COURSE DESCRIPTION

"Write. Find a way to keep alive and write. There is nothing else to say. If you are going to be a writer there is nothing I can say to stop you; if you’re not going to be a writer nothing I can say will help you. What you really need at the beginning is somebody to let you know that the effort is real.” – James Baldwin

The quote above was renowned Black American writer and race theorist James Baldwin’s response in 1984 when *The Paris Review* asked Baldwin what advice he would give someone who wanted to become a writer. This is where we’ll begin our class this quarter: with the desire to write, to express, and to be heard. Yes, this class is designed to teach you the nuts and bolts of academic writing at the college level but it’s about much more than that. You will learn how to become more confident readers, better critical thinkers, more self-reflective about our process as writers and learners both in and out of the classroom.

This class is about storytelling.

Why tell stories? Why do we need them? What are the uses of fiction (and literature) in our daily lives? TCORE 101 is a composition course, designed to help you become a more skilled and flexible academic writer. At the same time, we will be reading and writing about “literary” texts. As a (very) broad theme, this course will take up the question of fiction’s uses for everyday life—and we will practice using literature to develop concrete reading, writing, and research skills.

Most importantly, this class is designed to be a tool kit that will prepare you to engage your chosen majors, disciplines, and life outside of 2 the classroom with a new perspective. This class will challenge to think, perhaps as you’ve never thought before, about the role of language (spoken and written), the ways that writing helps shape identity, and the great power that we all have as writers ready to claim our own subject positions to tell stories, make arguments, and be heard.
What are we doing in this class?

This course introduces you to the principles of argument, including critical thinking, analytical reading skills, and writing skills needed for academic writing—all vital skills for success in college. In this course, you will learn to write through a process that involves analyzing texts, developing formal written arguments, participating in writing groups, creating digital compositions, presenting your research findings, and substantially revising your work in response to feedback.

As you might guess, we’ll be doing a lot of writing in this course. It is designed to introduce you to the full process of academic writing: brainstorming, prewriting, drafting, revision, and editing, and revision, and revision, did I mention: revision? This class will challenge you to think of revision not as an afterthought but as fundamental to good writing practices. Writing is a process, it is not something that can be done “once and for all” so we will spend a great deal of time in this course considering how we can form arguments and compose with revision in mind. We will work towards becoming more flexible, open critics of our own work and of others with the goal of becoming better readers, writers and critical thinkers in mind.

In this course you will develop critical writing and reading skills that will guide you in the wide range of writing situations you’ll encounter during your college career (academic and otherwise). Writing for academic contexts is essentially interactive, and your writing will develop in conversation with members of this class, myself, and the authors of our readings. As active readers, we will engage a variety of texts in order to identify and understand how other writers write effectively in different contexts. And as active writers, you will be doing lots of writing for this course, both at home and in class. You will be asked to respond to your colleagues’ ideas, writing, and criticism. It is expected that you will spend at least two hours per credit taken on homework outside of class—this translates to 10 hours a week for this class. Critical reading, clear thinking, and good writing takes time so please be prepared to carve out what is necessary.

REQUIRED MATERIALS

- Course Packet for TCORE 101J (available for purchase at Copy & Mail Center) – bring this to class every single day
- Additional readings posted to our Canvas Site (TBD)
- Access to our Canvas site: https://canvas.uw.edu/courses/1189564
- USB drive, or reliable email to send yourself frequent drafts and course notes
- Writing materials each class period—I suggest you have a laptop, notebook, journal, and planner dedicated to this class to help keep you organized. Keep in mind you must keep all materials throughout the quarter to help you in your final portfolio project.
- Computer and Internet access each day in class (strongly preferred that you have a laptop/tablet to use daily class)
- Canvas access each day (preferred that you access in class on a laptop for research and writing workshops)

READING LIST

**Most readings will be available in our course pack – purchase at the Copy & Mail Center; occasionally you will be asked to print an additional reading from Canvas. I reserve the right to add or remove readings as I see fit!**

