WRT 105: Practices of Academic Writing  
Fall 2009  
Syracuse University  
Course Credits: 3

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Phone: 914-422-2154  
Office: White Plains High School Room C-07  
Office Hours: T, W 2:35-3:00pm and by appointment

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Reexamine all that you have been told in school, or in church or in any book. Dismiss whatever insults your soul.  
Walt Whitman

Course Overview  
Welcome to WRT 105, Practices of Academic Writing. WRT 105 is an introduction to academic writing that focuses on the practices of analysis and argument, practices that carry across disciplinary lines. In this course, we will be reading challenging and provocative texts to inspire us to reexamine our world. Our rethinking will take us from analysis to research to reflection.

The class is cooperative and, in part, is structured like a writing studio. Be prepared to experience the process of writing from invention to drafting to revising and editing. We will employ peer editing strategies to review our writing, so you will serve as a critic as well as be the recipient of constructive criticism. Your engagement in these writing workshops will have an impact on your development and success as an academic writer.

In each unit, we will complete informal writing practices in preparation for a final essay (one per unit). Be aware that some, but not all, of your informal writing will be graded. As we prepare for the final unit writing assignment, we will annotate and respond to readings, orally share ideas in small and large groups, take notes on class readings and discussions, experiment with writing to reflect critical thinking, and draft initial and rough versions of essays.

The final product of the semester is a portfolio of your work. The portfolio should reflect your best efforts, as well as your growth as a writer and thinker during the semester. Please retain copies of your writing for the portfolio, which is an ongoing compilation of your work in this course. It will behoove you to work on your portfolio as we progress through each unit, rather than attempt to complete it at the very end of the semester.

I look forward to learning more about you as students, readers, writers, learners, and members of this writing workshop. Again, welcome to WRT 105.
Course Goals
In WRT 105, *Practices of Academic Writing*, students will be able to:

- digest and analyze intellectually challenging texts
- develop strategies of critical analysis and argument
- synthesize and integrate the ideas of others into their own writing;
- integrate technology into their analysis and as part of composing
- create a variety of types, forms, and genres of writing pieces
- identify and practice steps in the writing process (invention, drafting, revising, polishing)
- edit peer work and offer constructive suggestions to fellow writers
- accept constructive criticism and use it to inform future drafts of a piece of writing
- demonstrate the basic conventions of MLA citation and format

Participation and Attendance
WRT 105 is in part a writing studio or workshop, and your participation is necessary for its success. Participation means you are actively involved in the class, and you are respectful of the opinions of others. Constructive participation means speaking in class, but not monopolizing a discussion, and listening to others, even if they express views and opinions different from your own.

It is not possible to participate in class if you are absent from class. If you are unable to attend class, be sure to get notes from a classmate. You are responsible for the work that you miss in your absence. Please note that an absence is not an excuse for late work. If an absence is unavoidable, you are still responsible for submitting any work that is due. Plan to submit your work early, submit your work through a proxy, or email your work to me (serencepler@wpcsd.k12.ny.us).

Written Work
It is expected that all formal papers are word processed. Be sure to save all of your work, in both hard and electronic form, for inclusion in your portfolio. Also save all class, reading, and research notes, as well as all informal and formal class assignments. Again, it is your responsibility to keep track of your work.

Please remember with your formal written work:

- Type in only Time New Roman, Arial, Courier (or similar) 12 point font
- Double-space your work with 1-inch margins on all sides
- Use a proper heading at the top of your first page including
  - Your name
  - Instructor’s name
  - Course name
  - Date
  - Appropriate title, centered
- Follow MLA citation throughout the essay
- Include a properly prepared Works Cited page that begins on the page after the essay ends

