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 hour appointment and give you a clear indication—within a letter grade—of how you’re doing.

- Progression I Close Reading Essay¹ 15%
- Progression II Scholarly Essay (with substantial research)² 30%
- Progression III Civic Rhetoric or Creative Writing ³ 15%
- Attendance and Active Class Participation⁴ 20%

¹ Essay grades are on the final draft only and indicate degree of success, regardless of intent and process. Whatever you do towards 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. In general, 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 will* drop you from the course.
5. If you miss any three classes in a row, *I will* 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 will give you a failing grade for the course.
8. The *only* exceptions to these rules are in cases of religious observance or of serious illness. I will make every effort to accommodate different levels of observance for any recognized faith. See the CU website for the policy on this: [http://www.colorado.edu/policies/fac_relig.html](http://www.colorado.edu/policies/fac_relig.html). In the rare case of a serious illness (including, of course, mental health problems), you should go ahead and contact me during office hours, or by email, regarding the problem. We can then decide whether it will be possible for you to do well enough in the course—including in your all-important peer critiques—to allow extra absences. “Serious illness” does not include the usual nasty bugs we all have to endure. If you do not waste an allowable number of absences on something frivolous, you can miss as much as a week to recover from a bad case of the flu, etc. *In cases of allowable exceptions for serious illness,* I may still decide that it would be unreasonable to allow you to remain
in the course, in which case I will then be willing to argue for a late
drop on your behalf. Because this is a workshop relying on active
participation and collaborative editing, your ability to catch up in
your own work is not a sufficient measure of your ability to remain in
the course. To remain in the course with extra absences, my
determination of the effect of your absences on other students will
provide the ultimate measure.

9. After any absence, you should return to class with all missed work
completed as soon as possible—preferably by that class meeting (see
point 2 above). Any exceptions to this must be approved by me during
office hours, or, in cases of serious illness only, email.

Computer Workshop and WebCT

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.

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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
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.
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 1¼” margins. Formal drafts 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 (The ability to post to WebCT at any time does not eliminate 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 will 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), report you for an Honor Code violation, and submit a letter 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 even of unintentional plagiarism.** If you are worried about unintentional plagiarism (when to use quotes, how to cite paraphrase, or what can be regarded as common knowledge), remember that these subjects are part of our study. No well-intentioned student should fail to benefit from our discussion of standard academic protocols for recognizing intellectual property.

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 for Writing and Rhetoric Bylaws include the following procedures for any conflict between students and instructors:

Section VII C. [Conflicts] Between a student and a faculty member
1. If a student wishes to challenge a grade, s/he shall follow the relevant procedure on file in the PWR office.

2. If a student and a faculty member have a conflict,
   a. They should first meet with one another and attempt to resolve the issue.
   b. If this fails, one or both may meet with the PWR conflict resolution coordinator to attempt to resolve the issue(s).
   c. If this fails, either party may meet with the director, who will consult with the faculty member and student at the earliest appropriate stage of the process, to attempt to resolve the grievance.

This means that the Program in Writing and Rhetoric has a Conflict Resolution Coordinator to help you resolve any concerns or conflicts you may have after you meet with me. 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 (Above Average) 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 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.

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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.
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 2007; Sections 061 and 075  
jay.ellis@colorado.edu for appointments only  
Office: Program in Writing and Rhetoric, 1B50C  
(Basement of Environmental Design Building)  
Office Hours: T/Th 12:30 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) 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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<td>Introduction; WebCT; Noticing Dickinson</td>
<td>[Dickinson In Class]</td>
<td>[In-Class Free Write on the Course Title]</td>
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<td>1/18</td>
<td>Policies Review; Close Reading Dickinson; Transparency and Opacity</td>
<td>Policies and Requirements; Progression I; Dickinson</td>
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<td>3</td>
<td>1/23</td>
<td>Dickinson Spaces; Close Reading Whitman; The Critical Spectrum; Tropes Review</td>
<td>Dickinson; Whitman's “Crossing Brooklyn Ferry”</td>
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<td>4</td>
<td>1/25</td>
<td>The Dickinson and Whitman Spectrum; From Tropes to Close Reading</td>
<td>Whitman (Reread with Marginalia)</td>
<td>Tropes Ex. 2</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

