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FIQWS Language and Literacy: Linguistic Myths and Realities

Emily Miller
CUNY City College

Missy Watson
CUNY City College

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Language and Literacy

Linguistic Myths and Realities



course details

Topic Section

Emily Miller
Email: emiller1@ccny.cuny.edu
Office: NAC 6/321
Office Hours: MW 1:00-2:00pm (and by appt.)
FIQWS 10003, Section H2
Course#/Code: 65162
Location: TBD
Time: MW 9:30-10:45

Writing Section

Noelle Nagales
Email: nnagale000@citymail.cuny.edu
Office: NAC 6/321
Office Hours: TBD
FIQWS 10103, Section H2
Course#/Code: 65300
Location: TBD
Time: MW 11:00-12:15

course description & trajectory

What roles does literacy play in U.S. society? Who has access to literacy and who/what are the gatekeepers of that access? What are the historical and political implications behind how literacy education is valued and traditionally approached? What is the relationship between literacy and social differences, such as race and culture? How are we—the readers and writers participating in this class—affected by the ways that literacy functions in the U.S.? These are the kinds of questions that will guide the work we do in this FIQWS class, a two-section, collaboratively taught course that strives as much to engage students in critical thinking and reading about the issue of literacy as it does to mentor students in learning and practicing conventions of standard academic writing. In a way, then, we can understand this course as drawing on the topic of literacy as a vehicle for critically analyzing our own literacies and developing especially our academic and information literacies.

In the **first phase** of the course, we'll explore how social differences affect one's experience with literacy, gain some practice with rhetorical reading and paraphrase, and then draw on our own experiences as readers and writers to compose a digital literacy narrative. In **Phase 2** we'll explore various linguistic theories and engage with course readings, making connections and discovering areas of tension. We'll practice writing summary, synthesis, and argument to enhance our understandings and positions. In **Phase 3** we'll gain additional insight into the ideological "myths" impacting our views of language and literacies, and we will produce a well-supported research paper. While this phase emphasizes research, source use, and substantial revision, we will also draw on the practices in academic literacy introduced in Phases 1-3. **Phase 4** will be devoted to your portfolio completion as well as your final reflection essay where you will address the rhetorical choices you made for each of the course assignments.

This is a “ZERO textbook cost” course. As such, all materials will be accessible online or distributed in class.

Many of our readings will be available on the course website in PDF form. We will also read a collection of student writing (yours, your peers', and others'). Please print all course documents for class (or have digital access to them). If you decide to print them, plan to get to campus early to take advantage of free printing.

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<https://www.wwnorton.com/college/english/write/fieldguide/index.asp>

<https://courses.lumenlearning.com/englishcomp1v2xmaster/>

<https://writingcommons.org/>

<https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/>

<https://writingcenter.unc.edu/tips-and-tools/>

Course readings (all available on course website and/or distributed in print):

Tan, Amy. “Mother Tongue”

Anzaldúa, Gloria. “How to Tame a Wild Tongue” from *Borderlands/La Frontera: The New Mestiza*

Selfe, Cynthia et al. “What Are Literacy Narratives?”

Smitherman, Geneva. “African American English: From the Hood to the Amen Corner”

Lippi-Green, Rosina. “The Myth of Non-Accent”

Lippi-Green, Rosina. “The Standard Language Myth”

Worlfram, Walt. “Everyone has an Accent”

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course outcomes

This FIQWS **topic** section satisfies the “World Cultures and Global Issues” category of Pathways. Students will

- Gather, interpret, and assess information from a variety of sources and points of view.
- Evaluate evidence and arguments critically and analytically.
- Produce well-reasoned written or oral arguments using evidence to support conclusions
- Apply the fundamental concepts of language and literacy studies by recognizing the role of language attitudes and standards in empowering, oppressing, and hierarchizing languages and their users.
- Analyze and discuss the role that race, ethnicity, class, gender, language, sexual orientation, belief, ability, or other forms of social differentiation play in world cultures or societies.
- Speak, read, and write a language other than English, and use that language to respond to cultures other than one’s own.

