

ENGL 3340: Advanced Composition
Dr. Jennifer Wingard
TTh 8:30 -10:00 am

Course Description

Advanced Composition is a writing course that asks students to begin to understand themselves as experienced writers, and as such, see their writing as not mere assignments for a class but works placed within a larger context of discourse. In other words, the work in this course will allow students to begin to place themselves, their inquiries, and their writing within larger systems of language, writing, and ideology. The course will be broken up into three related units: the first will ask the students to consider narratives of memoir and place – how do narratives of the self change when we locate those narratives within particular places? During this unit we will read selections from Joan Didion, Mark Doty, Nick Flynn, and Arundhati Roy. The second section, we will pursue questions of education and our place as writers within it – how do current models of education locate students in particular narratives of learning? During this unit we will read current news stories, as well as essays by Jonathan Kozol, Nancy Mack and Jim Zebroski, Mike Rose, Tony Scott, and David Seitz. The final section, will ask students to reflect on and think through your writerly choices. How does our writing change as we begin to revise its style, form, and argument(s)? To help frame this discussion, we will read work by Patricia Bizzell, Linda Flower, Steven King, and Neil Gaiman. By the end of the course advanced writers should understand that writing is not merely a discrete set of organized words on a page; but rather, it is a series of choices made in response to located styles learned by the writer and reader.

Required Texts

- Mathieu, Paula, Tim Lindgren, George Grattan, and Staci Shultz. *Writing Places*. Second Edition. New York: Longman, 2013. ISBN-10: 032184548X
- Additional essays available via Blackboard Learn.

Major Assignments

- *Essay One: Locating the Writing Self* – This essay will focus on locating your own history of writing. We will read several writers who will not only discuss their own writing histories, but also will locate those histories in specific places. Those discussions will give us the opportunity to understand how locations affect our learning, writing, and literacy. This essay will give you the chance to reflect on how location(s) have affected your own writing and literacy.
- *Essay Two: Locating Writing in Schools* – This essay will allow you to respond to how writing has been (or has not been) located in schools. For this essay we will read Mike Rose’s latest book, *Why School?* This text will allow us to discuss how writing and literacy are framed within discussions of no child left behind and other testing based curriculae. This essay will give you a chance to position yourself within the debate and make a claim for how literacy and writing should be located within these discussions.
- *Revision Strategy/Reflection Paper* – The purpose of this assignment is for you to reflect on and think through your writerly choices, and create a tentative plan and explanation of the choices as to why one particular form over another is important for your writing. The goal of this assignment is to make you a more reflective, experienced writer.
- *Essay Three: Revision as RE-Vision – An Exercise in Writerly Choice (25%)* – The purpose of this assignment is to better understand the vital processes that go into writing – choice, voice, argument and revision. All too often, revision is seen as a way for students to “fix” their papers or to make them more inline with what someone else wants them to be. This revision is not about that. Instead, I am asking you to revise a piece solely to your specifications as a writer. That is not to say it still shouldn’t communicate with an audience, but it is up to you how to deliver your message.