

Instructor: Dr. Erik M. Bachman / embachman@gmail.com  
Office Hours: Thursdays, 9:30-10:45AM, Writing Center (Room 1060W in the HUB, Bldg. 1000)

## English 2, Section 98543: Composition and Critical Thinking

### Course Topic: Visuality and Writing

This course is required for all students who intend to transfer to a four-year university. It follows English 1A and assumes that you are already familiar with writing research papers and using MLA methods of citing sources and preparing Works Cited pages. You will be engaged in a variety of learning techniques, small group presentations and discussions, journaling activities, and four formal papers that demonstrate your ability to write focused thesis-driven essays. In this course we will look closely at works of non-fiction prose that offer a variety of perspectives on visuality and visual culture.

**Course Meeting Times:** TTh 8-9:20AM

**Course Room:** Room 323

### Required Texts

Roland Barthes, *Camera Lucida*  
John Berger, *Ways of Seeing*  
Vilém Flusser, *Towards a Philosophy of Photography*  
Susan Sontag, *On Photography*

Students are also required to obtain a writer's handbook published within the last five years (examples include *The St. Martin's Guide to Writing*, *The Bedford Reader*, *The Pocket Wadsworth Handbook*, etc.).

### Student Learning Outcomes

Upon successful completion of this class, students will have demonstrated the ability to:

1. Write evidence-based essays demonstrating logical reasoning and argumentative skills.
2. Evaluate logical reasoning and argument in assigned and researched texts.

### Goals of the Course

1. Use critical thinking skills to develop forceful and sound arguments on a variety of topics.
2. Develop an argument or analysis with a clear thesis, using specific evidence and unambiguous claims to support that thesis.
3. Study specific techniques for writing clear, cogent arguments, including definition, summary, deduction, induction, and analysis, as well as a variety of ways to present relevant evidence and defend claims.
4. Synthesize information, concepts, and ideas from a variety of texts.
5. Cultivate a practice and process for questioning.

6. Critically assess how cultural ideologies construct and affect one's own thought processes and social institutions.
7. Determine which method of organization will present an argument most effectively by using logic, persuasion, and the careful arrangement of supporting evidence, examples, and illustrations.
8. Understand the critical role that tone and word choice play in argument, especially language that appeals to reason or emotion, the denotations and connotations of words, concrete and abstract language, and the use of irony, satire, sarcasm, and other literary devices.
9. Express ideas clearly and directly, avoiding vagueness, ambiguity, wordiness, truisms, clichés, euphemisms, jargon, and generalized or inflated language.
10. Examine secondary sources purposefully by annotating; taking notes; quoting, paraphrasing, and summarizing exactly and effectively; and avoiding plagiarism.
11. Use a variety of print and on-line sources as well as first-hand research to develop strong arguments.
12. Apply principles of grammar, usage, and syntax to one's own writings.
13. Analyze the methods of argument used by other writers, including citations of authorities, statistical information, examples and analogies, the acknowledgment of opposing positions, the presentation of counterclaims, etc.
14. Avoid errors in reasoning, logical fallacies, and unexamined assumptions; identify personal biases in the arguments made both in one's own writing and that of others.
15. Read texts closely to identify premises, conclusions, claims, and assumptions in arguments by other writers.
16. Recognize and evaluate the significance of paradigms in determining social, political, and personal realities. Understand that there are valid worldviews, discourses, and ways of reasoning wholly different from one's own.
17. Recognize, understand, and critique power arrangements within social and economic systems that have helped to shape social institutions and interactions.

### **Course Requirements**

In a nutshell, these are the things you agree to do if you would like to continue to be a member of this class. Likewise, your final grade will be determined based on your performance in each of the following areas. Please note that you will be dropped from this course should you fail to satisfactorily fulfill the requirements set forth as follows:

#### Reading

There will be reading assignments for every class meeting. **Students will be expected to have completed these assignments in advance of each of these meetings so they can meaningfully contribute to discussion.** The assigned reading(s) must be brought to class, and each student must bring at least five questions and five observations regarding the week's reading(s) (for more on this, see Journal below).

#### Discussion

Because our class meetings will function primarily as seminars rather than lectures, **participation in class discussions is required of everyone**, and substantive contributions to seminar throughout the semester will be reflected in your course grade.

### Writing

There are **four major essay assignments** for this class, three of which will be written in class before being radically re-written in MLA style outside of class. The week before each of the four out-of-class essays are due, you will be asked to submit complete drafts of each respective paper. These drafts are required and will be workshopped by your peers. Students may fail to present a draft to one workshop; failing to submit drafts to more than one workshop will adversely affect your final grade.

**All essays and drafts are due on the dates listed in the course schedule below.**

Please note that it is not possible to get a passing grade in this course if you fail to submit final drafts for all four papers or if you miss more than one writing workshop.

