English 110: College Writing 1
Mobility in a Cultural Context
T/Th, 10:15-12:05, Klapper 708

Instructor: Professor Jennifer Polish
Office hours: Tuesdays, 2:15-3:15 pm
Office location: Klapper 354
Office phone: 718.997.4642
Email address: jpolish1@qc.cuny.edu
Course Blog URL: mobilityincontextspring16a.qwriting.qc.cuny.edu

Course Description:

When we think about “mobility,” each of us will be drawn to different memories, experiences, and associations. Some of us may think of physical mobility and the different ways that we can and cannot move our bodies through space. Some of us may think of racial mobility and the constraints that racist societal structures place on “the American Dream.” Still more of us may think of class mobility, gender mobility, and the proverbial glass ceiling. And, of course, the word “mobility” may trigger many associations that are not listed here.

Throughout this course, we will study how writing – and the institutions and cultural systems that shape writing – creates what we understand as a (false) binary between mobility and immobility. By analyzing a range of texts, from music videos to personal essays to academic articles, we will focus on learning to interpret difficult academic content and create texts of our own that we can confidently contribute to scholarly conversations.

Four writing assignments will be used as signposts along the journey through the space of this course. Along the way, students will use the in-class writings and discussions to help develop their college writing skills.

Course Objectives:

By the end of the term, students will be able to:

1) Identify and analyze in both academic and narrative writing – including students’ own writing – elements such as thesis, audience, motive, evidence, and structure.
2) Become fluent in methods and strategies for prewriting, writing, and editing.
3) Learn to recognize and articulate a variety of rhetorical strategies for a variety of purposes.
4) Identify intellectual and social problems and conduct scholarly research through learning to recognize and interpret literary conventions and theoretical academic essays.
5) Gain confidence in their writing abilities and learn to critique their own and others’ work.
Course Assignments:

This course will feature class blog assignments and three essay assignments.

**Blog Posts**: Each student will join the class blog using their Queens College email addresses during the first week of class. If students have technical difficulties joining the blog, or anticipate that they will have difficulty accessing the internet to post on their due dates, they should let me know immediately so that help can be provided.

At the beginning of the term, students will be assigned their dates to post on the class blog. Each post should be in response to one of the readings assigned for that particular day, and it should consist of *no less than 200 words*. In your blog post, each of the following questions must be answered:

- How does the author’s main point relate to what we’ve been reading/discussing in class?
- *How* does the artist/author make this point? (For example: Do they use powerful imagery? Do they cite (refer to) other scholars?) How effective is/are their point(s)?
- Refer to a specific passage or moment in the piece: how does this specific moment or passage relate to the overall message?
- What do you think about the reading?

You are encouraged to refer to other students’ posts, as well as include other media within your post, such as videos, gifs, or links to other articles to help explain what you’re saying. For the first week of class, I will make a model blog post to help guide your own, but please feel free to give them your own unique style!

There will be a few dates throughout the term where *each* student will have to post: check the class calendar (below) for details.

**Four Essay Assignments**: The first assignment asks students to develop an argument based on a contemporary, primary text. The second assignment asks students to create a one-act play that puts the ideas of two writers in conversation with each other. The third assignment asks students to conduct original research help prepare a research paper for an academic conference. The final, unnumbered assignment is comprised of your blog posts over the course of the term.

The due dates for these assignments can be found below in the course calendar: check your course calendar (below), as well as the class blog (under the Calendar section), to know what you have to read/what due dates you have for each day.
Assignment Expectations:

Blog posts from assigned bloggers must be posted at least 12 hours before class begins. Students must post these blog posts on time for each of their assigned classes. Points will be deducted from your final grade for each missed and late blog post.

Each Essay Assignment (not including blog posts) must be submitted in hard copy on the assigned due date in class. Any late papers will be reduced by a third of a grade for each day that it is late. When the syllabus indicates, “DUE: Portfolio Essay Assignment # X”, this indicates that students must submit all of the following: their most complete and proofread “final” draft, along with each draft that they submitted previously (even though these drafts will have my writing, yours, and the writing of other students’ on it: that is exactly what I want to collect. So please, do not lose these drafts!).

Reading About Writing:

In addition to academic and literary class readings (detailed in your Class Bibliography), many weeks will feature readings about writing. Since this is first and foremost a writing class, these readings are meant to supplement our explorations of the techniques and strategies of writing in the academy.

