WRITING ABOUT ART
WRTG-3020-097
SPRING 2012
Course Description and Policies

Instructor: Frances Charteris
Office: Temporary Building 1 (TB1) Room 4A.
Phone: Office: 303-735-0283
Cell: 303-828-8874
E-mail: frances.charteris@colorado.edu
Fax: 303-492-7877
Office hours: Mondays, 2-5 and by appointment
Classroom: EDUC 136
Blog URL:

COURSE OVERVIEW

Writing about Art is a course in rhetoric and composition that hones skills in professional communication in the context of contemporary visual production in various media.

The course is designed for juniors and seniors in Art and Art History and other Humanities degree programs in the College of Arts and Sciences, such as Architecture and Planning, Technology, Arts, and Media (TAM) certificate program, Theatre and Dance.

Rigorous critical thinking is essential for any professional writing; the critical thinking needs to be grounded in a solid, informed knowledge base that includes an understanding of the rhetorical situation of visual art and its production as well as the professional and cultural contexts that shape the field. The process of writing on art leads to a greater awareness of societal issues embedded in the practice of creating and working as a professional. As your writing skills develop and become refined, a sense of civic responsibility can ensue. Writing becomes active citizenship; writing builds and expands community; writing creates community. Art too creates community. The activities in the course build a bridge from college to real world situations.

Writing about Art respects and challenges students by seeing you as integral to the course design. Your intellectual engagement and commitment contribute to the class’s evolution. Individual interests, life experience and ideas, your activity as writers, reviewers and practicing artists, your speaking skills all contribute to shaping the course. You will have the opportunity to:

- Analyze contemporary art and visual production as a means to understand rhetorical principles and strategies
- Bring your disciplinary expertise to bear on ideas and problems in art within an interdisciplinary group, thus familiarizing you with team and reviewer communication
- Apply your disciplinary expertise to problems addressed within an interdisciplinary group, refining your team and reviewer communication
- Develop critical thinking skills and effective communication strategies that you can transfer or adapt from one task to another and from discipline to discipline
- Experience sustained focus on revision and review that hones an analytic and argumentative edge required by many forms of technical, professional communication
- Practice professional forms of engagement and communication by means of audio-visual presentations
- Work collaboratively on communication issues through cooperative editing and peer response
- Expand your research capacities as a result of attending a research session with the Art & Architecture Librarian
• Research topics in extensive depth by repeatedly revisiting data bases in pursuit of specific sources as evidence for your claims

In addressing issues in art, your own writing and speaking projects will serve as core materials. Although there are no formal prerequisites, the work in this course requires that you already have some facility in writing. We will only occasionally address sentence-level writing problems; instead, we will focus on communication strategies and forms, as well as analysis and argument that drive professional writing—that is, we will focus on shaping your writing and speaking so that your point is clear, persuasive, and supported with evidence; thus you reach a specific discourse audience.

A note on e-mail: I communicate regularly on email; Tuesdays and Thursdays are my teaching days when I am less likely to respond quickly. I reserve email strictly for professional issues. Personal issues must be addressed in person.

Office Location
My office is in TB-1, Room 4A. Temporary Building 1 is the oldest building on campus; located between Clare Small and Sewall Hall, on the North side of Campus. Enter the building, immediately go downstairs, make a left and walk to the end of the basement; my office is in the far northwest corner. It is a small space so I frequently hold office hours in UMC in the Subway area, by the windows looking out on VAC.
The Program for Writing and Rhetoric is in the basement of ENVD, on the east side of 18th Street across the CU Art Museum and Visual Arts Complex. At the main door of ENVD, walk straight ahead and own the stairs to the lower level hallway; open the door to your right and the office is to your left, open 8-12 and 2-5.

Texts & Software
• A Writer’s Reference Book, Diane Hacker, et al
• Readings on D2L assigned for each topic; each assignment sheet lists specific readings
• the rest of the reading is your own research
• A college dictionary, and a Thesaurus
• MS Word — latest version. This software is required for this course

Other material:
• All student writings, presentations and projects
• Artworks presented by the students and instructor in form of slides, tapes, DVDs, CDs
• Rhetorical concepts and strategies drawn from technical and professional communication texts, incorporated into handouts and assignment sheets

The required readings will be sequenced into writing assignments; writing guides and handouts will be referred to throughout the semester and will be useful as a reference long after the semester is over.

