Dr. Jay Ellis  
Office: Program for Writing and Rhetoric (Basement of Environmental Design Building), 1B50C  
Office Hours: As announced in Progressions (Syllabus), By Appointment  
For appointments: jay.ellis@colorado.edu

**WRTG 3020: Don’t Fence Me In**  
Course Description

*I don’t know what happens to country.*  
—John Grady Cole in *All the Pretty Horses*

This course is the study of a feeling. How is it that so many Americans feel entitled to open spaces? How can it also be the case that we often seem so determined to avoid social contact, that we seek out privacy in wilderness? Our inquiry may range as widely as considerations of public policy, the bloody history of manifest destiny, readings in gender studies, and criticism on literature and film. Individual essays, though, may pursue questions as confined as how one character, or poem, exhibits ambivalence about space. Essays will ultimately display a similar variety in topics: civic rhetoric, political science, philosophy, and many other disciplines may provide scholarship for this course. Our work will follow this feeling of simultaneous desire for, and fear of, space without limits. We will consider the ambivalent feelings Americans have for urban spaces, and that many men (and some women) have for domestic enclosure and the promised safety within civilized spaces.

Our course of study will be broken into three Progressions (or stages), the better to accomplish a larger movement (or Progression) from our preconceptions on the topic, to a wider and deeper set of ideas by the end of the semester. Similarly, the larger progression of the course entails improvement in your ability to do research. Most of all, this is a writing class—albeit one that relies on interest in critical reading in ideas (and feelings); you will learn to blur the distinction between reading and writing, to revise radically, and probably to spend more time on your writing than you ever have before.

**Progression I: Close Reading American Literary Space**

We begin with the American Renaissance poets Emily Dickinson and Walt Whitman, and finish with a short story by Stephen Crane. In this way, we will trace American feelings about space in poems and short fiction. The final essay for this progression will be a relatively brief close reading of one or more of the assigned works.

**Progression II: Close Reading and Scholarship in Literary and Cinematic Spaces**

We will continue with American fiction and film, improving your skills in close reading, while developing your research skills. The final essay for this progression will add good criticism by other writers, and some theoretical approach, to a stronger close reading of a novel or film. This essay will be the fullest and most demanding scholarly essay of the course, requiring significant research in pursuit of an idea about space that arises organically from close reading in one of our major texts. Essays may range widely between a continuation of
our aesthetic concerns, and investigations of larger social issues as they are occasioned by close attention to “American fictions” about space. This inherently interdisciplinary progression also encourages students to strengthen their writing within their major or to enjoy an excursion into another discipline.

**Progression III: Civic Rhetoric and Creative Writing on Space**

This brief Progression provides students with two choices: either civic rhetoric, or creative work (poem, short story, play, or creative non-fiction essay) on space. Civic Rhetoric students are encouraged to range widely after determining a particular spatial problem. This is your chance to bring your major discipline to an editorial, proposal, familiar essay, or journalism “think piece” on space, even as you are encouraged to do research well outside that major. “Creative Writing students” need not have any prior experience in creative writing, but they will be called on to work very hard in revision and workshop on each other’s projects. Classes will overlap these two options, providing lecture and discussion for one group with workshop time for the other group, or consideration of writing techniques applicable to both options. This progression is intended to meet the various needs of students nearing the end of the semester (indeed, in some cases, nearing graduation). Students who need more work in research and writing for their other courses or for graduate school preparation can continue that improvement; students who have done well enough at the academic essay and are unlikely to be doing further writing in academia now have an opportunity to pursue a creative writing project.
Dr. Jay Ellis

Policies and Requirements for WRTG 3020

Office: Program in Writing and Rhetoric; Basement of Environmental Design Building, 1B50; Be sure to ask in class to see a map to help you find it.
Office Hours: See Individual “Progressions,” By Appointment
Please use my email address, jay.ellis@colorado.edu, only for scheduling office hours. All help on your writing will be in class, during office hours, and on WebCT.

Texts
All texts other than novels are available by WebCT online link, handout, course packet, or by electronic or paper reserve at Norlin Library, as announced. See each Progression (Syllabus) for bibliographies and availability of all texts. CU Bookstore will have the required novel or novels for the course under its listing.
Dictionary: The American Heritage is available with a CD ROM that is well worth the money. Dictionary.com lately uses this dictionary, but you must be online and put up with advertising. In any case, you are expected to look up all words you don’t know, and also most of those you think you know. Own at least one college-level dictionary.

Grading
See the “Grading Guidelines” at the bottom of this page for explanation of letter grades. You may schedule an appointment with me during office hours at any time for a general indication of how you are doing in the course. Even before I’ve finished grading essays, I am happy to look over your work at any time with you during an office hours appointment and give you a clear indication—within a letter grade—of how you’re doing.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Component</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Progression I Close Reading Essay¹</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Progression II Scholarly Essay (with substantial research)²</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Progression III Civic Rhetoric or Creative Writing ³</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attendance and Active Class Participation⁴</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

¹ Essay grades are on the final draft only and indicate degree of success, regardless of intent and process. Whatever you do toward that draft (exercises, early drafts, revisions, and workshop) is graded either in your Participation or your Progression Grade.
² This essay grade expects success not only for a general reader, but also within an academic context: a well-written essay that lacks adequate research will not fulfill the requirement here, nor will a well-researched poorly written essay.
³ We will discuss in class the criteria for choosing one of these options.
Portfolio “Progression” Grade\(^5\) 20%

