COURSE OVERVIEW
As the title suggests, this course invites you to think about both the motives and methods of writing—in your writing and in the writing of others. To do this, you will read, write, and think critically in your exploration of rhetorical structures and literary forms. As you experiment with your own writing process, I will ask you to reflect on your own writing process in order to help learn more about what works best for you.

Fortunately, you will not be alone. With your classmates, you will form a writing community for the semester, and together you will discuss essays and writing strategies, and share your written work with one another. Assignments are designed to involve you in the kinds of reading, writing, and researching that you will need in the Oberlin College classroom—and beyond.

REQUIRED TEXTS
Writing with Style, (third edition) by John Trimble

Because we will be addressing the STRUCTURE of writing, you should be prepared to WRITE in your textbook and on the HARD COPIES you will print of the articles posted on Blackboard. I will be expecting you to annotate and/or produce notes for all readings. The traditional way to do that is to print the article and write on the hard copy. If this is a particular hardship for you, please come see me in the FIRST WEEK OF CLASSES.

COURSE GOALS
This course is designed to help you
• improve your writing skills for college academic work;
• learn some of the conventions of academic, literary, and popular writing.
• develop research and documentation practices;
• strengthen your critical thinking skills, as a reader and a writer;
• recognize the importance of audience;
• understand the way that form and function interact in a text;
• evaluate and revise your own work and the work of others;
• participate in constructive discussions about writing;
• appreciate and enjoy the writing process.

PRINCIPLES AND METHODS: Practice, Feedback, and Revision

A) PRACTICE
Like athletes, musicians, and painters, writers develop skills through trial, error, feedback, and close attention to what does and does not work. Proper practice leads to progress and confidence. In this course, you will write often and in a variety of ways. You will learn to identify elements of writing, and you will be asked to try out a number of writing strategies and modes. You will also be reading and discussing essays as a way of observing rhetorical methods at work in published writing. By sharpening your critical thinking skills and attending to language as a reader, you will hone your writing strengths.
B) FEEDBACK
The workshop component of the course requires you to share your writing with others. You will give and receive various kinds of feedback. Discussion of your work—with classmates, Writing Associates, and the Instructor—will help you assess how effectively your writing conveys your intentions and ideas. You will be asked to engage thoughtfully and respond to the work of your classmates. While you may wonder if you are properly qualified to comment on someone else’s paper, consider this: you are already an experienced reader and writer. So, use that experience to be as helpful as you can. I will often provide Peer Response worksheets to guide your feedback, but that should never limit what you have to say to a writer. Try to be both honest and encouraging when giving feedback. To maximize a workshop’s usefulness, you will all have to develop ways to express your ideas respectfully and constructively. You may be surprised by how much you learn about writing from offering feedback to classmates.

C) REVISION
After typing the last few words of your draft, you may leap in jubilation, shouting: “Yes! I’m finished.” Unfortunately, in writing, once is rarely enough. While the completion of a first draft is certainly worth celebrating, it does not mark the end of the writing process. In fact, it generously allows a new beginning, a re-visions that can now shape the piece or writing with a sense of an integrated entirety. Be prepared to go back to the proverbial drawing board. Let go of the belief that starting over indicates a wasted first effort. On the contrary, a flawed first draft is the start of a new and improved essay.

COURSE POLICIES & PROCEDURES

HOMEWORK: Assignments are generally due at start of class, unless stated otherwise. The syllabus reflects the day assignments are due.

ESSAY PREPARATION: On designated “Workshop” dates, please note how many copies of your essay are required—generally, at least two hard copies. Essay drafts should be double-spaced (“1.5 line” spacing is fine, and double-sided printing is encouraged to save paper). Final drafts of essays must be carefully revised, typed and double-spaced (which leaves room for comments and edits) on 8.5” x 11” white paper in 11 or 12-point font with 1” margins. The most polished/recent draft should always be on TOP of earlier drafts. For your own writing habit, use “Save As” to rename various drafts as you go along so that a) you have an electronic trail of your progress, and b) you don’t lose cuts you later wish to reclaim.

