

**WRIT 1733-1: Honors Writing**

MW 10:00 – 11:50 am, Penrose 220

Office Hours: MW 2-4 pm, T 12-2 pm, R 10 am – 2 pm

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# WRITING THE AMERICAN WEST



## The Class

**T**his section of WRIT 1733 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, 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 conduct your own archival research, learn about Denver's local publics, and write an oral history of someone who's been involved with the GLBT Community Center of Colorado. 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 Honors students, in mind and hope to offer a particularly rigorous and in-depth experience with rhetoric, writing, and the research traditions of academic scholarship. You can expect it to be interdisciplinary in scope and to engage in 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. Even though some of you may be 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), I'll take time to review these ideas and provide additional instruction in rhetorical theory, both ancient and modern. You'll apply these concepts to a broad range of texts that will help us work within our focus on the history of Denver and the 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#WRIT1722> for more information.) 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;
- Demonstrate an understanding of the role that rhetoric and research play in the public sphere and how this work contributes to the public good.

## 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 readings, class discussions, and your writing. This blog will also serve as a repository for our daily writing exercises, and we will also use this space to reflect on our experiences writing for the GLBT Community Center of Colorado.

### 📖 Rhetorical Analysis of *The Laramie Project*

In your first formal assignment, you will rhetorically analyze *The Laramie Project*. In 4-5 pages, you will support an interpretive argument about this film and enhance this interpretation by drawing on a select number of 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.

### 📖 Oral History Project

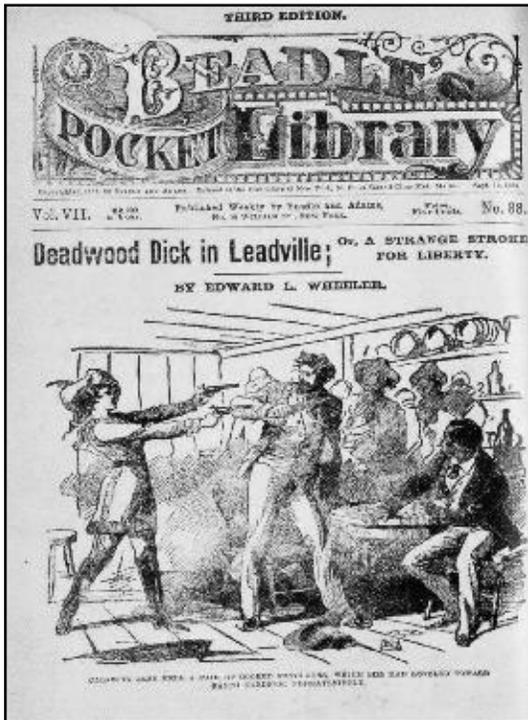
Working in pairs, you will interview two long-term volunteers who have been involved with the GLBT Community Center of Colorado. Individually, you'll then transcribe one interview and write an essay about this person's past involvement with the organization, fitting their experience in the larger

history of Denver's LGBTQ communities. (You may choose to write collaboratively, too, but I'll leave that up to individual pairs.) On the evening of Thursday, March 11, we will also present our projects to the public at the Center's "Jokers, Jewels, and Justice" community event.

### 📖 Final Portfolio

During finals, you will compile a portfolio that includes up to five pieces of your writing from this course. Three of four of these pieces can be revisions of earlier assignments from our course. You will introduce this portfolio with a

reflective essay that explains how these pieces of writing illustrate your mastery of our course goals. 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 1733-1, 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. Here's how I will calculate your final grade and what each letter grade means:

Grade Calculation	
Engagement & Participation (including Course Blog)	15%
Rhetorical Analysis of <i>The Laramie Project</i>	5%
Inquiry into Western Rhetorics	10%
Oral History Project	10%
Final Portfolio	60%

### 🔗 **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	F 0-59
A	93-100	B	83-87	C	73-77	D	63-67	
A-	90-92	B-	80-82	C-	70-72	D-	60-62	

## Course Schedule

- M Jan. 4** Introduction to the course and each other. What's a rhetorical situation? Start viewing *The Laramie Project* in class.
- W Jan. 6** Read William A. Covino & David A. Joliffe, "What is Rhetoric?" Don Shewey, "Town in Mirror," and Moisés Kaufman, "Into the West" (Blackboard). Finish viewing *The Laramie Project* in class.
- M Jan. 11** Read Jim W. Corder, "Argument as Emergence, Rhetoric as Love," and Amy L. Tigner, "The Laramie Project: Western Pastoral" (Blackboard).
- W Jan. 13** **Peer review workshop:** Bring to class three copies of a complete draft of your assignment. Review *Quick Access*, pp. 17-27, 84-94. Schedule individual conference to meet with Professor Bateman on Thursday or Friday.
- M Jan. 18** **No Class:** Martin Luther King, Jr. Day
- W Jan. 20** **Rhetorical analysis of *The Laramie Project* due at the beginning of class.** Read Benson Tong and Regan A. Lutz, "The American West in Its Many Incarnations," Frederick Jackson Turner, "The Significance of the Frontier in American History," and Patricia Nelson Limerick, "The Real West" (Blackboard).
- M Jan. 25** Read documents about Japanese American Internment (Blackboard). Review *QA*, pp. 330-344.
- W Jan. 27** Read Gary L. Roberts & David Fridtjof Halaas, "Written in Blood: The Soule-Cramer Sand Creek Massacre Letters," Jim Kuypers, "The Art of Criticism," and Patrick Real, "What Happened and Why?" (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 Feb. 1** Find at least five secondary sources and submit them as a works cited page. Read at least two of them and bring summaries of each source to class. Continue to compile your annotated bibliography.
- W Feb. 3** Post your annotated bibliography (of at least five sources) to our course blog and bring a hard copy to class.
- M Feb. 8** **Thesis workshop:** Bring to class an initial draft of two to three pages of your research essay, including your emerging thesis statement.
- W Feb. 10** **Peer review workshop:** Bring to class three copies of a complete draft of your research essay. Schedule individual conferences to meet with Professor Bateman on Thursday or Friday.
- M Feb. 15** **Inquiry into Western rhetorics research essay due at the beginning of class.** Read "Denver" (Blackboard). Guest speaker: Deb Pollock from the GLBT Community Center of Colorado.
- W Feb. 17** Read Eric Marcus, "The Storekeepers," and excerpts from Lisa Keen & Suzanne B. Goldberg, *Strangers to the Law* (Blackboard).
- M Feb. 22** Read "Oral History: George Mendenhall," and Nan Amilla Boyd, "Queer Cooperation and Resistance" (Blackboard).
- W Feb. 24** Read primary documents about Denver's GLBT history (Blackboard). Bring to class five additional documents that enhance our understanding of this history. **Interviews for oral history project must be completed by Friday.**
- M Mar. 1** **Transcripts of interviews due at the beginning of class.** Bring to class an informal outline of your narrative.
- W Mar. 3** **Peer review workshop:** Bring to class three copies of a complete draft of your oral history narrative.
- M Mar. 8** **Peer review workshop:** Bring to class a draft of your visual presentation of your oral history.
- W Mar. 10** **Final draft of oral history project due—both narrative and visual display. Peer review workshop:** Bring to class a draft of your introductory essay for your portfolio.
- R Mar. 11** **Present oral history projects** to the GLBT Community Center of Colorado at "Jokers, Jewels & Justice."
- S Mar. 14** **Portfolio due by 8:00 p.m.** Upload a digital copy to the DU Portfolio Community Writing Program assessment and drop off a hard copy at Penrose 344.