**Writing and Critical Inquiry**

Fall 2016 Topic: Words and Images

ENWR 1510, section 61

Michael J. VanHoose New Cabell Hall 036

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**Office Hours**: TR 2-3 pm, W 5-6 pm in Gilmer 290: <http://www.virginia.edu/webmap/popPages/38-GilmerHall.html>

For additional office hours, make a booking at <https://mjvanhoose.youcanbook.me>.

**Overview of ENWR 1510**

This course is meant to help you develop your ability to write in academic contexts you’re likely to encounter in college. But as you may have already discovered, what one course requires of your writing may be quite different from what’s required in another. Writing in Biology is considerably different from writing in History, and so on. Such disciplinary differences mean there’s no single approach to writing that will satisfy all academic contexts, and you should expect that throughout your college career you’ll be asked to write in a variety of genres for a wide range of purposes.

What a course in college writing can offer, however, is an introduction to the habits of mind that characterize critical inquiry in the university. Academics in all fields *inquire* into established, evolving, or emerging knowledge by asking questions and investigating potential ways to address these questions. They conduct research, make observations, present findings—and writing is crucial to every step of this process, for writing offers not only a way to report the results of an inquiry but also a disciplined form of thinking that shapes the inquiry as it unfolds. In this course, regular practice in writing will help us pose questions, identify problems, respond to conversations, construct arguments, imagine alternatives, and explore ambiguity and complexity. By participating in these endeavors, you’ll have an opportunity to develop your capacity as a writer and deepen your understanding of the topic on which we’ll focus our inquiry.

**Course Topic: Words and Images**

With the increase and widespread availability of new technologies and media tools, more and more writing appears alongside visual means of representing experience, generating knowledge, and communicating ideas. This course will allow us to explore, as both readers and writers, what we expect from and hope to accomplish with writing that includes images. Why might we place images—photographs, for instance—in our texts? How do these images affect our words and vice versa? In what ways do images offer a “rhetoric” that complements or competes with the rhetoric of writing?

We’ll begin our course with essays that *don’t* include images as a point of comparison for those that do. Through these initial essays, we’ll examine some of the ways that writers use words to represent experiences, develop ideas, test concepts, and generate new knowledge. We’ll consider how essays reflect a process of writing that can help us examine what we know, ask questions about what we don’t yet know, explore contingent responses to those questions, and document and share that process with others who might collaborate with us or extend our work.

In the second unit of the course, we’ll turn to what happens when we add images to words (or words to images). How do we understand the relationship between these media? What do we expect as readers from writing that includes images? When we look at a text composed of words and images -- for example a page from a psychology or economics textbook, a web page, a friend’s Instagram account -- we realize that both components are visual but not in the same sense. In what ways do we treat images and writing differently—or similarly—when we encounter them as readers?

You’ll also have opportunities to write your own essay that includes images when, in our final unit, you’ll produce a digital essay that you’ll present to the class at the end of the term. This assignment will ask you to confront the same kinds of rhetorical decisions addressed by the writers we’ll read throughout the semester, and you’ll get to see how your peers have negotiated these decisions as well.

**Participating in a Seminar**

This course may differ in several respects from others you’ll take while you’re in college. First of all, this course is a seminar, which means it’s relatively small—a feature that enables me to give close attention to your writing, ask for your ideas in class, and meet with you individually during the term. Rather than listen to lectures, you’ll be asked to participate in class discussion almost every day, so it’s important that you’re prepared to contribute.

Another difference between this seminar and other courses you may be taking lies in the amount and quality of writing that is expected of you. You’ll be required to respond to writing assignments every week of the term, and it’s important that you not fall behind. On some occasions you’ll write 5 – 6 page essays that will call for considerable drafting and revision, but more often you’ll complete short assignments meant to help you think about the subject at hand in new ways or to assist you in producing writing that is lively, engaged, and self-aware. And you’ll get response from your peers as well as your teacher, and you’ll regularly be asked to discuss and analyze the writing of your classmates.

Finally, this seminar differs from most other courses in that student writing is regularly presented in class. By the end of the semester, every student will have had at least one piece of writing (and probably more) discussed in class. In other words, your writing for this course will address not only the teacher but also other members of the class, so you should see your writing as part of a public conversation. We’ll discuss each other’s work in small groups and as a class in order to gain a better understanding of how we can develop as writers.

**Texts and Online Materials**

UVA Collab:  The majority of reading and writing assignments will be facilitated through our course’s Collab site, which is titled “16F ENWR 1510-061” Here is the URL: <https://collab.itc.virginia.edu/portal/site/4a34b403-fa3a-4009-b0de-c482a1fb7c6a>; you can also access it by typing <http://bit.ly/2bcftXh>. You should become comfortable with the site as quickly as possible.

Daily Readings: You will find your readings, typically as PDFs and/or URLs, in the “Resources” section of our Collab page.

Syllabus revisions: This syllabus will be subject to revision, particularly early in the semester. I will notify you as soon as possible when changes occur. The most recent version of the syllabus will always be available on Collab.

File organization: Since much, if not all, of the work for this course will be in some digital format and shared online, you should develop the approach that works best for you in terms of saving and organizing your materials.  You may find UVA Box (with or without Collab) useful, since you can organize and access your files from any device.  For more information about getting started: <http://its.virginia.edu/box/>

**Writing Assignments**

Major assignments: You will be assigned to write three 5-6 page essays, one for each Project of the course. They should be in a regular 12-point font, with 12-inch margins and double spacing.