**General WRTG 3020 Course Description**
This is an advanced interdisciplinary writing seminar. You will complete three major writing projects (at least two of these being essays), informing at least one (and possibly two) of these with significant research at an advanced undergraduate level, with an acute awareness of your intended audience for each. To succeed, you must read each assignment before the day it is listed on the “schedule” part of each “progression” (our word for the schedule part of a syllabus); you must write carefully to the prompts given in each progression and come to class with your work posted to WebCT. You are not required to offer an entirely fresh understanding of the reading, but you should at least have formed a question about it. I may at any time give pop quizzes or call on particular students concerning assigned material, and I reserve the right to include grades on such exams in the Participation and Progression grades. A final exam to determine that you have done all the reading may be required, depending on how seriously the class takes reading assignments, and a passing grade on this would become half the overall “Progression” grade for each student. For this advanced writing seminar, you will be required to work within a writing community, giving and responding to substantial critiques within a “small group” of four to five fellow students.

See the Course Description, and the individual Progressions specific to our topic for more information on the course theme. All serious writing courses require discussion of ideas, as well as of process and technique. Your active engagement with difficult ideas is assumed.\(^6\)

**Progressions**
Our semester will be divided into three stages, with each stage intended to help you master critical skills in the course, and each focused on a particular aspect of our topic.

**Our movement toward the goals of each stage is called a progression because you are expected not simply to improve by repetition, but to improve through a**

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\(^4\) Discussions, presentations, and workshop in class. Note that you cannot do well in this if you do not read assigned material before class, and that I may give unannounced quizzes to determine this. If you suffer from shyness, please send me an email and make an office appointment to discuss how you can still be an active participant in the class. Otherwise, you are expected to speak in class, every class.

\(^5\) This grade indicates how much you’ve moved; how hard you’ve worked, and how much your writing has changed (we hope improved) throughout the course. The Progression Grade is based on all work to be found in WebCT—not only final drafts, but early drafts, revisions, exercises, and critiques—as well as office hour discussions and the degree to which you put class time to good use as a writer and editor.

\(^6\) This course may include discussion of adult themes, such as politics, sexuality, and religion, and we assume that the learning process may include difficult subject matter that may be uncomfortable for any or all of us to discuss. Participation in the course does not mean agreement to discuss issues to which you claim special sensitivity; at the same time, the course makes no promises not to explore ideas that may be found offensive by any particular student or group of students—only to do so in a manner that is fair to all students. If you suspect that a particular reading, viewing, or lecture may offend you and you wish not to attend that day’s class, see me in advance to arrange for an alternative to your attendance.
movement from one way of doing things to another, generally more complex, way of doing things. Our use of this as a spatial metaphor for improvement also helps us avoid the useless worry of moral language about writing (such as the concept of “errors”—a foolish and class-bound way to think about writing that doesn’t work or that is inappropriate for a particular audience or genre), and to focus instead on competency, skill, and facility. If you cannot commit to earnestly improving your writing through multiple drafts, beginning with a serious draft (more than something tossed off to meet the prompt), and working through several significant—perhaps radical—revisions, you should find another section of the course.

Attendance and Participation
Because this is a workshop, you must attend class fully prepared for meaningful participation with the other students.

   The Rules on Absences:

1. I make no distinction between “excused” and “unexcused” absences, so save your doctor’s notes and explanations. Miss only if you must. If you must miss a class, read on.
2. After any absence, contact your fellow students, not me, to find out what you missed.
3. If you miss two classes in the first week, I will drop you from the course.
4. If you miss two classes in the first two weeks, I can drop you from the course.
5. If you miss any three classes in a row, I can drop you from the course.
6. All absences negatively affect your grade. One or two may have little effect, assuming you are very active and engaged in class. (If you’re really sick, we want you to rest!) More than that will definitely pull down your Participation Grade and begin to affect your Progression Grade. Understandable absences mean understandable catch-up work—just as in the rest of your life.
7. If you miss more than six classes total, for any reason, I can give you a failing grade for the course.
8. After any absence, you should return to class with all missed work completed as soon as possible—preferably by that class meeting. In the case of a very serious illness, see me during office hours to arrange a schedule for you to catch up.

Computer Workshop and WebCT

7 The fact that we are capable of contacting each other at any time, night and day, does not mean that we should do so; certainly it does not mean that we should expect immediate answers to every communication. Please, use email only to make an appointment with me. Then come see me during office hours with your questions. All minor questions can always be answered by a rereading of the prompt, of this document, of other material on WebCT, or by asking a fellow student who may have better notes. If not, the fault is mine and will be so critical that I will address the matter in class. In
If you are reading this, you are already somewhat acquainted with WebCT. We will use WebCT throughout the course, in class and outside of class, as a virtual extension of our classroom space. No advanced knowledge of computers is required for the course. If you can type, we can teach you the rest within the course, and we also have dedicated technical support for our class. **All work for the course must be handed in to WebCT. If you have any computer problems, call 5-HELP for technical support.**

You will be assigned a “small group” where you will hand in that work within WebCT, and you are required to read all the posts of your fellow four to five students in this group within half a week. *If you choose to edit each other’s work on hard copy, you must make a copy of this editing and give this to me at the end of the semester (so I know what you’ve been up to in your group). Unless otherwise stated in class, do not hand in any assignments to me in paper form, and please, use my email address only to contact me to arrange office hour meetings—never to send attachments. For security reasons, my computer deletes all student emails with attachments. Furthermore, if you send me a draft by private email, your fellow students will not have access to it.*

For discussion of the course in general, your progress in it, or a particularly interesting reading or writing problem, please see me during office hours. If you have another class during the exact time that I hold office hours, bring me a copy of your registration to that effect, and I will schedule an alternative time to meet with you. I **put a high value on discussing the course during office hours, and I will be happy to help you during that time.** Please feel free to make an appointment as late as that day (though it helps if you make an appointment earlier) and come talk.

