WR 39B: Critical Reading & Rhetoric

Writing 39B, Critical Reading and Rhetoric, is the first of two required lower-division writing courses at UC Irvine. It is a four-unit course that may be taken pass/no pass unless your department requires that it be taken for a letter grade. WR 37 is an extended version of WR 39B and enrollment is limited to invitation by the Composition Program.

Both 39B and 37 include close reading and writing analytical essays for an academic audience, as well as writing across genres; the reading and writing practices you'll learn in this course will help you succeed in your other courses and will prepare you to engage responsibly and effectively in the university community.

REQUIRED TEXTS AND RESOURCES

- *Course Books/Texts TBA by your instructor*
- *The Anteater Guide to Writing and Rhetoric*, 5th ed. (AGWR)
- *Canvas online class environment*

PREREQUISITES

Before enrolling in WR 39B, you must have satisfied all Academic English/ESL and UC Entry Level Writing requirements or passed (with a "C" or better) either WR 39A or a S/A designated section of Humanities Core. If you are unsure of your status, check with the Program in Academic English/ESL in HIB 201 (824-6781) or the Composition Department in HIB 420 (824-9692).

FIRST DAY RULE
All students enrolled in first-year writing courses (WR 37, WR 39A, WR 39AP, WR 39B, WR 39C) are REQUIRED TO ATTEND THE <u>ENTIRE</u> FIRST CLASS MEETING. Enrolled students who do not attend THE ENTIRE class on the first day WILL BE DROPPED from the instructor's roll and their spot will be given away.

If you lose your place, you must manually drop this course yourself by submitting an authorization code to the Registrar by the end of the second week of classes. If you do not drop the course, you will receive a grade of NR, which becomes a permanent F after one quarter. This policy has been approved by the Composition Director and by the Executive Committee of the School of Humanities in order to allow instructors to admit students on the wait list in time for them to keep up with the course.

DROPPING/ADDING/GRADE OPTIONS

If you want to add, drop, or change your grade option for this class, it is your responsibility to obtain an authorization code from your instructor (issued by the Composition Office).

<u>ADDING</u>: If you signed up for the online waiting list for a particular section on the Registrar's site, please note that these lists expire after the registration period. Once classes begin, the way to add a class is to attend the section you want to add on the first day of instruction: if there are any seats available, and if your instructor agrees to add you to a class, you will be given an add code that you can then use at WebReg to register for the course. You can also get help finding a section to add in the

Composition Office (HIB 420, 949-824-9692), as they have the most up-to-date information on what sections have open seats.

DROPPING: If you want to drop during the first two weeks, ask your instructor for a drop code that you can use at WebReg to drop the class. **You will not be dropped automatically if you simply stop attending class.** You must use the Composition Office authorization codes for all drops, adds or changes. Students who wish to drop this course must complete the drop in WebReg by the end of the 2nd week of classes. These deadlines are strictly enforced.

CHANGING GRADE OPTION: Request a code from your instructor to change your Grade Option (from Letter to P/NP or the other way around). NOTE: Students who wish to change their Grade Option to P/NP should first check with their academic counselors to make sure this choice is available to them. You may use the code to change your Grade Option until the end of Week 2. The Composition Office can assist students wishing to change their Grade Option between weeks 2 and 7. After week 7, students must see the Humanities Office staff.

EXCEPTIONS: If you would like to petition for a drop based on extenuating and documented circumstances, you must submit a petition at the **School of Humanities website**.

REQUIREMENTS / COURSE POLICIES

o *All assigned draft(s) must be turned in as scheduled in order to meet the benchmarks of the class and to receive timely feedback.* You may be asked to hand in print copies of drafts; you may also be asked to keep a digital portfolio of all your writing work in this class in an online course environment. Ask your instructor for more information.

o *Excessive absence from class is grounds for failure.* Most WR 39B instructors consider more than 10% unexcused absences from class to be excessive.

o Late papers may not be accepted. Please speak with your instructor ahead of time if you fear you may not be able to meet a deadline. *Failure to hand in any essay or short writing assignment is sufficient grounds for failure in the course.*

o Failure to upload your final essays to Turnitin by the assigned deadline (or uploading a draft that is different than the one turned in to your instructor) is grounds for failure in the course.

o You must have access to a computer and the internet to complete many of your writing assignments. If you do not have access to a computer, check out the drop-in Computer Labs across campus.

o For all UCI writing courses, a final grade of C or above satisfies the writing requirement. If you earn a final grade of C- or lower in any writing course, you must repeat that course and you must drop your enrollment in the next course in the sequence.

o If you are repeating WR 39B, you may NOT resubmit the same papers. Resubmitted papers from a previous WR 39B will receive a non-passing grade. Additionally, you may not resubmit work that you did in 39A for your 39B assignments.

o You must receive at least a C average for the midterm portfolio and RIP in order to pass the class.

