

Writing 101: Academic Writing

Fall 2013

Writing War: What Is It Good For?

Section 101.15 · TuTh 1:25-2:40pm · Bell Tower East 110

Section 101.16 · TuTh 3:05-4:20pm · Bell Tower West 113

Section 101.17 · TuTh 6:15-7:30pm · Crowell 106

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or by appointment

Purpose: This class is designed to familiarize you with academic writing and to introduce you to reading and writing strategies that will help you successfully engage the intellectual conversations swirling around you in college and beyond. We will treat writing as a process, which means we will pay attention to more than the final version of an essay. Instead, we will discuss your work at each stage: prewriting, planning, drafting, rewriting, and revising. Each of these stages offers an opportunity for your ideas to become more clear and interesting, and for the form of your essay to become more readable and convincing. Our work with the writing process will demand that you practice writing nearly every day. Good writing of all types is finally a product of hard work and vigilant practice. This class will ask you to work hard and regularly.

Course Description: We live in a country that has been involved in several military conflicts across the globe in recent years, as our military participates both overtly and covertly in actions targeting terrorist groups, rogue nations, and other insurgent campaigns. Our historical moment also gives us unprecedented access to these conflicts, as journalists, soldiers, and civilians in war zones take advantage of new communication technologies to report on war, to communicate with loved ones, to protest military actions, to show their support for the troops, or to reveal the “truth” behind the headlines. In these ways, war’s on-the-ground participants make meaning out of their experience and intervene (in ways both direct and indirect) in larger public discussions about the meaning of war in our nation’s history. In these ways, too, we experience war (if only at a distance) and are called on to respond, to understand what war means for ourselves and our culture, and to make meaning out of stories from distant war zones.

If “war is a force that gives us meaning,” as the title of a recent book by Chris Hedges suggests, our course asks us to consider how that meaning is made and what that meaning can be both for ourselves and our communities. Some of the questions that will drive our inquiry this semester will include: How do soldiers, civilians, and writers find and make meaning in war? Are their meanings the same as those of the media and the state? To what extent can writing convey the experience or the truth of war? How do we understand and experience war from the home front? We will explore these questions by examining the American experience of war from the Civil War to the present, with a special focus on different modes of writing about war: academic essays, fictional stories, blogs, letters, and diaries.

Course Texts: You are responsible for bringing the appropriate text(s) to class each day. Please get in the habit of writing notes in your books as you read. Most of our required readings will be available online and through our class Sakai site. On the day we read one of these texts, I expect you to bring a copy of the text to class for discussion; students who fail to do this will be considered unprepared for the discussion. This may entail a significant amount of printing, but you may also use your laptops or iPads to access the readings in class. If you choose to access the readings digitally rather than print them, I expect the same level of preparation and annotation as if you were using hard copies of the text. Required Text:

- Colby Buzzell, *My War: Killing Time in Iraq*

Writing Projects and Goals: The primary work of “Writing War” will be to develop our own critical perspectives about the relationship between writing and war through a series of interlinked writing projects that provide us space to make our own meaning out of the diverse texts of the course. *To make our own meaning out of the diverse texts of the course.* This is the key element for our Writing 101. Although we will hear from a range of voices and read across different genres, our goal as writers and thinkers is to stake out our own position, to articulate our own perspective through sensitive, responsive, and critical engagement with others, including our peers. Our writing does not exist in a vacuum; it is part of an ongoing dialogue and conversation. It is imperative that we listen well to our sources, that we hear the nuances of their arguments, that we orchestrate their voices in such a way that then our voice emerges more clearly, more vibrantly, more convincingly. If “war is a force that gives us meaning,” then, like the writers we will study, we will find our way towards that meaning through the written and rewritten word.

To listen well to other voices is an art that requires practice, practice, and more practice. And to put those voices into dialogue with others and ourselves is similarly an art that demands practice. Towards that end, you will be asked to write several different kinds of texts this semester, all of which will prepare you for the final assignment of each writing project. In our shorter assignments, you will practice how to read critically, how to engage the ideas (and words) of others in a substantive way, how to test ideas from an academic essay against the experience of a soldier or a fictional story, how to advance your own arguments using both primary and secondary sources, etc. In addition, we will learn and practice how to annotate and take notes with writing in mind, how to conceive and draft essays in do-able sections, how to respond productively to our peers’ writing, how to revise our own writing in substantive ways, and how to edit with an eye toward clarity and cohesion. These shorter assignments will not only serve as the fodder for our discussions about writing, but will also become the building blocks and initial drafts of your longer writing assignments.

