This course will position up front your role as writer and the material practice of writing. While other courses may include writing as a component, here we emphasize the way our subjects are rhetorically, persuasively, and inventively composed for an audience. We read both professional and student writing on equal terms, taking what we learn from both to extend our understanding of the elements of composition and communication. I believe the study and practice of writing is best modeled by reading quality writing, practicing a method for writing process (that is to say, drafting), and promoting a supportive, collaborative environment for producing advanced work.

On the subject of cross-cultural writing, we consider a range of questions and problems in inter-cultural experience, particularly what it means to live between two or more cultures and/or nations. We will read in a variety of genres and narratives, from different cultural and political locations, in order to gain exposure to ways of seeing a range of personal and social issues. Selected readings in the scholarship provide a conceptual backdrop, while more literary-like essays, exemplary in their writerly style, will deepen the rhetorical grasp of our course topic and serve as models to study writing, proper.

Film is so ubiquitous today that we neglect the power of images to shape perspectives on cultural others. The best films present a different kind of experience with our course topic in intercultural themes, one owing to drama, narrative style, radical social vision, and often challenge our common (unstated) assumptions regarding cultural difference. Our selected films offer both a complex performance of the problem of inter-cultural experience and a lively, engaging source for viewing pleasure and discussion.

We also consider the relationship between writing and film in order to extend the conventions of the college essay and consider inventive ways to prompt your writerly interests. While film may operate in distinctly visual and narrative formats, there remain ways to study composition following cinematic models of organization, figures of speech, and style. In fact, montage (the juxtaposition of shots), one of the central cinematic devices, has much to teach us about the structural elements of our writing. Our goal is to explore a number of creative, sometimes alternative, methods to deepen our understanding of techniques for developing our writing.

Criteria, The Colorado Commission on Higher Education

Rhetorical Knowledge

This course will hone your capacities for critical and analytical thinking and creative expression by engaging you directly and reflectively in acts of reading and writing. Our work together is based on the principle that the best way to learn to write is by writing—by engaging frequently and intensively in the arts of composition. My goal in this course is to provide you with ways of composing, and ways of interacting with texts and field sites for research that will enable you to become a more reflective, active, and effective participant in the intellectual and civic life of our campus and our culture. Through your own acts of reading and writing, criticism and research, you will learn first hand the ways that knowledge is composed, beliefs are formed, and values are sustained—and you will learn that your own voice can make a difference.

Writing Process

The class is taught as an intensive writing seminar emphasizing critical thinking, revision, oral presentation skills, and strategies for addressing specialized disciplinary and/or discourse communities. Two major components
organize the practice of writing: writing sequence and peer review. In peer review, authors will lead the class in an open and constructive discussion of the goals and merits of their essay drafts. Authors will facilitate discussion, drawing attention to strengths and weaknesses, brainstorm ideas for development, and quiz readers on other writing and rhetorical issues. Student comments are framed within our ongoing discussion of writing techniques and their effects. We will also model a practice of writing as process by developing a series of writing prompts that, together, serve as a sequence toward a document of greater complexity.

Writing Conventions

Our goal is to hone your ability to identify complex relationships and to communicate that complexity with clarity and purpose to an audience. We will also study a selection of prose style strategies in order to further our grasp of the sentence and rhetorical sophistication. While this is not a grammar class, we revisit a few of the basic components of the complex sentence as one part of a deeper turn to what makes good writing. We will take to heart an idea of an old writing teacher of my own: language is a kind of evidence. With this idea in mind, we will be concerned with the word as well as the sentence as we study what makes good writing.

Advanced Content Knowledge

In our study, we enter into the ongoing debates in a specialized discourse community of real-world audiences and members of your discipline. The topics surrounding social responsibility, inter-cultural values, and rhetorical address are more broadly ethical concerns important for our understanding of the stakes in education. We deepen our practice of writing and critical thinking when we deepen our understanding of the questions and problems in a specific area of knowledge.

