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Writing for the Social Sciences

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CUNY City College

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ENGL 21002H: Writing for the Social Sciences

Fall 2018

Instructor: Dr. Maria L. Plochocki (*plo-hots-kee*)
Course Tutor: **Renee-Elise Piana** (renpiana@gmail.com).

Meeting Place and Times: Mondays and Wednesdays, 6:30PM - 7:45 PM, NAC 4/161.

Office: NA 6/332C; **Mailbox:** NA 6/220

E-mail: MPlochocki@ccny.cuny.edu; maria.plochocki@baruch.cuny.edu; or use the "Email" Tool within BlackBoard; please allow up to 48 hours for me to respond. You can also add me to your Skype contacts, under username "Mariaplochocki."

Tel.: 212-650 - 6339 (6339 from any campus phone)

Office Hours: Before each class meeting, I'll be available in our classroom for at least fifteen minutes in case you want to talk, as well as either in the classroom or in my office for about minutes afterwards; I'm also available by appointment, which I recommend if you want to talk longer, such as to review feedback on a paper.

Note: Please feel free to post more general questions within the "Ask Your Questions Here!" Discussion in our ***BlackBoard classroom***. I subscribe to this Forum, so this is also a good way to get in touch with me.

Course Description:

You will learn to do research and to write in the social sciences by engaging in an extended fieldwork project over the course of the term. The ethnography will include choosing your own research site, interacting with others, interviewing them, documenting their experiences, and reflecting on your work. The final fieldwork report will be an extensive exploration of the subculture you have observed. By assembling a portfolio with a selection of your writing done for class, you will be able to see your progress as a writer over the course of the semester. The final Self-Assessment essay will give you a chance to evaluate that work based on your own criteria as well as the course learning objectives.

There will be whole-class and small-group activities, as well as individual consultations with your instructor to lead you through the process. In small-group work, you will hear your peers' responses to your work and respond to their essays so that you learn to read all writing with a critical eye. You will complete a variety of high-stakes and low-stakes writing assignments, write in different genres (each of which will constitute a module within the course), acquire the reading, writing, and research skills of a field worker, present your work to class, and submit a final essay (ethnography) at the end of the semester.

Course Learning Outcomes:

- acknowledge your and others' range of linguistic differences as resources, and draw on those resources to develop rhetorical sensibility
- enhance strategies for reading, drafting, revising, editing, and self-assessment
- negotiate your own writing goals and audience expectations regarding conventions of genre, medium, and rhetorical situation
- develop and engage in the collaborative and social aspects of writing processes
- engage in genre analysis and multimodal composing to explore effective writing across disciplinary contexts and beyond
- formulate and articulate a stance through and in your writing
- practice using various library resources, online databases, and the Internet to locate sources appropriate to your writing projects
- strengthen your source use practices (including evaluating, integrating, quoting, paraphrasing, summarizing, synthesizing, analyzing, and citing sources)

Required Texts and Materials:

- We'll be using excerpts from the following OERs (Open Educational Resources) (these and others are hyperlinked in the course schedule, below)
 - Adell, N., Bendix, R. F., Bartolotto, C., & Tauschek, M., eds. (2015). *Between imagined communities and communities of practice: Participation, territory, and the making of heritage*. Göttingen: Universitatverslåg Göttingen.
 - Bazerman, C. (1988). *Shaping written knowledge*. Madison: University of Wisconsin Press. Available at <https://wac.colostate.edu/books/landmarks/bazerman-shaping/>.
 - DeCarlo, M. (2018). *Scientific Inquiry in Social Work*. Open Social Work Education. Available at <https://scientificinquiryinsocialwork.pressbooks.com/>.
 - Henderson, P. (2011). *AIDS, intimacy and care in rural KwaZulu-Natal: A kinship of bones*. Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press.
 - Introduction to Sociology. (2e ed.)(2017). Houston: Rice University Press/ OpenStax. Available at <https://openstax.org/details/books/introduction-sociology-2e>.
 - Sociology: Understanding and changing the social world. (comprehensive ed.) (2012). Saylor Academy. Available at https://saylordotorg.github.io/text_sociology-understanding-and-changing-the-social-world-comprehensive-edition/
 - Tombro, M. (2016). *Teaching autoethnography: Personal writing in the classroom*. Geneseo, NY: State University of New York/ Open SUNY Textbooks. Available at <https://textbooks.opensuny.org/teaching-autoethnography/>.
- A notebook for all in-class writing, your research, and interview notes (AND/ OR you may use a dedicated folder on your computer; in either case, I recommend backing up all your files in some form of cloud storage, such as OneDrive, and/or scanning/ copying all handwritten work and keeping in a secure location)
- A binder to collect all your work.