Forum Posts: In preparation for many days, you will be assigned to write informal forum posts, typically between 250 and 500 words. These should be posted **no later than 5:00pm on the day before class discussion on the relevant readings**.

**Classroom Computer Policy**

I will allow you to bring your readings and take notes on laptops or tablets, as long as they do not detract from class discussion. If I have reason to believe computers are interfering with the class’s ability to participate fully in discussions, I will have no choice but to prohibit them and require that you print out readings. Please be responsible.

In any event, I encourage you to try printing your readings and see how this affects your engagement with our texts. Irrespective of whether you print readings, I would like you to get in the habit of marking them up with underlining/highlights and marginal notes. If you are not printing your readings, you should try marking them up in Adobe Acrobat or Apple Preview.

**Texting in class is prohibited**. If I catch you using your phone during class, I will give you one warning, and in subsequent cases I will mark you down for one half of an absence.

**Evaluation**

In order to pass a writing project, you need to have completed all work for the project (proposals, drafts, peer reviews, response sheets, self-evaluations, etc.) at a passing level.  Once that basic criterion has been met, each project will be graded individually—and will count for one third of your final grade—when you submit a portfolio of your work at the end of each unit.

**Policies**

Attendance – A seminar of this size requires regular attendance at class meetings. Students are allowed up to one week of absences (two for a class that meets twice a week; three for a classes that meets three times a week) during the course of the semester for whatever reason. It’s best to save these absences for illness, family emergencies, religious observance, etc., and it’s good practice to inform your teacher by email when you’re going to miss class. An additional absence beyond the one-week maximum will generally result in your final grade being lowered by one full grade, and if your absences add up to two weeks of missed classes, your teacher will be unable to give you a passing grade. (Keep in mind that if you make a habit of arriving at class late, your teacher may count such tardiness as a missed class.)

Late Work – Assignments submitted late receive a one-grade penalty unless you’ve received permission from your teacher. Extensions to major assignments will only be granted in cases of family emergency, serious illness, or acute emotional distress.

Honor Code - Any student found cheating or plagiarizing will be given a failing grade for the course.  The instructor will consult an Honor advisor regarding the possibility of filing an official report to the Honor Committee.  For a detailed description of plagiarism, please see: [http://www.virginia.edu/honor/wpcontent/uploads/2012/09/PlagiarismSupplement2011.pdf](http://www.virginia.edu/honor/wp-content/uploads/2012/09/PlagiarismSupplement2011.pdf)   
  
Honor Code Plagiarism Policy – <http://www.virginia.edu/honor/>

**Support and Resources**

Writing Center – <http://www.engl.virginia.edu/undergraduate/writing/center>

You can make a one-on-one appointment at the Writing Center, where a tutor can help you with drafting, revision, argument structure, and other concerns. Several tutors are trained specifically for ESL. Though tutors can offer help at every stage of the writing process, they do not offer proofreading or editing services.

UVA Libraries Research - <http://www.library.virginia.edu/research/>

Subject Guides, Databases, Research tools and tips. Note: This will be especially helpful for project 2 (using databases to find photos) and project 3 (long paper and presentation: multiple sources).  
Start here to look for images and image citation help - <http://guides.lib.virginia.edu/images>  
Self-service scanning - <http://www.library.virginia.edu/services/scanning-self-service/>

Digital Scholar’s Lab – <http://www.library.virginia.edu/libraries/#scholars-lab>  
This is a good place to get access to scanners in Alderman Library. “The Scholars’ Lab caters to the digital research and scholarly analysis needs of faculty and advanced students in the humanities and social sciences.”

Digital Media Lab – <http://www.library.virginia.edu/libraries/#dml>

The place to go for quiet recording spaces/audio booths, USB microphones for computers, Flip and other digital video cameras and Macs loaded with Garage Band, i-photo, Photoshop, and i-movie for project one and two.

Disabilities Assistance – <http://www.virginia.edu/studenthealth/sdac/sdac.html>

All students with special needs requiring accommodations should present the appropriate paperwork from the Learning Needs and Evaluation Center (LNEC). It is the student’s responsibility to present this paperwork in a timely fashion and follow up with the instructor about the accommodations being offered. Accommodations for test-taking (e.g., extended time) should be arranged at least X days before an exam.  The LNEC is located in the Department of Student Health and can be contacted at 243-5180/5181.

**(Schedule of readings and assignments – see the next page)**

Fall 2016 - ENWR 1510: Words and Image

Schedule subject to change\*

**Project 1: Writing about Writing: Close Reading and Analysis of an Essay**

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| ***Wk.*** | *Date* | *Readings* | *Assignments* |
| **1** | 8/22 | Course introduction. In-class writing. Discuss course, syllabus, and Collab resources. | *In-class: write a paragraph introducing yourself and describing your prior writing experience.* |
|  | 8/24 | Atwan: “Notes on the Definition of an Essay”  Montaigne: “On Coaches”  Also read brief background materials on Montaigne. | **Forum Post 1:** How does Atwan’s argument complicate your understanding of the essay as a genre? How do you see Atwan’s ideas in relation to reading Montaigne’s essay? (~350-500 words) |
| **2** | 8/29 | Solnit: “Woolf’s Darkness—Embracing the Inexplicable”  Mark up Solnit’s essay (underline or highlight—whatever works for you) to identify passages you find striking, and take some notes in the margins. