

## Writing 205: Critical Inquiry and Research

### Breaking Down the Façade: What's Behind "The Storm Called... 'America?'"

Writing 205 focuses on the rhetorical strategies, practices, and conventions of critical academic researched writing. A working premise for this course is the recognition that we all now write or compose in a cultural environment saturated by an unprecedented level of information—the so-called “data glut” of late capitalism. In order to succeed as writers and thinkers and engaged citizens in such an environment, it becomes important for us to grow accustomed to locating, evaluating and processing reliable information. Part of this task involves asking good questions—questions that trigger an active engagement with both current and historical issues and concepts. Over the semester, we'll learn to ask and pursue such questions, ultimately making our own arguments. Reading, using the writing process, researching, and creating final/polished texts are all inseparable components of this course. For more information on our shared inquiry, read the Course Description link on our blog.

Here are the Writing Program's [Learning outcomes](#) for WRT 205.

#### Requirements

- *The DK Handbook*, by Wysoki and Lynch (Longman Publishers 2008)
- *Rewriting: How to Do Things with Texts*, by Joe Harris (Utah State Press 2006)
- Essays, articles, and films supplied by the instructor. You will be required to download AND PRINT a selection of articles from Blackboard and/or the web. These will be considered a REQUIRED TEXTBOOK for the class.
- You will use various digital media this semester (blogs, websites, databases, digital movies, Powerpoint, RSS readers, social media, web 2.0 software). You may need to access scanners, use digital cameras, download materials, use media players, etc. Locate resources on campus or seek assistance from classmates if necessary to complete this work. Seek individual

help/alternative arrangements from me if you struggle with this at any time during the semester.

## **Assignments and Grading**

### **Unit 1—Shared Research Topic**

- Synthesis Paper (20% of overall grade)

### **Unit 2—Individual Research Project**

- Research Progress Reports (25% of overall grade, collectively)
- Final Paper or Project (25% of overall grade)

The above assignments will be graded with letter grades, based on this scale:

A 95-100	B+ 87-89	C+ 77-79	D 60-69
A- 90-94	B 84-86	C 74-77	F 59 or below
	B- 80-83	C- 70-73	

I do consider revisions of essays a possibility—for an essay that is *significantly* weak (i.e. a “C-” or below) but was handed in on time, a student may request the option to revise and must contact me immediately to set up an appointment and discuss the matter. If we agree that revision is the appropriate course of action, the revision grade is averaged with the original grade to determine the final score. I only allow revision in cases where a student has handed in all assignments on time, and has shown great effort throughout the unit.

### **Participation/Portfolio** (30% of overall grade)

Everything else produced in the course that is not listed above falls into this category, such as group presentations, digital interaction, discussions, writing conferences, brainstorming, and homework. See the Portfolio Grading Contract for more details.

Please feel free to ask about your course grade at any time and to see me if you have any questions.

## **Policies**

A writing studio depends on everyone's participation and daily contributions; therefore, you are allowed 4 absences this semester, but anything beyond that will naturally impact your portfolio grade. If you miss more than 9 classes without any official, documented excuse, you will be ineligible to pass the course. Inform me in advance of anticipated absences (religious, athletic, other). If something severe arises (emergency, terrible illness or trauma, death in family), please let me know, so that we can ensure you a fair opportunity to pass the course.

Late work will be penalized for each day (including days our class does NOT meet) that it is late after a deadline. Major essays will be docked one grade level per day late (i.e. A to A-). After a week, late homework will be counted as a zero. Don't ask me, after the fact, if you can make up work; you cannot.

I expect professionalism and excellent decorum at all times. Be attentive and listen carefully, take active notes every day, contribute with focus to peer workshops, be respectful and open-minded during class discussions. Be quiet and courteous if you enter the classroom late, do not use laptops or mobile devices for purposes unrelated to classroom matters. Do not distract others from their learning, or bring negative energy and attitudes into the classroom.

Check your SU email daily, and check the course blog before class, in case of any changes or announcements.

