**WRD 110: Composition and Communication I**

**Ecologies of Place**

*“My voice goes after what my eyes cannot reach, / With the twirl of my tongue I encompass worlds and volumes of worlds.”*

*~Walt Whitman (Leaves of Grass)*

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**Course Description**

In this course, we will think about place and knowledge ecologically—how multiple factors comprise and shape places. Approaching critical inquiry ecologically will help us think about how knowledge about place is created, our roles in that process, how we are affected by place, and how we are unavoidably interconnected with other people and places. We will consider several questions: How can we better recognize the ways that places are shaped—the ways discourses shape the world and vice versa? What roles do we have in the shaping of places, and how are we shaped by them? How do local actions and decisions affect other places and vice versa? As we work through these questions, we will gain a deeper comprehension of local places like UK and Lexington and our own relationships to them.

**Overview and Goals**

Composition and Communication I is a course in speaking and writing emphasizing *critical inquiry* and *research*. Throughout the course, I will encourage you to explore your place in the broader community and take a stance on issues of public concern—that is, to begin to view yourself as an engaged citizen. You will engage in reflective thinking and analysis, conduct primary research in the community and secondary research using Library resources, and learn how to write and speak effectively about a local issue not only for your classmates but also for audiences beyond the classroom. A significant component of the class will be learning to use visuals and online resources to enhance writing and oral presentations. Over the course of the semester, class members can expect to work independently, with a partner, or with a small group of classmates to investigate, share findings, and compose presentations of their research, as well as to practice and evaluate interpersonal and team dynamics in action.

**Student Learning Outcomes**

By the end of the semester, students will be able to

* + compose written texts and deliver oral presentations that represent a relevant and informed point of view appropriate for its audience, purpose, and occasion in an environment that reinforces the recursive and generative nature of the composition and delivery rehearsal processes.
  + demonstrate an awareness of strategies that speakers and writers use in different communicative situations and media, and in large and small groups; learn to analyze and use visuals effectively to augment their oral presentations; to employ invention techniques for analyzing and developing arguments; to recognize and address differing genre and discourse conventions; and to document their sources appropriately.
  + find, analyze, evaluate, and properly cite pertinent primary and secondary sources, using relevant discovery tools, as part of the process of speech preparation and writing process.
  + develop flexible and effective strategies for organizing, revising, editing, proofreading, and practicing/rehearsing to improve the development of their ideas and the appropriateness of their expression.
  + collaborate with peers, the instructor, and librarians to define revision strategies for their essays and speeches, to set goals for improving them, and to devise effective plans for achieving those goals.
  + engage in a range of small group activities that allow them to explore and express their experiences and perspectives on issues under discussion.

**Course Materials**

*Compose, Design, Advocate*—Anne Wysocki & Dennis Lynch

Pocket Manual

Digital Journal/Blog

# Course Policies

# On-Time Attendance and Participation

Since discussion will be an integral part of the course, you must be prepared for class, on time, and offer productive comments based on the assigned readings. Preparation involves not only reading but also making notes about the reading so that you are prepared to discuss issues in depth. I reserve the right to add quizzes to the class agenda if too many class members appear to be unprepared.

You can accrue two unexcused absences on a TTh schedule, but your final course grade will be reduced by a half letter grade for each unexcused absence thereafter. To receive an excused absence, you must provide official documentation; if for a sponsored University activity (such as intercollegiate athletics), documentation must be provided in advance. The University Senate and the Division of Writing, Rhetoric, and Digital Media set a limit on total absences—*both excused and unexcused*—at 1/5th of the total class meetings.

Students who are 15 minutes late on a TTh schedule will be marked absent for the day. That absence will become an unexcused absence, weighing against your total number of unexcused absences, if you cannot provide proper documentation. If a quiz occurs, you can only make it up if you have a valid, documented excuse for your tardiness. So be prepared and on time!

## Late Assignments

Your assignments for this course, including speeches, essays, journals, and informal assignments, are due on the dates indicated in the class outline below or as indicated in class. Late assignments are not accepted. All assignments must be posted on Blackboard, which applies a date/time stamp to them. They must be posted BEFORE class in order to be marked as “on time.” You may request (in advance) one two-day extension of the due date on the *final draft* of a major written assignment (not drafts). Late assignments are not accepted unless a two-day extension has been requested and approved in advance of the deadline. If you are absent on a day when an assignment is due, your speech is scheduled, or an exam is given, you will be allowed to hand in or make-up that work *only* if the absence is officially excused.