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.
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<th>Week</th>
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| 5    | 1/30 | Crane’s Details; Close Reading Practice; What’s an Abstract?  
Stephen Crane’s “The Bride Comes to Yellow Sky”  
Tropes Ex. 3 |
| 6    | 2/1  | Crane’s Spaces; Close Reading Examples; Process: How Do I Write This Thing?  
Stephen Crane (Reread with Marginalia)  
250-Word Abstract |
| 7    | 2/6  | Editorial Roles; Critiques; W.C. and Size  
Begin Reading Blood Meridian for Progression II  
Essay Rough Draft |
| 8    | 2/8  | Workshop: W.C. and Beads  
Peer Essays  
Critique |
| 9    | 2/13 | Workshop: W.C. and Hit List; Word Counts (Not “to be”)  
Peer Essays  
Essay Second Major Draft |
| 10   | 2/15 | Workshop: Punctuation Review  
Peer Essays  
2nd Critique |
| 11   | 2/20 | Meta-Writing; Progression Review; Information Literacy  
Final Essay |

### Progression I Exercises and Essay Prompt

**A Note on All Reading Assignments:**

Because we must have reliable evidence on which to base everything we write (even feelings and personal experience cannot be counterfeited without paying a high price before Oprah), you must finish all readings before the class date on which they are due. You will receive a failing grade for the Participation and Overall Progression portions of the final grade—regardless of how good your essays prove to be (based, we would then assume, on catch-up reading)—if you regularly fail to read assignments on time.

The assignment of “Marginalia” simply means that you should come to class with a reading printed out (if I provide it on WebCT), and marked up by you. **Throw away the highlighter, and use a pen or pencil instead.** We need more than underlining—though that’s helpful. We need notes, questions, even frustrations, written in your margins as you read, or at least when you reread, an assignment. Engage with the text, and come to class prepared with at least one comment or question for every reading.

**Noticing Dickinson:**

For this assignment, 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**

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1. It is critical that you begin to read the novel assigned for the next Progression as soon as you can. See Progression II for specific page assignments, but be sure you read through at least a few pages of this difficult novel before you decide you can breeze through it; many find the style and the depth of the ideas in the book require a little more time. Most will want to stay ahead of the class schedule for finishing chapters, lest they fall behind in Prg II.
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 for now) 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 for each class you see that a critique is due. 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 a 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.*
Dr. Jay Ellis  
Spring 2007; Sections 061 and 075  
jay.ellis@colorado.edu for appointments only  
Office: Program in Writing and Rhetoric, 1B50C  
(Basement of Environmental Design Building)  
Office Hours: T/Th 12:30 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) 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*

**Schedule**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Day</th>
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<th>Focus</th>
<th>Reading/Viewing</th>
<th>Writing Due</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>2/20</td>
<td>Progression Review; Information Literacy: Ethos, Credibility, Veracity, and Web Sites</td>
<td></td>
<td>[Progression I Final Draft]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>2/22</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 (See Alternate Prompts Below)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>2/27</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 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.
Progression II Exercises and Essay Prompt

Noticing and Responses

Special Note: Please be careful to label all posts that might contain “spoilers” with the words “possible spoilers” in the subject line of your post. This only refers, of course, to posts that “drift” into the reading assigned for a future class. In other words, if you’re posting for the first day and you mention something that happens beyond page 54, you want to warn your group that your post might spoil something in the plot beyond that page.

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.

Alternative Responses

For those students who benefit from a more structured prompt for responses, here are prompts for each days reading or viewing. You may choose any of the following prompts to guide your “responses,” or you may write on some other aspect of the primary text that interests you.

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2 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.
**Blood Meridian:** 3 Responses Total are Required. I’m providing several prompts to encourage variety—some are easy, some much more difficult—and you may post more than three times, of course.

For the reading up to page 54:
- Choose one of the epigraphs (see the unnumbered first page following the title page) and venture some reasonable inferences as to how one or more epigraphs function as textual doorways into this novel. Without (necessarily) performing any research, can you “notice” and then begin to “close read” the likely purpose of a particular epigraph?
- What might we make of the word, “clay” at the top of page 5?
- What might be the judge’s rhetorical purpose in the Reverend Green’s tent? In the bar?
- How do the kid and Toadvine bond?
- Comment on the longest sentence you’ve found to this point.