- Loose leaf paper.
- A recording device and camera (you may use your smart phone).

Recommended Texts/Web Sites:

Please also bookmark the following for easy reference:

- The [Purdue OWL](#) (Online Writing Lab);
- The [Writing Center at UNC](#) (University of North Carolina);
- [Writing@CSU](#) (Colorado State University); and
- The [Excelsior College Online Writing Lab](#).

Assignment	Grade Weight
Letter of Introduction*	10%
Peer Interview/ Profile*	10%
CCNY Class Observation*	10%
Research Proposal/Grant Application*	10%
Presentation	10%
Portfolio, incl. Self-Assessment*	10%
Final Essay (Ethnography)	20%
Participation	15%

*due dates appear below, in the course schedule; most of these will be scaffolded, or broken down into smaller deliverables, on each of which you'll receive feedback.

Schedule of Meetings and Assignments (subject to revision; we follow the [Fall 2018 CUNY Academic Calendar](#))

27 Aug.: First meeting; course introduction. For homework, you'll be responsible for posting a question re: the syllabus in a designated BlackBoard Discussion Forum Thread; this will count toward your Participation grade in this class.

29 Aug.: Diagnostic essay (to be written in class and revised into the first substantial writing assignment)

3 Sept.: University closed (Labour Day)

Module I: Letter of Introduction, Self and Writer

5 Sept. (Wednesday with a Monday schedule): Please review pp. 92 – 124 in Tombro's *Teaching autoethnography*; we'll discuss this genre of writing and samples in class.

10 Sept.: no class

12 Sept.: Please review Bazerman, "Codifying the Social Scientific Style" (Ch. 9); "[Ethnography, Observational Research, and Narrative Inquiry](#)"; and Bazerman, "Active Social Symbolic Selves" (Ch. 5; recommended)

17 Sept.: In-class writing and sharing of ideas (we'll be using sections in *Sociology: understanding ...*)

19 Sept.: No class

24 Sept.: Draft of the Letter of Introduction due; please bring two copies or have the file available to share electronically. These will receive feedback from me and a classmate (peer review)

Module II: The Peer Profile

26 Sept., 1 Oct.: *Sociology: Understanding ...*, pp. 101 – 22; Henderson, Ch. 4; Ch. 5 in *Introduction to sociology*; re-review secs. 3.2 and 3.3 in *Sociology: understanding ...*; we'll most likely intersperse our work with these readings with more hands-on work toward this assignment, namely the in-class interview and follow-up. Final Draft of the Letter of Introduction due 1 Oct.

3 Oct.: Revision of drafts of the Peer Profile; as before, please bring in two copies of your draft or have same available to share electronically. again, these will receive feedback from me and a classmate but also be used to practice fact-checking and follow-up, two crucial fieldwork skills.

8 Oct.: No class

Module III: The Classroom Observation

10, 15 Oct. : *Intro to sociology*, Ch. 16; *Sociology: Understanding ...*, pp. 114 – 7. We'll also begin making arrangements for you to complete this assignment by identifying classes for you to observe, explaining your interest in same, and gaining permission/ access to the class you've chosen.