**The Writing Center** According to a recent survey, most S.U. students who use the Writing Center have GPAs higher than 3.0; moreover, one in four have GPAs higher than 3.6. Experienced writing consultants at the Writing Center (101 HB Crouse Hall, on the Quad) can teach you how to succeed on individual assignments and ultimately become a better writer. They're prepared to work one-on-one with you at any stage of your process and with any kind of writing you're attempting while attending SU. Whether you need help understanding an assignment, brainstorming ideas, revising subsequent drafts, or developing editing strategies, face-to-face and online appointments are available for 25- or 50-minute sessions

throughout the semester and can be reserved up to seven days in advance via their online scheduling program, [WCOOnline](#). In addition, drop-in appointments are welcome Monday through Thursday from 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. and brief concerns, questions, or drafts can be emailed to consultants via the eWC. For more information on hours, location and services, please visit [their website](#). Their phone number is (315) 443-5289. This is a free resource to all students and highly recommended for every assignment you work on in this class.

**Extra Credit** If you visit the Writing Center for my class (once or often), I will factor this into your participation grade for each unit in the form of extra credit. You must obtain written evidence for your visit and submit it with your final draft to get the extra credit—only a “Client Report Form” from the Writing Center will be accepted.

**Special Needs and Situations** If you believe that you need accommodations for a disability, please contact the [Office of Disability Services \(ODS\)](#), located in Room 309 of 804 University Avenue, or call (315) 443-4498 for an appointment to discuss your needs and the process for requesting accommodations. ODS is responsible for coordinating disability-related accommodations and will issue students with documented disabilities Accommodation Authorization Letters, as appropriate. Since accommodations may require early planning and generally are not provided retroactively, please contact ODS as soon as possible. Syracuse University and I are committed to your success and to supporting Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973. This means that in general no individual who is otherwise qualified shall be excluded from participation in, be denied benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity, solely by reason of having a disability. You are also welcome to contact me privately to discuss your academic needs although I cannot arrange for disability-related accommodations.)

**Religious Observance** SU’s religious observances policy, found at the [SU Policy website](#), recognizes the diversity of faiths represented among the campus community and protects the rights of students, faculty, and staff to observe religious holy days according to their tradition. Under the policy, students are provided an opportunity to make up any examination, study, or work requirements that may be missed due to a religious observance provided they notify their instructors before the end of the second week of classes. For fall and

spring semesters, an online notification process is available through MySlice/Student Services/Enrollment/My Religious Observances from the first day of class until the end of the second week of class.

**Academic Honesty** The academic community requires ethical behavior from all of its participants. For writers, this means that the work we claim as ours must truly be ours. At the same time, we are not always expected to come up with new ideas; we often build our thinking on the ideas of others. We are expected, however, to credit others with their contributions and to clearly indicate the boundaries of our own thinking. In cases where academic dishonesty is detected (the fraudulent submission of another's work, in whole or part, as your own), you may be subject to a failing grade for the project or the course, and in the worst case, to academic probation or expulsion. For a more detailed description of the guidelines for adhering to academic honesty in the College of Arts and Sciences, go to [their website](#).


**Student Writing** All texts written in this course are generally public. You may be asked to share them with a peer, the class, or with me during classroom activities or for homework. You will also be asked to sign a [consent form](#) requesting the use of your writing for professional development, teacher training, and classroom instruction within the Syracuse University Writing Program.

#### ONE TIME EXTENSION COUPON

You may use this coupon on any assignment (homework or major essay) if you need to take an extension. **YOU MUST PRINT IT OUT AND HAND IT IN, IN ORDER TO USE IT.** It will be good for one full week (for example, Tuesday to Tuesday) from the assignment's original due date. Be sure to see me before or after class if you choose to use this, so we can discuss your extended due date. You can only use this once, so save it for when you really need it! (You can even use it retroactively, within reason.)

**Write down this info for your records:**

Assignment: \_\_\_\_\_ Extended Due Date: \_\_\_\_\_

 <b>TEAR OFF THIS COUPON AND GIVE IT TO INSTRUCTOR</b>
Your name: _____
Assignment: _____
Extended Due Date: _____