Syracuse University Student Works Policy
In compliance with the Federal Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act, works in all media produced by students as part of their course participation at Syracuse University may be used for education purposes, provided that the course syllabus makes clear that such use may occur. It is understood that registration for and continued enrollment in a course where such use of student work is announced constitute permission by the student. After such a course has been completed, any further use of students works will meet one of the following conditions: 1) the work will be rendered anonymous through the removal of all personal identification of the work’s creator/originator(s); or 2) the creator/originator(s)’ written permission will be secured.
Academic Integrity
According to the Syracuse University Academic Integrity Policy, “at Syracuse University, academic integrity is expected of every community member in all endeavors. Academic integrity includes a commitment to the values of honesty, trustworthiness, fairness, and respect. These values are essential to the overall success of an academic society.” Any work that bears your name is assumed to be your original thoughts, ideas, and words. You are required to give credit for ideas not your own, even if you put them into your own words. The following Syracuse University Policy on Academic Standards applies to you as a student enrolled in a Syracuse University course:

“Syracuse University students shall exhibit honesty in all academic endeavors. Cheating in any form is not tolerated, nor is assisting another person to cheat. The submission of any work by a student is taken as a guarantee that the thoughts and expressions are the student’s own except when properly credited to another. Violations of this principle include giving or receiving aid in an exam or where otherwise prohibited, fraud, plagiarism, the falsification or forgery of any record, or any other deceptive act in connection with academic work. Plagiarism is the representation of another’s words, ideas, programs, formulae, opinions, or other products of work as one’s own, either overtly or by failing to attribute them to their true source. Sanctions for violations will be imposed by the dean, faculty, or Student Standards Committee of the appropriate school or college. Documentation of such academic dishonesty may be included in an appropriate student file at the recommendation of the academic dean. Any piece of work bearing a student’s name is assumed by the school to guarantee that the thoughts, expressions, editorials, and photographic material not credited to another are literally the student’s own.”

<http://academicintegrity.syr.edu>
<http://provost.syr.edu/provost/units/academicprograms/academicintegrity>

Course Materials
You should bring with you to each class a notebook, a binder or folder for handouts, pens/pencils, and this syllabus.

In addition to this syllabus and the Syracuse University Student Manual our class texts will include selections from the following:

- **Writing Analytically**
  - David Rosenwasser and Jill Stephen
- **Critical Encounters with Texts**
  - Margaret Himley and Anne Fitzsimmons, ed.
- **Ways of Reading**
  - David Bartholomae and Anthony Petrosky, ed.
- **Signs of Life in the USA**
  - Sonia Maasik and Jack Solomon, ed.
- **Fast Food Nation**
  - Eric Schlosser
- **Nickel and Dimed**
  - Barbara Ehrenreich
- Additional essays, articles, stories, and poems provided by instructor

Course Content
The assigned readings for this course are designed to be challenging and thought provoking. You are encouraged to consider new perspectives and understandings about yourself, others, and the world in which we live. Please let me know immediately if any of the assignments make you feel uncomfortable so that we can design an alternative.

Course Grading

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<tr>
<th>Assignment</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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<tr>
<td>Jumpstart Unit --- Jumpstart Essay</td>
<td>10%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Unit I—Analysis Essay</td>
<td>20%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Unit II—Documented Argumentation Essay</td>
<td>20%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Unit III—Discourse Analysis Essay</td>
<td>20%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Class participation, informal writing (ongoing)</td>
<td>20%</td>
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<tr>
<td>FINAL course portfolio</td>
<td>10%</td>
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Formal papers will be graded according to the rubrics in the Syracuse University Student Manual unless otherwise indicated on the assignment sheet. Class participation, informal writing assignments, and final course portfolio will receive letter grades of A (95), B (85), C (75), D (65) or F (below 60). Final course grades will be computed based on the following chart bases on the Syracuse University grading scale:

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>96-100</td>
<td>C+</td>
<td>76-79</td>
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<tr>
<td>A-</td>
<td>92-95</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>72-75</td>
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<tr>
<td>B+</td>
<td>88-91</td>
<td>C-</td>
<td>68-71</td>
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<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>84-87</td>
<td>D</td>
<td>60-67</td>
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<tr>
<td>B-</td>
<td>80-83</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>59 or lower</td>
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**Special Concerns**

Students who need special consideration because of any sort of disability should make an appointment to see me in the first week of classes.
**Class Schedule**

Please note that this syllabus may be revised during the semester.