For the reading up to page 108:
- What’s wrong with Sproule?
- Which Jackson wins? How and why (perhaps)?
- Compare the first description of Indians with the first description of the Glanton gang.

For the reading up to page 204:
- Why does the judge discuss geology?
- How do you make gunpowder (on the run)?
- Who complains about the Tiguas?
- Why does the judge tell the parable of the harnessmaker?
- Discuss the final paragraph of Chapter XIII. What change is indicated in this single paragraph?
- Discuss the problem of epistemology raised by Holden.

For the reading up to page 304:
- What, exactly, does the kid do regarding Shelby? Why?
- Discuss the description of animals in the kid’s absence from the gang.
- Discuss Holden’s second discourse on epistemology.
- What should we make of the phrase, “neuter austerity,” on page 247?
- What is the function of the chapter concerning James Robert and “The Borginnis?”
- What goes wrong when the gang settles down? Go beyond what merely happens—why do you think this happens—or why does the book include this turn of events?

For the reading through the end:
- What is the kid charged with by a significant character? Do you think he’s guilty?
- What does the kid do with the woman in the mountains?
- What is Elrod’s problem?
- What happens at the very end (not including the Epilogue)?
- What happens in the Epilogue?

**Unforgiven:** 2 Responses Total are Required. Again, I’m providing several possibilities. Choose what you like from this list—or write about some other aspect of the film. You’ll note that I’ve included no prompts here concerning dialogue. This does not rule out discussion of the dialogue, of course, but I rather hope to encourage students unaccustomed to writing about film also to see (and hear) other aspects of this film.
• Comment on the use of sound in the film (perhaps including music).
• What might we make of the character names?
• Discuss the sets used in the film. (Buildings were constructed completely—as stand-
alone buildings, unlike the usual false-fronts often used for films.) What might we
notice about the various interior shots in this film? Why might that prove important?
• Discuss the blocking (where people are standing, when and where they move, etc.) of
the “delivery of the ponies” scene. You might also include some comment on the sound
effects in this scene.
• What trope or tropes are employed around the word, “gun?” Try to cite at least two
examples of this (there are more).
• Discuss lighting in the film. Which scenes are dark, which light, and why?
• Discuss camera placement, and perhaps movement, or perhaps edits (cutting) in one
scene. How does the combination of shots reinforce—or, perhaps, add contrast to—the
primary effect of a scene?
• What is the function of W. W. Beau champ in this film? (And why is he called “W.
W.”?)
• What similarities and differences do you see between the film’s climactic confrontation
and the way such encounters were described earlier by Little Bill?
• What is the difference between the opening and closing shots (the prologue and
epilogue shots, as it were)?

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

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! (Sadly, 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 arguments supporting retributive violence. 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 (paraphrasing McCarthy), "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 civic rhetoric 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.

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<th>Creative Writing Due</th>
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<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>4/17</td>
<td>Meta-Writing; 10-Minute Papers; Progression Review: What Space?</td>
<td>[Final Prog II Essay]</td>
<td>[Final Prog II Essay]</td>
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<td>2</td>
<td>4/19</td>
<td>Finding a Civic Focus; CW Process</td>
<td>Civic: Turner; Creative Writing: Individual Assignments</td>
<td>Turner Response Paragraph</td>
<td>Mentor/Author Profile</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>4/24</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>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>4/26</td>
<td>FCQ’s; 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>5/1</td>
<td>Full Class Workshop on Stance</td>
<td>Civic: Individual Research; CW: Critical Work on Mentor/Author</td>
<td>Revision</td>
<td>Significant Revision or 300 New Words</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>5/3</td>
<td>Workshop</td>
<td>Individual Research</td>
<td>Critique</td>
<td>Full Revision; Critique 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>5/4</td>
<td>No Class; Papers Due on WebCT by end of the day</td>
<td>Final Draft</td>
<td>Final Draft(s)</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Meta-Letter (for Civic Rhetoric 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)

As no musician can play well without listening carefully to other musicians, writers must read. You must show in your work for this option that you have undertaken a serious, if necessarily brief, study of at least one author working in the medium you choose. 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. Because this option understandably must emphasize effort (as opposed to success) a little more than success when it comes to your grade, a significant part of your grade will be determined by how much you seem to have tried to learn from the tricks and techniques of one or more other writers.

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, or for not reading suggested works by other writers.*