Learning Technology in the Classroom

We will use a fair amount of technology, especially as a means to further communication outside the classroom. A portion of your grade will reflect your thoughtful use of these technologies. Course website will hold all elements of course, from schedule to readings. We use CULearn primarily for the delivery of written work. You will also submit writing and compose online media albums on your blog and VoiceThread (www.voicethread.com) account, in order to receive peer feedback and--more importantly--foster active dialogue with peers.

Rationale for Teaching and Learning with Technology

Why use a course blog and VoiceThread? Why create a multimedia project in a writing class? Because innovative scholars in the discipline of rhetoric and composition argue persuasively that to ignore the significant role of technology in our culture means that “we run the risk of making composition studies increasingly irrelevant to students engaging in contemporary practices of communicating.” According to Elizabeth Daley, executive director of the USC Institute for Multimedia Literacy, “those who are truly literate in the twenty-first century will be those who learn to both read and write the multimedia language of the screen.” Multimedia essays are compositions as much as traditional essays are, and they require an equal number of thoughtful rhetorical choices about an even greater number of available means of persuasion.

The Writing Center

Please note that CU-Boulder has an outstanding Writing Center where you can receive extra help with your writing. “We offer writers from across disciplines and skill levels the opportunity to work one-on-one with consultants trained in writing pedagogy. Writing Center sessions strive to address writers' stated needs while attending to relevant disciplinary, rhetorical, grammatical, and stylistic concerns. Consultants provide feedback and advice geared toward promoting writers' abilities to communicate successfully and think critically in the complex and changing environments of the university, the workplace, and society. Services are FREE to all CU students, faculty, staff and alumni.” Keep in mind that the staff of the Writing Center are not there to “fix” your grammatical mistakes. They aren’t an editing service. They will, however, help you identify patterns of error at the sentence level and help you learn to correct them. For more information, please see http://www.colorado.edu/pwr/writingcenter.html.
Course Requirements

Essay Sequence #1: Situating *Persepolis* and the Writer 30%

* Essay ........................................................................................................25%
* Blog/peer comments.................................................................................5%

Media Essay Sequence #2: Intercultural Visions 30%

* Media Essay............................................................................................25%
* VoiceThread Comments............................................................................5%

Essay Sequence #3: Exploration of an “Imagined Community” 20%

Homework (writing exercises, peer reviews, annotations) 10%

Reflective Essay 10%

Essay Sequence #1: Situating *Persepolis* and the Writer

We will sequence 3-4 prompts (short papers) where you select among writing options that situate the real-world and fictional story of *Persepolis*. In addition, we will have read three essays on writing and social activism. In one prompt you will write reflexively, an inquiry into how you imaginatively enter into dialogue with the personal and social demands of our texts. Another prompt option has you “rewrite” a short piece of the graphic novel into a narrative account of the story. Your task is to develop one of your short papers into a longer, more deeply considered essay that discusses your interpretation of what is significant and important about our topic to date. As you complete the writing exercises in this sequence, you will also keep a journal on our course blog that captures your reflections on your writing and thinking. You will also comment on other student’s blog posts.

Media Essay Sequence #2: Intercultural Visions

An image Portfolio, with narrative requirement, explores how images of various kinds can be read as cultural texts and how some images themselves act as “readings” of cultural meaning. Your work is to develop a pointed commentary, through media and text, of a particular facet of the intercultural experience. A few critical questions include the following. How do ways of “reading” images differ from our ways of reading texts? Can images present more than one point of view? What is a “visual narrative”? How are cultural and social “codes of meaning” presented in images? As you complete the project, you will introduce media to VoiceThread in order to elicit comments. You will also comment on other student’s VoiceThread portfolios.

Essay Sequence #3: Exploration of an “Imagined Community”

In this essay you will enter into an imaginative dialogue with a place or space of interest, one you find meaningful and inspires you to think deeply. While our controlling term for the course is “intercultural” experience, here you may extend this term in order to develop a reflection upon the ways you are interconnected with places and spaces of interest. You will draw on personal experience as well as professional writing, working in sequenced papers, to develop a persuasive and interesting essay. As you complete the writing exercises in this sequence, you will also keep a journal on our course blog that captures your reflections on your writing and thinking. You will also comment on other student’s blog posts.