Participation:

Attendance is a very, very important part of this class: it is where we will do most of our learning, and your grade subsequently depends a great deal on participation. The majority of this class will enable students to experience collaborative writing and learning processes, so participation is the most important piece of this class. Students are encouraged to realize that their contributions to the class benefit not only themselves, but everyone else in the class.

Much of our class time will feature in-class writing, group activities, and discussion, and while these in-class writings will not be graded, each student is expected to contribute to the classroom’s collaborative creative process. If students cannot write by hand, alternative methods will be made available.

Grading Contract:

A student is guaranteed a B if they successfully fulfill each of the following criteria:

- Miss no more than 3 classes throughout the term (let me know if there are health or other issues that require accommodation)
- Demonstrate a willingness to meaningfully contribute to the classroom learning environment (including participating in class discussions, classroom writing activities, and blog posts, discussing alternative arrangements with me as needed)
- Complete each assignment – including all blog posts and all assignment drafts – on time and fulfilling each of the requirements for the assignment
• Actively demonstrate respect for all members of the campus community, including in blog posts and responses

Grading Stats:

Participation (In Class and at Conferences): 30%
Blog Assignments: 30%
Assignment # 1: 15%
Assignment # 2: 15%
Assignment # 3: 20%

Grading Criteria for Blog Posts and Responses:

Posts and responses will receive full credit when they fully answer the questions described above; when they are posted on time; and when they demonstrate full engagement with the course (drawing from the readings, other classmates’ online comments, and class discussions). Full points will be given for posts that address the questions and raise some of their own in a thoughtful, engaging way that draws on other students’ ideas as well as cited media.

Grading Criteria for Essay Assignments:

Adapted from Gordon Harvey, Writing Program at Harvard University

Each graded assignment will be returned to students with extensive comments that will make it clear how and why essays have been assessed as such.

An “A” range essay not only fulfills each facet of the assignment on time, but reflects confidence, control, and skillful analysis. Its use of sources is both persuasive and subtle, with a clear argument and forceful evidence.

A “B” range essay fulfills each facet of the assignment, but offers analyses that may not be richly complex. Many points are supported well, but there are aspects of an argument that are not supported or are not supported well. The integration of sources is efficient, but not necessarily graceful.

A “C” range essay fulfills most facets of the assignment. It is between 1 and 3 days late. It is usually focused and coherent, but presents a lot of difficulty with articulating and presenting the central ideas and arguments. Sources are often presented without significant analysis or insight.

A “D” range essay fulfills some facets of the assignment. It is more than 3 days late. It shows strands of insight that are not sufficiently developed or articulated fully, but overall these essays do not seriously grapple with ideas, texts, and arguments. These papers may make some effort to integrate sources, but do so unconvincingly.
A failing range essay does not complete most facets of the assignment. It is more than a week late (without communication with the professor). It does not grapple with texts or ideas, and in addition to being unfocused or incoherent, it does not meet the requirements of the assignment.

The Writing Center:

Located in Kiely Hall 229, tutors there are trained to help you revise your writing at various stages. If you believe you need additional help with your writing, or if I ask you to set up a regular meeting with a tutor, you should make an appointment at least one week prior to when an assignment is due. You can also get online help by visiting their website at http://qcpages.qc.edu/qcwsw/.

Special Accommodations:

If you have a learning, sensory, physical, or other reason for needing any kind of special accommodation in this class, contact the Office of Special Services in 171 Kiely Hall at 718.997.5870, and please feel free to reach out to me for additional assistance.

Academic Integrity:

*From the Writing at Queens website, linked below:*

“Writing in college really means taking part in a conversation with other scholars, writers, and thinkers. Academic citation is how you demonstrate the relationship between your ideas and those of others. On the other hand, plagiarism is the failure to demonstrate that relationship: to your professors, this will look like stealing other people’s ideas.

You can gain the authority you need to enter these conversations by learning different ways to engage with sources. Authority is not something you already have, or that you find somewhere, or that you get by passing a class: when you write a college paper you create your own authority. Writer Mark Gaipa emphasizes this point when he argues that “[a]uthority . . . is less a characteristic than a relationship that a writer has with other authors” (419). Gaipa provides a number of suggestions for engaging with sources (see the comics version here). What he shows is that your authority as a writer comes in large part from the way that you can relate to other writers. The writing assignments you do in your classes will help you practice the different ways of relating to other writers, and this practice is the thing that your professors really want to see in your writing. –Mark Gaipa, “Breaking into the Conversation: How Students Can Acquire Authority for Their Writing,” *Pedagogy* 4.3 (2004): 419-437.”