**Information Literacy**

This level of course assumes you are somewhat adept at research, but we will improve your research skills through workshop and individual direction. You must make use of many research resources outside of class. Norlin library has an excellent research staff. Make use of whatever open tours there are of the library, and become well acquainted with the resources of the Central Reference Department, beginning at http://www-libraries.colorado.edu/ps/ref/frontpage.htm. Special tutoring services in research are available at http://www-libraries.colorado.edu/ps/ref/peer.htm. **It is assumed that you will conduct a reasonable level of research beyond explicit requirements. It is also generally the case that you should never hand in a paper that has only online sources.**

**Protocols for Assignments**

The format for all major drafts is either MLA or APA style (see appropriate guides), depending on the favored format for your major. Otherwise, I prefer MLA format with parenthetical citation, a proper header, double-spaced throughout, 12-point type throughout, with appropriate indentation for extended quotes, name and page number on every page in the upper right-hand corner, and 1” to 1½” margins. Formal drafts

particular: please do not send emails regarding absences, excuses, etc. Contact your small group instead. I reserve the right to refuse to answer all inappropriate contact by email.
are complete only if they include a Works Cited or Works Consulted page in the same document (but not to be included for the required page count as assigned). Except for inclusion of your name, format is not important on informal exercises. On all drafts of essays, it is: I may refuse assignments that do not conform to all formal requirements. Late essays, if accepted, will be docked 1/3 a letter grade each class they are late. I may only accept drafts in class—and not on days we do not meet (WebCT does not affect the need for us to keep a reasonable schedule). If you have problems with “block,” see me early on during office hours. I may refuse to give written comments on any project if you fail to hand in a full first draft on time.

Keep copies of your work in at least three places: 1) on a main storage drive, 2) on a backup floppy or other drive, 3) and in WebCT. After one week, I will accept no computer-related excuses. I therefore urge you to visit CU’s Information Technology Services for any help you need.

Late and incomplete drafts compromise my schedule for commenting on papers. This means that if you fail to turn in a complete draft on time, you are negatively affecting the teaching and learning for the entire course and even in my other courses. Accordingly, I reserve the right to dock final grades on any project—no matter how impressive—if earlier drafts were not complete and on time.

Special Circumstances

Campus policy regarding religious observances requires that faculty make every effort to reasonably and fairly deal with all students who, because of religious obligations, have conflicts with scheduled exams, assignments or required attendance. In this class, I will make every effort to respect the needs of some students to reschedule attendance and work in order to observe religious holidays. Because even movable religious holidays are scheduled far enough in advance for us to plan ahead, I require that you meet with me at the beginning of the semester to discuss schedule conflicts between a particular holiday and any day that CU has not scheduled as a holiday, so we can determine a reasonable means of avoiding conflicts between course requirements and your religious observance. Other observance will of course be respected within the bounds of CU policy. See full details at:

http://www.colorado.edu/policies/fac_relig.html

If you qualify for accommodations because of a disability, please submit to me a letter from Disability Services in a timely manner so that your needs may be addressed. Disability Services determines accommodations based on documented disabilities.


Classroom Behavior, the Honor Code, Plagiarism, and Sexual Harassment Policies

Classroom Behavior
Students and faculty each have responsibility for maintaining an appropriate learning environment. Students who fail to adhere to such behavioral standards may be subject to discipline. Faculty have the professional responsibility to treat all students with understanding, dignity and respect, to guide classroom discussion and to set reasonable limits on the manner in which they and their students express opinions. Professional courtesy and sensitivity are especially important with respect to individuals and topics dealing with differences of race, culture, religion, politics, sexual orientation, gender variance, and nationalities. Class rosters are provided to the instructor with the student’s legal name. I will gladly honor your request to address you by an alternate name or gender pronoun. Please advise me of this preference early in the semester so that I may make appropriate changes to my records. See polices at http://www.colorado.edu/policies/classbehavior.html and at http://www.colorado.edu/studentaffairs/judicialaffairs/code.html#student_code

All students of this course are expected to follow the Honor Code: http://www.colorado.edu/academics/honorcode/

The Honor Code

All students of the University of Colorado at Boulder are responsible for knowing and adhering to the academic integrity policy of this institution. Violations of this policy may include: cheating, plagiarism, aid of academic dishonesty, fabrication, lying, bribery, and threatening behavior. All incidents of academic misconduct shall be reported to the Honor Code Council (honor@colorado.edu; 303-725-2273). Students who are found to be in violation of the academic integrity policy will be subject to both academic sanctions from the faculty member and non-academic sanctions (including but not limited to university probation, suspension, or expulsion). Other information on the Honor Code can be found at http://www.colorado.edu/policies/honor.html and at http://www.colorado.edu/academics/honorcode/