REVISIONS: Essays will generally receive feedback from class members, before a grade is assigned. You may revise once after a letter grade has been assigned on most assignments. However, for a reassessment (new grade), the revision must be accompanied by:
1) the previous graded draft with teacher comments.
2) a clear and specific notation (A, B, C) in margins or right in text of where you made significant changes
3) a letter-by-letter explanation of the changes
4) an overall explanation of the most significant improvements in the revision

IMPORTANT CONCEPT: a corrected draft is not the same as a revision.

CLASS PARTICIPATION: A portion of your grade will be based on your preparation for class and participation in course activities. In order to receive an A or a B in these areas, you must do more than attend class. You must demonstrate that you have been keeping up with the readings, preparing written homework assignments, annotating thoughtfully, peer editing with attentiveness, and then verbally contributing to small group works and class discussions.
LATE WORK: On workshop days, missing work prohibits full participation in the writing process and will be reflected in your preparation grade. For turning in polished drafts and revisions, deadlines may be individually adjusted if a reasonable request is made in advance of the due date. It is best, if you do feel the need to request an extension, that you demonstrate your own good planning and ask for a specific extension deadline. For instance, “I have a quartet rehearsal that runs 1-5 on Thursday, so it will be hard for me to meet the 4:00 deadline. May I have a deadline extension until 9:00 p.m. Thursday night? I could e-mail you a final draft by then, and drop my hard copy and drafts in your mailbox by 9:00 a.m. on Friday morning.”

ATTENDANCE IS REQUIRED. You are expected to attend all class meetings. In general, only family emergencies and serious health issues will merit an excused absence. If you do miss class—for any reason—you are responsible for finding out what you missed from a classmate, completing the work, and handing it in with a note with the date it was due and the date you are submitting it. In general, work should come in within a week of the absence. Also, it is good form to communicate directly with the Instructor as early as possible about the general reason for the missed class and your make-up plan for material covered and deadlines missed. (My email address is: nboutili@oberlin.edu) Consequences of missed classes are noted in the Grading section below.

Recap: Making up all missed classroom learning, activities, and work is your responsibility; when you show me the make-up work, I will “unzero” your preparation for the day, because you prepared to learn without being there. (Note: It’s not a good idea to ask a professor “Did I miss anything important?”)

OUTSIDE SESSIONS REQUIREMENT: In addition to attending class, you are required to attend at least 6 Outside Sessions as follows:

TWO meetings with the Instructor, at least one prior to Fall Break. You may either attend office hours or initiate an appointment. You are welcome to meet with me more, but only two will count toward this requirement.

The other four should include:
ONE session must be a visit to the campus Writing Center in Mudd.
ONE session must be with our class Writing Associate whose name is: ____________________.
The remaining TWO can be any combination of the following:
   a) a talk by a visiting writer;
   b) research appointments with college librarians;
   c) a literary reading;
   d) campus presentation related to writing;
   e) additional meetings at the Writing Center or with our Writing Associate.

GRADING
Your ASSIGNMENT AVERAGE will be calculated as follows:
Assignments 1  15%
Assignments 2  15%
Assignments 3  15%
Assignments 4  15%
Assignments 5  20%
Homework/Quizzes  10%
Participation (Outside Session Attendance)  10%
ASSIGNMENT AVERAGE  100%
Your **FINAL COURSE GRADE** will be determined by both your ASSIGNMENT AVERAGE and the PERCENTAGE OF CLASSES you attend. As long as you attend 90% of our class meetings or more, you will get the full 100% of your Assignment Average as your final grade. There is a 10-pt grace with this formula. If you attend 82% of the classes, your ASSIGNMENT AVERAGE will be multiplied by 92% (your 82% + grace 10% for 92%).

EXAMPLES: if you earn an 88% Assignment Average and attend 92% of the classes, your final course grade will be the full 88%, or B+. However, if you have an 88% Assignment Average, and attend only 75% of our class meetings, the 88% will be multiplied by 85% (75% attendance + grace 10%), which becomes a 74.8%, or a C.

If you have questions about this formula, feel free to inquire.

**Graduation Requirements**

**College of Arts & Sciences students:** The Rhetoric and Composition Program intends for this course to give students the writing instruction that will enable them to achieve certification in other Writing Intensive (WRi) or Writing Certification (WR) courses. It is possible that you might demonstrate sufficient skill in academic writing to earn certification in this course, but passing this course does not automatically entitle you to it.