Of course, all students in this class will be expected to develop their own writing authority while avoiding plagiarism: you always must cite (refer to) other authors when you are using their ideas, even when you’re not quoting them directly.
The full CUNY policy on academic integrity can be found here, and more information on how you can best contribute to scholarly conversations can be found on the Writing at Queens website, quoted above.

Writing Conferences:

Writing conferences will take place during the last half hour of scheduled class time, and attendance is required. During these workshops, we will focus on forming writing communities while improving specific aspects of writing. On the first day of class, students will be assigned to Group A or Group B, and you should attend conferences accordingly. If you need to switch your day, please notify me.

Course Calendar:

Please follow this calendar to know which readings you have to do for the day. Sometimes, there may be changes to this syllabus that will be listed under “Calendar” – where you find all your readings – and you should go with those changes. If you need or want captions/transcripts for uncaptioned videos, please notify me and I will provide a transcript, no problem!

Remember that, even though it doesn’t say it here, each student must complete their assigned blog posts on time! When you find out your blog schedule, I advise you to write it into your own syllabus so you remember!!

2/2 Introduction

2/4 “Fast Car”
Reading: Aronowitz, “End of the Road”
On youtube, watch:
- Tracy Chapman, “Fast Car” (lyrics here)
- SaintHannah93, “Amy//Eleven – Fast Car”
- Rihanna, “Shut Up and Drive” (lyrics here)
- superdario1000, “Wreck-It Ralph – Shut up and Drive”

2/9 NO CLASS (Queens College follows a Friday schedule)

2/11 Metal Boxes on Roads
Reading: Pratt, “Reading Maps: One”
Reading About Writing: “How to Blog With a Twist, Not a Shopping List”
Kramer, “Writing with Purpose”

2/16 Dis/abling Transportation
Reading: Walshe, “Environmental Racism: Bronx Activists Decry Fresh Direct’s Impact on Air Quality”
Hendricks, “Living in Car Culture without a License”
**Reading About Writing:** Williams, “Writing Can Take Many Forms”
**Due:** Pre-Draft, Assignment # 1

**2/18**  
**Taking Up Space (or Not)**  
**Reading**  
Mathias, “How Manspreading Arrests Highlight What’s ‘F**ked Up’ About Broken Windows Policing”  
Clifton, “Entitled Men Everywhere Just Can’t Stop Taking Up All the Space on Public Transportation.”  
**Reading About Writing:** Gaipa, “8 Strategies for Critically Engaging Secondary Sources”
**Blog Post:** Each student posts today: pick one of Gaipa’s strategies and use it to help you respond to today’s readings, even if it doesn’t reflect your actual beliefs. (Just remember to keep your posts respectful.)

**2/23**  
**Close Reading**  
**Reading About Writing:** Harvard, “How to Do a Close Reading”
**Due:** Rough Draft, Assignment # 1

**2/25**  
**Cars and Corsets**  
**Reading:** Tinkler, “Corsets, Cars, and Cigarettes”  
**Reading About Writing:** Harvey, “Elements of the Academic Essay”
**Due:** Revised Draft, Assignment # 1

**3/1**  
**Writing Race as Movement**  
**Reading:** Long, “Diagnosing Drama”  
On youtube, watch: ABC Television Network, “Maggie and Amelia Talk About Race – Grey’s Anatomy”
**Due:** Portfolio, Assignment # 1

**3/3**  
**Woman of Color Feminism: Mobile Words, Mobile Homelands**  
**Reading**  
Flores, “Creating Discursive Space Through a Rhetoric of Difference.”
Piercy, Woman on the Edge of Time (excerpt)

**3/8**  
**What Kind of Mobility is Assimilation?**  
**Reading:** Gans, “Acculturation, Assimilation and Mobility.”
Chomsky, “Assimilation is a Double-Edged Sword for Immigrants”
Yep, Dragonwings (excerpt)
**Due:** Pre-Draft, Assignment # 2

**3/10**  
**Identities Across Space and Time**  
**Reading:** Diaz, This is How You Lose Her (excerpt)
Duyvis, *Otherbound* (excerpt)

**Blog Post:** Each student posts today: Pick one of the readings and – citing personal experiences, previous class discussions, and/or online media – discuss how movement (physical or mental) relates to identity in the story/excerpt. Also write: What questions does your chosen reading raise for you as a scholar?