Selections from Writer/Thinker/Maker: Approaches to Composition, Rhetoric, and Research
Tim O’Brien, “How to Tell a True War Story”
Chimamanda Adichie, “The Danger of a Single Story”
Chimamanda Adichie, “Jumping Monkey Hill”
Sherman Alexie, selections from The Lone Ranger and Tonto Fistfight in Heaven
Bessie Head, “The Deep River: A Story of Ancient Tribal Migration”
Chinua Achebe, “The Truth of Fiction”
Helen Oyeyemi, “Dornička and the St. Martin’s Day Goose”
Stanley Fish, “How to Recognize a Poem When You See One”
Salman Rushdie, “Imaginary Homelands”
Herbert Kohl “I Won’t Learn From You”
[[Plus additional readings you will have to print]]

**Core Learning Objectives For Our TCore 101 Class:**

**Objective 1:** To compose strategically for a variety of audiences and contexts, both within and outside the university.

**Objective 2:** To work strategically with complex information in order to generate and support inquiry.

**Objective 3:** To craft persuasive, complex, inquiry-driven arguments that matter.

**Objective 4:** To practice composing as a recursive, collaborative process and to develop flexible strategies for revising throughout the composition process.

**Objective 5:** Increase your confidence and self-efficacy as a reader, writer, and critical thinker at the college level.

**Objective 6:** Learn to work in classroom teams and collaborate in groups to support learning at the community and individual level.

**UWT - First Year Writing Learning Goals**

1. **Read rhetorically through processes of meaning-making, learning, and communicating purposefully and to various audiences**
   - entering textual academic and civic conversations/discussions/arguments through reading and engaging with texts in meaningful ways
   - reading rhetorically, or reading with the purpose of understanding the way meaning, understanding, or persuasion is produced around a text/artifact (e.g., understanding its purpose, context, audience expectations, etc.)

2. **Revise in recursive processes that continually re-see, rethink, and research ideas, questions, and new information**
   - engaging in multiple drafts of a project in ways that deepen the writer’s knowledge and understanding of the complexity of initial question or topic
   - using writing as a way to think through ideas, sources, questions, and assumptions about the subject or text at hand
   - returning to the library and other places of information in order to answer emerging questions that the writing and rewriting of a draft brings up
   - using feedback from peers, the writing center, and teacher to move drafts and thinking forward in significant ways, not to find “what the teacher wants to hear” but to develop a deeper understanding of the complexity of the topic being written about

3. **Reflect as a way to understand one’s own reading practices, and producing understanding (or theory) that helps the writer cultivate flexible and rhetorically-based practices for future use**
• practicing frequent self-assessment of reading and writing practices so that the writer can make sense of what she has read, what questions about learning and her reading develop, and where the potential is for future growth
• articulating in some way the writer’s reading practices as practices, not as a single or immediate reading task, in order for her to cultivate flexible ways to read for future needs
• writing about the student’s own thinking and assumptions as thinking and assumptions, which is a kind of theorizing about how the writer thinks and where that thinking may have originated (e.g. cultural, experiential, linguistic sources)

4. Proof and edit one’s drafts in self-conscious ways, ways that allow the writer to consider future proofing and editing practices as rhetorical in nature and as a part of the writing process
• practicing processes of polishing and editing of one’s drafts according to explicitly discussed SEAE standards, or other explicit standards that are appropriate for the rhetorical situation at hand
• getting help and assistance from a writing handbook, peers, the writing center, and the teacher at the final stages of drafting
• thinking about and reflecting upon practices that can help the writer cultivate sustainable ways to polish and proof his future writing, knowing that everyone needs such help

5. Engage in academic research as a process that includes recognizing when information is needed to support writing, and having the ability to locate, evaluate, incorporate, and acknowledge appropriate source
• practicing methods of looking for and distinguishing what sources are appropriate for the writer’s purpose and audience
• interrogating sources in ways that reveal the rhetorical aspects that produce meaning from them and suggest their significance to the writing project at hand (e.g. Is the article an academic article? What is the purpose or exigency of the article? Where does the author’s position fit within the larger conversation?)
• using the library’s resources and experts to help make decisions about where to look for information and what kind of information they may find in those places