## Plagiarism

Part II of Student Rights and Responsibilities states that all academic work‚ written or otherwise‚ submitted by students to their instructors or other academic supervisors‚ is expected to be the result of their own thought‚ research‚ or self–expression. See section 6.3.1; online at

<http://www.uky.edu/StudentAffairs/Code/Section%20VI.pdf>

In cases where students feel unsure about a question of plagiarism involving their work‚ they are obliged to consult their instructors on the matter before submission. When students submit work purporting to be their own‚ but which in any way borrows ideas‚ organization‚ wording or anything else from another source without appropriate acknowledgment of the fact‚ the students are guilty of plagiarism.

Plagiarism includes reproducing someone else's work‚ whether it be published article‚ chapter of a book‚ a paper from a friend or some file‚ or another source, including the Internet. Plagiarism also includes the practice of employing or allowing another person to alter or revise the work which a student submits as his/her own‚ whoever that other person may be. Plagiarism also includes using someone else’s work during an oral presentation without properly citing that work in the form of an oral footnote.

Whenever you use outside sources or information‚ you must carefully acknowledge exactly what‚ where and how you have employed them. If the words of someone else are used‚ you must put quotation marks around the passage in question and add an appropriate indication of its origin. Plagiarism also includes making simple changes while leaving the organization‚ content and phrasing intact. However‚ nothing in these Rules shall apply to those ideas which are so generally and freely circulated as to be a part of the public domain.

You may discuss assignments among yourselves or with me or a tutor‚ but when the actual work is done‚ it must be done by you‚ and you alone unless the assignment has been designed to be conducted with a partner or small group of classmates. All work submitted must be new, original work; you may not submit work you have produced for another purpose or class, including a previous CIS or WRD 110 course.

## Class Conduct

We will have fun this semester, and there will be a great deal of give and take in our discussions. But we will only have fun if you conduct yourself with respect for yourself and others. I expect you to

1. come to class prepared (do all reading and come prepared to discuss it; do all homework) and take pride in the work you do
2. offer support and encouragement to your classmates
3. listen to others carefully before offering your opinion
4. talk to me outside of class if anything that happens during class bothers you.

In order to maintain a productive work environment, I expect you to put away your cell phone and turn off its sound before each class period, as well as refrain from eating, sleeping, reading irrelevant materials, talking once class is in session unless asked to do so, and entering the classroom late or leaving early without permission. Additionally, laptop usage will be allowed only during appropriate workshops. Students who engage in behavior so disruptive that it is impossible to conduct class may be directed to leave for the remainder of the class period. See the UKY's Code of Student Conduct for further information on prohibited conduct:

http://www.uky.edu/StudentAffairs/Code/part1.html

## Peer Groups

Because most writers, educators, and other professionals must learn to work collaboratively, you will collaborate—cheerfully—with your peers both in and out of class. I will ask you to form groups early in the semester. You will work with this group often in class as well. Treat everyone in this class as a valued colleague, and you will have few problems. *That means that you will honor all deadlines agreed to by your classmates as though I were the one who set them and in general be respectful.* Consequences for "slacking" may result in anything ranging from a full letter grade deduction for the assignment to a zero (determined on a case-by-case basis).

## Gender and Pronoun Reference

It is no longer customary to use the masculine pronoun for cases of indefinite pronoun reference, e.g., "When a professor grades papers, *he* is often swayed by a student's degree of effort." Instead, style books recommend changing pronouns to the plural form, e.g., "When professors grade papers, *they* are often swayed by a student's degree of effort." Some call this practice "gender-fair language." Others just call it good sense. Regardless of the reason, it is standard procedure in professional settings and this class, so bring your gender-bender sentences to class so we can figure them out together.

## Blackboard

The daily schedule may change during the semester. You will be responsible for checking the online syllabus and schedule before beginning your homework for each of our class meetings for any changes or updates. I will post all major assignments here and on Blackboard. If you lose an assignment page or handout, you are expected to get a copy from the website or Blackboard rather than from me. In general, all assignments will require a title, your name, my name, and the date, but this is particularly important for items posted to Blackboard. You are responsible for keeping back-up (I recommend several) copies of all your work since electronic texts can be lost. Copies of work can be saved in the “Content Collection” area of your Blackboard account. You are also responsible for checking to make sure that your assignments are posted to Blackboard on time, in the right location, and in the right format.