17 Oct.: DeCarlo, Ch. 14. In *Sociology: Understanding ...*, sect. 3.5, "Social Interaction," esp. pp. 126 - 31

22 Oct.: Draft of the Classroom Observation due; please follow above procedures.

Module IV: The Ethnography and Research Proposal

24 Oct.: re-review "Rhetoric of Science ..."

(https://wac.colostate.edu/books/bazerman_wac/chapter6.pdf).

Intro to Sociology, Ch. 2; [“Ethnography, Observational Research, and Narrative Inquiry.”](#)

29, 31 Oct.: Choosing a subculture and defining your project. Tombro, “Choosing a Topic Assignment” instructions and samples on pp. 218 – 65; *Sociology: Understanding ...*, Ch. 4, esp. “Primary and Secondary Groups”; *Intro to Sociology*, Ch. 3. Isnart article in Adell et al. (what lends a community/ group unity?), pp. 179 – 92. Final draft of the Classroom Observation due 29 Oct.

5 Nov.: Ethical considerations in writing ethnographies. Please review DeCarlo, Ch. 5; sect. 2.3 in *Sociology: Understanding ...*; Henderson, Ch. 2;

7, 12 Nov.: Research for the Ethnography. Library instruction? Please review DeCarlo, Chs. 1,2, 3, 8, and 16 in preparation. Proposal for the Ethnography due (this is not the same as the Research Proposal writing assignment for the course!) due 7 Nov.

14 Nov.: Field research: challenges, rewards, and precautions. Please review DeCarlo, Chs. 6, 7, 9 – 15 (as needed); Tombro, Ch. 9, esp. p. 56, “Conducting Interviews Assignment”

19 Nov.: Preparing your Research Proposal. Please review *Sociology: Understanding ...*, secs. 4.2 and 4.3; Ch. 6 in *Intro to Sociology*. Annotated bibliography for the Ethnography due.

21 Nov.: This period will be spent on the above two assignments, the Ethnography and Research Proposal, in whatever way/s will be most helpful to you. Please review Salzbrunn article in Adell et al. (pp. 193 – 208, esp. “Case Study” section)

26 Nov.: The role of objects/ artifacts in culture. Groth article in Adell et al. Artefact-sharing exercise (time permitting). Intimacy with a place. Tombro, pp. pp. 168 – 92.

28 Nov.: Intimacy with a subject: Tombro, pp. 68 – 91.

3 Dec.: Draft of the Research Proposal due; please follow above procedures.

5 Dec.: Continuing to revise the Ethnography.

10 and 12 Dec. + final-exam slot: Presentations. Final drafts of the Ethnography and Research Proposal due: TBA

Portfolio including components of your field work, a selection of writing done for class, and Self-Assessment Essay due: TBA.

Other important dates:

17 Sept. (Mon.): Last day to withdraw from any Fall 2018 class *without* the grade of “W”;
6 Nov. (Tues.): Last day to withdraw from any Fall 2018 course *with* a grade of “W.”

Policies

I. Grading:

- A. Detailed assignment descriptions, incl. grading criteria, on all major papers will be distributed prior to the due dates via BlackBoard;
- B. All written work must consistently follow the latest [APA](#) style/ formatting guidelines (the recommended resources listed above, CCNY's [library](#), and [Writing Centre](#) have many resources on this).
- C. Grading for all work will be based on its own merit, such as adherence to assignment requirements and course objectives. It will not be based on my feelings about any person, idea, issue, etc.
- D. Quizzes will be administered periodically; these
 1. must be completed within the time allotted to receive credit;
 2. are closed-book, -notes, etc.; anyone with their book/ notebook open, cell phone out, talking, etc., will receive no credit;
 3. No make-ups or do-overs will be allowed on quizzes. If you miss a quiz because of an *excused* lateness or absence (see section on attendance), I will simply exempt same from grading (not count it);
- E. The Participation portion of your grade will be based on your consistently preparing for class and actively engaging in class discussion or other activities; maximising your own and your classmates' ability to learn and get the most out of this class; and abiding by all course policies (see also section on conduct below);
- F. Grades are a reflection on you, not me, the course, etc.; if your grades are not what you would like, you are responsible for making the necessary effort to bring them up to where you want them to be (see below).