- Our **first writing project** will initiate our process of making our own meaning out of the texts we read. We will read several short stories and poems, using these as a springboard for our inquiry into the relationship between writing and war and what this relationship tells us about language, identity, culture, memory, and myth. We will practice developing arguments through the close analysis of an individual text and each student will produce a critical analysis of one of our literary texts as the final assignment of Project #1. To deepen and advance our interpretations, we will also read several critical essays about the relationship between writing and war. The point of this project is to begin to think like a writer and scholar, paying close attention to details, noticing patterns and anomalies in a text, raising questions about the author’s choices, making your own claims that answer those questions, and engaging other scholars to develop your ideas.
- Our **second writing project** will introduce archival research while we continue to practice the writing moves from the first unit. Having examined academic essays and literary fiction, we will shift gears and investigate the everyday writings of soldiers and civilians at different moments in American history, using the Rubenstein Rare Book and Manuscripts Library as our primary resource. As an introduction to archival research and as a basis for historical analysis, we will examine soldiers’ letters, diaries, and scrapbooks as both material objects and compelling narratives of war. This project will involve group work and will culminate with the production of a website about your chosen archive of writings.
- Our **final writing project** will extend this conversation by focusing on blogs and other forms of digital and visual communication that play an integral role in contemporary wars. As a class, we will read a soldier blog (Colby Buzzell’s *My War: Killing Time in Iraq*) in addition to other texts to get a sense of the perils and possibilities of these new forms of communication. In preparation for the research requirements of this assignment, we will create our own collective bibliography of possible areas of inquiry for our final essays. We will each post our research in the form of literature reviews to a class blog in order to build a usable bibliography for the final project. The final essay asks you to synthesize

the “moves” of our first two projects, producing a piece of cultural criticism that develops a historically-informed analytical argument about a particular genre of contemporary war writing (using one to three contemporary texts as your primary resources).

Writing 101 Goals and Practices: While many of the specific features of academic writing vary from discipline to discipline, *students in all sections of Writing 101 learn how to:*

- *Engage with the work of others*
- *Articulate a position*
- *Situate their writing for specific audiences*
- *Transfer writing knowledge into situations beyond Writing 101*

Please see <http://twp.duke.edu/faculty/writing-20-course-goals-and-practices> for more explanation of these goals and practices.

Participation: As a hands-on writing course, our class will only be successful if you come to class prepared and ready to participate enthusiastically. **Preparation** in this instance not only means that you have read the assigned text or written the assigned essay; it also means that you have connected the day’s reading to previous readings, that you have raised questions about the reading, that you have pinpointed puzzling passages and rewritten them in understandable terms, that you have taken notes about how the author put her essay together, that you have marked the areas of your text that you are most proud of and identified those areas that need the most help, etc. Preparation of this sort will ensure your productive participation in the course and will help to initiate our discussion before you even arrive in class.

Just as preparation can take many forms, **participation** in our course can wear many hats. Of course, I hope that everyone talks and contributes to discussion regularly, but active participation can also mean: detailed annotations of our texts and your peers’ essays; meaningful email exchanges with me about the day’s discussion; generative commenting in class forums; productive workshoping of your peers’ papers; emailed questions to prompt discussion; written feedback on your peers’ drafts; reading aloud in class; transcribing discussion notes on the board; etc.

Ultimately our class is a **collaborative venture** and that collaboration will take many shapes. While some of us will be more talkative than others, I would finally ask you all to think about your participation in terms of “how am I advancing the thinking of this class” and “how am I pushing my/our writing into new realms.”

Attendance: Because this class will emphasize discussion, regular attendance and enthusiastic participation are essential. Much of your work will consist of talking in class about your writing and about the texts we read. Thus, this is not a course in which you can cut a class and somehow “make up” the work you missed. I understand, of course, that conflicts arise and, therefore, you are allowed three absences for the semester (these absences include illnesses accompanied by a “Short-Term Illness Notification” email). Missing a scheduled conference with me or your UWT also counts as an absence. I encourage you to save them for those times when you really need them. If you are absent more than three times, your final grade for the course will be dropped a third of a grade (e.g., from a B minus to C plus) for each absence over three. If you experience an emergency or serious illness, please remain in contact with me by email. Absences that will be granted without penalty include major religious holidays (notify me in writing of any absences expected for this reason in advance) or school-sanctioned events where your attendance is required (official documentation from a coach or event organizers must be submitted in advance). In addition, come to every class on time. If tardiness becomes a problem, I will implement penalties for late arrival. For example, if you are tardy twice, it will be counted as an absence.