## Netiquette

When communicating online, consider the conversations as having the same boundaries as any real life interactions. No personal attacks. If you happen to be attacked by a member of the class, it is best to let me handle it. If you feel compelled to respond, I recommend a request for information, e.g., "What makes you say that?" Responding in kind feels good momentarily, but escalating the flame will only quash discussion for the rest of us. In addition, do not download material to the class listserv or send messages to members in private or on Blackboard that could make other members of the class uncomfortable. Think of the class as a professional place, like an office, and your fellow classmates as fellow professionals. Within these guidelines, our online interactions should be an enjoyable and productive.

## Writing Center / Multimodal Communication Lab

The Writing Center is located in W. T. Young Library, Thomas D. Clark Study, 5th Floor, West Wing (phone: 257-1368). You can walk in or make an appointment online (http://web.as.uky.edu/oxford/). The staff can help you identify and correct problems with all aspects of your writing as well as work with you on visual design. If you have additional problems with your speaking, you may also go to the Multimodal Communication Lab in 106 Grehan (phone: 859-257-8370). I recommend that you consider going to either location if you feel stuck at any stage of the communication process.

## Students with Special Needs

If you are registered with the Disability Resource Center (DRC) and require special accommodations to complete the work for this course, you must produce a letter from the DRC that details what you need *before* I can grant you these accommodations. Special accommodations cannot be granted retroactively. This is a non-negotiable class policy. Please contact the DRC at 257-2754 if you have questions about your eligibility for special accommodations.

**Semester Project: The Ecologies of Lexington/UK**

Throughout the semester, you will take part in several assignments individually and collaboratively that ultimately contribute to a documentary project about Lexington/UK. Your goal is represent your chosen place in a way that pushes beyond what people already know or think they know about that place. In short, you will be documenting a deeper, more complex story for your chosen location. You will accomplish this goal by using a combination of fieldwork and secondary research to produce a digital documentary. The project will include at least one mapping component, but not a map in the traditional sense. Instead, you will make a more comprehensive map of your chosen location. Some approaches that you may want to consider are political, physical, historical, social, visual, personal, cultural, culinary, behavioral, architectural, occupational, and biological. Mediums for the mapping component could include web-texts with hypertext, videos, Google Map Maker, Tagcrowd, or Many Eyes. Keep in mind that any attempt to document a place can be only partial—never the whole picture—but in doing so you are contributing to how that place is shaped. Therefore, you must represent your chosen place in a way that is fair and ethical.

Since you all will be working in groups for most of the semester, it is important to choose your groups carefully. You will neither be able to change groups once the groups are chosen, nor change topics once proposals have been approved. I expect all group members to equally divide up all work and to treat each other respectfully. To those ends, each group will draft and sign its own group contract, as well as periodically submit group dynamics reports. Collaborative work does not mean that everyone in a group receives the same grade. Although each overall assignment will receive a group grade, individual members will have their grades adjusted based upon whether or not they have been meeting their obligations to the group.

**Breakdown of Project Components**

Digital Journal (20%)

You will be required to keep a web journal or blog for the entire semester. This will be used for a variety of writing assignments, including projects or field notes, smaller pieces that will be developed and worked into the projects, research summaries, and reflections. This will provide one way of sharing information and serve as a record for your work. By the end of the course, your journal will be a testament to your own credibility that you have built through critical inquiry. A note on privacy: your journal settings do not have to be public, but it should be sharable so that you can share it with me for grading. You may then also share it with classmates, including group members.

Introduction Speeches (5%)

An important component of understanding place is how places affect and shape us. In this formal speech, you will introduce yourself to the class by sharing your own sense of place and how it has shaped you. Some ideas you might want to consider are family, friends, population, region, food, local culture, rural/urban/suburban, demographics, landscape, biodiversity, and infrastructure. This speech will be 4-6 minutes and must include at least four visuals. You may use no more than five 3x5 inch note cards (one side only). Attire is snappy-casual. You must cite any information that you get from secondary resources.

Proposal (15%)

This proposal will consist of two parts. The first is a collaboratively written document (2100 words) that will be submitted to the instructor and contain at least four sources (10%). The proposal has three components: 1) an audience analysis explaining how you anticipate your chosen project connecting with your intended audience, 2) a detailed description of the artifact you intend to produce, and 3) a project plan with tasks, deadlines, and individual responsibilities. The group will then present an overview for their project in a semi-formal group speech (5%). Your proposals will help you all get your ideas together long before you all start trying to create your digital documentaries and will provide an opportunity for each group to receive feedback from me and other peer-groups.