Plagiarism

We assume that the work you hand in as your own was in fact written by you. If you have any questions about how to quote or paraphrase material so as not to be mistaken for a plagiarist, this course should answer those questions; in any case, I will be happy to meet with you to avoid a misunderstanding. Note that your work may be evaluated through TurnItIn.com, a plagiarism service provided to all faculty at CU-Boulder; and that this service retains a copy of the submitted work for future comparisons. If I find that you have plagiarized, I will give you a failing grade (between 0 and an “F”—50 points on a hundred) for that project (essay or presentation) and may submit a letter to your Dean to be placed in your file. I may fail you for the course for a first offense that is egregious, and I will certainly do so for a second offense.

University Policy on Sexual Harassment

The University of Colorado policy on Sexual Harassment and the University
of Colorado policy on Amorous Relationships applies to all students, staff and faculty. Any student, staff or faculty member who believes s/he has been the subject of discrimination or harassment based upon race, color, national origin, sex, age, disability, religion, sexual orientation, or veteran status should contact the Office of Discrimination and Harassment (ODH) at 303-492-2127 or the Office of Judicial Affairs at 303-492-5550. Information about the ODH and the campus resources available to assist individuals regarding discrimination or harassment can be obtained at http://www.colorado.edu/odh and at http://www.colorado.edu/policies/discrimination.html

Grade Protests and Other Conflicts
If you feel that a grade you have received is unfair, you should make an appointment to see me during office hours and make your case. If you are not satisfied after that, you may request that I print a copy of the assignment and give it to another reader in the Program for Writing and Rhetoric. The grade for your paper may be adjusted up or down in light of the comments given by the additional reader.

The Program in Writing and Rhetoric has an ombudsperson to help you resolve any concerns or conflicts you may have. Please contact the main office, at 303-492-8188, for more information.

Grading Guidelines:
Each letter has a range from + to -. The following are guidelines for the range within each letter.

A  Excellent Work. A paper that is superior in style, form, and content. Not necessarily perfect, but approaching perfection. The paper is ambitious in conception and successful in revision. To earn this as a participation grade requires remarkable hard work on the drafts of fellow students, earnest and interesting contributions to class discussions, and no more than two or three absences total.

B  Good Work. The paper is superior in one, but average in another of the following: thought, form, and style. There are a few mistakes, but not many. The paper may be ambitious and fail—though not too badly. Or the paper may be good—but not superior—in thought, but very well executed. There may be one significant but not major fault in thought, form, or style. In participation, this grade requires work that stands out above the class average. You absolutely cannot earn this, or a higher grade, if you do not regularly, with enthusiasm, participate in class discussions—or, if you are shy, make

8 CU’s final grades do not include an “A+.” If you reach an “A” for your final grade, that’s as good as an “A+” during the semester.
arrangements for alternative participation.

C Average Work. The paper exhibits strengths but weaknesses. The writing is readable at the surface level, and has an idea, but it will have significant, unresolved problems in more than one key area: quality of idea, reasoning, and evidence; or word choice, stance, and structure. The paper may fulfill basic requirements yet say little of importance or significance—or a well-written paper that does not satisfy a significant part of the assignment. In participation, this grade reflects showing up, surface reading, and average or below-average contribution to discussions and workshop.

D Inferior Work. A paper that is seriously underdeveloped and deficient in content, form, style, or mechanics. It may be disorganized, illogical, confusing, unfocused, or contain pervasive errors that impair readability. A paper that does not come close to meeting the basic expectations of the assignment—including length. In participation, this grade reflects a lack of contribution to the class effort, missed readings, failure to critique the work of fellow students, and generally insufficient attention to the workshop.

F Failing Work. A paper that is incoherent, disastrously flawed, unacceptably late, plagiarized, or non-existent. Any paper that fails to meet basic requirements of page length, number of sources, and genre (for instance, a “book report” when a “close reading” was required by the prompt) can earn a paper an “F.” In participation, this grade reflects the attendance and contributions of a student unable to adequately participate in the course, or one indifferent—or hostile—to fellow students or the goals of the seminar.
Dr. Jay Ellis
Spring 2006; Sections 049 and 064
jay.ellis@colorado.edu for appointments only
Office: Program in Writing and Rhetoric, 1B50C
(Basement of Environmental Design Building)
Office Hours: T/Th 12:45 to 1:45 and by appointment
Note: To schedule a meeting, please write to me or ask in class. I keep far more than the
minimum three office hours a week, on average, but to schedule extra hours (when possible)
on Wednesdays and Fridays, I may meet with you at a nearby cafe, etc. So, write to confirm a
time and place. I greatly value office hours and prefer to meet with students to discuss the
course. For this reason, I may not return emails that are not specifically requesting a meeting
with me.

Don't Fence Me In
Progression I:
Dimensional American Fictions

I don't know what happens to country.
—John Grady Cole in All the Pretty Horses

Representation of the world, like the world itself, is the work of men;
they describe it from their own point of view, which they confuse with the absolute truth.
Simone de Beauvoir

Schedule

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<th>Focus</th>
<th>Reading/Viewing</th>
<th>Writing Due</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>1/17</td>
<td>Introduction; WebCT; Noticing Dickinson</td>
<td>[Dickinson In Class]</td>
<td>[In-Class Free Write on the Course Title]</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| 2   | 1/19 | Close Reading Dickinson; Transparency and Opacity | Policies and Requirements; Progression I; Dickinson
| 3   | 1/24 | Dickinson Spaces; Close Reading Whitman; The Critical Spectrum | Dickinson; Whitman's “Crossing Brooklyn Ferry” | Tropes Ex. 1 |
| 4   | 1/26 | The Dickinson and Whitman Spectrum | Whitman (Reread with Marginalia) | Tropes Ex. 2 |

1 McCarthy, Cormac. All the Pretty Horses. NY: Knopf, 1992. 299.
3 All texts for this Progression are located in (or linked to from) the “Readings” section of our WebCT.
Progression I Exercises and Essay Prompt

Noticing Dickinson:
Simply make a list of things you “notice” in two Dickinson poems (reading is on WebCT). We will discuss in class briefly how to do this, but your main reminder here is that you should do your best to forego all interpretation. Rather than telling us what something “means,” simply indicate it. (For example, “I notice that Wallace Stevens has a lot of prepositions in his poem titles.”) This list should consist of at least a dozen items, total. Be prepared to comment in class without me calling on you; any student who does not speak up in class during discussion of a reading should schedule a meeting with me to discuss either strategies to successfully participate in class discussion, or alternative means of contributing to the class.

Tropes Exercise, Parts I, II, and III
Please refer to the Tropes Exercise in “Notes on Composition.” For a reference, follow the “Web Link” for “Silva Rhetoricae.”
Further directions for those of us bad at figuring out directions:
1. Open the “Tropes Exercise” in “Notes on Composition” in WebCT. You can block and copy this into Word and save it for future reference.
2. Go to “Web Links” in WebCT, and click on the “Silva Rhetoricae” link. This is one of many good sites for tropes and rhetorical figures, and you can easily use this site to find most of the terms I list in the exercise; others you can find using Google or one of the references I cite at the bottom of the exercise.
3. To begin Part I, simply write out or copy the definitions you find. Of course, to really get anything out of this, it will help if you can translate the definition you find into your own words—showing that you truly understand the trope or rhetorical device in question.

Essentially, this exercise begins as an Easter egg hunt: you simply have to look up some terms and become familiar with them. Then, you put this vocabulary into play in the beginnings of close reading toward your eventual essay. For example, one of the ten terms you define might be “kenning,” which you might go on to “notice” as a device used by Crane, which then leads
you to close reading for insights about the gender space in that story (what, after all, does “he of the six guns” mean?). Part III of the exercise does not have to be done with a text you will write on, but of course, it wouldn’t hurt to be working in the direction of your essay.

250-Word Abstract
Simply indicate what text or texts you will be examining in your close reading essay, and on what you intend to focus. This will probably be a progression from your Tropes exercise, but if you prefer, you may choose a different text or texts for your essay. In 250 words, tell us where you’re looking, how you plan on reading the text (what feature of it will you focus on), and (less importantly) what you expect to find.

Close Reading Essay
In four to six pages, write an interpretive essay that focuses on one or two of the texts we’ve read in an examination of space (in whatever form) in that work, perhaps drawing on your own personal narrative concerning space. We will go over various types of space in these texts, both in aesthetic and semantic terms. Your primary evidence for your interpretation must be the primary text: close reading is the focus; other voices are not required. (You’ll do a lot of research next essay!) For practice, include a Works Cited that simply lists the primary work or works under consideration.

Critiques
Critique at least one student essay from your small group. All members of each group are responsible for determining who critiques which essay so that everyone does a critique, and everyone receives a critique. Round robin is preferable to pairing off. (Ex: instead of Anne and Simon trading essays, while Alberto and Sarah trade papers; Anne critiques Simon’s, who critiques Alberto’s, who critiques Sarah’s, who critiques Anne’s.) Obviously, it will be all the more important for an student unavoidably absent to stay in touch with his or her group, so that no one gets missed. We will go over Word commenting tools so that all critiques will be electronic, posted to WebCT, in Microsoft Word. If you expect any problems with Word documents, get help sooner, rather than later.

Briefly, all serious critiques will consist of at least one substantive paragraph of overall reaction, and will also employ various commenting techniques (at least the “comment” sticky-note feature) throughout the essay. A good critique, including reading time, should take at least half an hour to an hour per essay.

“2nd” and subsequent critiques should usually be on a different student’s paper. The minimum requirement for this progression, for instance, is two critiques, or two different student’s papers. Better students will of course informally continue to work together throughout a progression, and would therefore in this progression end up doing at least three critiques: one on a first draft, one on a second draft but also a follow-up on the first essay they critiqued. Failure of fellow students within a group to post a full draft in Word is no excuse for not doing critiques; you can always roam into other groups and do volunteer critiques—even in sections other than yours.
Final Revision of Essay

Remember to review the Requirements and Policies Sheet, the Progression Checklist (in “Notes on Composition”), and the above prompt before handing in your final draft. Also be sure to read aloud, and if possible to listen to someone else read your work aloud, to catch things the eye—and spell check—misses.
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Spring 2006; Sections 049 and 064
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Note: To schedule a meeting, please write to me or ask in class. I keep far more than the minimum three office hours a week, on average, but to schedule extra hours (when possible) on Wednesdays and Fridays, I may meet with you at a nearby cafe, etc. So, write to confirm a time and place. I greatly value office hours and prefer to meet with students to discuss the course. For this reason, I may not return emails that are not specifically requesting a meeting with me.

