

# I hate writing

## 10 things

a writers boot camp

- ❶ I'd rather be Facebooking, or, why I hate reading.
- ❷ I sort of remember Schoolhouse Rock, or, why I hate grammar.
- ❸ I burned my SAT vocab lists, or, why I hate words.
- ❹ It's hard to be specific AND concrete, or, why I hate details.
- ❺ Shakespeare is, like, Ye Olde English, or, why I hate poetry.
- ❻ I'm right because I say so, or, why I hate rhetoric.
- ❼ Google knows everything already, or, why I hate research.
- ❽ I don't play well with others, or, why I hate workshopping.
- ❾ I hit spellcheck already, or, why I hate revising.
- ❿ Just tell me what to put down, or, why I hate thinking.

JOHN MCPHEE, Pulitzer Prize winner and grandmaster of literary nonfiction, said about writing, "The first draft [is] an unreadable thing. And you would not want to show it to anybody because it's just full of entrails hanging out with loose ends . . . You belch it all out on paper. When you've got something on paper, you then have something to work with . . . and turn into a piece of writing." Writing is all about guts, gas, gross anatomy, and getting down to business. Writing isn't a check mark, a destination vacation, a graduation requirement. Rather, it's a practice, a process, an extreme sport. This course will take up McPhee's writer's heroic journey— from unreadable thing to piece of writing—by engaging what it means to be a good writer and reader, how to recognize and develop the skills and strategies to write, read, and analyze, and why good writing and reading are central to everything you do. Be prepared for a term of high-impact, low-stake, high-risk, creativity-freeing, genre-tripping, word-playing, workshop-intensive writing, reading, and thinking. This will be hard, but it will be fun. You will hate it, but you will grow to love it. We will trek, tromp, jump, crunch, sweat, and swear through academic, expository, persuasive, and creative writing challenges. We will set high goals and meet tough benchmarks. We will hone the tools and muscles you already have and push, stretch, and dream till you're one lean, mean writing machine. Are you ready? Let's do this.

### Essential Questions

What is good writing? What makes a good writer? More importantly, how do you develop a strong writing process? Specifically, what is academic writing, expository writing, creative writing? How might different forms and genres of writing overlap and connect?

### Outcomes

#### Students will understand . . .

Different forms and genres of writing, reading, and analytical thinking, particularly academic and expository.

#### Students will know . . .

How to ask, complicate, and develop meaningful lines of inquiry for the purposes of writing and reading.

#### Students will be able to . . .

Develop, produce, and revise successful essays and other writings based on personal experience, class texts, contemporary issues, and popular culture.

### Requirements & Grading

Your grade should not be the sole exigence or motivation for this class. It is the hope of the course that you walk away from Essay Writing with something more. Find some pleasure and some edification and some knowledge from this class (or any class really) and success is usually not far behind. With that in mind, your grade will be a reflection of engagement,

"The world I create in writing compensates for what the real world does not give me."  
—Gloria Anzaldua

"Read in order to live."  
—Gustave Flaubert

"To write is to write is to write is to write is to write is to write."  
—Gertrude Stein



### Required Course Texts & Materials

- Essay Writing C Course Reader (available via the Robinson Center).
- Composition notebook (Process Journal).
- Web access and an active email account

Essay Writing  
Section C  
MTTh  
9 AM-2:20 PM  
GLD 100  
Summer 2015  
Dr. Edmond Y.  
Chang  
Robinson Center  
for Young  
Scholars  
University of  
Washington



"I am going to be rather hard-nosed and say that if you have to find devices to coax yourself to stay focused on writing, perhaps you should not be writing what you're writing.

And if this lack of motivation is a constant problem, perhaps writing is not your forte. I mean, what is the problem? If writing bores you, that is pretty fatal. If that is not the case, but you find that it is hard going and it just doesn't flow, well, what did you expect? It is work; art is work."

—Ursula K. Le Guin



### Course Requirements

- Writing Challenges/  
Short Papers  
(40%)
- Final Portfolio  
(20%)
- Class Participation  
(40%)

“Imagination is more important than knowledge.”  
—Albert Einstein

“An idea that is not dangerous is unworthy of being called an idea at all.”  
—Oscar Wilde

“I always advise children who ask me for tips on being a writer to read as much as they possibly can. Jane Austen gave a young friend the same advice, so I’m in good company there.”  
—J.K. Rowling

effort, close reading, critical thinking, writing, revision, and participation.

### Writing Challenges/Short Papers (40%)

The majority of the writing you will do for this class is in the form of short, critical, and well-conceived papers. Each week you will be given one or more “writing challenges,” particular writing task to accomplish in 1 to 4 pages. Writing challenges focus on specific skills, forms, genres, and ideas to work out particular writing muscles and habits. From personal narrative to close reading to poetry to exposition to argument, these short papers will be graded on clarity, coherence, analysis, concision, and how well they satisfy the assignment. See the Writing Challenge/Short Paper prompt for more details.

### Final Portfolio (20%)

The capstone of your writing boot camp will be your final portfolio, your honed and toned body of work. The final portfolio will include: your selected Writing Challenges, your Major Paper, and a cover letter that explains how the portfolio demonstrates the goals and outcomes for the course. The cover letter, in fact, is the final week’s Writing Challenge. Your portfolio will be graded on completeness, organization, revision, and presentation. **A portfolio that does not include all the above will be considered incomplete and receive a failing grade.**

### Participation and Preparedness (40%)

Preparedness and participation forms a large component of your final grade. It is essential that you prepare for class, attend class, and participate. Missing class may seriously compromise your ability to do well in this class. Again, negative participation will hurt your participation grade. Participation is determined by 1) your **respectful** presence in class, 2) your **willingness** to discuss, comment, and ask questions, 3) your **preparation** for class, which includes bringing required materials to class and doing all of the assigned reading for class, 4) your **Process Journal**, 5) your **engagement** in group work, workshopping, and in-class presentations, 6) your care and use of the class blog (bookmark the address, check and comment regularly, think of the blog as an extension of class):

<https://catalyst.uw.edu/gopost/board/changed/40404/>

and 7) your interactions with me and other students. Finally, failure to turn in homework, incomplete assignments, or late papers will negatively impact your participation grade.

### Attendance

**Attendance is required.** If you are absent, you miss the explanation of an assignment, the discussion of a reading, the chance to play and participate, and overall, the class as a community of learning. Also, you are expected to be in class on time. Class will start immediately at the appointed time. In the first minutes of class I may make important announcements, establish the agenda for the class meeting, begin immediately with an important lesson, or field questions. If you come in after we start class, even by only a few minutes, you are late and we will mark you as such. Chronic or conspicuous attendance problems will negatively affect your overall participation grade for the class. If you know you are going to miss class, please let me know ahead of time (via email), if you can, and make any necessary arrangements. And when you do miss class, always find another student to get class notes and see me in order to make up missed work in a timely manner.



### Late Assignments

All assignments must be done completely and turned in on time. Lateness will subtract from your assignment’s final grade and work must be turned in as soon as possible. Note that I will not comment on late work. However, you still need to complete late work for a complete portfolio. If you miss class on the due date of a paper, you must notify me and make arrangements to get the paper to me as soon as possible. **Unless previously arranged, I do not accept assignments via email.** Remember that a paper has not been officially handed in until it is in my hands. Never turning anything in late is always the best policy.



### Paper Formatting

- 1) 1" margins top, bottom, left, and right on each page.
- 2) Single-spaced block header with your name, date, course, my name.
- 3) Appropriate title.
- 4) Standard Times Roman Font, 12 point only.
- 5) Number all pages except for the first page in the top right-hand corner.
- 6) Correct MLA citation and bibliographic format. Bibliography if necessary.
- 7) Stapled once at the top left corner.

## Assignment Format

All papers must be typed or produced on a word processor. All documents should be saved in Microsoft Word format; if you do not have access to Word, then save your documents in RTF or Rich Text Format.

