This class examines how place has grown, since the 1990s, into a cornerstone concept for the study and teaching of writing, mainly college-level writing. In textual and human subjects research, theory and practice, place has both supplemented and complicated well-known categories of difference and has encouraged Rhetoric and Composition scholars to think carefully about the social, physical, and discursive situatedness of writers and writing. Questions that this class will take up include, how have compositionists defined place? How have compositionists drawn from other disciplines in order to study places of writing? How have notions of place evolved since the heyday of the process theory of writing? What assumptions about language inform different strands of place-oriented work in Rhetoric and Composition? Where is scholarship on writing and place going?

For the purposes of this class, place will operate as an umbrella term to account for contributions from ecological theories of writing; the meshing of composition and critical regionalism, cultural geography, place writing, and place-based education; and post-process theories of writing. Scholars whose empirical research, theories, or practical guides we may consider include Sidney I. Dobrin, Christian R. Weisser, Nedra Reynolds, Derek Owens, Robert Brooke, Christina Haas, Douglas Reichert Powell, Jenny Rice, Christopher Schroeder, Ralph Cintron, and David A. Gruenewald.