Don’t Fence Me In
Progression II:
Violence, Identity, and Western Spaces

I ain’t like that no more.
*Unforgiven*

What kind of Indians was they?
*Blood Meridian*

I don’t deserve this. [. . .] I was building a house.
*Unforgiven*

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<td>1</td>
<td>2/21</td>
<td>Progression Review; Information Literacy: Ethos, Credibility, Veracity, and Web Sites</td>
<td></td>
<td>[Progression I Final Draft]</td>
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<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>2/23</td>
<td>Questions from <em>Blood Meridian:</em> “What kind of Indians:” Violence and Identity</td>
<td><em>Blood Meridian</em> to p. 54</td>
<td><em>Blood Meridian</em> Response</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>2/28</td>
<td>“I was building a house:” Western Spaces in <em>Unforgiven</em></td>
<td><em>Unforgiven</em>¹; (<em>Blood Meridian</em> to p. 108)</td>
<td>Noticing <em>Unforgiven</em></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

¹ You must have seen the film by this date. It’s widely available, but you’ll find it best to plan ahead—perhaps even seeing the film with your small group or at least another student outside class. You may view the film at Norlin (call to make sure
### Progression II Exercises and Essay Prompt

#### Noticing and Responses

First, make sure you get down lists of things you notice in the viewing and reading for the progression. Second, write brief responses (at least) to the texts. Remembering that one part of your evidence for this essay will consist of close reading, you’ll most likely be writing something useful for the first draft of the essay, and you’ll have the opportunity to think ahead toward an abstract.

#### 300-Word Abstract

First, indicate not only what primary text or texts you will be examining, but some key passages or scenes that you might want to focus on. In 300 words, tell us where you’re looking, how you plan on reading the text (what feature of it will you focus on), and what you expect to find. Second, indicate what disciplinary, or interdisciplinary, research you plan for this essay. Most likely you will not have done much, if any, research at this point. But what do you need for this project, and where do you expect to look for it? Of course, you’ll want to look ahead to the essay prompt to get a good sense of the project requirements in the final revision.

#### Preliminary Bibliography

they have it available and not on hold for another class). And, of course, these days a film like this costs less than a book to purchase used on the internet.

\(^3\) Bring all sources to class where possible for the rest of the Progression. This is particularly important if you check out one of the collections of criticism on McCarthy or Eastwood; I’d like you to share such items within reason.
Your preliminary bibliography is the working draft of your future “Works Cited.” Look ahead to the research requirements given in the prompt below. List your primary source(s), at least one or two significant secondary sources, and at least one tertiary source. Be sure to get help from research librarians in Norlin, and see the many links to sources given here in WebCT—in Web Links but also from the Progression II Extensions page. Make judicious use of Google and, if you know how, online article access through Chinook (we’ll cover this last resource in class). This is a working document, and for reasons of format it’s easiest at first to keep it a separate document. Note, however, that once you begin drafts of the essay, I need you to at least cut and paste all your bibliographic information into the bottom of the same document as your essay (so I can open it all at once). Finally, to do well on this part of the progression, you need to make some notes beneath each entry. For example:


This early book-length volume was the first full treatment of the McCarthy novel and consists of notes on likely sources for the book’s many (surprisingly many) historical references. Beginning with lists of character and place names, Sepich’s *Notes* grew to encompass more in-depth arguments about several passages in the novel, including non-historical literary references.

OK, a tough example! (Sad, this book is out of print and will likely be available only when I get my copy on reserve.) But you get the idea. For more help on how to do this bibliography, google the term “annotated bibliography.” And remember, a serious essay will likely begin with more than a quick cut and paste of easy sources.

**Scholarly Essay**

In five to seven pages, write a scholarly essay on some problem of violence, identity, or space in the West. These are large terms, of course, and might also be combined for a topic. To make them work, you’ll want to narrow at least one of them. Example:

“Senseless and Sensible: Varieties of Retributive Violence from *Blood Meridian* to 9/11”

Another tough example! But one that could work using both the McCarthy text and Ward Churchill’s arguments supporting retributive violence. (Churchill’s 9/11 essay is not assigned, but an example of another primary text you could use.) Such an essay (admittedly ambitious) would necessarily also address issues of identity. To make this example work, one would need to narrow the question of identity, such as a focus on the question “What kind of Indians [or highjackers] was them?” Here’s a more narrow example:

“*Unforgiven* Domestic Violence Inside Out”

This one would naturally close read the scenes of violence against women, as well as their mud (and horse manure) attack outside Greely’s, and could draw on sociological and psychological research on domestic violence, as well as film studies of same, and of course, secondary material directly on the film.

As always, the general territory of “space” of any kind is merely a conceit of the course. *As the most important goal of the course is to help you improve your writing, please do not feel you must force an otherwise interesting topic under the rubric of “space.”* Similarly, primary texts other than those assigned for the whole class are allowed, *with specific permission*. That
said, we will have to make sure your workload is fair, so no “double-dipping” without special permission, which generally includes a more extensive project.