All papers must follow the manuscript format outlined by the assignment. Unless otherwise noted, all papers must use **MLA citation and documentation conventions**. All papers must be neatly printed (in black), stapled in the top, left-hand corner if necessary, and should not be three-hole punched. Papers that do not follow these format guidelines will not be accepted. They will be returned unread to you. Papers will be regarded as late until they are resubmitted in the proper format.

**Always make a backup copy of every paper you turn in**, lest you be one of the unhappy people whose paper is eaten by the computer. You may even want to take the precaution of e-mailing your paper to yourself as an attachment at least a couple of times during the drafting process and certainly **BEFORE** you exit the document for the last time and leave the computer lab, your friend's computer, or even your own computer. This way, even if you lose your disc or your paper gets mysteriously erased, you still have a copy in your e-mail files.

## Evaluation Rubric

Over the course of the quarter, your assignments will receive feedback and comments that will identify what you are doing well and what still needs improvement. Your grades assess your fulfillment of the assignment, the quality of work, detail, analysis, and argumentation, overall effort, and finally, style, polish, and risk taking. Consider the following evaluation rubric as signposts or a kind of legend to your progress and evaluation:

- **Outstanding (A/A+)**: Offers a very highly proficient, even memorable demonstration of the trait(s) associated with the course or assignment goal(s), including some appropriate risk-taking and/or creativity.
- **Strong (B+/A-)**: Offers a proficient demonstration of the trait(s) associated with the course or assignment goal(s), which could be further enhanced with revision, additional support, and creativity.
- **Good (B-/B)**: Effectively demonstrates the trait(s) associate with the course or assignment goal(s), but less proficiently; could use revision to demonstrate more skillful and nuanced command of trait(s).
- **Acceptable (C/C+)**: Minimally meets the basic course or assignment requirement, but the demonstrated trait(s) are not fully realized or well-controlled and would benefit from significant revision.
- **Inadequate (D/D+)**: Does not meet the course or assignment requirement; the trait(s) are not adequately demonstrated and require substantial revision on multiple levels.

## Academic Dishonesty

Plagiarism, or academic dishonesty, is presenting someone else's ideas or writing as your own. In your writing for this class, you are encouraged to refer to other people's thoughts and writing – as long as you cite them. Many students do not have a clear understanding of what constitutes plagiarism, so feel free to ask questions about these matters at any time. Plagiarism includes:

- a student failing to cite sources of ideas
- a student failing to cite sources of paraphrased material



### Contact Ed

Office:  
 Robinson Center  
 Guthrie Annex 2  
 E-mail:  
[changed@uw.edu](mailto:changed@uw.edu)  
 AIM & Google Talk:  
 EDagogy

"I entered the classroom with the conviction that it was crucial for me and every other student to be an active participant, not a passive consumer...[a conception of] education as the practice of freedom.... education that connects the will to know with the will to become. Learning is a place where paradise can be created."  
 –bell hooks

"I believe more in the scissors than I do in the pencil."  
 –Truman Capote

"I'm a rewriter. That's the part I like best...once I have a pile of paper to work with, it's like having the pieces of a puzzle. I just have to put the pieces together to make a picture."  
 –by Judy Blume

- a student failing to site sources of specific language and/or passages
- a student submitting someone else’s work as his or her own
- a student submitting his or her own work produced for another class

If you have any doubt about how to cite or acknowledge another’s writing, please talk to me. It is always better to be safe than sorry. As a matter of policy, any student found to have plagiarized any piece of writing in this class will be immediately reported to the College of Arts and Sciences for review. For further information, please refer to UW’s Student Conduct Code at <<http://www.washington.edu/students/handbook/conduct.html>>. **Play it smart, don’t plagiarize!**

**syl-la-bus: n 1: a summary outline of a discourse, treatise, or course of study or of examination requirements  
2: subject to change**