II. Attendance

- A. Will be recorded at every class meeting;
- B. Presence at every class meeting in its entirety is assumed and crucial to success in this course. Because of the manner in which this course will be run, there will be little, if any, opportunity to "make up" missed class time;
 1. Total absences for the term should not exceed two weeks' worth;
 2. If you plan to be absent or late or leave early, you must notify me via email. If you are unable to excuse an absence/ lateness/ early departure in advance for any reason/s, you must document the circumstances preventing you from doing so satisfactorily; a doctor's note or something of this nature will suffice, but not from parents, other relatives, etc.
 3. Excessive absences, esp. early in the term, will result in your being dropped from the course. This will result in a grade of "WU" (Withdrawn Unofficially), which will negatively impact your academic standing and eligibility for financial aid, so, if, for any reason(s), you're unable/ unwilling to continue in the class, please speak to me and/ or your academic adviser/ counselor to find and evaluate out your options;
 4. If you miss any amount of class time/ work for any reason, you are responsible for finding out what you have missed and being caught up when you're in class again;

5. If you do not attend class when an assignment is due, you must make sure the absence is an excused one, have an extension on the assignment, or find a way to submit the work by deadline (see below).
- III. Deadlines are specified in the course schedule, though subject to modification. I'll only accept work past deadline if:
 - A. You request an extension in writing at least twenty-four (24) hours in advance, specifying when the work will be handed in. One extension per assignment, please; OR
 - B. You present appropriate documentation (see above) to excuse the late submission;
 - C. Turnitin will send a Digital Receipt to the email address registered with BlackBoard when you upload an assignment; please retain this as proof of timely submission;
 - IV. All writing assignments must be submitted to me in class. If this is not possible (in exceptional circumstances), you may email me the work as an attachment. Most of the assignments in this class will be scaffolds of smaller portions, such as notes and drafts with feedback; these will need to be handed in to me along with your final draft, which must also be uploaded to Turnitin;
 - V. Once graded and returned to you, papers may be revised and resubmitted once, under the following conditions:
 - A. Revisions must be handed in within two weeks after the graded paper has been returned to you;
 - B. All parts of an assignment, such as drafts and peer reviews, must be submitted and resubmitted in the same format. For ex., if you submitted the original in hard copy, you need to include both the graded draft and the revision together; if the original is submitted electronically, you needn't resubmit same with the revision; however, all other parts of the assignment, such as the peer review, must also be submitted electronically;
 - C. Extensions may be requested on revisions, as well (see above);
 - D. The grade earned with a revision will override the previous grade; and
 - E. Assignments which have not earned credit in the first place (for example, because they were not turned in on time) will also be ineligible for revision.
 - VI. Academic Integrity:
 - A. All CCNY students are held to CCNY's own [honour code](#), as well as CUNY's [academic honour code](#);
 - B. All work submitted for this class must be 1. your own; 2. with citations for all words, ideas, and information which are not your own; and 3. completed specifically for this course;
 - C. Plagiarism is a serious academic offense and will be dealt with accordingly. All incidents of suspected plagiarism will be documented and reported to the appropriate school officials, with students having the opportunity to respond;
 - D. Whilst collaboration is encouraged, this should not extend to doing others' work for them, or allowing them to do yours;
 - E. Final drafts of all the major writing assignments will need to be submitted to Turnitin, as will select other assignments. For each submission, Turnitin will

generate an Originality Report, which will be available for download. Any unacceptable use of sources or other violation of academic integrity will be handled in accordance with departmental, college, and university procedures;