Reflective Essay
This essay asks you to reflect on your strengths and weaknesses as a writer, your writing process, and what you’ve learned in this course. You’ll need to provide evidence to support your claims. For example, if one of your strengths is capturing the reader’s attention right away, quote the first line or two from something you’ve written that does this. This essay should be honest, thoughtful, and well supported.

**Films:**

We view complete and selected parts of the films listed below. Selected films are assigned for out of class viewing, available in Norlin Reserves.

*The Immigrant.* Charlie Chaplin, writer/director. USA 1916
*Head On. (Gegen die Wand.)* Fatih Akin, writer/director. Turkey/Germany 2004.
*Summer Palace. (Yihe Yuan)* Ye Lou, director/writer (China)

**Required Readings**

Major readings are printed and annotated. Texts available on course website. More readings, including student essays, are not listed and will be added later in semester.

Baldwin, James. “Stranger In A Village.”
Edwards, Brent Hayes. “Diaspora.”
hooks, bell. “Choosing the Margin As A Space of Radical Otherness.” *Yearnings, Race, and Cultural Politics.* South End Press. 1989:
Wallace, David Foster. “Consider the Lobster.” *Gourmet Magazine*

**Course Policies**

**Grading**

**Late Assignments:** Assignments are due at the beginning of class. I do not accept late assignments via email.

Given the small class, collaborative environment of this course, each student must be prepared and submit required work on time. Late assignments will be reduced in letter grade for each day late. For example, if your paper evaluates at a “B” but is 2-days late, this paper will be reduced to a C+. Keep in mind that late papers often fall outside the review process and therefore see lower grades than papers evaluated by peers and instructor.
Assignments

Because every writing situation is unique with respect to purpose and audience, each assignment sheet you receive will provide specific grading criteria designed to match the occasion for writing.

Annotations

In order to receive full credit, you must submit your annotated readings. Annotations present evidence of your critical and evaluative reading of the text--marginalia that highlights key ideas and responds in a thoughtful manner to the questions, problems, and core assertions of the text. Summary is unacceptable; we look for a critical engagement with author and author arguments. Annotations are usually due at the end of an essay sequence (though I may call for them earlier).

Blog/VoiceThread Comments

As noted above, blog and VoiceThread comments serve as an important extension of the course. To receive credit, post responses before class. You will receive a separate handout with directions. All responses must be prepared and substantive. To receive full credit, avoid off-the-cuff remarks or extemporaneous comments.

Grading Scale:

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Attendance

The success of this course depends on the student sitting next to you. Get the picture. We need fully present and prepared members of class--that is, engaged, questioning, curious, committed students.

You are allowed 3 absences -- I do not distinguish between excused or unexcused--for planned and unplanned events (religious observance, illness, family emergencies, to name a few). If you miss more than 3 days, I may (and likely) will lower your semester grade one letter grade for each additional day (e.g., B to B-). If you are absent 7 days, for what ever reason, you will fail the course.

Also, when you miss class you most certainly miss in-class work, which cannot be “made up” in any other way. Such absences are reflected--without exception--in points reduced in participation grade.

Tardiness:

Two late arrivals = one absence. If you arrive late, check with me after class to make sure I have marked you as late, not absent. Otherwise you may be responsible for the absence(s).

Honor Code (including plagiarism)

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/

Disabilities Accommodations
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 (303-492-8671, Willard 322, www.colorado.edu/disabilityservices).

Religious Observances
If conflicts arise between class meetings, assignment deadlines, or examinations and holidays or celebrations observed by your religion, please notify me during the first two weeks of the semester so that we can arrange suitable accommodations. Please see the CU-Boulder campus policy at http://www.colorado.edu/policies/fac_religion.html.

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, 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 policies at http://www.colorado.edu/policies/classbehavior.html and at http://www.colorado.edu/studentaffairs/judicialaffairs/code.html#student_code

Discrimination and Harassment
The University of Colorado at Boulder policy on Discrimination and Harassment, the University of Colorado policy on Sexual Harassment and the University of Colorado policy on Amorous Relationships apply 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, the above referenced policies and the campus resources available to assist individuals regarding discrimination or harassment can be obtained at http://www.colorado.edu/odh.