Since the proposal will be collaboratively written, each group will need to make sure that the document feels like a cohesive piece of writing—instead of a document that was produced in sections. This is one of the most important skills or professional composition collaboration. With this goal in mind, remember to use third person and first person plural when referring to individual group members or the collective.

Descriptive Web-Text (15%)

One of the most basic, but often undervalued types of inquiry is using observation analytically. Essential to mastering this skill is your power of description, which is an important type of fieldwork. When you take the time to thoroughly describe a place, you must develop your abilities to focus, pursue observations, ask questions, and look for the answers. In short, the more you describe a place and pay attention to it, the more you will realize how little you know about it and what else you would like to learn. Sometimes, your method of inquiry will be as simple as observing a place further, while at others you will need to conduct secondary research.

In this formal writing assignment, you will draw from homework and field notes that you have accumulated in your digital journals to write a short, 900 words informative web-text describing a place on UK’s campus. You must include at least two images and three hypertexts. The goals of this assignment are two-fold: 1) You will gain practice using observation and description as a method of inquiry, and 2) your observations will form part of the foundational fieldwork for your digital documentaries. Your writing will include a mixture of physical description and your research about your chosen place—information that cannot be known through observation alone. Each group member must write about a different place relevant to the overall project theme.

Digital Documentary (25%)

This grade will be for the final product that your semester project shapes into, but the grade is divided into two parts. The larger portion, 20%, is for the finished documentary. Think of this project like giving an in-depth tour of your chosen place that shares what you have learned during the semester with an audience that may know little-to-nothing about your location. The smaller portion, 10%, will be for a group “tour” in which your group will present its project to the class.

Your goal in this project is to present your audience with a new way of seeing the subject of your documentary. You are essentially documenting complexity, revealing information about your subject that most people would not necessarily perceive. Therefore, you must think about how a place is shaped, how it can exert its own shaping influence, the artificiality of borders and boundaries for places, and how knowledge about places is constructed and shared—that is, how threads and networks of discourse circulate to form places in the ways that we access them. To these ends, your group will choose a theme that will form the foundational direction for your inquiry. You will then conduct a combination of fieldwork and more traditional primary and secondary research. Your research should eventually lead you to a more specific purpose for your digital project. What is it that your project is doing? What are your goals as a group? How will your project achieve those goals? Since any attempt to represent a place can be only partial, how will your group ensure that it does so ethically? What part(s) is your group presenting, and why? Examples of how your projects may take shape include websites, videos, audio-visual essays, and interactive maps. For example, you may decide to create a video with a combination of dubbed narration and recorded footage, or you may decide to make an interactive website with short videos and images. Regardless of your chosen medium or combination of mediums, you must create a website for housing and sharing your project, even if it is merely a basic one. At the very least, this site will have an introduction to your project and brief biographical information about the group members, including links to each member’s research blog.

Your project must integrate at least one map that visually represents a place(s) that are important to your chosen project theme. Think about how the place has been represented visually and what your specific goals are for your project; then, create a map or series of maps that help your group achieve those goals. You may wish to consider a more interactive mapping option like Google Map Maker, a data map such as geospatial time, or a more stripped down map such as one created through a program like Microsoft Paint. What type of map works best for representing your information and sharing it with your audience in order to achieve your goals?

Reflections (10%)

You will write three short (350-500 words) reflections throughout the semester. In each reflection, you will respond to a short prompt that asks you to consider a previous project you will have completed and its respective learning outcomes.

Class/Workshop Participation (15%)

We will be doing a lot of work in this class, and much of the work/skills will build upon previous ones, so it is imperative that you are prepared for class each day. Preparation includes doing any assigned reading and homework, bringing in drafts for workshops and participating in them, and taking part in class discussions. This grade can also include quizzes; although I do not like giving quizzes, I will if I sense that students are consistently unprepared for class.

## Grading Policy

Only students who have completed all components of the two major assignments are eligible for a passing grade in this course.