**Conservatory of Music students:** Earning a “P” grade in this course satisfies the Conservatory Writing Requirement. Questions or personal concerns about writing requirement credit through this course should be brought to my attention early in the semester.

**Special Needs/Accommodations:** If you have a documented disability and wish to discuss academic accommodations, please contact me as soon as possible.

**The Honor Code Matters:** Oberlin College’s student-created Honor Code is vital to the integrity of the work that all of us do in the institution. Acknowledging the influence of others (giving credit where credit is due) and understanding the academic customs and conventions of documenting one’s sources are fundamental writing skills for college and beyond. I expect you to read the Oberlin College Honor Code carefully. We will discuss how it applies particular kinds of assignments.

The code is online at: [http://www.oberlin.edu/studentpolicies/honorcode/](http://www.oberlin.edu/studentpolicies/honorcode/)

One element of the Honor Code is the requirement that you write and sign the following statement on your essays before turning them in:

*I affirm that I have adhered to the Honor Code in this assignment.*

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Nancy Boutilier

No essay will be assigned a grade until it has this signed affirmation that the work is your own and that you have fully credited all sources. When you submit an assignment via email or Blackboard, type your full name after the Honor Code statement to serve as your signature and send it from your own email account.
RHET 103 / Writing: Motives & Methods  
SEMESTER OUTSIDE SESSION REPORT  
TURN IN AT MID-TERM & AGAIN ON LAST DAY OF CLASS

STUDENT NAME_________________________________  SEMESTER:__________________

1. First Meeting with Nancy (prior to Fall Break)  Date:_____________________

2. Second Meeting with Nancy (no report needed)  Date:_____________________

3. Writing Associate (WA) Meeting with __________________________  Date:_______
   Issue(s) Addressed:

   Outcome(s):

   4. Writing Center (WC) Visit with __________________________ (staffer’s name)  Date:_______
      Issue(s) Addressed:

      Outcome(s):

   5. WA / WC / Speaker / Reading / Librarian ___________________________ Date:_______
      Something you learned about writing from event:

   6. WA / WC / Speaker / Reading / Librarian ___________________________ Date:_______
      Something you learned about writing from event:
ASSIGNMENT DEADLINES
Friday, Sept. 26: ASSIGNMENT 1 / Research-infused Reflection
Monday, Oct. 13: ASSIGNMENT 2 / Just the Facts?
Wed., Nov. 5: ASSIGNMENT 3 / Weighing In
Monday, Nov. 17: ASSIGNMENT 4 / Close Reading / Analysis
Friday, Dec. 12: ASSIGNMENT 5 / Synthesis / Multiple Modes

W1 / What’s Reading Got to Do With It?
W 9/3: Introductions and Great Expectations
F 9/5: What is good writing, anyway?
☐ Choose writing to like to share and write 1 page about what you value in that writing.

W2 / Beah-yond the “I”/eye of first person narrative
M 9/8: ☐ Actively Read & Annotate Beah Packet (Bb)

☐ Tuesday 9/9: Attend ISHMAEL BEAH (OC ’04) CONVOCATION 7:30 Finney Chapel

W 9/10: Writing about yourself / Adair Lara’s Formula
☐ Brainstorm a list of memorable moments that touched the recorders of history AND had a direct or indirect connection to your own understanding of the world.

F 9/12: SOAP: Keeping your research clean
☐ Actively Read & Annotate “The Modes Explained” (*Fields of Reading*, p. 16-31)
☐ Consider your brainstorm from Wednesday in light of Adair Lara’s formula and take some notes on possible hooks and epiphanies that might go with the events you listed.

W3 / Research Basics
M 9/15: SOAP: Keeping your research clean
☐ Draft A1 based on the pre-writing that most captures your attention.

W 9/17: Introduction to Research with Librarian Megan Mitchell in Mudd Library
☐ *Fields of Reading*: Read 32-40 and skim over 41-54 to familiarize yourself with what is in book.
☐ Complete Plagiarism Self-Test of Blackboard
☐ Bring to class 3 questions to research on your topic and a list of 10-12 keywords.

F 9/19: Part II of Introduction to Research with Librarian Megan Mitchell in Mudd Library
☐ Bring in a list of three sources (listed as required by MLA and described in *Fields of Reading*) followed by a paragraph on what each source has helped you learn about you topic.