VI. Tutorial and other assistance:

- A. The course tutor, **Renee-Elise Piana**, is here to help you throughout the semester. She is an invaluable resource. Ms. Piana will provide you, both in and out of class, individually or as a whole, assistance on a number of important skills including, though not limited to, more effective note taking strategies, approaches that foster active and engaged reading practices, research preparation, as well as support with written assignments;
- B. Help with your written work for all classes is available through [CCNY's Writing Centre](#) and from me, of course; see also resources hyperlinked in and above the course schedule. Though everyone can benefit from visiting the Writing Centre, in some instances, I may require that you seek such assistance and verify attendance;
- C. The **Gateway Advising Center**, NAC 1/220 (<http://www.ccnycuny.edu/gateway/>) provides academic advising for students without a declared major (especially helpful if you have questions about your course of study, core requirements, etc.);
- D. The **AccessAbility Center Tutoring Services**, NAC 1/218 (<http://www.ccnycuny.edu/accessability/>) provides one-on-one tutoring and workshops to all registered students with learning or physical disabilities (Note: if you require any special assistance or accommodation, please contact the [AccessAbility Center/Student Disability Services](#), and let me know as soon as you can, ideally during the first three weeks of the term; please also ensure that I have copies of all necessary forms, such as about accommodations you are entitled to. I encourage persons with disabilities or particular needs that impact course performance to meet with me to co-design accommodations);
- E. The **SEEK Peer Academic Learning Center**, NAC 4/224 (phone: 212-650-5786; email: seekpals@ccny.cuny.edu) offers counseling and peer tutoring for students who have registered for the SEEK Program, and who need academic and financial support.

VII. Responsible Use of Technology

- A. At all times, you must follow CUNY's [Policy on Acceptable Use of Computer Resources](#);
- B. As I note above, we'll be using electronic resources in this class; viewing them on your laptop or similar device will make working with them much easier, obviously. However, no personal web browsing, instant messaging, etc., is permitted. If you do this, you will not be allowed to use a laptop in class and will have to make other arrangements to be prepared and have access to the assigned materials in class;
- C. I can only accept the following types of files: *.doc; *.docx; *.rtf; or *.odt on work submitted electronically on which I'm to provide feedback. You may scan in notes and other handwritten material and save as a *.pdf or *.jpeg file;
- D. For your own protection, please save/ back up all files in a secure location, preferably more than one; I strongly recommend a system like GoogleDocs or iCloud. Computer issues are not an excuse for failing to submit work on time;

- E. Please promptly bring to my attention any non-working or malfunctioning links, by emailing me with this information and/ or posting it in the “Tech Tips” Discussion in BB. Under no circumstances will I accept a link’s not working as an excuse for being unprepared for class unless you have taken this step;
- F. I can only provide the most basic support for BlackBoard, Turnitin, and similar applications. If you have trouble with your device or any program, software, etc., please ask the [Information Technology Service Desk](#) for help;
- G. By default, all CUNY-sponsored applications, such as BlackBoard, use your [college email](#), which you’ll need to check regularly in order to stay current with our class and all school-related business (use the “Update Email” link in the BB home page to add the email address you check regularly);

IX. Conduct

You are expected to behave in ways which promote your own and others’ learning and maximal benefit from all classes, incl. respecting their time and learning needs. This includes but is not limited to:

- A. Arriving to class on time and staying for the entire period;
- B. Using class time constructively (engaging in the activity at hand, incl. cooperating with classmates);
- C. Being prepared for class (having all necessary materials read, reviewed, etc., and available to you; being ready to contribute to class discussion or other activity);
- D. Avoiding disruptive/ distracting behaviour (mobile phone turned off; no eating, personal grooming, or private conversations);
- E. Wearing earbuds/ headphones in class, even if nothing is playing through them, will only be permitted during drafting/ peer-review sessions and similar activities. Likewise, nothing which may be used to conceal earbuds/ headphones, such as a hood, may be worn in class. When listening to music or anything else, please be considerate of others, and keep your volume low;
- F. See above section on consequences of the misuse of technology/ class time;
- G. See also CCNY’s Statement on Community Standards: <https://www.ccnycuny.edu/studentaffairs/community-standards> and [CUNY’s Manual of General Policy](#), esp. Sect. VII.