Classroom and Communication Etiquette: While we may disagree with one another's opinions, every student should feel comfortable contributing to discussion. Treating other members of the class and the instructor with respect at all times is essential. Students who do not live up to this standard may be asked to leave and/or be counted absent at my discretion. It should go without saying that reading the newspaper, using electronic devices, texting with friends, or sleeping during class are unacceptable behaviors that violate our standard of respect for one another. Additionally, I understand the lure of the laptop and there will certainly be times when we use them in class; however, unless I indicate otherwise, laptops should be put away at the beginning of class.

Email should always be polite and professional, and it is most appropriate for brief, specific questions. I am happy to answer your questions and eager to work with you in person during office hours, but please do not send entire paper drafts over email, and do not count on a response to last minute emails about assignments. I am always happy to work with you in person, but I am not "on call" 24 hours a day. Since email is a form of professional communication, any email sent to me should have correct grammar, punctuation, spelling, capitalization, and salutations. To learn more about email in an academic setting, visit the Writing Studio's multimedia resources (<http://twp.duke.edu/writing-studio/resources/multimedia>) and scroll down to "Yo, Dear, or Hello Professor?": Mastering the Discourse of Academic Email" video.

Please Note: I will not discuss grades over email. If, at any time during the term, you would like to discuss your grade on a specific paper or for the course, please make an appointment with me.

Conferencing and Office Hours: As part of the writing process of our course, there will be several times during the semester where we meet to discuss your work. Conferences are an integral part of the course and will provide us with another space in which to brainstorm, practice, and critique each others' written work. It is therefore imperative that you come to the conference prepared to fully engage your own and your peers' work. While there will be formal conference opportunities, I also strongly encourage you to meet with me during office hours or to make an appointment with me to discuss your work in progress or any aspect of the course. These one-on-one conferences are an excellent opportunity to brainstorm ideas, work on specific writing moves, advance new arguments, grapple with those still-bothering-me questions/ideas from class, or just get to know each other, etc. They often produce rich lines of inquiry for future papers or lead to breakthroughs in the revision process.

Written Work/Paper Format: Unless otherwise noted, all assignments must be typed, double-spaced, in 12-point font, with 1-inch margins. Essays of more than one page must be numbered and stapled (or double-sided). All essays should include a heading (with your name, the course number, my name, and the date), a title, and proper documentation (see individual assignment sheets for citation conventions). Please proofread everything carefully; excessive spelling, typographical, or mechanical errors will be returned without comments.

Throughout the semester, you will be asked to submit your work to both our class Sakai site and our WordPress blog. To facilitate easy downloading and identification of your work, please get in the habit of saving your work in such a way that identifies your name, the assignment, and the draft in your file name. For example, for the second draft of Project #3: Berkey_Project 3_Draft 2 or Berkey_3.2.

Late Papers: All papers must be submitted at the time and on the day they are due. It is important for you to complete and submit your work punctually so the course moves forward as intended and you have time to complete subsequent assignments. Late work will be handled according to the following guidelines: Shorter assignments will not be accepted late. For each calendar day a final writing assignment is late, your grade will be lowered a third of a letter grade; e.g., A- (one day late) → B+; B+ (two days late) → B-. Please consult the syllabus for all due dates and consider them final unless I announce an alternate date in class.

Academic Dishonesty/Plagiarism: All work submitted in this course must be your own and must be written exclusively for this course. Any paper with your name on it signifies that you are the author—that the wording and ideas are yours. You must properly document your use of sources for ideas, quotations, and/or paraphrasing. *Plagiarism, the unacknowledged use of others' work, is an extremely serious offense*; and it will be treated as such by me, the Thompson Writing Program, and Duke University. If I find that you have committed plagiarism, you will be penalized in accordance with university policy; usually this means failing the assignment and academic suspension. **Please review the Duke Community Standard** (<http://www.studentaffairs.duke.edu/conduct/resources/dcs>); **come talk to me if you have questions.**

Grading Breakdown:

Writing Project #1	
Blog Entries	15 points (3 x 5pts)
Final Assignment	40 pts
Writing Project #2	
Research Log Entries	15 pts (3 x 5 pts)
Synthesis Paper about Research Logs	10 pts
Group Website	25 pts
Writing Project #3	
Prospectus/Literature Review	20 pts
Final Paper	50pts
Feedback	
Blog Comments	18 pts (6 x 3pts)
Anonymous Peer Review	7 pts
Total Possible for Semester	200 points

Shorter assignments (blog entries, blog comments, research logs) will be graded with a system of checks:

- √ Good: 5 pts for blog/research log entries; 3 pts for blog comments
- √- Hurried; incomplete; doesn't answer assignment: 3 pts for blogs/research logs; 1 pt for comments
- 0 Missing or late: 0 pts

More substantial essays receive letter grades. Final course grades are determined on the following scale: A (186-200 points); A- (180-185); B+ (173-179); B (165-172); B- (160-164); C+ (153-159); C (145-152); C- (140-144); D+ (133-139); D (125-132); D- (120-124); F (0-123).