This FIQWS **writing** section satisfies the English composition requirement. Students will

- Explore and analyze in their own and other’s writing a variety of genres and rhetorical situations.
- Develop strategies for reading, drafting, revising, and editing.
- Practice systematic application of citation conventions.
- Recognize and practice key rhetorical terms and strategies when engaged in writing situations.
- Develop and engage in the collaborative and social aspects of writing processes.
- Understand and use print and digital technologies to address a range of audiences.
- Locate research sources (including academic journal articles, magazine and newspaper articles) in the library’s databases or archives on the internet and evaluate them for credibility, accuracy, and bias.

grade breakdown

Phase	Assignment	Word Count	First Draft Due	Final Draft Due
1	Digital Language & Literacy Narrative and Reflection Essay	4-5 minutes 2-3 pages	Mon. 9/24 Mon. 10/1	Fri. 9/28 Fri. 10/5
2*	Exploratory Essay	5-6 pages	Mon. 10/29	Fri. 11/2
3*	Researched Critical Analysis Essay	5-7 pages	Wed. 11/21	Fri. 11/30
4	Final Portfolio and Self-Assessment Essay	Varies 3-4 pages	Wed. 12/5 Mon. 12/10	Fri. 12/14

*Phase 2-3 assignments must be accompanied by a Cover Letter. See below.

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cover letter reflection assignment

You will write brief reflections for your Phase 2 and 3 assignments, leading to the Final Self-Reflection Essay at the end of the semester. One of the best tools we have for learning is through reflection, as it helps us to reinforce our knowledge. If we consciously build a vocabulary for discussing our learning, our awareness of what we know grows and fortifies. A major goal, then, of this writing course is for you to reflect on your learning and writing practices. When you submit your Phase 2 and 3 assignments, you will paste at the top a short (~2-page) cover letter wherein you reflect on these questions:

- What are some of the most meaningful insights you've gained in this phase (and through writing this assignment) regarding language, rhetoric, and writing?
- What concepts/terms have impacted most your learning and your writing practices (e.g., rhetoric; rhetorical situation; context; exigence; purpose; author; audience; text; genre; argument; evidence; something else)? How so?
- In what ways has this phase's assignment helped you to achieve (some/any of) the Course Learning Goals listed in the syllabus? Please provide examples (of actual moments in/after class or through the completion of certain assignments).

This can be written in essay or letter format (but not bulleted format). Language differences are welcome. Informality is welcome. The most important thing is that you are capturing your perspectives, experiences, and knowledge.

brief descriptions of major assignments and important due dates (detailed prompts will be distributed later):

<p>Digital Literacy Narrative Assignment & the DLN Reflection Essay (20% of T&W)* Video due 10/5 Reflection due 10/5</p>	<p>You will engage in critical examinations of your own literacy backgrounds, analyzing through artifacts and experiences how literacy learning shaped you and vice versa. Drawing on and extending the genre of the <i>literacy narrative</i>, you will present your findings by composing a 5-6-minute video. In addition to preparing and recording a digital (video) version of your narrative, you will draft a 2-3-page written reflection where you discuss the learning you gained and analyze the rhetorical choices you made while composing your digital project.</p>
<p>Exploratory Essay (20% of T&W) Due 11/2</p>	<p>In this essay you will critically engage with, summarize, and synthesize some of the arguments made in our course texts. Based on what you've learned, you will articulate your own ideas, construct complex claims (that move beyond simplistic "agree/disagree" and "good/bad" statements), establish clear differences across each position, and demonstrate a fair and dialogic relationship with texts.</p>
<p>Researched Critical Analysis Essay (20% of T&W) Due W 11/30</p>	<p>You will apply linguistic theory to critically analyze instances of language users experiencing tensions when not quite "fitting into" specific communities and ways of being (linguistically and culturally). This essay asks you to demonstrate a sophisticated understanding of linguistic theory, to develop a clear and nuanced thesis, and to support your thesis with analysis, outside research, and responsible source work.</p>
<p>Portfolio Assignment and Final Reflection Essay (20% of T&W) Due F 12/14</p>	<p>You will curate (as in carefully organize and present) a portfolio of the work you've accomplished this semester. You will use your instructors' and peers' feedback to make revisions to various works (including the essay <i>not</i> selected for your final Research Paper--the Expository Essay <i>or</i> Critical Analysis Essay). You will write an accompanying reflection to serve as an introduction to you and your writing.</p>