### Jumpstart Unit- Mind the Gap

Welcome to WRT105. In this unit, we will review the summer reading and prepare to tackle this new course and all its challenges. We’ll examine the following texts:

- *Fast Food Nation* by Eric Schlosser
- *Nickel and Dimed* by Barbara Ehrenreich
- *Is it Now a Crime to be Poor?* by Barbara Ehrenreich
- *Social Class and the Hidden Curriculum Work* by Jean Aynon
- *Multiculturalism, Universalism, and the 21st Century Academy* by Nancy Cantor
- *Is Google Making us Stupid?* by Nicholas Carr

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Welcome Back</th>
<th>September 10, 11</th>
<th>Welcome to WRT105, review syllabus, Chapters 1-2 of Writing Analytically</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Week 1</td>
<td>September 14-18</td>
<td>Discuss ‘little gems’ from <em>Fast Food Nation</em></td>
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<td>What is a reflection? What is a summary? What does it mean to annotate? What is a Dialogic Journal?</td>
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<td>Discuss ‘little gems’ from <em>Nickel and Dimed</em></td>
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<td>Compare and contrast texts; identify the aim of the author</td>
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<td>Read chapters 3 and 9 in <em>Writing Analytically</em></td>
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<td>Read <em>Multiculturalism...</em></td>
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<td>Discuss insiders and outsiders</td>
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<tr>
<th>Week 2</th>
<th>September 21-25</th>
<th>Introduction to SU library resources</th>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Read <em>Social Class and the Hidden Curriculum Work</em></td>
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<td>Workshop drafts of Jumpstart Unit essay</td>
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<tr>
<th>Week 3</th>
<th>September 29-October 2</th>
<th>Read <em>Is it Now a Crime to be Poor?</em></th>
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<td>Read <em>Is Google Making us Stupid?</em></td>
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<td>Revise and Polish Jumpstart Unit essay</td>
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<td><strong>Jumpstart Unit essay is due at the end of this week</strong></td>
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### Analysis Unit

We will focus on analysis by reexamining our world and the many assumptions that inform our actions. Why do we do things this way? What do we believe that? We will look closer at the values and ideas of our community and ourselves. We will review the follow texts:

- *The Politics of Staring* by Rosemarie Garland
- *The Trading Floor* by CollaborationTown
- *From Poster Child to Protestor* by Laura Hershey
- *What’s Easting Gilbert Grape* by Peter Hedges

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week 4</th>
<th>October 5-9</th>
<th>Read <em>Writing Analytically</em> Chapters 7-8</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>What is analysis?</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Read <em>The Politics of Staring</em></td>
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<tr>
<th>Week 5</th>
<th>October 13-16</th>
<th>Identifying an author’s aim and analyzing an author’s choice of words- the power of word choice</th>
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<tr>
<td></td>
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<td>Read <em>The Trading Floor</em></td>
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<td>Discuss the publicity of activism (colored ribbons, plastic wristbands, reclaimed derogatory terms)</td>
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<td>Discuss the politics of disease and disability</td>
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<td>What is a QTI?</td>
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| Week 6 | October 19-23 | Discuss Hypervisibility  
Read *Writing Analytically*, Chapters 5 and 13  
Are we seeing the trees *and* the forest?  
Noticing the *Pitch* and the *Complaint* |
|---|---|---|
| Week 7 | October 26-30 | Read *From Poster Child to Protestor*  
Uncover assumptions  
Comparing and contrasting unit essays: what is the common thread?  
QTI  
Examine images of disability and ability; disease vs. disability  
Workshop drafts of Analysis Unit essay |
| Week 8 | November 2-6 | Digging deeper: assumptions revisited  
Screen *What’s Eating Gilbert Grape*  
Summary vs. Response vs. Analysis: clarifying the stages of tackling a text  
Revise Analysis Unit essay  
**Analysis Unit essay is due at the end of this week** |