3/15 **Queer Youth and Race**

**Reading:** Sonnie, *Revolutionary Voices* (excerpt)

On youtube, watch: LesBi Trailers Channel, “The Incredibly True Adventures”

**Due:** Rough Draft, Assignment # 2

3/17 **Mobilizing Queerness**

**Reading:** On youtube, watch: phenix55, “Grey’s Anatomy”

Ted, “Lee Mokobe”

Yue, “Queer Asian Mobility”

**Due:** Revised Draft, Assignment # 2

3/22 **Illusions of Mobility**

**Reading:** Sudbury, “From the Point of No Return”

Sapphire, “American Dreams”

Examine this gifset

3/24 **Performances!**

**Due:** Portfolio, Assignment # 2

3/29 **LIBRARY VISIT**

**Blog Post:** Each student posts today: Print out each of your previous blog posts for this class and review them closely. What is your voice as an academic writer like? Do you like it? If not, how would you like your academic voice to be? How do you make your arguments (by quoting extensively, by using personal experience, links to other media, humor, etc.)? Which of Gaipa’s strategies do you tend to use when engaging with the course readings? Are there themes that you tend to write about/arguments you tend to make? What are these themes/arguments? What questions do you have about these themes? What assumptions do you tend to make?

3/31 **Researching Research**

**Reading About Writing:** Savage, “Learning to Use Information Resources Effectively”
4/5 **Health Movements**  
*Reading About Writing:* OWL Purdue, “MLA Overview and Workshop”  
**Due:** Pre-Draft, Assignment # 3

4/7 **Claiming Bodies, Claiming Health**  
**Due:** 3 Sources Due, Assignment # 3

4/12 **Peer Review**  
**Due:** 3 Sources Due, Assignment # 3

4/14 **Linguistic Juggling: Language as Power**  
*Reading:* Mellix, “From Outside, In.” Al-Din, “Racism, Pedagogy and the Renaming of the USA.”  
**Due:**

4/19 **Research, Research, Research**  
*Reading About Writing:* Writing Commons, “Formatting the Works Cited Page” Tougaw, “Integrating Sources” Tougaw, “Draft Workshop”  
**Due:** 3 More Source Due, Assignment # 3

4/21 **Mapping Dis/ability**  
*Reading:* Clare, “The Mountain” Harnet, “Escaping the ‘Evil Avenger’ and the ‘Supercrip’”  
**Due:**

4/26 – 4/28 **NO CLASS – SPRING BREAK**  
*Blog Post:* Each student posts this week: Before spring break, you will all have formed writing teams. During the break, you will read the 3
research posts of your writing teammates. You will comment on each post, addressing the questions given out in class and posted in the Calendar on the class blog.

5/3 Disney, Disney, Disney
Reading: Mattingly, “Becoming Buzz Lightyear”
Lawson, “Mental Illness in Disney Animated Films”
On youtube, watch Abby Wilson, “Belle (Little Town)”
Nicole Rey, “Kill the Beast”
“Gaston”
wq15, “Crazy old maurice”

Reading About Writing: “A Close Look at Close Reading”
Harvard, “Summarizing, Paraphrasing, and Quoting”
Harvard, “Nuts and Bolts”

5/5 In/visibility
Reading: Wilson, “Making Disability Visible”

Reading About Writing: Lamott, “Shitty First Drafts”
Dila, “Rethinking the Shitty First Draft”

Due: Research Questions and “Shitty First Draft”, Assignment # 3

5/10 Peer Review
Reading About Writing: Harvard, “Citation Formats”
Harvard, “Scholarly Journals”

Due: Rough Draft, Assignment # 3

5/12 Peer Review 2
Due: Revised Draft, Assignment # 3

5/17 Happy Last Day!
Due: Portfolio, Assignment # 3

Class Bibliography:


Díaz, Junot. *This is How you Lose Her*. Faber & Faber, 2012.