FAILS/REPEATS

If you earn a final grade of C- or lower in any writing course at UC Irvine, you must repeat that course. If you have pre-registered (enrolled) for WR 39C and then learn that you must repeat WR 39B, remember to drop 39C as soon as possible. If you are repeating a course, tell your current WR 39B instructor at the beginning of the quarter. When you repeat and pass the course, that passing grade will replace the earlier failing grade in your transcript.

PLAGIARISM

Please read the university policy on Academic Honesty in the Registrar Website (www.reg.uci.edu). Submitting a paper that is based on the words and/or structure of another student's work or submitting a paper that includes researched information that is not properly cited is plagiarism, and thus, grounds for failure in the course. All information borrowed from print or electronic sources must be identified. Failure to do so is theft. Copying a sentence and changing a word or two does not make the ideas or the information yours. Deliberately altering data to fit your thesis is also a form of cheating. ***Plagiarists fail the course and have their offense recorded in their School and in the School of Humanities.*** Violations of academic honesty can affect a student's graduation, financial aid, and eligibility for honors. The Composition Program deals with plagiarism cases every quarter, even though most people do not hear about them. No matter how pressured you feel, do not plagiarize; it is not worth it. Note: submitting the same work for more than one class without notifying the instructor is considered plagiarism at UCI.

RESPECTING YOUR INSTRUCTOR'S TIME

At a research university such as UCI, instructors have many responsibilities and demands on their time in addition to teaching, and they are not available to students on call or at all times. In addition to grading your work in a fair and timely manner, your writing instructor is responsible for being in class on time, using class time effectively, providing two hours a week for student conferences and a limited amount (about 1 hour a week) of email feedback to student questions.

Here are some methods of respecting your instructor's time outside of class:

o   When you attend office hours, bring some focused questions with you.

o   Focus email questions as clearly as possible.

o   Avoid emailing your instructor about matters that can be addressed in class time or office hours.

o   Do not send email drafts or final papers to your instructor, or attach drafts or final papers to an email message to your instructor, unless you have been requested to do so.

o   Call or email your instructor ASAP if you cannot show up for a scheduled appointment.

HOW TO DO WELL IN WR 39B

o   ***Be prepared to invest time in writing and reading.*** To do well in any course that involves extensive reading and writing, you have to schedule adequate time to do the required reading and writing…. and you have to train yourself to not put off assignments until the last minute. Count on spending at least **2-3 hours outside of class for every hour in class**. This means you should **expect to spend at least 6-12 hours each week working on out-of-class assignments**. Expect to read 100 to 150 pages per week, and expect to write somewhere between 500 and 1,000 words each week (one double-spaced, typed page is 250 words).

o   ***Be curious about your course texts***. The more you read about, know about, and understand a topic, the better your writing about it will become. Develop a sense of curiosity about the genres you're reading and writing about this quarter. Look for instances of it in your everyday life, and practice the reading skills you've learned on all the texts you encounter.

o   ***Don't procrastinate.*** Most students find that the class work becomes much more manageable if they start their reading, writing and revision early, and devote a little time each day to the process. Those students who delay their drafting process until the last minute usually regret it.

o   ***Get help when you need it***. Most students find it useful to start working on papers early, to write more than one draft of the essay, and to attend office hours to get individual attention. Many

successful students also find the services of the UCI Writing Center (www.writing.uci.edu/writingcenter.html) to be very helpful. This Center offers a range of services including workshops and individual tutoring tailored to your course and to your needs. The Campus Writing Coordinator also sponsors Writing and Library Research Peer Tutors—for more information, go to www.writing.uci.edu/peertutors.html.

As with all the work for this class, however, don't procrastinate in meeting with the tutors and/or setting up Writing Center appointments. Plan ahead! The Writing Center and Tutors become very busy around due dates, as students from all the other 39 classes will be requesting appointments as well.

OVERVIEW OF ASSIGNMENTS / GRADING

Your instructor will be assigning a number of different research and writing assignments (some formal, some less formal). Keep in mind that even short assignments such as reading responses and pre-writing exercises are an important part of your success.