*"T" stands for "Topic Section" and "W" stands for "Writing Section"

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course policies, procedures, and pertinent information

Homework/Coursework (20% of T / 20% of W): All homework and in-class activities are important and will have an impact on your development and success as academic writers. You will devote time, thought, and energy to a variety of informal and formal reading and writing practices. During the course you might be asked to annotate readings, keep a record of ideas, jot down observations, complete in-class assignments, take notes on class discussions, collaborate with your classmates, and engage in a variety of research, drafting, and revision assignments. Your instructors will review class work on a regular basis. These will be graded on a point system. **You will get a zero for coursework you do not complete or that you do not submit on time.** If there are extenuating circumstances (e.g., medical or other emergencies), please contact us so that we can arrange a time to talk about missed work. Finally, writing well depends upon reading well. The course texts will provide you with ideas and arguments, facts and statistics. They will prompt thought as you agree or disagree, qualify or extend their knowledge. They enlarge the context for our class discussion, and they illustrate choices other writers have made as they composed. Writing and reading are interdependent practices, and you will move between the two regularly throughout the course. Be prepared to write about (or be quizzed on) that day's assigned readings.

Participation and Attendance: Both FIQWS sections are courses in literacy learning, and literacy is learned most effectively when immersed in communities who share goals, interact, and collaborate; therefore, it is essential (and mandatory) that you attend class and participate. While we understand that everyone has different approaches to participation, we still expect that you arrive to class promptly so that we can begin on time, be prepared with (your own copies of) all readings/texts under investigation, and to engage in a way that best fits you (by actively listening, taking notes, asking questions, offering comments, collaborating with peers during group work, etc.). We also ask you to avoid walking around or stepping outside of class (but, of course, consult with us if you absolutely need to do either). Finally, missing class and/or arriving late will affect your learning, your classmates' learning, and your grade. If you must miss a class, you are responsible for submitting **on time** (in person, on the course website, or by email) any work assigned. You are also responsible for asking your classmates about any changes made to the syllabus, calendar, and assignments. If you miss four class periods, you are at risk for failing the course, and your instructor(s) will contact you about proceeding.

Late Policy on Major Assignments: 5% of the grade will be automatically deducted for major assignments turned in past the due date. We will still accept your paper and you will be deducted only 5% as long you submit it by the next class period. If you miss this deadline and submit your assignment at the following class period (making it two class periods late) an additional 5% will be deducted (for a total of 10%). An example: *If you miss the deadline for your Digital Literacy Narrative assignment (due on Wednesday, September 16), you can submit it on Monday, September 21 and will be deducted 5%, or you can submit it on Wednesday, September 23, and be deducted 10%.* If you do not submit a major assignment within 7 days of its due date, you are required to schedule a meeting with us so that we can discuss how to proceed (or whether you need to drop the course). This policy applies regardless of you being absent or not, so you should still attend class even if you have not completed an assignment! And, again, if there are extenuating circumstances, please contact us immediately.