Writing Resources for our Writing 101:

- **Undergraduate Writing Tutors:** This semester we are lucky to have Undergraduate Writing Tutors (UWT) working with our class. You will meet with your section's UWT on two occasions this semester, once during the first writing project as you revise and expand your blog entry into a paper and again during the final writing project as you draft your final assignment. These sessions are an opportunity to get an outside reader's perspective and will add to the different kinds of feedback you receive on your writing this semester. All UWTs have taken EDU 255 to learn about the pedagogy of tutoring and can also draw on their own experiences in Writing 101. These sessions are a required part of the course and your failure to attend your sessions will be counted as an absence in the class.
 - Section 101.15: Gracie Willert (gracie.willert@duke.edu)
 - Section 101.16: Andrew Kragie (andrew.kragie@duke.edu)
 - Section 101.17: Jenna Hymowitz (jenna.hymowitz@duke.edu)
- **Writing Studio:** The Writing Studio is a great resource for you as a student in Writing 101 and beyond. It is a space for you as a writer to practice your craft as well as hone your eye as a critical reader of your

own and others' texts. Staffed by trained tutors, the Writing Studio can assist you at all stages of the writing process. You can familiarize yourself with all aspects of the Writing Studio (including their different locations) by visiting their website at <http://twp.duke.edu/writing-studio>. Be sure to check out their website's helpful handouts and resources as you prewrite, draft, revise, and edit your work. You can also schedule an appointment with a tutor online or make an appointment for an E-Tutoring session by visiting <http://twp.duke.edu/writing-studio/appointments>. Remember: it is always helpful to bring the assignment sheet (and syllabus) for the paper you are working on to the tutoring session.

- **Undergraduate Writing Partners Program:** Writing Partners are available to assist first-year students with their writing on **Sundays, Mondays, and Wednesdays** from **8-10pm** in **Carr 136**, beginning on September 15. You can visit at any stage of the writing process - from brainstorming, to drafting, to revising, to polishing the final draft. The Partners can also help with writing for any course. No appointment is needed. Just drop in!
- **Duke Library:** Our libraries have a great staff and a helpful website on citation and avoiding plagiarism; please familiarize yourself with this website: <http://library.duke.edu/research/citing/>. See particularly the "Plagiarism" link. Our course librarians are:
 - Carson Holloway (carson.holloway@duke.edu); Lilly Library
 - Elizabeth Dunn (elizabeth.dunn@duke.edu); Rubenstein Rare Book and Manuscript Library

Finally: I reserve the right to amend this syllabus throughout the semester. Changes will be discussed and announced in class before being implemented. Have a great semester!

Working Schedule of Readings and Assignments: This schedule is subject to revision. I will announce changes in class or over e-mail, and you are responsible for all such announcements. Readings and assignments are *due* on the day listed. S = Sakai, O = Online

Date Readings and Written Assignments

**Project One: Writing War: Language and Violence, Memory and Myth
(Analysis)**

Week One

T	8/27	Introduction to Course: Syllabus and Expectations Read and discuss Ambrose Bierce's "Chickamauga" in class
R	8/29	S: Mary Favret, "A Brief History of the Meaning of War" Blog Entry #1 Due

Week Two

T	9/3	S: Bierce, "Parker Adderson, Philosopher"; "Killed at Resaca"; "What I Saw at Shiloh" Blog Entry #2 Due
R	9/5	S: Sarah Cole, "Enchantment, Disenchantment, War, Literature," <i>PMLA</i> 124.5 (2009): 1632-47 (http://www.mlajournals.org/doi/pdf/10.1632/pmla.2009.124.5.1632) S: Harris, "Forwarding" Blog Comments #1-2 Due: Comment on two of your peers' blog entries

Week Three

- T 9/10 S: Selected War Poems
S: Kate McLoughlin, "War and Words"
S: James Anderson Winn, "Introduction: Terrible Beauty," from *The Poetry of War*
Blog Entry #3 Due
- R 9/12 S: Tim O'Brien, "The Sweetheart of the Song Tra Bong"
S: Diana Gill, "Introduction," from *How We Are Changed By War*
S: Harris, "Countering"
Blog Comments #3-4 Due: Comment on two of your peers' blog entries