The Writing Center is available free of charge for help on any aspect of your writing assignments for this course. For information, see http://www.colorado.edu/pwr/writingcenter.html
The Program for Writing and Rhetoric staffs this center. Tutors help you consider writing strategies, develop your ideas, and organize your thoughts. They explain grammatical or mechanical matters, though they do not edit or proof your paper; they will help you with any paper you are writing for a CU class (not just papers for writing classes). The service is free to all CU-Boulder students. Because appointments at the Writing Center are free and effective, they are popular; set up an appointment to see them early in your paper writing process. Contact tutors for an appointment at the Web address above. I urge you to make use of their exceptional support.

COURSE CONTEXT
Offered through the Program for Writing and Rhetoric, College of Arts and Sciences, WRTG 3007 is designed to fulfill curricular requirements established by the University of Colorado at Boulder and the Colorado Commission on Higher Education.

University of Colorado at Boulder Core Requirement
WRTG 3007 fulfills the core upper-division writing requirement for students majoring in Art & Art History, Dance, Film, Creative Writing and students of Digital media in TAM. The emphasis on organization,
communication and awareness of audience are relevant to real world scenarios where clarity of thought, civic consciousness, and concision of expression are essential. The course is approved for the Arts and Sciences core curriculum written communication, and builds on the skills practiced through the first year writing core requirement by applying an advanced understanding of rhetorical concepts to communication within specialized fields.

ASSIGNMENTS

Assignments are designed to apply rhetorical concepts to increasingly complex forms of professional analysis and communication.

- Readings in rhetorical concepts applicable to professional communication
- Common forms of professional communication
- Analysis of concepts in contemporary art
- Exercises in positioning yourself within a professional context
- Approaches to providing feedback and working collaboratively
- Planning and research focused on audience and purpose
- Multiple forms of presenting major projects

Assignments:

An outline of a grant proposal based on an actual grant that includes a budget, OR a short review paper on an artist or cultural event, CV, artist’s statement, and a biographic statement 10%

An analytical paper on a photographer supported by 5 critical references as well as readings 15%

A multimodal assignment on an idea presented through the lens of personal experience to be uploaded to the class blog via Vimeo or You-Tube 20%

An argumentative essay based on close analysis of a film of your choice supported by at least 7 critical references that form an annotated bibliography – annotations are 5% of this grade 20%

An argumentative essay on artist supported by your research 15%

A 15-20 minute audio-visual presentation on one of the formal papers 10%

Attendance, engagement, attitude 10%

Class participation can raise or lower your semester grade by as much as half a letter grade to a full letter grade. It is based on:

- Attitude and contribution to the tone and constructive culture of the class
- Preparation and participation in class discussions
- Preparation for workshops
- Oral or written critiques of the work of your peers, as assigned
- Willingness to work and to receive and use feedback
- Handing-in proof read drafts
- Self-direction
- Attendance

Sentence-level help

If I think your writing needs to be addressed on the sentence level, I may require you to work with me in individual conferences, and if there is not enough time to meet your needs, I will direct you to work with consultants at the Writing Center. You are always welcome to visit the center on your own initiative.

SELF-DIRECTION

The syllabus and schedule for the entire semester will be distributed in the first week of class. Assignment sheets as well as group assignments for workshops, critiques, and other assignments will be uploaded in advance as
needed. We will review and discuss directions once for each assignment. You are responsible for keeping track of
the schedule, assignment sheets, for following guidelines, and for keeping track of due times and dates.

Please be ready to manage your responsibilities attentively and independently. Please know, though, that I am
always glad to answer questions.

ATTENDANCE

Daily attendance
Because the course is based on in-class learning and group participation, attendance is mandatory. You can miss
three classes without affecting your grade. Beyond three classes, for every class you miss for any reason, your grade
will be lowered unless we have reached an agreement, in writing, for extenuating circumstances. Even when
excused, more than six absences will result in failing the course unless we have reached an agreement in writing,
for extraordinary circumstances.
If you must be absent, you are responsible for notifying me, finding out what you missed, and completing any
assignments on time.

