

## Fall 2009 College Writing

WRI 100: Section 02 2 M 1- 3:30 PM

Cedar Crest College Room: BHA 4

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*“We develop our best ideas in the act of writing. Writing facilitates thinking. Writers write not to record but to discover and develop their ideas.”*

-- Donald McQuade

### **COURSE DESCRIPTION**

In a student-driven model that respects the writer as an individual, undergraduates will use critical thinking to facilitate thoughtful writing. Firmly grounded in the concept that—“...*you can't write better than you think!*”(John Chaffe)—this course will instruct students in the writing process by exposing them to a variety of writers and essays, and the range of techniques, styles and topics they exhibit. The goal here is to move students beyond summarizing what they have read to interacting with the text to produce a piece of writing that questions, comments and evolves out of the material to stand on its own as a unique response to the original .

A portfolio of work will be developed and students will have multiple opportunities to revise and rewrite their essays. They will also be afforded an opportunity to discover and develop their individual writing processes through both peer and instructor critique as well as individual and group conferences. The focus of the class will be primarily on writing, therefore students are expected to produce at least 25-30 pages of written material through pre-writing, rewrites, drafts and final drafts.

### **REQUIRED TEXTS and MATERIALS**

- John Chaffee, Christine McMahon, and Barbara Stout, eds. *Critical Thinking, Thoughtful Writing*. 4<sup>th</sup> ed. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 2008
- Laurie G. Kirszner and Stephen R. Mandell. *The Pocket Wadsworth Handbook*. 4th ed.
- Joan Didion. *Year of Magical Thinking*. New York: Vintage Books, 2006
- Fully activated Cedar Crest email account
- Bound notebook (not spiral) for journaling
- Highlighter
- Writing Folder to be used as a portfolio for your work
- An electronic storage device (flash drive, rewritable CD rom, MP3 player, etc)
- Spiral notebook or loose-leaf for note taking
- A current college level dictionary and a thesaurus

## **WRI 100 OUTCOMES, OBJECTIVES and ASSESSMENT**

### **Upon completion of WRI-100: College Writing, students will be able to:**

- Use critical reading and writing strategies as a way of inquiring, understanding, and thinking about a subject.
- Use writing to communicate their own understanding of a subject while integrating and distinguishing their ideas from those of others.
- Analyze other writers' arguments by locating and evaluating their claims, the ways in which they support those claims, and how they address counterarguments and alternative points of view.
- Focus on a writing task's purpose by clearly articulating an insightful claim (or series of claims) and drawing upon sound reasoning, specific and pertinent evidence, illustrative examples, and relevant authorities to express and develop those ideas.
- Draw upon and use a variety of rhetorical forms, genres, and structures as appropriate to the expectations of audience and the demands of a writing task.
- Understand that there are differences between academic writing styles in the humanities, natural sciences, and social sciences (the MLA, CSE, and APA, for instance). These differences include citation methods and procedures for incorporating quotation, paraphrase, and summary of source material, but also matters such as organization, style, tone, vocabulary, and format.
- Utilize research skills and appropriate technologies in effectively addressing a writing assignment to locate, evaluate, analyze, and synthesize both primary and secondary sources.
- See that successful writing often takes several drafts, and develop strategies for generating and revising ideas and the language to express them, along with editing and proofreading practices to ensure readability.
- Critique their own and others' writing and ideas, as well as understand the collaborative and social contexts in which writing takes place.
- Prepare a manuscript of professional quality and format, while controlling readability conventions in spelling, grammar, mechanics, and syntax.

### **In order to attain these outcomes, WRI 100 has the following course methods:**

- Thinking critically requires you to recognize and analyze patterns of argument. To analyze arguments, you will locate and evaluate writers' claims, the supports for these claims, and their counterarguments. You will also assess the credentials and authority of the writer. You will apply these skills of analysis to various sources of information, in both print and electronic forms, in order to evaluate the legitimacy and applicability of this information.
- In order to learn to communicate effectively in writing, you will be asked both to examine and to practice the uses and effects of various types of writing, noticing how different contexts for writing call for changes in tone, syntax, rhetorical mode, and genre. Feedback from your teacher and classmates will guide you as you write and revise your work.

### **Student performance regarding WRI 100 learning outcomes will be evaluated through the following forms of assessment:**

- Student writing will be evaluated according to the six qualities of effective college writing: insightful ideas, a supported thesis, audience and discourse conventions, coherence and

logical organization, a sophisticated and professional style, & the revision process and manuscript preparation.