Week Four

- T 9/17 **First Draft of Paper #1 Due**
Large Group Workshop
- R 9/19 **Blog Comments #5-6 Due:** Comment on two of your peers' first drafts by noon on September 19
Introduction to Writing Project #2

<p align="center">Project Two: Soldiers in the Archives: Everyday Writings from Past Wars (Working with Primary Sources, Working with Librarians)</p>
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Week Five

- T 9/24 Introduction to Archival Research with Elizabeth Dunn; we will meet in the Rubenstein Rare Books and Manuscript Library space on the third floor of Perkins Library on West Campus (no food or drinks)
O: "War Diaries and Journals" and "War Letters" from *Encyclopedia of Life Writing*, Ed. Margaretta Jolly
http://www.credoreference.com/entry/routlifewrite/war_diaries_and_journals
http://www.credoreference.com/entry/routlifewrite/war_letters
- R 9/26 Research Day in the Rubenstein Library on West Campus
Final Draft of Paper #1 Due

Week Six

- T 10/1 S: Diana Gill, "The Metes and Bounds of Narrative and Self," in *How We Are Changed By War*
One Research Log Entry should be posted by 5:00pm on Wednesday, Oct. 2
- R 10/3 Designing a Website Workshop

Week Seven

- T 10/8 S: Jessica Meyer, "Writing Home: Men's Letters from the Front" in *Men of War: Masculinity and the First World War in Britain*
S: Drew Gilpin Faust, "Dying" in *This Republic of Suffering: Death and the American Civil War*
- R 10/10 Large Group Workshop on Research Logs
- F 10/11 **Completed Research Log Due;** post to Sakai by 7:00pm

Week Eight

T 10/15 No Class: Fall Break

R 10/17 Group Conferences: **Response Papers on Group's Logs Due** at beginning of conference
(bring 4 copies of your response paper)

Week Nine

T 10/22 Small Group Work for Website Development

R 10/24 **Project #2 Due**
Introduction to Writing Project #3

Project Three: Digitizing War: Writing Wartime Today (Research)
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Week Ten

T 10/29 Colby Buzzell, *My War: Killing Time in Iraq* (57-145)
S: Keith Brown and Catherine Lutz, "Grunt Lit: Participant Observers of Empire," *American Ethnologist* 34.2 (May 2007): 322-328,
<http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1525/ae.2007.34.2.322/pdf>
Optional: John Hockenberry, "The Blogs of War," *Wired* 13.8 (2005),
<http://www.wired.com/wired/archive/13.08/milblogs.html>

R 10/31 Library Workshop with Carson Holloway in the Lilly Library on East Campus

Week Eleven

T 11/5 Buzzell, *My War: Killing Time in Iraq* (146-218)
S: Lisa Gilman, "An American Soldier's iPod: Layers of Identity and Situated Listening in Iraq," *Music & Politics* 4.2 (Summer 2010): 1-17

R 11/7 Buzzell, *My War: Killing Time in Iraq* (218-306)

Week Twelve

T 11/12 Geoffrey Wright, "The Geography of the Combat Narrative: Unearthing Identity, Narrative, and Agency in the Iraq War," *Genre* 43.1-2 (2010): 163-190,
<http://genre.dukejournals.org/content/43/1-2/163.short>
Stacey Peebles, "Lines of Sight: Watching War in *Jarhead* and *My War: Killing Time in Iraq*," *PMLA* 124.5 (2009): 1662-1676,
<http://www.mlajournals.org/doi/pdf/10.1632/pmla.2009.124.5.1662>

R 11/14 **Prospectus/Literature Review Due**
Small Group Workshop

Week Thirteen

T 11/19 Putting It All Together: Brainstorming Map Workshop

R 11/21 **First Draft of Writing Project #3 Due**
Speed-Dating Introductions Workshop

Week Fourteen

M 11/25 **Anonymous Peer Review Due by Monday, Nov. 25 at noon**

T 11/26 No Class: Thanksgiving

R 11/28 No Class: Thanksgiving

Week Fifteen

T 12/3 **Second Draft of Writing Project #3 Due for Peer Review Workshop**

R 12/5 TBA

Week Sixteen: Finals Week

Final Drafts of Writing Project #3 Due during your section's exam period

Congratulations on finishing Writing 101! Good luck on your final exams and have a great winter break! Keep in touch next year and enjoy the rest of your Duke career!