Conferences
You are welcome to schedule a meeting in office hours or by appointment to discuss your work. I would especially
advise one-on-one conferences in the early stages of writing a paper or prior to making your presentation. I am
very happy to meet you in the early part of the semester to answer any singular questions about the course.

If you are unable to keep an appointment, please notify me as soon as possible, by e-mail or by phone. Another
student can often use the time slot.

If you need me to know what you have done in advance of our meeting, please email me the work at least by 8 a.m.
the day before we are to meet. Also be sure to bring to the meeting any earlier drafts with my corrections.

Punctuality
Please be on time. If you walk in late, you miss important announcements, and you disrupt the class. It is
unprofessional and disrespectful behavior. Three late arrivals equal one absence.

Preparation
Come on time prepared to engage in all class activities. As a participant in the workshop, you commit to serving as
an active critic. If you come unprepared for discussions, class activities, or workshops, your participation
evaluation will be lowered.

Draft distribution and workshops
The course schedule is very tight, which means that if you postpone your papers being reviewed on critique days
you will not receive group critique at a later date. Please submit all drafts by the times posted in the class schedule
and bring sufficient drafts to share with your group.

The penalties for missing your distribution or workshop day are serious:

If your draft is not work-shopped, or if you are absent the day your draft is scheduled to be work-shopped, the
final grade on the paper will be an F, unless I have agreed to work with you on a draft of the paper in an
individual conference. I will schedule a conference to replace a workshop only if I consider your reason for
missing the workshop to be valid.

GRADING GUIDELINES

Your work will be held to high standards, according to the following criteria:
A Excellent in content, form, and style—original, substantive, insightful, persuasive, clear, and free of mechanical errors.

B Good, with no major flaws—interesting, with above average thought and expression.

C Adequate or reasonably competent. May have a mixture of strengths and weaknesses.

D Poor in content, form, or style—disorganized, illogical, confusing, unfocused, or containing pervasive errors that impair readability.

F Incoherent or disastrously flawed, OR late, plagiarized, never workshopped.

DRAFTS AND REVISIONS

Revisions must be handed in with my corrected drafts attached.

Late papers (final version) will not be accepted, unless I have agreed that your reason for handing a paper in late is valid.

Plagiarism involves the unauthorized use or close imitation of the language and thoughts of another author and the representation of them as one’s own original work. The following constitute plagiarizing and applies to drafts as well as finished papers:

- Using someone’s precise wording without accreditation by means of quotation marks
- Appropriating an entire idea or concept that you paraphrase but do not cite the source or author with accurate documentation
- Incorrect or misleading documentation
- Submitting someone else’s paper as though it is your own work

Plagiarism means automatically failing the course. (See "Honor Code" in "University Policies" below.)

UNIVERSITY POLICIES

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; 303-735-2273). 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 http://www.colorado.edu/academics/honorcode/

I will be using D2L Turnitin.com linking, allowing for easy and quick submission of any papers with slightest hint of plagiarism.

DISABILITY:
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 be addressed. Disability Services determines accommodations based on documented disabilities. Contact: 303-492-8671, Willard 322, and http://www.Colorado.EDU/disabilityservices
RELIGIOUS HOLIDAYS:
Campus policy requires that faculty make every effort to deal reasonably and fairly with all students who, because of religious obligations, have conflicts with scheduled exams, assignments or required attendance. In this class, absences for religious observances are accommodated through the two-absence policy (see Attendance, p. 2). Beyond the two allowable absences, absences for religious observances must be approved by me at least one week in advance. See policy details at http://www.colorado.edu/policies/fac_relig.html

CLASSROOM BEHAVIOR:
Students and faculty each have responsibility for maintaining an appropriate learning environment. Those who fail to adhere to such behavioral standards may be subject to discipline. 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 SEXUAL 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 sexual harassment or discrimination or harassment based upon race, color, national origin, sex, age, disability, creed, 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
To visit Norlin site for this class please do the following: Go to Libraries Home page via CUConnect; go to Research Guides and put my last name, charteris, in the box; hit ‘search’ and you will come to a listing—WRTG 3007 Writing in the Visual Arts; click on it and you will find a very effective research guide.