- Students will demonstrate the ability to engage in critical analysis through class discussion of assigned reading and through informal and formal written assignments.
- Students will demonstrate the ability to communicate clearly and effectively in writing in the prewriting, drafting, and revising of their papers for the course.
- Students will demonstrate the ability to practice information literacy through assigned research tasks.

### **College Writing Studio:**

- WRI 001 College Writing Studio is a supplemental writing lab for WRI-1 courses, providing extended workshop time and basic writing instruction in grammar, sentence and paragraph structures, and essay coherence. Students are placed in the studio based on college examination scores and WRI-1 writing samples. If you are enrolled in WRI 001, you should use this feedback to hone your writing skills.

## **STUDENT RESPONSIBILITIES**

### **Honor Philosophy**

The Cedar Crest Honor Philosophy states that students shall uphold community standards for academic and social behavior to preserve a learning environment dedicated to personal and academic excellence. Personal integrity and honor dictate that students take responsibility for their actions in all academic and social situations.

### **Classroom Protocol**

Appropriate classroom behavior is implicit in the Cedar Crest Honor Code. Such behavior is defined and guided by complete protection for the rights of all students and faculty to a courteous, respectful classroom environment. That environment is free from distraction such as late arrivals, early departures, inappropriate conversations and any other behaviors that might disrupt instruction and/or compromise students' access to their Cedar Crest College education.

### **Plagiarism**

Plagiarism is the act of using someone else's ideas, or words and not giving proper credit to the original source. It is dishonest to present oral or written work that is not entirely the student's own, except as may be approved by the instructor. Students must follow the requirements of the instructor regarding when and how much collaboration with other students is permitted. Any language taken from another source, whether individual words or entire paragraphs, must be placed within quotation marks and attributed to the source, following the citation format specified by the instructor. Paraphrased material from an outside source must also be attributed. In addition, if the student is indebted to another source for a specific perspective or a line of argument—regardless of whether the student has directly quoted the source or not—that debt must also be acknowledged. Make no mistake about it, **plagiarism is a serious academic offense** and in this class the penalty for it and any other forms of academic dishonesty is a grade of F on the individual assignment or for the entire course, to be determined by the instructor. **Plagiarism on the final research paper will result in an F for the course.**

## Attendance

Students are expected to attend every class and to be on time. Participation is extremely important to your success in this course and there will be no distinction made between *excused* and *unexcused* absences. The final grade will be lowered one letter grade for each absence past the second. Four or more absences will result in a final grade of **F**. I must be notified of any anticipated or unforeseen absences through either the Director of The Advising Center or the Dean of Student Affairs. You are responsible for any and all material covered in your absence. Cedar Crest's Inclement Weather Hotline number is 610-606-4629. On the rare occasion that I cancel a class, you will be notified via email to your Cedar Crest account. I will also leave a message on my office voicemail (x6446).

## Grading

- **Papers/Assignments/Quizzes/Journals/Participation 50%**

All papers must be typed on one side only, in MS Word, Times New Roman, font size 12. The paper must be double-spaced, formatted in MLA style and handed in when due. Late papers will result in a lower grade (one letter grade lower for each 24 hour period). If you are absent from class, I expect the paper via email, as a MS Word attachment, by 6PM the same day it is due.

This is the **only** condition under which you may email me your paper **or unless I specifically ask** you to do so. If you are in class and do not hand in a paper, it is automatically late and one letter grade will be deducted each 24 hour period until the paper is handed in. Homework assignments, the Midterm and the Final Research paper may not be handed in late. A number of shorter papers (2-3 pages) will be assigned as well as 2-3 longer essays (4-6 pages) drafted and revised for grading. You will be quizzed on assigned material.

A Journal will be maintained and used as a learning tool as well as to initiate discussions about the readings and as a resource for developing and writing your own papers. These will also be collected periodically and evaluated. The level of participation in your peer group will be determined by individual group members. Your attendance, your level of preparedness and your participation in class and group discussions will all be factored into your overall grade for the course.

- **Midterm 25%**

Students will write an essay based on The Year of Magical Thinking/ Doubt. The essays (6 pages minimum) will go through an extensive revision process before being collected and graded.

