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Language & Literacy: The Politics of Language

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Freshman Inquiry Writing Seminar (FIQWS), Fall 2018

Language and Literacy
The Politics of Language

Topic Section

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    Office Hours: by appointment only
    FIQWS 10003, Section HA3
    Course#/Code: 65165
    Location: NAC 6/329 / NAC 6/306
    Time: T/Th 8:00-9:15 am

Writing Section

    Laura Rizzo
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    Office: TBA
    Office Hours: TBD
    FIQWS 10103, Section HA3
    Course#/Code: 65301
    Location: TBD
    Time: MW 11:00-12:15pm

course description and trajectory

What roles does literacy play in society? Who has access to literacy and who/what are the gatekeepers of that access? What are the social 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, and who is privileged by these differences? 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 language and literacy as it does to mentor students in practicing conventions of academic writing. Thus, we can understand this course as drawing on the topic of language and literacy as a vehicle for critically analyzing our own languages and literacies and developing especially our academic and information literacies.

required course texts and materials

All readings will be available for free in print, online, or on Blackboard in PDF form. We will also read a collection of student writing (yours, your peers', and others'). Please bring ALL course documents to class— either in print form (some days print only may be required) or in digital form (document must be saved to device, and not accessed in class on Blackboard, when Internet may fail you).

course outcomes

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

1. Identify and apply the fundamental concepts of the field of language and literacy studies.
2. Recognize the role of language attitudes and standards in empowering, oppressing, and hierarchizing languages and their users, and be open to communicating across different languages and cultures.
3. 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.
4. Gather, interpret, assess, and critically evaluate information and arguments from a variety of sources and points of view.
5. Analyze cultural, linguistic, and global cultural diversity, and describe an event or process from more than one point of view.
6. Produce well-reasoned written or oral arguments using evidence to support conclusions.

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

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

grade breakdown*

There are 4 Major Assignments that must be completed in order to pass both courses. These assignments will be assessed by both instructors and assigned a single grade and will make up 80% of both final grades. The remaining 20% of your course grade will be based on homework, participation, and classwork and will be assessed separately by your instructors and will separately impact the two respective courses.

Phase	Assignment	Word Count	First Draft Due	Final Draft Due
1	Digital Language & Literacy Narrative and Reflection Essay	4-5 minutes 2-3 pages	Wed. 9/26	Mon. 10/1
2*	Exploratory Essay	5-6 pages	Wed. 10/31	Mon. 11/5
3*	Critical Researched Analysis Essay	5-7 pages	Mon. 11/26	Mon. 12/3
4	Final Portfolio and Self-Assessment Essay	Varies 3-4 pages	TBD	Sat. 12/15

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

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 (1.5-2-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) and actually name and quote the learning goals you reference.

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

course policies, procedures, and pertinent information

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 Monday, October 1), you can submit it on Wednesday, October 3 and will be deducted 5%, or you can submit it on Monday, October 8, and be deducted 10%.* If you do not submit a major assignment within 2 weeks 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.

Classwork (20% of T / 20% of W, assessed separately): Classwork (all homework and in-class activities) are the only assignments that will be assessed separately by your instructors. Classwork is 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 classwork on a regular basis. These will be graded on a pass/fail system but separately by your respective instructors. **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.

Participation and Attendance: Both FIQWS sections are courses in literacy learning, and literacy is learned most effectively when immersed in communities who are supportive and 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 stepping outside during class (but, of course, consult with us if you absolutely need to). Finally, missing class and/or arriving late will affect your learning, your classmates' learning, and certainly can affect your grade. If you must miss a class, you are responsible for submitting **on time** (in person, on BB, 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 more than four class periods, you are at risk for failing the course, and your instructor(s) will contact you about proceeding.

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 different 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.

Contacting Your Instructors: We encourage you to contact us and visit during our office hours or talk to us about arranging 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 me important reminders.