6. Problematize one’s existential writing situation, or pose problems that the writer’s own language practices may create when they are set next to the dominant academic discourse, or when others read and judge one’s writing
• reflecting on the ways one communicates to others and where those linguistic competencies originate, what assumptions others have about one’s competencies and why they might hold such beliefs
• interrogating the dominant discourse, often academic English or Standard Edited American English (SEAE), as a discourse that is used as a standard by which most in the academy and civic marketplace are judge in subtle and explicit ways
• considering the ways that all languages are dynamic and political in nature, and that their dynamism and politics create tensions in diverse communities, or in homogenous communities in which “others” attempt to enter and participate
• questioning one’s own linguistic and communication decisions as ones that are not simply personal and idiosyncratic, but also are a part of larger social or discursive practices in communities outside the dominant one (or inside it)
• questioning how one’s own language practices are judged in academic, civic, and other communities, and what the larger social consequences of those judgments are
Grading Scale
Each of our major assignments will have a rubric to help us establish what the expectations are; grades are based only on the things we have discussed or outlined as part of our assessment and in class discussions.

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Letter grade</th>
<th>Numerical grade</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>4.0 - 3.9</td>
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<tr>
<td>A-</td>
<td>3.8 - 3.5</td>
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<tr>
<td>B+</td>
<td>3.4 - 3.2</td>
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<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>3.1 - 2.9</td>
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<td>B-</td>
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<td>C+</td>
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<td>C</td>
<td>2.1 - 1.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C-</td>
<td>1.8 - 1.5</td>
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<tr>
<td>D+</td>
<td>1.4 - 1.2</td>
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<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>1.1 - 0.9</td>
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<tr>
<td>D-</td>
<td>0.8 - 0.7 (Lowest passing grade)</td>
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<tr>
<td>E</td>
<td>0.0 (Failure or unofficial withdrawal; no credit earned)</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

**Final grade note:** Anything at or above 96.5% = 4.0

Canvas grade records:
You may always check your grade estimate in the Canvas gradebook by clicking on the “Grades” link when you login to Canvas. Below you can find the UW Tacoma grading scale that will be used to calculate your total percentage as a GPA. Keep in mind that your Canvas “grade” is an ESTIMATE of your participation grade, and not reflective of your final course grade since 60% of your final course grade comes from your end of term portfolio. In any case, Canvas can be a good barometer to tell you how you’re doing in the class (with traditional grade estimates) – but it is still an estimate!

**Remember to talk to me about any grade anxiety or uncertainty that you have about the course or individual assignments. Periods of anxiety or stress (often concerning writing or assessment) happen to everyone and I’m here to support you and make a strategic plan to meet the course goals and expectations. Often, the participation grades will fluctuate at the beginning of the quarter since we won’t have many assignments completed – they will commonly stabilize near the end of the quarter. (This is the case for students submitting all of their work. If you are missing assignments on a regular basis this may not be true.)

COURSE PRACTICES
All the work in this course will be organized around the interdependent acts of reading, writing, and discussion. The goals of this course culminate in you becoming a better, more conscious language user, so what we do in TCORE 101 is designed to be completely inter-connected.

Your Personal Responsibility:
- You have enrolled in this college course; therefore, it is your responsibility to attend face-to-face class daily, login to our Canvas classroom daily, purchase our Course Pack, print additional materials as they arise, and fulfill the course requirements.
- Your job schedule, vacations, transportation issues, computer problems, and personal problems are typically not considered valid excuses for absences or late assignments.
- If you have questions/concerns about assignments, grades, or course policies, you need to contact me. (Please contact me sooner rather than later!) See first page of this syllabus for my e-mail address.
- Effective time-management is necessary for success in this course. You are expected to keep track of your assignments and due dates in a student planner, notebook, or phone.
Writing Projects
The major writing assignments in TCORE 101 are sequenced to teach you how to generate and develop ideas from academic reading, how to focus and shape those ideas into cohesive and organized papers, and how to write in a style appropriate for the various disciplines in the university. Our major writing projects will be produced in and out of class, and each will take a large chunk of the quarter.