All papers need to be written in MLA style — see http://owl.english.purdue.edu/ as well as MLA on line; most papers are due Sunday at 5 pm; late papers will be read but you will not receive full credit.

WEEK 1

Tues. 1/17: Welcome.
Introductions all round. Review syllabus. Students interview each other to begin to establish community and also a sense of who makes up the primary audience of your classmates. The activity will give you a sense of inherent diversity of disciplinary interests, world travel, family life and social status that exists in any group at CU.

Assgt#1: Write a CV, an artist’s statement, (or a personal statement) and a biography. Samples will be provided. If you have a proposal you want to write, this would be a good time to begin that. There will not be a separate assignment for proposal writing.

Due in class 1/19.

Thur. 1/19: BRING 2-3 COPIES TO SHARE. Share a few first assignments; view materials that connect with assignment #2.

Assgt#2: Google photographers on the list in preparation for viewing books of images in Special Collections. Choose one to write on.

WEEK 2

Tues. 1/24: MEET IN SPECIAL COLLECTIONS, 3rd floor Norlin, north west corner, N-345, double glass doors. NB: Open only 1-5 Thursday and Friday and by appointment, contact: Prof. Deborah Hollis, Deborah.Hollis@colorado.edu; or Amanda Brown, Amanda.H.Brown@colorado.edu

Thur. 1/26: In-class writing exercises; bring materials to write with, meaning notepaper and pens and pencils. You will write in response to selected images using specialized vocabulary pertaining to photography, a vocabulary that constantly evolves.

Asst #2a: Begin an annotated bibliography — at least 3 entries and write a first paragraph on the work of a photographer you have selected. Submit to D2L by midnight Saturday, 1/28.

WEEK 3

Tues. 3/31: Review paragraphs using projection. Visit Purdue OWL, an online writing source for composition and rhetoric: http://owl.english.purdue.edu/ We will also visit the class website on Norlin Library page.

Thur. 2/9: Research session in Norlin with Amy Clausen—DO NOT MISS!! IT CANNOT BE MADE UP!!! Room# TBA

Assgt: #2b Rework first and add one or two more paragraphs of your photo paper. Work toward completing your annotated bibliography. Submit by midnight Saturday, 2/11.

WEEK 4

Tues. 2/7: DAVE UNDERWOOD ON POWERPOINT. Bring 3 copies of your paper to share. Discuss assignments.

Thur. 2/9: Presentations on photographer, 10-15 images; organize this presentation so that you discuss each image giving title, date, place; any information that enables you to persuade your audience of the validity of your point of argument. Directions for these presentations — as well as for film and artist’s paper — are posted. Please follow them.

Discuss reading: “The Treacherous Medium” by Susie Linfield and trace her rhetorical strategies, such as stance, situation, argument, and affect.

Asst.#2c: write as much as you can of the rest of your paper and include all research as footnotes as well as a bibliography of sources: a minimum of 6 paragraphs is expected. Submit by midnight, Saturday 2/11.

WEEK 5

Tues. 2/14: Discuss papers in small groups, using handouts — we may begin with projecting a couple of papers as examples.
Thur. 2/16: **Presentations on photographer:** 20 minutes each. Followed by discussion of readings by referring to specific sentences and paragraphs in the texts.

**Asst#2d:** Write a final, complete version of Photo Analysis and include any research references, written in Modern Language Association Style (MLA); submit before class, 2/21.

**WEEK 6**

**Tues. 2/21:** Discuss multimodal rhetoric. How an assignment using multiple means of communication advances an understanding of composition and rhetoric? Why is it important to learn to formulate a critical response by means of images, video and/or sound? Storyboards as a preparatory step toward a 3 minute video.

**Thur. 2/23:** Dave Underwood will do a presentation on film rhetoric - by referencing famous films as well as works by students who have produced multimodal pieces in my own and others’ courses in previous semesters. This presentation will also serve you well when you begin your film analysis.

