*Homework:* Continue drafting
- 4/29:** *Discussion:* **Inquiry Rough Draft due;** workshop  
*Homework:* Revise

**Week 16:**

- 5/2:** *Discussion:* Workshop  
*Homework:* Revise
- 5/4: Prep Day, no class**
- 5/6 No class**

**Final: Final Paper / Portfolio Due**

[see next page for Walking Journal Prompts]

## ENGL 102 Walking Journal Prompts

## The Campus Community:

1. Following “Steps to Inquiry” in *FLAW* page 14, take a walk on campus and respond to each of the three steps. Based on your observations, what topics might be developed into research projects? From this list, which of these might you be interested in researching? Why?
2. On the outline of campus supplied in class, draw a map of the places you inhabit most and / or which are most significant to you. Spend ten minutes or so drawing, then choose one of the places on your map and describe it in as much detail as you can, from the physical description of the place to your emotional attachment to it. Why is this place (or any of the places you included) on your map? How does it connect to the other places? If you were to write a research paper about this place, what angle might you take? Who / what do you associate with this place?
3. (Adapted from *Writing Places*) Find a place on campus and plan to spend at least 30 minutes observing and taking notes. Evenly divide a page in your journal vertically into 2 columns. In the right column, using bullets to denote each observation, write down everything you observe: the smells, the people, etc. Be as observant of the place as possible, even if it is a place you are familiar with. Make sure you take time to pause and look around. Later, when you return to your room, sit down with these observations and carefully review each item. Try to make some connections and analytical observations and to ask some questions. In the left column, write down these connections. Based on your analysis, what might an interesting research project be? Focus on choosing a topic to write about.
4. Write about the topic you have chosen. Using your prior journals and classroom conversations as a guide, what further questions should you ask about your topic? Consider the connections between the articles you’ve found and analyze them. Do they agree or disagree with each other? Do you agree or disagree with them?
5. Go for a walk on campus. Find a place on the 3<sup>rd</sup> or 4<sup>th</sup> floor of the Joe Crowley Student Union to reflect on how your project is developing and the direction in which you want to take it.
6. At night, revisit a place on campus you normally go to during the daytime. Compare the two experiences.
7. Go to a place on campus you’ve never been before and make observations. What are the sensations of encountering a new place? Also, think about your movements throughout the day: How do pathways / fences / doors / hours of operation influence our everyday lives and habits?
8. Go to a public place on campus. Describe the people you encounter, in general, and choose at least one who catches your interest and describe them in detail. Make sure you note where you are and what time it is. Is anyone there “out of place”? Are you? What is the norm? Do people stand out in positive or negative ways?
9. Go to a public place on campus and observe those around you. Take notes about what is said. What topics are discussed? Were you interested in any of them? Why? Describe the place you go. How public is it? How loud are the interactions? How well-informed is the discourse?

### City and Suburb:

10. How do I define the boundaries of my neighborhood? For example, is my neighborhood the entire old southwest? Or are there subregions within it? At what point do I leave my neighborhood, and how do I know? Some questions you might ask are: 1) How are subregions categorized (culture)?; 2) How are they delineated (geography)?; 3) Do certain places within the neighborhood define them? And you might also question whether campus contains regions similar to neighborhoods, and if so, what are they? How are they defined? How are they delineated? Who inhabits them?
11. What is the city's identity? Identify neighborhoods in the city; consider who lives where and why. Where do neighborhoods begin and end? What are their borders? What types of things do you expect to encounter there? Consider research questions and areas of inquiry.
12. Enter the city: ramble through a neighborhood you've identified in your last journal entry. What happens there? What are its traits? Based on your observations, who lives / works / visits there? Does the neighborhood match your expectations of it? What signs and / or advertisements do you encounter? List possible research questions.
13. Revisit the same neighborhood at a different time. Describe in detail the changes you observe. Also, note any evidence / elements of imposed order / authority you witness during your day. Who is in power and how is that power represented / manifested (made visible)?
14. Revisit the same neighborhood and find five things about it you hadn't noticed on either of your previous trips. Start asking deeper questions about the place that can be developed into a research project.
15. From memory, draw a map of the neighborhood you have visited. What things did you include? What did you exclude or forget to add?
16. What political and / or economic issues face this particular neighborhood? How do these compare with other neighborhoods in the city? How do they compare with the city as a whole?
17. open
18. Writing Elsewhere: keep a journal of the places you go over spring break
19. Observe your reaction to returning to Reno and / or classes. Compare being away and coming home. What do / did you miss?

### The Natural World:

20. How has the car transformed Truckee Meadows? How have cars changed Reno neighborhoods? What is your carbon footprint? Consider your resource use? Gas, water, electricity, etc.
21. Visit a "natural" or "rural" space and record your impressions
22. If humans are a part of nature, comment on the ethics of our influencing the state of nature to the extent that we do.
23. (adapted from *Listening to Earth*) If you consider Rebecca Solnit's argument that urban areas are as natural as rural areas, discuss the place of suburbia in the spectrum between urban and rural. Include in your discussion the place of the shopping mall.

24. Describe some of the basic feelings you derive from spending time in a rural environment and an urban environment.
25. Note the impact, if any, you make on a place. Did you buy something? Did you throw anything away? Drive somewhere?
26. On what scale should we live? Global? Local / Regional? Why? What does that lifestyle look like?
27. Return to the mental map you drew of campus at the beginning of the semester. Redraw it now. How has it changed? What have you added or subtracted from it?

#### Cosmopolitanism and the Internet

28. Think about technology. How many hours per day do you spend online? Is this a place? Do you interact with it? How is it different from the physical places we inhabit? Can we truly dwell there? Are there times you would rather be online than in a physical space?
29. What does technology do to the way we inhabit physical spaces? What does it do to the size of our world? Make it bigger or smaller?
30. open

#### Further topics for consideration:

- ✓ In Reno, what is the division between work and leisure space?
- ✓ How visible is scholarship? Where do you see it? Where is it located?
- ✓ How hospitable is the city to alternative transportation?
  - i. Parking / driving / pedestrian / cycling / public transportation issues
- ✓ Who uses the streets? How are they used? How is it changing?
- ✓ How much is abandoned or closed? What is opened?
- ✓ What are the attributes of affluence as you witness them in town? Of poverty?
- ✓ Sit in one of the Biba coffeeshops, then sit in the Starbucks on campus; what, if anything, is different? Who is there? Etc

#### Food for thought:

- ✓ If sight and our bodies are so essential to understanding place, how can these journal assignments reflect that?
- ✓ How do we value questions?
- ✓ How do we acknowledge the value of everyday life?