Feedback, Grading, and Use of 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 receive many kinds of feedback during this course. Some will come from fellow students and some will come from your instructors. Both are important; they tell you in various ways how your readers are responding to your writing. This feedback will also help you learn how to assess your own work. You are expected to put in serious effort to advancing your academic literacies, and you will (mostly) be assessed based on how effectively you have accomplished the various and different goals set out for each of our major assignments. Finally, you will also meet with one or both of your instructors around week 8 to discuss your progress, and you may be asked, encouraged, or required to seek additional feedback from tutors at the Writing Center.

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Grammar: Students are expected to take an active role in developing their English language, grammar, and mechanics. We recognize that students come from different educational, linguistic, and cultural backgrounds and that it takes a lifetime to fully develop language and grammar, especially if English is a student's additional (and not first) language. As your instructors, we are committed to adopting approaches deemed most effective by the fields of TESOL and Composition and Rhetoric: we will provide ongoing feedback on your writing to highlight language issues on which you need to work, and we will refrain from penalizing students for their language. It is not until the final essays that grammar will be accounted for in the grading.

Computer Use and Assignment Format: Most assignments for this class must be word-processed, using Microsoft Word, OpenOffice, or Google Docs (please save all documents as rtf or doc files. No links or PDFs please). Use an easily readable font, size 11 or 12, and double-space all work. Include one-inch margins and follow the page layout used by the MLA format described in your handbook. Computers, as you know, are susceptible to crashing and freezing. **Problems with computers/printers/internet are not excuses for late work.** Save your work frequently, back up your files (in multiple places!), don't wait until the last minute to print, and plan your projects with extra time allowed for inevitable glitches.

In-class Expectations: For the courtesy of your fellow classmates, please turn off all cell phones, iPods, IM's, iPhones, etc. Laptops must be used in ways relevant to our class (no outside coursework or surfing). Texting is not permitted during class. Be courteous, polite, and considerate to all members of the class at all times. We will have different perspectives voiced in class, so our comments should be shared and responded to respectfully. As a group, we will also represent diverse cultural and linguistic backgrounds and must all commit to honoring, respecting, and accounting for each other's differences. As your instructors, we are committed to this.

Contacting Your Instructors: We encourage you to contact us (your instructors) and visit during our respective office hours. If you are unable to meet with us during the allotted office hours, please contact us so that we can arrange an appointment. We expect you to accept a responsible role as a communicator in this class and to keep us informed about your work, your progress, your questions, and your problems. Please do not hesitate to meet with us to talk about your work several times during the semester, preferably BEFORE your grade is the central concern. Do not hesitate to email us to ask questions or send us important reminders.

Blackboard & Email: Our course will be loaded on CUNY Academic Works, and we will review access together on the first day of class. Assignments will be submitted to Blackboard, CCNY's on-line teaching support system. We expect you to be able to regularly locate, download, and link to a range of course materials. Assignments will sometimes be handed in during class (as a printed hard copy) but will mostly be submitted electronically (to Blackboard or, in some cases, via email). Assignments due online are due thirty minutes before our regular class start time (i.e., if our class meets at 2:00pm, assignments due that day must be submitted by 1:30pm). We will also contact you regularly via the Blackboard course student email listserv, so check your CCNY email daily.

The Writing Center: The CCNY Writing Center provides a supportive learning environment where students can have one-on-one tutoring sessions with experienced writing consultants. The Writing Center is located on the third floor of the North Academic Center (NAC). Students can schedule an appointment either by going to the Center in person, or by calling (212) 650-8104. This is a free resource available to all students and recommended for all writing assigned in this class. The Center also has a computer lab open to students where students can use computers and printers during operating hours (up to 15 pages a day). For more information on hours, location and services, please visit the official website of the CCNY Writing Center: <http://www.ccnycuny.edu/writing/>.

Special Needs and Accommodations: There are several Student Support Services available for CCNY students. You can check this website for a complete list and for more information: <http://www.ccnycuny.edu/services/>. If you believe that you need accommodations for a disability, please contact CCNY's AccessAbility Center (Student Disability Services), <http://www.ccnycuny.edu/accessability/index.cfm>, located in the North Academic Center,

