Program for Writing and Rhetoric:
WRTG 3020: Xcultural Writing & Film

Fall 2008
Tony Ruiz

Ofc. Hrs.: MW 1:00-2:45 or by appt.
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For contact, always best to email: tony.ruiz@colorado.edu

Course website: spot.colorado.edu/~truiz/pwr3020ruiz.html
Blog: http://wrtg3020.blogspot.com/

Mailbox: If you must miss class and wish to turn in an assignment, place your work in my mailbox - Environmental Design Bldg., lower level, PWR lobby

As a prerequisite to taking this course, students acknowledge and accept all policies listed on this syllabus.

Required Texts
All readings posted on website, several of which must be printed.

Course Topic
I will define our course subject simply as cultural difference and rhetorical awareness. There are a number of competing accounts on the definition and significance of these terms, and so part of our work will be to account for some of the major concepts and arguments surrounding these terms. The two subjects for the course necessarily complement each other: in order to understand the current debates regarding the politics of cultural difference, we must examine our own presuppositions and ask questions grounded in rhetoric: What is the language I’m speaking? Where does this language come from? What are the rules of this language? Given these rules, what are the inevitable outcomes?

Writing and Communication
Your ability to organize information, with precision, for a target audience is as important as is any given skill in your discipline. We will examine writing conventions such as organization, concision, and audience, to name a few, in the advanced context of our course content and your research and writing. With an understanding that ideas are only as strong as their communication, we will also study a selection of basic prose style and grammar/usage conventions. Workshops will provide a collaborative and supportive environment to study and
practice these writing strategies. Reading will comprise a major component of the course (and I hope to offer interesting and varied literature). In addition, we will explore our topic by reading in a variety of genres, providing an opportunity to study the way writing occurs in alternative contexts and for alternative purposes.

**Rhetoric**

In addition, our goal is to hone your ability to identify complex relationships and to communicate that complexity to an audience. One important dimension of this practice is to recognize that our social experience is comprised of competing narratives and discourses. Rhetoric has us question how we make meaning, and what are the strategies for inquiry, persuasion, and communication toward a specific purpose. The answers to these questions requires understanding several general rhetorical tools for analysis as well as effective work in your research and writing. Finally, what distinguishes this course from introduction writing courses is the range and complexity of the theories, methods, and practices in our two primary subjects. Your goal as a student reader, writer, and thinker is to identify these complex relationships and communicate that complexity with clarity and purpose to an audience. My goal is to present solid strategies for meeting these intellectual pursuits.

**Major Semester Assignments for Grade**

Assignments: All documents submitted for grade must be original and drafted in this course.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>I: Quizes &amp; Writing &quot;Prompts&quot;</th>
<th>15%</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Prompts: - 1-2 pg. expository writing assignments</td>
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<tr>
<td>Quizes: readings and grammar/usage</td>
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<tr>
<td>Rhetorical Analysis Assignment (3pgs.)</td>
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**September**

**II: Essay #1: Personal Essay: Reasons to Believe: Reflections on Ethical Commitment and Social Difference, or BLOG (meeting comparable requirments) 15%**

Investigating the notion of cross-cultural difference calls for a reflection into your own presumpositions regarding difference. This assignment has you reflect upon influences upon your own development of "the call" for ethical or social awareness in regards to difference.

**October**

**III: Essay #2: Investigative Essay/Comparative Analysis: Perspectives on a Contemporary Xcultural issue 30%**

You will investigate and compare different perspectives on a specific contemporary Xcultural social or ethical issue. We will set the occasion for this writing by studying the work of the art and design collective Torolab.

**November-December**

**IV: Essay #3: Advocacy Essay or Project/Grant Proposal 30%**

Both options require documented research. The option of writing (a) an advocacy essay or position paper on a social or ethical in Xcultural difference, seeking to
pursuade readers of a particular position; or (b) a grant or project proposal, which either advocates a position or explores a social problem and seeks funding for research or a program/policy to address this issue.

**Presentations and Workshop Prompts (short rhetorical analysis papers) and Participation:** 10%

**Grading:**
I use the standard numerical scale detailed in your student handbook to calculate final grades (3.0=B, 3.3=B+, etc.).

**Late Papers Grade Reduction:** All drafts of major essays are due on scheduled date. For each day late, papers will incur a .10 grade point reduction (e.g., a paper that grades 3.0 and is two days late, will receive a 2.8). Papers received in my mailbox same day will not be counted late. Each day thereafter will count as late. I do not accept papers by email. All late papers must be placed into my mailbox PWR lobby with time and date of submission noted.

**Attendance Policy**

**NO EXCEPTIONS TO ATTENDANCE POLICY.**
Participation in a workshop type course includes classroom discussion, writing workshops, in-class exercises, group work, and so on. Missing more than one workshop will be reflected in a reduction of grade points.

**My attendance policy is clear—if you choose to miss classroom meetings, expect final course grade to reflect your choice.**

- 2 absences are allowed with no change in course grade. These days allowed for unplanned events or religious observance only.
- 3 absences are allowed with makeup assignment (usually a presentation to class on your writing).
- 4 absences: semester grade no higher than B
- 5 absences: semester grade no higher than C
- 6 ABSENCES: Automatic "IF" grade. You must stop attending class. Following university policy, if absences are the result of illness or injury, with a doctor's note explaining why you were unable to attend class on the specific dates, you may receive an "IF" grade (Incomplete, regarded as "F" if not changed in one year).

**General Policies**

**Permission to Use Work:**
Enrollment in a course offered through the Program for Writing and Rhetoric implies permission to reproduce and use student writing and media work for educational
purposes. In special circumstances, a student may request an exception to this policy. All student writing and media will be presented to classroom anonymously.

**CU Honor Code:** In WRTG 3020, the honor code informs your conduct in class, group projects outside of class, and your written work submitted for grade. All essays submitted for grade must be original and drafted in this course. The Code is based on the ideals of honesty, trust, fairness, respect and responsibility. It is my policy in all my classes to fail anyone who engages in “academic dishonesty.” For detailed information, visit the University of Colorado’s Honor Code website for further information: http://www.colorado.edu/academics/honorcode/

Students and faculty each have responsibility for maintaining an appropriate learning environment. Students who fail to adhere to behavioral standards may be subject to discipline. Faculty have the professional responsibility to treat students with understanding, dignity and respect, to guide classroom discussion and to set reasonable limits on the manner in which students express opinions. See policies at http://www.colorado.edu/policies/classbehavior.html and at http://www.colorado.edu/studentaffairs/judicialaffairs/code.html#student_code

**Plagiarism:** Simply put, plagiarism is taking credit as yours someone else's writing and ideas--whether from professional writing or student essays. Plagiarism will result in an automatic "F" grade and report to the Student Honor Committee.

**Special note to students with disabilities:**
If you qualify for accommodations because of a disability, please submit a letter to me from Disability Services in a timely manner so that your needs may be addressed. Disability Services determines accommodations based on documented disabilities. Contact: 303-492-8671, Willard 322, or www.Colorado.EDU/disabilityservices

**Special Note to students who speak English as a second language:**
If you speak English as a second language, you should contact me before the third class meeting so that I can better assist you in the course, advise you about special ESL courses, and/or refer you to appropriate services on campus.