- **Final Research Paper 25%**

A final research paper (minimum of 8 pages) exhibiting proper documentation, drafted and revised, will serve as the final exam. This paper will also be presented orally.

## Introduction to the course:

**WEEK 1**  
M Aug. 25

Peer Group Assignments /Who are we? /Exchange of Info  
**Journal:** Meditation on a focus word / **Threads**  
 Read: **HO: LB:** *Public and Private Language*, Richard Rodriguez  
 Why *College Writing*?  
 How can *you* be successful in WRI 100?  
 Format: Student Driven /Peer Groups/ Portfolio/ Journals  
 Final Research Paper  
**In class writing:** Writing Assessment Essay

## Unit 1: Writing – “Words carry the places they’ve been.” -Unknown

**WEEK 2**  
M Aug. 31

Read: **CTTW:** Chap. 1-*Thinking Through Writing*, (4-21);  
 Chap. 2- *Reading Actively, Reading Critically*, (22-49)  
**PWH:** *Chap. 1-Understanding purpose and Audience (2);Chap. 2- Writing Essays( 6)*  
**Quiz on above texts**  
**Peer Group/ Journal:** Group meditation on a focus word / **Threads**  
**Discussion: CTTW:** *Grounds for Fiction*, Julia Alvarez (36-44)  
**HO: WP5:** *On Keeping a Notebook*, Joan Didion  
**WP:** *The Joy of Reading Writing Superman and Me*, Sherman Alexie  
**CCN:** *Language & Literature from a Pueblo Indian Perspective*, Leslie Marmon Silko  
**In class writing:** Unit 1 paper

## Unit 2: Forgiveness – “Forgiveness is the fragrance the violet leaves behind on the heel that has crushed it.” – Mark Twain

M Sept. 7

**Labor Day Holiday - No Class**  
 Read: *The Year of Magical Thinking*, Joan Didion  
**Due by 6 PM Wednesday Sept. 9th: Chapter meditations**

**WEEK 3\***  
M Sept. 14

Read: **CTTW:** Chap. 3-*Thinking Critically Writing Thoughtfully*, (50-83)  
 Chap. 4-*Viewing Critically, Thinking Creatively*, (84-116)  
**PWH:** *Chap. 3-Writing Paragraphs (19); Chap. 4-Writing an Argumentative Essay (24)*  
**Quiz on above texts**  
**Peer Group/ Journal:** Group meditation on a focus word / **Threads**  
**Discussion: CTTW:** from *My American Journey*, Colin Powell  
**HO: I:** *Amish Grace Transcript & Podcast*, Bill Moyers  
**I:** *Undeserved Forgiveness*, Jeff Jacoby  
**CCN:** *Secret Ceremonies of Love and Death*, Beverly Lowry  
**In class writing:** Unit 2 paper

**Unit 3: Identity** — *I think that history is inextricably linked to identity. If you don't know your history, if you don't know your family, who are you?* --Mary Pipher

**WEEK 4**  
M Sept. 21

Read: **CTTW:** Chap. 5-*Making Decisions and Drafting*, (117- 144)  
Chap. 6-*Revising Thoughtfully, Using Language Ethically*, (145-181)  
**PWH:** Chap. 5-*Revising Run-Ons* (32); Chap. 6-*Revising Sentence Fragments* (34) ; Chap. 7-*Understanding Agreement* (38)  
**Quiz on above texts**  
**Peer Group/ Journal:** Group meditation on a focus word / **Threads**  
**Discussion: CTTW:** *Reversing Established Orders*, Stephen Jay Gould  
**HO: WP:** *Split at the Root: An essay on Jewish Identity*, Adrienne Rich  
**WP5:** *Reading Lolita in Tehran*, Azar Nafisi  
**CCN:** *Invisible Man*, Lawrence Otis Graham,  
**CCN:** *The Female Body*, Margaret Atwood  
**In class writing:** Unit 3 paper  
**Due:** Essay #1

**Unit 4: Learning** — *“Every act of conscious learning requires the willingness to suffer an injury to one’s self esteem. That is why young children before they are aware of their own self-importance, learn so easily.”* –Thomas Szasz

**WEEK 5**  
M Sept. 28

Read: **CTTW:** Chap. 7 - *Writing to Describe and Narrate* (184-211)  
Chap. 8 - *Writing to Classify and Define* (212-264)  
**PWH:** Part 2-*Writing Grammatical Sentences: Chaps.8-10* (44-61)  
**Quiz on above texts**  
**Peer Group/ Journal:** Group meditation on a focus word / **Threads**  
**Discussion: CTTW:** *The Learning Curve*, Atwul Gawande  
**HO: LB:** *How Women Learn*, Mary Field Belenky, Blythe McVicker Clinchy, Nancy Rule Goldberger, and Jill Mattuck Tarule  
**LB:** *Women’s Brains*, Stephen Jay Gould  
**WP4:** *Learning in the Shadow of Race and Class*, bell hooks  
**In class writing:** Unit 4 paper

**Unit 5: Memory** — *...no matter how 'fictional' the account of [the book], or how much it is a product of invention, the act of imagination is bound up with memory. You know, they straightened out the Mississippi River in places, to make room for houses and livable acreage. Occasionally the river floods these places. 'Floods' is the word they use, but in fact it is not flooding; it is remembering. Remembering where it used to be. All water has perfect memory and is forever trying to get back to where it was. Writers are like that: remembering where we were, what valley we ran through, what the banks were like, the light that was there and the route back to our original place. It is emotional memory--what the nerves and the skin remember as well as how it appeared. And a rush of imagination is our flooding.* -Toni Morrison

**WEEK 6**  
M Oct. 5

Read: **CTTW:** Chap. 9 - *Writing to Compare and Evaluate* (265-324)  
Chap. 10 - *Writing to Speculate* (315-354)

**PWH:** *Part3-Writing Effective Sentences: Chaps. 11-16 (62-83)*

**Quiz on above texts**

**Peer Group/ Journal:** Group meditation on a focus word / **Threads**

**Discussion: CTTW:** from *An American Childhood*, Annie Dillard

**HO: WP5:** *Autobiography of a Dress*, Jamaica Kincaid

**CCN:** *Somehow Form a Family*, Tony Early

**CCN:** *The Gangster We are All Looking For*, Lê Thi Diem Thúy

**WP4:** *Tiny Clack of Sparks*, Bernard Cooper

**In class writing:** Unit 5 paper

**M Oct 12**

**Fall Break – No Class**

Read: **CTTW:** Chap. 11 – *Writing to Analyze* (356 – 396)

*Writing to Propose Solutions* (397-444)

**PWH:** *Part 6-Writing With Sources: Chaps. 28-32 (131-177)*

## **Unit 6: To Be Determined by class**

**WEEK 7**

M Oct. 19

Read: **CTTW:** Chap. 13 – *Writing to Persuade* (445-503)

Chap.14- *thinking About Research* (504-546)

**PWH:** *Chap 34-MLA Documentation (190) Note the differences between MLA and APA styles (Chap. 35)*

**Quiz on final 4 chapters in the text**

**Peer Group/ Journal:** Group meditation on a focus word / **Threads**

**Discussion:** Each group will submit one essay for the class to read on the agreed upon topic

**In class writing:**

**\*Due:** Midterm

**WEEK 8\***

M Oct. 26

**Peer Group:** workshop material from your portfolio

**Full Class Critique/Discussion on Technique:** of a completed draft

**In-class writing:** Revision

**Group/Individual conferences**

**WEEK 9**

M Nov. 2

**Peer Group:** workshop material from your portfolio

**Full Class Critique/Discussion on Technique:** of a completed draft

**In-class writing:** Revision

**Group/Individual conferences**

**Due:** Essay #2

**WEEK 10**

M Nov. 9

**Peer Group:** workshop material from your portfolio

**Full Class Critique/Discussion on Technique:** of a completed draft

**In-class writing:** Revision

**Group/Individual conferences**

- WEEK 11\***  
M Nov. 16
- Peer Group:** workshop material from your portfolio  
**Full Class Critique/Discussion on Technique:** of a completed draft  
**In-class writing:** Revision  
**Group/Individual conferences**
- WEEK 12**  
M Nov. 23
- Peer Group:** workshop material from your portfolio  
**Full Class Critique/Discussion on Technique:** of a completed draft  
**In-class writing:** Revision  
**Group/Individual conferences**
- WEEK 13**  
M Nov. 30
- Peer Group:** workshop material from your portfolio  
**Full Class Critique/Discussion on Technique:** of a completed draft  
**In-class writing:** Revision  
**Group/Individual conferences**
- WEEK 14**  
M Dec. 7
- FINAL PRESENTATIONS**