Overview of Assignments

- Class Community: Participation, Discussion, and Peer Review

- Critical Reading Exercises

- Rhetoric-in-Practice Exercises

- Assignment 1: Rhetorical Analysis Essay (RA) *

- Assignment 2: Rhetoric-in-Practice Project (RIP) *

* These final assignments must be included in your final, cumulative portfolio (see below).

Grading Percentages

- Class Community: Participation, Discussion, and Peer Review (10%)

- Midterm ePortfolio Submission (30%)

- Rhetoric-in-Practice Project (30%)

- Final ePortfolio (30%)

What is an ePortfolio?

In WR 39B, not only is the work that you do important, but it is also important that you are rhetorically aware of the choices that you make in your writing and learning. An ePortfolio helps to reflect on the writing process throughout the course. You will complete all of the assignments listed above, and you will turn all drafts in as scheduled.

You'll receive comments from your instructor in the form of emailed responses, marginal notes on essays, etc., but only responses to major assignments will include a letter grade. Why? It's our belief that you should have the opportunity to develop your writing and reading expertise, and we expect that regular writing, reflection and revision should be part of that process. Further, it's our experience that grades can actually inhibit the creative process necessary in order to grow and develop as a writer.

How does the class work? You will do all of the weekly reading and writing assignments, turn in all of the drafts of the essays and complete all of the scheduled final drafts of the essays and projects – to build towards the major assignments. This class will have three checkpoints: the midterm portfolio submission, the RIP, and the final portfolio submission. Each grade is final, but you'll use that to help you adjust and rethink your writing for the next assignment. You will show your critical thinking about rhetoric and genre in the final portfolio through the evidence you have produced throughout the quarter.

Midterm Portfolio Submission

Your midterm portfolio will contain:

- A portfolio introduction introducing and evaluating the contents (see below)

- Final version of the RA.

- A *selection* of process work (including in-class writing, critical reading exercises, RIP exercises, and drafting) – clearly organized and labeled.

Final Portfolio Requirements

Your final portfolio will contain:

- A portfolio introduction introducing and evaluating the contents (see below)

- Final versions of your RA and your RIP Project.
  These major assignments should be clearly organized and labeled.

- A *selection* of process work (including in-class writing, critical reading exercises, RIP exercises, and drafting) – clearly organized and labeled.

Each item in the portfolio should have significant annotations or commentary from you, indicating why you've included this item in the portfolio, what you learned from this assignment, how it fits into patterns in your writing, where you might strengthen your writing, or when you had moments of clarity and insight.

How this work is organized and presented is up to you (although your instructor may offer some suggestions or provide some guidelines). You will use a digital portfolio system, and you'll be given additional instructions before you assemble your portfolio from your instructor.

Your final grade will depend on a few important elements:

- Ownership and initiative, including thoughtful, precise, productive and concrete self-assessment.

- Responsiveness and contribution to the ongoing academic conversation.

- Ability to target your writing to specific audiences.

- Critical reading skills (understanding and responding meaningfully to readings and peers).

- Writing/revision skills (the ability to *apply* thoughtful self-assessment to improve your work).

- Ability to meet the regular benchmarks of the class – meeting deadlines, for example.

The Portfolio Introduction/Self-Assessment

The portfolio introduction evaluates how you did in the class and analyzes all of your writing contained in the portfolio, and will include the following:

- Your analysis of the advancement of your writing through papers, participation, engagement, and the revision process in all its stages, including peer editing (with specific evidence for your evaluation taken from your own writing and the feedback you have received).

- Your reasons for making the choices you made, and what you may have done differently; what you think you accomplished and what may need more work.

- Your responses to the class texts and how these sources informed your own work and ideas.

- Your answer to this: How did these assignments prepare you for life and work beyond 39B?

Beware: you should follow your instincts as well as your informed belief, not hubris or pathos. Consider what you did, what you could have done, what you believe you wanted to learn, etc. You should include your rationale, where you think you improved, where you could have done more, what you liked, what you didn't.

Class Community Assignments

We cannot learn to speak, read, or write in a vacuum. Because these are inherently social practices, we must practice speaking, reading and writing in the society of others. Therefore, this class will be conducted with a workshop atmosphere; your full participation in the class community is extremely important. This part of your grade includes, but is not limited to:

- **Attendance, Class, and Group Participation.** This part of your grade includes attendance, arriving to class on time, having the required reading/work completed, and participating in the ongoing discussions of class readings and assignments (both in class and online); it also includes meeting deadlines and effective participation in group assignments.