In-class Expectations: Most importantly, be courteous, polite, and considerate to all members of the class at all times. We will have different identities and perspectives present in class, so our comments should be shared and responded to respectfully. We will represent diverse cultural and linguistic backgrounds and must all commit to honoring and respecting each other's differences. As your instructors, we are also committed to this. Finally, 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.

Grammar: Students are expected to take an active role in developing their English language usage, 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 teaching 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 you for your language.

Blackboard & Email: Our course will be loaded on Blackboard (BB), CCNY's on-line teaching support system. You're expected 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 on BB using the "Submit Assignments" function. ***Assignments submitted on BB are due 30 mins. before class on the date their due***. We will also contact you regularly via the BB student email listserv, so check your CCNY email daily.

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 permitted**. Use Times New Roman font, size 12, and double-space all work. Include one-inch margins and follow the page layout described by MLA or APA formatting guidelines. 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.

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! The Center also has a computer lab open to students where students can use computers and printers (up to 15 pages a day). Please visit the official website of the CCNY Writing Center: http://www.ccny.cuny.edu/writing/.

Academic Integrity: All writing submitted for this course is understood to be your original work. In cases where we detect academic dishonesty (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 integrity, see CCNY's Policy on Academic Integrity on the college website: http://www2.cuny.edu/about/administration/offices/legal-affairs/policies-procedures/academic-integrity-policy/. As part of this course, we will discuss strategies for adhering to standard conventions for responsible source use and for maintaining academic integrity.

Special Needs and Accommodations: You are welcome to contact me to discuss your academic needs or any special circumstances that you feel impacts your learning. We will work our best to accommodate your needs. There are also several Student Support Services available for CCNY students. Check this website for a complete list and for more information: https://www.ccny.cuny.edu/sssp. If you believe that you need accommodations for a disability, please contact CCNY's AccessAbility Center (https://www.ccny.cuny.edu/accessability/), located in NAC 1/218, or call (212) 650-5913. Since accommodations may require early planning and generally are not provided retroactively, please contact the Center as soon as possible. CCNY and we as your instructors 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.

CCNY Quick Links and Other Resources
- **IT Service Desk** (where you can get your CCNY username, set up your email and password, and get access to CUNY Portal, CUNYFirst, and Blackboard): Go in person ASAP to NAC 1/301.
- **The City College of New York** website: http://www.ccny.cuny.edu/
- **CUNYFirst**: https://home.cunyfirst.cuny.edu/oam/Portal_Login1.html
- **Blackboard** (sign up): http://www.ccny.cuny.edu/registrar/cuny-portal-and-blackboard-info-page.cfm
- **Blackboard** (access) **/ CUNY Portal**: Once signed up with an email/username and password, go to the CUNY Portal Log-in (https://cunyportal.cuny.edu/cpr/authenticate/portal_login.jsp). Then, enter your username and password. You'll see "Blackboard" in the left menu. Upon clicking on it, you'll see a list of your classes in the right menu. Click on our class. Access readings and documents or submit assignments by clicking on the menu options on the left side.
- **Computer Labs** (including those with printers) at CCNY: http://www.ccny.cuny.edu/it/hours.cfm
- **CCNY Library**: http://ccny.cuny.edu/library. CCNY has several libraries that you can use: Cohen Library in the NAC building (enter from 2nd floor rotunda) the Science and Engineering Library in Marshak Science Building (Room J29), the Music Library in Shepard Hall (Room 160), the Architecture Library in the Spitzer School of Architecture, the Dominican Library (NAC 2/202). Go to the CCNY Library Home Page and click on the drop-down menu "Divisions" to find a list of all CCNY libraries with locations and hours of operation.
- **CCNY Writing Center**: http://www.ccny.cuny.edu/writing/
- **CCNY Bookstore**: http://www.ccnybooks.com
- **Purdue Online Writing Lab** (a great writing resource!): http://owl.english.purdue.edu
- **Microsoft Word** (free access for CCNY students): https://citymail.ccny.cuny.edu/pdf/About-Office-365.pdf
- *The New York Times* (free access for CCNY students): https://myaccount.nytimes.com/verification/edupass