W4 / Ways of the Workshop
M 9/22: Workshop A1
☐ Incorporate you research discoveries into you Reflection (A1 Draft)
☐ Bring 3 typed, hard copies of your draft to class for feedback from classmates.

W 9/24: Beyond Narration: Intro to Rhetorical Strategies
☐ More Feedback
F 9/26: What’s the Point?
☐ Actively Read (SOAP) “From 1890: The First Text Message” in Fields of Reading (566)
☐ Revision of A1 due by 5:00 p.m. on Blackboard

W5 / The Reporter’s Eye or The “I” in Rel-I-ability
M 9/29: First Person
☐ Read “I’m So Totally, Digitally, Close to You” in Fields of Reading (583)

W 10/1: Primary, Secondary
☐ Read The Week excerpts posted on Blackboard
☐ Read “Regarding the Pain of Others” in Fields of Reading (366)

F 10/3: Graphic News
☐ Read “The Veil” in Fields of Reading (184)
☐ Read “Setting the Record Straight” in Fields of Reading (136)

W6 / That Explains It!
M 10/6: Complete assignment on Blackboard for Ackerman and Jeans
☐ “Why Leaves Turn Color in the Fall” Fields of Reading (442)
☐ “Why the Sky is Blue” (Bb)

W 10/8: Narrative Arc
☐ Bring all notes and drafts of A2

☐ FYI: Wednesday 10/8: Wordless! An Evening with Art Spiegelman and Phillip Johnston
OC CONVOCATION 7:30 Finney Chapel (FREE)

F 10/10: Workshop A2
☐ Bring 3 typed, hard copies of your draft to class for feedback from classmates.

W7 / Review
M 10/13: Writing for Exams

☐ Revision of A2 due by 5:00 p.m. on Blackboard

W 10/15: In-Class Review
☐ “The Great Refusal” in Fields of Reading (325)

F 10/17:
☐ Mid-terms Self-Evaluation Due
☐ Outside Session Report Form Due

* * * FALL BREAK * * *

W 8 / Writing The Trimble Way
M 10/27: Principles—Good Manners and Writing
W 10/29: Process ☐ Read Trimble, Chapters 1 and 2
F 10/31: Openings ☐ Read Trimble, Chapter 3 and 4

W 9 / Documented Argument
M 11/3: Workshop for A3
W 11/5: Conclusions / ☐ Read Trimble, Chapters 5

☐ Wednesday, Nov 5: A3 Due at 5:00 on Blackboard
F 11/7: From Observation to Analysis
☐ Turn in all Trimble Process and Pre-Writing / ☐ Read Trimble, Chapter 9 & 10

W 10 / Interpretation as Argument
   M 11/10: Poetry Partners Discussion / ☐ Poetry Packet ☐ Read Trimble, Chapters 6
   W 11/12: Draft to Outline Workshop / ☐ Read Trimble, Chapters 7
   F 11/14: Workshop / ☐ Read Trimble, Chapters 8

W 11 / Synthesizing
   M 11/17: The Parts of the Whole (“Auscultation”)

   ☐ Monday, Nov 17: A4 Due at 5:00 on Blackboard

W 11/19: ☐ Gary Smith’s “Why Don’t More Athletes Take a Stand?”
F 11/21: Big Question Writing

W 12 / Process Outline
   M 11/24: Proposal Due
   ☐ Read Trimble, Chapters 13

   W 11/26: Revision Day
   ☐ Read Trimble, Chapter 14

   THANKSGIVING BREAK

W 13 / Research & Write
   M 12/1: Variation
   ☐ Read Trimble, Chapter 15

   W 12/3: A5 Workshop
   ☐ Read Trimble, Chapter 16

   F 12/5: Detail and Bridging
   ☐ Read Trimble, Chapter 17

W 13 / The Final Stretch
   M 12/8: ☐ A5 Workshop

   W 12/10: Course Evaluations
   ☐ Self-Evaluations Due

   F 12/12: Presentations
   ☐ Outside Session Report Form Due

   ☐ Friday. December 12: A5 Due at 5:00 on Blackboard

READING PERIOD: December 14-16

FINAL DEADLINE FOR LATE WORK TUESDAY, DECEMBER 16 at Noon