- **Class Presentations.** You will be asked to work individually or in a group on projects to collect information about the texts being studied and their rhetorical situations; you'll then present your findings to the class in formal presentations. Your presentations will include PowerPoint (or some other visual presentation software) and the creation of hand-outs.

- **Weekly Reflection Writing.** Your instructor will assign weekly "low stakes" writing that responds to A) the course readings and B) your own writing. This writing will be posted to the Canvas class environment, where you'll be required to respond to your classmates writing, and to further the class discussion. Your work on these assignments will be assessed on the detail, depth and risk you take in your writing, not on length. (Keep in mind, though, that very short reflective writing often skirts the important, difficult questions at hand.)

- **Peer Editing and Responses.** You will turn in exploratory writing and working drafts of all formal assignments, and you'll be required to provide both written and verbal commentary to classmates. This commentary is an important part of learning to develop your own writing, and giving cursory or perfunctory responses will hurt your grade as well as your development.

Exactly how your instructor assigns and comments on various small assignments in this category will, by necessity, vary from class to class. Please do not assume that this part of your grade is "extra," and won't count toward your success in this class. All participation, presentations and short writing assignments are designed to help you succeed on your longer assignments. Failure to complete these assignments will have an impact on your success in the class (as well as on your final grade).

Critical Reading Exercises

Critical Reading Exercises are informal writing assignments that help you start practicing the rhetorical skills you need for the rhetorical analysis essay. These short assignments will look at the rhetorical triangle and help you delve into genre and context of the texts that you're reading. These exercises could lead into possible topics for your rhetorical analysis paper so you should be as insightful and creative to experiment here in how you can really think through the challenges of the paper. Make sure that you quote, cite, integrate and analyze appropriate selections from the text. Your instructor will have specific prompts for you to answer for these exercises.

Rhetoric-in-Practice Exercises

Just as the Critical Reading Exercises prepare you for the Rhetorical Analysis Essay, the Rhetoric-in-Practice Exercises prepare you for the RIP project. Here, you'll get to experiment in writing in different genres through imitation to analyze a genre through constructing it yourself. You'll concentrate on rhetoric from the practical side and consider your message, audience, context, genre, and ethos as a rhetor. Your instructor will have specific prompts for you to answer for these exercises.

Rhetorical Analysis Essay

A thesis-driven analysis of an aspect of rhetoric in an assigned text, written for an academic audience. Your instructor will provide more information about the particulars and the focus for this essay.

- Multiple drafts, peer review and revision are required elements of the assignment; failure to complete parts of the process will result in a lower grade in your final portfolio.

- The final essay should be a minimum of 6 pages long and be presented in MLA format, including Works Cited.

- A minimum of 3 secondary sources must be used to develop the essay (not including the text being analyzed).

Rhetoric-in-Practice Project and Essay

For this project, you will select a purpose and audience that addresses the class theme (or responds to one of the class texts). You will then select an appropriate genre for this project, and demonstrate your rhetorical know-how by selecting appropriate rhetorical choices for this situation. You will write a companion essay that describes your creative and revision process, analyzes the rhetorical choices you made and assesses your success at meeting your goals in this project. This companion essay will draw on your midterm portfolio introduction and be a precursor to the final portfolio introduction as well.

Drafts, peer review and revision are required elements of the assignment. Before you begin work on your project, you will be asked to submit a proposal providing a detailed description of the rhetorical situation of your project (portions of this proposal may be revised and included as part of the RIP Essay). Your instructor and/or class and group members will give you feedback on your proposal throughout the quarter before you begin writing.

Multiple drafts, peer review and revision are required elements of the assignment, and are calculated into the final grade; failure to complete parts of the process may result in a failing grade. The length of the Project depends on the genre and purpose and the Essay is usually about 2-3 pages long. The essay should be in MLA format, including Works Cited. A minimum of 3 sources must be cited in the essay, though the Working Bibliography may have 10 or more sources that you read in the process.

RIP projects should be a text-based genre, but can be creative, hybrid genres. Practice possibilities in your RIP exercises and take risks to find out what might be the best way to express your message.

Your instructor may suggest specific directions that relate to your class readings; please ask your instructor for more details.

Detailed prompts, objectives and rubrics will be provided to you in the Canvas class environment.

IMPORTANT FORMS FOR WR 39B

There are some important forms (Consent to Reproduce and Publish / Academic Honesty, Plagiarism, TurnitIn) that you need to fill out for this class that are available online:

www.humanities.uci.edu/comp/forms/

You can access these forms at the URL above. Please make sure you complete these forms by the end of the first week of class.