Portfolio (60% of final grade)
In this course, you will complete a series of writing assignments, each of which is designed to help you fulfill the course outcomes. The first two are essays, each of which will target specific skills and allow you to build toward a final research project. You will have a chance to significantly revise each paper using feedback from me and your peers. The second half of course will center around a major research project, throughout which you will write and revise shorter assignments in service of composing a longer “major project.”

At the end of the course, you will submit a portfolio that will include will include both shorter papers, your longer major paper, and a critical reflection explaining how those papers demonstrate our course outcomes. A portfolio that does not include all the above will be considered "Incomplete" and will earn a grade of 0.0-0.9. The grade for complete portfolios will be based on the extent to which the pieces you select demonstrate the course outcomes. The portfolio will be worth 60% of your final grade.

Participation (40% of final grade)
Preparedness and participation forms a large component of your final grade. It is essential that you attend class and participate. Missing class will seriously compromise your ability to do well in this course. If you must miss a class, ask a member of your cohort for notes and make up missed work in a timely manner.

Participation includes but is not limited to: your respectful presence in class; your willingness to discuss, comment, and ask questions; your preparation for class, which includes bringing required materials to class and doing all of the assigned readings and completing your reading journals; the effort put into your writing assignments; your engagement in group work; your interactions with me and other students both in and outside of our classroom.

I hope and expect that disagreements will arise during class discussions, but disagreement should always maintain the academic spirit of respect. Derogatory, intolerant, or discourteous language/behavior will not be tolerated in our classroom.

Please don’t use your cell phones, or have them visible or audible, during class time.

Conferences
I’ll hold individual conferences with each of you twice during the quarter to discuss your work. These conferences (15 minutes long) are an opportunity to get feedback about your papers/projects and to express any concerns, questions, or suggestions you might have. Conferences are mandatory and, if missed, will affect your participation grade.

Class Policies

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Situation</th>
<th>What to do…</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>“I didn’t do my homework.”</td>
<td>Still come to class! Now get your homework done for some points…</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“I did my homework late.”</td>
<td>Turn it in before it’s a week late, and I will accept it with a grade deduction for lateness</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“I have a general question about class, homework, or the mysteries of the universe.”</td>
<td>1. Poke around our Canvas page to see if you can find the answer.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2. Reread any related assignments or handouts.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3. Last step, email me with any questions you have.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
“I’m going to miss class.”

1. Email me your homework BEFORE class time if you want full credit for it.
2. Follow the “I missed class!” directions below.

“I missed class!”

1. Check Modules page on Canvas to see what you missed.
2. Check the homework for the next class period.
3. Check in with your learning team.
4. Last step, email me with any questions you have.

“I’m freaking out about ____.”

Just email me or drop by my office. Let me know what’s up! 😊

**Late Work:** While late work is annoying for a lot of reasons, it’s not the end of the world. However, it can quickly impact your overall grade. You cannot receive full credit for assignments turned in beyond their due dates/times. Don’t skip class just because you didn’t do the homework. Most days, you will still be valuable to the class conversation even without your HW. If you miss class and would like to turn an assignment in for full credit, it must be received before the beginning of our class period via Canvas. All of our assignments must be submitted through the appropriate Canvas assignment page for credit.

**Communication:** I am fairly available via email. I get between 50-80 e-mails per day, so please be patient as you wait for a reply. If you email me please give me at least 48 hours to respond – often I am much quicker than this! When you email me, it would do you well to have a salutation (“Hi Steph,”) and to sign your email (“Thanks, [your name]”). Believe me, this has more of an impact on my mood when responding than I’d like to admit! It’s also good practice for future professional correspondence.

**CLASS COMMUNITY, CONDUCT, ETC.**

This is a college course, and therefore this institution, your classmates, and I have high standards for your behavior during this quarter. Any conduct that makes our learning environment less safe or impedes another student’s learning is absolutely unacceptable. If I believe any student is infringing upon another student’s right to learn in this class, I will ask to meet with this student in order to make the classroom environment most productive. If you ever feel that your right to learn and explore in our class is disrupted, please shoot me an email, drop me a note, or come by my office to chat. I want to make this a space that works for you, individually, and for our class, collectively.