Note that as always, **you absolutely must have a full five to seven page first draft to receive comments from me and for me not to dock your grade.** Yet, this draft can be formative, and we expect radical revision before your final draft. **Minimum sources for the first draft: four.**

This essay may include your voice as you see fit, provided that strategy works within what we will call a *familiar scholarly essay*. In any case, your close reading of one or more of the texts for this progression should be put in conversation with relevant *scholarship* at both the secondary and tertiary levels.

Secondary scholarship simply means something written directly about your primary text(s). Tertiary scholarship means at least one item from a particular disciplinary angle on your idea—one that is not particularly—or at all—geared toward your primary text, but one that helps you make your argument about that text. (An essay on guns as synecdoche in both texts, for instance, might draw on the work of Jacques Lacan; one on changing ideas of “the West” in either primary text, on the other hand, could draw on a famous essay by Fredrick Jackson Turner.) Initially, you may have all electronic sources—but not in the final draft.

In subject, you may now range more widely than a purely “literary” or “film studies” essay. But, while your essay may address a particular (not too universal!) problem of space in American life, you should at the very least use your primary text as a perfect occasion (more than a mere excuse) in which to view that problem. So, you have a spectrum along which you may work: from a purely aesthetic consideration of the primary text, to an essay that is very much about some problem in the world, and yet that seems to require significant attention to that text in order for us to understand that problem.

**Final Revision of Essay**

**In seven to ten pages, write a scholarly essay** on following the above prompt. Remember to review the Requirements and Policies Sheet, the Progression Checklist (in “Notes on Composition”), and the above prompt before handing in your final draft. Also be sure to read aloud, and if possible to listen to someone else read your work aloud, to catch things the eye—and spell check—misses.

Be sure that your evidence comes in
1. **Close Reading** in the primary text(s),
2. **Secondary Research**: solid scholarship on that text,
3. and **Tertiary Research**: scholarly sources on whatever disciplinary (or interdisciplinary) angle you choose.

While your personal evidence might also work at some point, you will always want to avoid faulty generalization, hypothetical arguments, etc. **Be specific**, and work your way up from the details to the larger idea.

**Minimum sources**: five, including your primary text (if one; if you use both primary texts, you will need four secondary and/or tertiary sources). Without a waiver from me, at least one of your secondary or tertiary sources must be in paper form, i.e., not available as full text online; at least one of your sources must be a peer-reviewed journal article. **Most, though not all, successful essays will employ more than the minimum number of sources.** Finally, with
permission from me, you may work on some text other than the two primary texts we have used in class. All essays must be in correct format, MLA style unless you use another for your discipline, in which case APA, etc., are allowed.
Progression II Primary Source Bibliography


*Unforgiven*. Clint Eastwood, dir. Warner Bros, 1992.\(^3\)

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\(^3\) Note that if you write on the film, you may need to list other aspects of the film depending on your focus. A paper that focused on the character of Ned, for instance, would include "Morgan Freeman" as an actor. See the MLA guide (or link) for more details.
Progression III:

Extended Spatial Arguments in Civic Scholarly Rhetoric

Or

Creative Writing on Space

I'm happy when the revisions are big.
I'm not speaking of stylistic revisions,
but of revisions in my own understanding.

—Saul Bellow

I believe more in the scissors than I do in the pencil.

—Truman Capote

This Progression has two options: you will write a proposal, essay, think piece, or editorial devoted to civic rhetoric on space (an argument about some spatial problem in the world), or a significant piece of creative writing. As we will see in class, civic rhetoric is simply rhetoric—argument—that attempts to address a problem in the real world. There are two options for a
civic rhetoric essay (one essentially brings your previous essay to a different audience, while of course improving on that essay; the other is a new essay or editorial). See the prompts below the Schedule for more guidance.

Students wishing to take the creative writing option must meet with me or post a convincing argument during the first week of the progression to make sure you have done well enough at the previous research essay, and to discuss the kind of writing you would like to do. The workload, difficulty, and grading standards for creative work will be as difficult—but no more so—as for the essay option. No previous experience at creative writing is necessary, and as usual, very hard work at something a student wants to learn—yet may not have had much experience in—is rewarded in the overall “Progression through the Semester” grade.

For all options, students are encouraged to seek publication of their final revision, where the success of that revision merits it. Office hours would be the best way for me to help with this, but I can also simply give quick advice on where and how to submit your writing for publication.