Chang / Essay Writing C / Summer Stretch 2015 / University of Washington

**Week 1: PERSONAL**

**M 6/29** Introduction to the Course  
Ed’s 10 Rules of Writing, Taking Notes & Close Reading  
John McPhee, “The ‘Unreadable’ Thing”  
Genre  
How to Workshop & Peer Review  
To Do: Personal Essay/Literacy Narrative Brainstorming  
Read Anne Lamott & Stephen King

**T 6/30** Discuss Lamott & King  
Audience  
Workshop Brainstorming  
To Do: Personal Essay/Literacy Narrative Draft  
Read Frederick Douglass, Sherman Alexie, & Amy Tan

**Th 7/1** Discuss Douglass, Alexie, & Tan  
Rhetoric & Exigence  
Workshop Literacy Narrative Draft  
To Do: Personal Essay/Literacy Narrative Final  
Read Michael Ruhlman, J. Kenji Lopez-Alt, & Ken Wells

**Week 2: EXPOSITION**

**M 7/6** Telling Details, Evidence, Extra Sensory Communication  
Discuss Ruhlman, Lopez-Alt, & Wells  
Food Writing  
To Do: Food Writing Challenge  
Read John McPhee

**T 7/7** Exposition vs. Description, Telling Details (cont.)  
Discuss McPhee  
Sports Writing  
To Do: Sports Writing Challenge

**Th 7/9** Sentence Length, Pace, Action  
Discuss McPhee (cont.)  
Workshop Food or Sports Writing Draft  
To Do: Food or Sports Writing Final  
Read Hughes, Brooks, Williams, Bukowski

Mon 6/29  
First Day of Classes

**June**

Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30				

Literacy Narrative  
Brainstorming Due

Literacy Narrative  
Draft Due

**July**

Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30	31	

Literacy Narrative  
Final Due

Food Writing Draft  
Due

Sport Writing Draft  
Due

**Week 3: CREATIVE WRITING**

Food or Sports  
Writing Final Due

**M 7/13** Playing With Language, Rhythm, Vocabulary  
Close Reading Poetry  
Discuss Langston Hughes, Gwendolyn Brooks,  
William Carlos Williams, and Charles Bukowski  
To Do: Poetry Challenge  
Read Bradbury, Jackson, and Liu

Poetry Draft Due

**T 7/14** Precision, Concision, Decisions  
Close Reading Fiction  
Discuss Ray Bradbury, Shirley Jackson, and Ken Liu  
To Do: Short-Short Story Challenge

Short-Story Draft  
Due

**Th 7/16** In-Class Presentations  
Workshop: Poetry or Short-Short Story Draft  
To Do: Poetry or Short-Short Story Final  
Read Olmert, Somerville, and Orwell

**Week 4: ARGUMENT**

Poetry or Short-Short  
Story Draft Due

**M 7/20** Definition  
Discuss Michael Olmert, Siobhan Somerville, George Orwell  
To Do: Definition Challenge  
Read Le Guin and McGonigal

Definition Due

**T 7/21** Claim, Research, Argument  
Three Rhetorical Appeals  
Discuss Ursula K. Le Guin and Jane McGonigal  
To Do: Editorial Draft  
Read Kingsbury

Editorial Draft Due

**Th 7/23** Three Rhetorical Appeals (cont.)  
Discuss Kathleen Kingsbury  
Workshop: Editorial Draft  
To Do: Editorial Final  
Read Bartholomae and Freire

**Week 5: METACOGNITION**

Editorial Final Due

**M 7/27** What is Metacognition?  
Course Goals Revisited, Final Portfolio  
Discuss David Bartholomae  
Workshop: Sample Cover Letters  
To Do: Cover Letter Draft  
Select Revisions for Portfolio

Cover Letter Draft  
Due

**T 7/28** Final Portfolio (cont.)  
Revision  
Discuss Paolo Freire  
Workshop: Cover Letter Draft  
To Do: Final Portfolio Revisions

Final Portfolio Due

**Th 7/30** Final Portfolio (cont.)  
Revision (cont.)  
Workshop: Final Portfolio  
To Do: Final Portfolio