### Journal

Active reading and note-taking are essential to drafting cogent and insightful essays for this course. To that end, students will be asked to keep a journal in which they record the questions, arguments, problems, and insights that come up in the course of completing the reading and research assignments. Treat your journal as an opportunity to engage the course materials in a conversation and to reflect upon your writing process. **Your journal should be brought to every class** so you can contribute to class discussion the (at least) five questions and five observations required of you from each week's assigned reading(s). I will be spot-checking your journals throughout the semester.

### Group Presentation

In Weeks Eleven and Twelve, you and your assigned group will present an argument regarding Susan Sontag's *On Photography*. This project will require collaboration both in preparing the presentation and delivering it.

### Attendance

According to the Cabrillo Catalog, "Class hours of absence are considered excessive when they total more than the number of hours a full-term class meets during each week of a 16-week semester. [. . .] Excessive absence from class [. . .] will constitute reason for an instructor to drop a student from that class. However, it is the student's responsibility to officially withdraw from classes by published deadlines to avoid failing grades."

This means that **no more than two absences will be allowed in this course**. If you exceed two absences, you should officially withdraw from the class.

### Reading Quizzes

I reserve the option of integrating pop quizzes into the course schedule. Carry out your reading and journal-keeping accordingly.

### **A Note on Plagiarism**

Plagiarism occurs when you present someone else's work as your own. **If plagiarism or cheating of any kind is suspected, the student(s) involved will be dealt with in the severest manner allowed by Cabrillo College policy.**

For more information on Cabrillo's policies concerning plagiarism, please see <https://www.cabrillo.edu/services/writingcenter/Plagiarism.html>.

### **Accommodation Statement**

Students needing accommodations should inform the instructor. As required by the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), accommodations are provided to insure equal access for students with verified disabilities. To determine if you qualify or need assistance with an accommodation, please contact Accessibility Support Center (formerly DSPS), Room 1073, (831) 479-6379.

You may likewise consider the following:

\*If you have difficulty seeing or hearing, or mobility difficulty, please let the instructor know so that you can be seated appropriately.

\*As small changes can make the difference between frustration and success, please let the instructor know if you are having difficulty with the accessibility of the materials or the class.

\*If you have an accommodations letter, please give the instructor a copy and meet with him to discuss any accommodations you need to succeed in this class.

### **Schedule of Readings and Assignments**

(texts marked with \* will be handed out the class meeting before they are to be read)

#### **Week One**

08/29 T Course Introductions and Overview  
 Rubrics for Essays  
 Thesis-Writing  
 Mock Writing Workshop

08/31 Th Berger, 5-43

#### **Week Two**

09/05 T Berger, 45-112

09/07 Th Berger, 114-55

#### **Week Three**

09/12 T **Students will write Essay 1 (1,000 words) in class. (Bring an exam book.)**

09/14 Th *Assignment (due in class):* Radical rewrite of Essay 1

**Week Four**

09/19 T \*Laura Mulvey, "Visual Pleasure and Narrative Cinema" (1975)  
**Final Draft of Essay 1 Rewrite (1,250 words) Due**

09/21 Th \*Linda Williams, "When the Woman Looks" (1984)

**Week Five**

09/26 T FILM TO BE VIEWED OUTSIDE OF CLASS: *Peeping Tom* (1960; dir. Michael Powell)

09/28 Th **Students will write Essay 2 (1,000 words) in class. (Bring an exam book.)**

**Week Six**

10/03 T *Assignment (due in class):* Radical rewrite of Essay 2

10/05 Th Barthes, 3-60  
**Final Draft of Essay 2 Rewrite (1,250 words) Due**

**Week Seven**

10/10 T Barthes, 63-119

10/12 Th Barthes, 3-119 (re-read)

**Week Eight**

10/17 T **Students will write Essay 3 (1,000 words) in class. (Bring an exam book.)**

10/19 Th *Assignment (due in class):* Radical rewrite of Essay 3

**Week Nine**

10/24 T Sontag, 3-48  
**Final Draft of Essay 3 Rewrite (1,250 words) Due**

10/26 Th Sontag, 51-82

**Week Ten**

10/31 T Sontag, 85-149

11/02 Th Sontag, 153-208

**Week Eleven**

11/07 T Group Presentations on Sontag

11/09 Th Group Presentations on Sontag

**Week Twelve**

11/14 T Group Presentations on Sontag

11/16 Th Meet in Library for Research Essay Tutorial

**Week Thirteen**

11/21 T Flusser, 7-48

11/23 Th **THANKSGIVING—NO CLASS**

**Week Fourteen**

11/28 T Flusser, 49-94

11/30 Th *Assignment (due in class):* Annotated Bibliography for Essay 4

**Week Fifteen**

12/05 T *Assignment (due in class):* Draft of Topic Paragraph for Essay 4  
(Workshop)

12/07 Th *Assignment (due in class):* First Draft of Essay 4 (Workshop)

**Essay 4 (1,400 words) due during Final Exam (Tuesday, December 12<sup>th</sup>, 7-9:50AM)**