## Schedule

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<th>Date</th>
<th>Focus</th>
<th>Reading Due</th>
<th>Essay Option Writing Due</th>
<th>Creative Writing Due</th>
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<td>4/11</td>
<td>Meta-Writing; 10-Minute Papers; Progression Review: What Space?</td>
<td>Civic: Turner; Creative Writing: Individual Assignments</td>
<td>[Final Prog II Essay]</td>
<td>[Final Prog II Essay]</td>
</tr>
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<td>4/13</td>
<td>Finding a Civic Focus; CW Process</td>
<td>Civic: Schama; CW: Individual Assignments</td>
<td>Turner Response Paragraph</td>
<td>Mentor/Author Profile</td>
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<td>4/18</td>
<td>Full Class: Editorial Space; Kristoff; Workshop</td>
<td>Civic: Kristoff; CW: Individual Assignments</td>
<td>Meta Letter</td>
<td>Rough Draft of Short Work or 300 Words of Longer Work</td>
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<td>4</td>
<td>4/20</td>
<td>Civic Class: Schama; CW: Workshop</td>
<td>Civic: Schama; CW: Individual Assignments</td>
<td>Rough Draft</td>
<td>Significant Revision or 300 New Words; Critique 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>4/25</td>
<td>Full Class Workshop on Stance</td>
<td>Civic: Individual Research; Revision CW; Critical Work on Mentor/Author Individual Research</td>
<td>Critique</td>
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<td>6</td>
<td>4/27</td>
<td>FCQ’s; Workshop</td>
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<td>Critique</td>
<td>Full Revision; Critique 2</td>
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<td>Workshop</td>
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<td>Revision</td>
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<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>5/4</td>
<td>Workshop</td>
<td></td>
<td>Critique</td>
<td>Significant Revision; Critique 4</td>
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<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>5/5</td>
<td>No Class; Papers Due on WebCT by Regular Class Time (Section 049: 11:00 pm; Section 064: 3:30 pm)</td>
<td>Final Draft</td>
<td>Final Draft(s)</td>
<td></td>
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Meta-Letter (for Essay Options)

Write a letter to a family member or an acquaintance who is not in this class. Keep any introduction into what you’re about to write to a bare minimum. We must assume you are writing to someone who will be interested to read from you a letter about what you’re thinking and writing on in this class, so jump right into the important part of what you want to say. In this letter, you might describe your final revision for Progression II and then describe what you would like to turn that essay into before the end of our class. Or, you might describe your thinking toward a new essay or editorial on a civic problem of space. How will you make this essay work for a civic—not necessarily academic—audience. Be sure to include both some speculative thinking, and some concrete ideas on what, exactly, you will do next in this project. What sources might you use? Who cares about this problem? And why?

Mentor/Author Work (for Creative Writing Options)

You cannot write fiction or poetry without reading it—indeed, without reading a lot of it. Although much of your choice of reading with be a self-study, I will advise you on whose work you might study in order to either model your work on theirs, or at least in order to employ some of the technical aspects of their work. To begin with, you’ll do some research on authors, then choose one and write a one-page “Profile,” including a brief close reading of some of their work. Biographical information is fine, but the place of an author within a movement, etc., is even better. Best of all would be to recognize some technical aspect of the author’s work and to discuss that. I’ll be helping you with this as necessary, of course.

Civic Writing Options Project Requirements

Written Projects: First Draft
Choose **one** option for a written project:

1) Write a three to five page **Proposal** (four pages minimum if graphics of any kind—spreadsheet, pie chart, graph, etc.—are included). The proposal must have a clearly defined audience that is in a position to effect specific changes regarding space or place. After reading your proposal, you should have reasonable expectations that you can influence a majority of your audience to act on your plan. Minimum of six sources for this option.

2) Write a four to six page **Familiar Essay** on issues of space or place. While you may draw on personal experience, and or, some creative writing techniques, you must at some point seriously consider more than one position on the particular problem you address. While your audience may be general, you should attempt to create an impetus to action on the part of your readers. This is **more** than an editorial, and should include at least three textual sources of evidence (albeit translated for a general audience). For examples, see well-written general magazines (**The Atlantic**
Monthly, The New Yorker, The Utne Reader, The Nation). After reading this essay, your readers will either agree with you or not—but they should all respect the structure and style of your argument.

3) Write a five to six page “Think Piece” Article on space or place. For this piece, you should imagine you are a reporter who has been given more space to address a particular problem than you would get in the regular part of a newspaper. You will use at least four—though likely several more—sources of textual evidence, but these will be embedded in your writing for a general audience. Your stance should attempt objectivity. For examples, see the Sunday magazines in newspapers of record (The New York Times, The Washington Post, The Los Angeles Times) and longer articles in magazines such as those mentioned in option 2. This option allows you to spread out and make a clear argument without avoiding complexities, with room to acknowledge complications and several points of view. After reading this article, your readers might have several different points of view, but they will be much more informed about your topic.

4) Write an Editorial. For this option, you need to be clear about the size of your audience: where, exactly, would you submit this editorial? The Daily Camera has a smaller readership and would of course be more likely to concern itself with local issues. The editorial page of The Washington Post, by contrast, concerns itself with more national issues. Editorials are counted by words, rather than pages, and the difficulty in writing a good one is in staying within, rather than going beyond, the form. Go online to a reputable newspaper in which you would want to publish the piece, and copy and paste an editorial there into Word. Do a word count, and that gives you your word limit. Also read through several editorial pages, and note the differences between editorials without bylines and those with. You may write a “letter to the editor,” but we would prefer a longer editorial, such as those written by regular writers for that page, or those written by guest editorial writers.

Creative Writing Option Project Requirements

Creative writing possibilities include one long poem or a series of poems, one short story or a series of bagatelles, a chapter or section of a novel, a one-act play or one act of a longer play, or a creative non-fiction essay. Writers choosing this option should speak with me about readings and exercises to help with particular projects.

Note: process is all-important in doing well with this option. You cannot hope to complete your best effort if you start late, fail to write regularly, etc. I will provide some guidance on the writing process, and will then expect you to stick to the schedule on which we agree. The word “creative” does not allow for missing deadlines.