**Documented Argument Unit**

In this unit we will discuss inquiry and research. We’ll ask questions, form and challenge opinions, and compare our ideas to that of the ‘experts.’ We will state a claim and find textual support for the argument in our quest to build a well-crafted argument. We’ll consider the follow texts:

- *What We Talk About When We Talk About Race*  
  *The Veil*  
  *Selling Hot Pussy: Representations of Black Female Sexuality in the Cultural Marketplace*  
  *I, Too, Sing America*  
  *Recognizing Strangers*  
  *Race-ing Men: Boys, Risk and the Politics of Race*

| Week 9 | November 9-13 | Unit overview  
Read *What We Talk About...*  
A review of library resources available to students  
Review reliable sources  
Consider race relations in our community: Quick and Dirty library research |
|---|---|---|
| Week 10 | November 16-20 | Read *The Veil*  
Small group analysis of text: respond to others’ opinions  
What is a claim?  
Discuss who is an expert  
Draw connections between text-world; text-text |
| Week 11 | November 23-25  
*Thanksgiving Break* | Read excerpts from *Selling Hot Pussy...*  
Predicting the future based on the recent past: What might have been? What could be? How does he past dictate the future?  
Read *I, Too, Sing America*  
Compare and contrast texts; the value of voice and perspective in an argument  
Creating an argument- what sources could help support |
| Week 12 | November 30-December 4 | Read *Recognizing Stranger*  
Tying it all together: weaving a thread through our class; our city; our state  
Review academic integrity policy  
Review MLA citation  
Workshop drafts of Documented Argument unit essay  
Review and discuss the writing process- invention to drafting to revising |
| Week 13 | December 7-11 | Read *Race-ing Men*...  
Reevaluating our views; compare and contrast our community with other regions- who would you be if you lived there?  
Peer edit and polish essays  
**Documented Argument essay is due at the end of this week** |

### Discourse Analysis Unit

What does our language reveal about us? What do we reveal about language? Everything has a context. Language is a powerful tool: use with care. Let’s examine the following texts:

- *Brief Introduction to Saussure and Semiotics*  
  Dr. Patricia Moody  
- *I Go Back to May 1937*  
  Sharon Olds  
- *Our Town*  
  Thornton Wilder

| Week 14 | December 14-18 | Read *Brief Introduction to Saussure and Semiotics*  
Discuss the importance of audience  
Letter writing to three different people: how does audiences influence language? |
| Week 15 | December 21-23  
*Winter Break* | Review the power of context  
Identify your languages: to whom do you speak your languages?  
Read *I Go Back to May 1937*  
Discuss genitive space  
Evaluate language use in the poem: why are these little things big deals? |
| Week 16 | January 4-8 | Review word list (from *Parade Magazine*) and create your own: how is your language created?  
Who is the narrator of your life? To whom is the narration directed?  
Select a word: Quick and Dirty research on the word’s etymology, past and modern uses, connotations  
Draft Discourse Analysis unit essay |
| Week 17 | January 11-15 | Read *Our Town*  
The value of a director: who decides the meaning of language?  
The art of subtlety: how do we imply more by saying less?  
Workshop Discourse Analysis Unit essays |
| Week 18 | January 19-22 | Discourse Analysis Unit essay due at the end of this week
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<tr>
<td></td>
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<td>Review unit essays</td>
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<td>Workshop essays - what is publishable work?</td>
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<td>Review portfolio purpose and requirements</td>
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<td>Course evaluations</td>
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<td><strong>Portfolio due at the end of this week</strong></td>
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