**Electronics:** I encourage the use of laptops when we’re working on writing projects, research, and collaborative work in class.

While we will have times during writing sessions where you may listen to music, it makes me CRAZY when a student has headphones in/on during class discussions. Please remove all headphones or earbuds when in our classroom. Please turn your cell phones to silent or vibrate when you enter class. If you are expecting an important call, you must leave the classroom to take it. (But let me know before class begins.) Be respectful in not disturbing others. If you’re being annoying with your phone, I’ll ask you to leave—it is just extremely distracting, and I’m nosy.

**Plagiarism and Academic Dishonesty:** Plagiarism occurs when you knowingly submit someone else's ideas or words as your own. Plagiarism is an act of intentional deception that is dishonest, and robs you of the most important product of education—the actual learning. Plagiarism includes using someone else’s words as your own without noting it in your text, submitting someone else’s work as your own, and submitting papers for this class that you have submitted to others (without the permission of your previous teacher as well as my permission). If I suspect academic dishonesty, I will discuss it with you; plagiarism will result in a failed
Repeated plagiarism (whether fully intended or not) or cheating will result in your failing this course. Talk to me if you are struggling—plagiarism is much less productive.

For more information, please refer to the Academic Honesty: Cheating and Plagiarism document prepared by the Committee on Academic Conduct in the College of Arts and Sciences, UW Seattle:

HTTPS://WWW.TACOMA.UW.EDU/NODE/38211

Support Services
Teaching and Learning Center: The TLC is awesome and FREE! It provides a wide variety of instructional resources and support for teaching and learning at UW Tacoma. They are here to assist you in achieving your goals and provide math/quantitative, writing, science, and other tutoring services.

Online: http://www.tacoma.uw.edu/teaching-learning-center/teaching-learning-center

Counseling Services: Located in MAT 354, the Counseling Center is free to students. This is a wonderful place to reach out to if you are feeling uneasy or overwhelmed with personal or academic stresses.

Library: The UWT Library provides resources and services to support students at all levels of expertise. They guide students through the research process, helping them learn how to develop effective research strategies and find and evaluate appropriate resources. For more information about the Library and its services, see:

http://www.tacoma.washington.edu/library/library

Disability Support Services: The University of Washington Tacoma is committed to making physical facilities and instructional programs more accessible to students with disabilities. Disability Support Services (DSS) functions as the focal point for coordination of services for students with disabilities. In compliance with Title II or the Americans with Disabilities Act, any enrolled student at UW Tacoma who has an appropriately documented physical, emotional, or mental disability that substantially limits one or more major life activities [including walking, seeing, hearing, speaking, breathing, learning and working], is eligible for services from DSS. To schedule an appointment with a counselor, please call (253) 692-4522. Consult the web page below for a complete description of services.

http://www.tacoma.washington.edu/studentaffairs/SHW/dss_about.cfm

Campus and Safety Information
Escort Service: Safety Escorts are available Monday – Thursday 6:00AM - 11:00PM. They can be reached either through the duty officer or by calling 253-692-4416.

In case of a fire alarm: Take your valuables and leave the building. Plan to return to class once the alarm has stopped. Do not return until you have received an all clear from somebody "official," the web, or email.

In case of an earthquake: DROP, COVER, and HOLD. Once the shaking stops, take your valuables and leave the building. Do not plan to return for the rest of the day. Do not return to the building until you have received an all clear from somebody "official," the web, or email.

Inclement Weather: Call (253) 383-INFO to determine whether campus operations have been suspended. If there is sketchy weather, check your Canvas email. Even if class is cancelled, I may have you submit assignments online and/or assign work for the next class. It is still your responsibility to check (even if you are making a snowman at the same time).

Keep this syllabus, refer to it throughout the quarter, and think of it as a binding contract between us.

I look forward to a great quarter in this class! 😊