**Asst#3:** Multimodal assignment. *Please read assignment sheet carefully.* Write a first draft of a narrative or a treatment that begins this project. As you write, imagine translating the piece into images, still or moving. Only use original material - no found footage pieces please; original sound is also important. Do a storyboard.

**Writing is due Saturday midnight, 2/25.**

Read assigned texts.

**WEEK 7**

**Tues. 2/28:** Review narratives/treatments. View works on DVD that combine words and images; works that rely solely on images; works with voiceover. Discuss the assigned reading on audience. Who is the audience for the piece you are creating? Consider audience as an active participant in rhetorical discourse; audience contributes to and participates in making meaning.

**Thur. 3/1:** Read any narratives we did not get to on Tuesday.

NB: all classes are invited to PWR UNDERGRADUATE CONFERENCE ON DIVERSITY, from 8-12:30 but 8 AM CLASS is required to meet in British Studies room at 8 am; there will be a full breakfast throughout the morning till 12:30.

**Asst #3a Storyboard due 3/6 in class.** Rework narrative or treatment as needed – **final version of narrative/treatment and storyboards need to be completed by 3/13.** All narratives and treatments will be read aloud to the group followed by critique and discussion.

**WEEK 8**

**Tues. 3/6:** Share storyboards and any narratives or treatments not previously read.

**Thur. 3/8:** WORK DAY: I will be in our classroom to discuss projects with you one on one as needed. Bring in any video you have done so far. Review any issues that come up in completing this assignment. Videos need to be viewed in class Tuesday, 3/13. Complete all elements of multimodal project by Thursday, 3/15, including self assessment in response to questions on the assignment sheet. Please upload finished works to D2L and the class blog.

**WEEK 9**

**Tues. 3/13:** View student multimodal works. Viewing.

**Thur. 3/15:** **View works.** Bring multimodal project to closure. Discuss assignment #4.

**Asst#4:** Write a paper on a film of your choice. View the film over the weekend. Begin to do research on the film for an **annotated bibliography,** a complete version of which is to be included with final draft of your paper. **Asst#4a:** Write an **annotated bibliography by Midnight Saturday, 3/16.**

**WEEK 10**

**Tues. 3/20** View a film in class; after we will discuss how to write on this rich and affective medium.

**Thur. 3/22** Finish viewing the film. Do writing exercises; employ specialized vocabulary when referring to the film. Many terms are listed in “Film Glossary” though digital terminology is absent.

**Asst#4b:** begin film paper - write at least 2 paragraphs, **submit before leaving for break or by midnight Saturday 3/24.**

**WEEK 11**
WEEK 12

Tues. 4/3 Discuss papers and project as many as possible. Discuss text *The Cinematic*, by David Campany and other readings.

Thur. 4/5. Presentations on film that respect time limits and follow directions.
Asst: # 4c Write a full draft of your film paper that includes all references, citation and Annotated Bib. Submit by midnight Saturday, 4/8.

WEEK 13

Tues.4/10 Work in groups: Review papers and annotated bibliographies using handout I will provide in class.

Thur.4/12 Presentations
Asst#4d: Complete your film paper. Include all research, cited appropriately using MLA Style. Submit before class on Tuesday.

WEEK 14

Tues. 4/17: I will present on contemporary art in various genres.

Thur. 4/19: Writing exercises and discussion of readings.
Asst# 5a 2 choices. Begin writing on work of a contemporary artist of your choice or a group that makes art such as RAQS; or write a proposal for a show that you will curate; argue why you will include 3 or 4 artists in this show explaining ideas the exhibit will address and how the work will function in the space you have in mind.
Submit draft by midnight Saturday, 4/21

WEEK 15

Tues. 4/24: Asst.#5 SHARE drafts - BRING COPIES

Thur.4/26: Presentations.

WEEK 16

Tues. 5/1: Viewing and critiquing of final paper.

Thur. 5/3. Presentations. Remember to write a self-reflection on your participation on the course.

FINAL WORKS FOR YOUR PORTFOLIO ARE TO BE SUBMITTED BY 5PM SUNDAY – NO LATE SUBMISSIONS WILL BE ACCEPTED.

Thank you for taking the course.

Enjoy the summer!