90 – 100%: A Digital Journal: 15%

80 – 89%: B Introduction Speech: 5%

70 – 79%: C Descriptive Web-Text: 15%

60 – 69%: D Proposal: 15%

59% and below: E Digital Documentary: 25%

Reflections: 10%

Participation/Preparation: 15%

**Course Calendar**

\*\*\*This calendar is tentative and subject to changes as deemed necessary by the instructor. \*\*\*

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| **Week One** | |
| August 21st | No Class |
| August 23rd | Introduction to Course; Ice Breaker |
| **Week Two** | |
| August 28th | Discuss “Place” folder readings on BB; Writing Exercise |
| August 30th | Introduction to WordPress and Research Blogging; Discuss *CDA* (1-30) |
| **Week Three** | |
| September 4th | **Due**: Place Response to Blog  Discuss *CDA* (223-245); Invention for Speeches |
| September 6th | Discuss *CDA* (251-255); Begin Outlining for Speeches |
| **Week Four** | |
| September 11th | **Due:** Speech Outlines  Discuss NPR StoryCorps Pieces and PDFs; Workshop Speech Outlines |
| September 13th | **Due:** Full Version of Speech  Speech Rehearsal Day  Post Revision Plans by 11:30 PM to Blogs |
| **Week Five** | |
| September 18th | **Introduction Speeches** |
| September 20th | **Introduction Speeches**; Begin Drafting 1st Reflection; Reflections Due by 11:30 PM to Blogs |
| **Week Six** | |
| September 25th | Discuss Semester Project and Goals; Discuss Eblen’s article on Short Street; View Short Street Map |
| September 27th | Discuss Readings in “Wide Reach of Place” folder in BB; Descriptive Writing Exercise; Invention for Digital Documentary |
| **Week Seven** | |
| October 2nd | **Due**: Pick Groups and Bring Some Project Ideas for Discussion; Drafts of Group Contracts to BB by 3:00 PM  **\*\*Meet in Library Classroom B108a\*\***  Discuss *CDA* (144-163); Discuss Project Ideas from Homework; Introduction to Research |
| October 4th | **Due by Noon**: Revised Group Contracts  **\*\*Meet in Library Classroom B108a\*\***  Discuss *CDA* (181-212), Research Day  **Due by 11:30 PM:** Research Blog Post |
| **Week Eight** | |
| October 9th | Discuss Ethical Fieldwork and Interpersonal Communication; Descriptive Writing Exercise; Description as a Method of Inquiry |
| October 11th | **Due:** Draft of Proposal to BB by 3:00 PM  Discuss *CDA* (213-221); Workshop Proposal Drafts; Draft Proposal Speeches  **\*\*Proposals Due to BB by 11:30 PM Friday, Oct 12th \*\*** |
| **Week Nine** | |
| October 16th | **Proposal Speeches**; Discuss Proposed Ideas as a Class  **Due:** Group Dynamics Report by 11:30 PM |
| October 18th | **Group Meetings with Mr. Parmer**  (schedule on BB) |
| **Week Ten** | |
| October 23rd | **Due:** Research Post by 3:00 PM  Discuss *CDA* (263-304); Visual Rhetoric Exercises |
| October 25th | **Due:** Draft of Web-Text to BB by 3:00 PM  Workshop Web-Texts; Discuss *CDA* (305-312)  **Due:** Post Revision Plan by 11:30 PM |
| **Week Eleven** | |
| October 30th | **Due:** Web-Text to Blog Page by 3:00 PM; Reflection 2 by 11:30 PM  Discuss Mapping (Creating, Shaping, and Representing Knowledge); Digital Mapping Exercises |
| November 1st | **Due:** PostDigital Map of “Your Lexington” with Description by 3:00 PM  Invention for Project Maps |
| **Week Twelve** | |
| November 6th | **Due**: Progress Post by 3:00 PM  Work on Digital Projects |
| November 8th | **Due:** Progress Post by 3:00 PM  Work on Digital Projects |
| **Week Thirteen** | |
| November 13th | **Due:** Full Draft of Digital Project  Workshop Digital Projects  **Due by 11:30 PM:** Project Revision Plans |
| November 15th | **Due:** Outline of Digital Tour Speech  Workshop Digital Tour Outlines; Work on Digital Projects  **Due by 11:30 PM**: Tour Revision Plans |
| **Week Fourteen** | |
| November 20th | **Due:** Progress Post by 3:00 PM  Workshop Revised Digital Projects |
| November 22nd | **\*\*No Class: Thanksgiving Holiday\*\*** |
| **Week Fifteen** | |
| November 27th | **Due:** Documentary Projects Live by 3:00 PM  Work on Digital Tours |
| November 28th | **Digital Tours** |
| **Week Sixteen** | |
| December 4th | **Digital Tours** |
| December 6th | **Digital Tours**; Concluding Comments  **Due by 11:30 PM on Sunday, Dec 9th:** Reflection 3 |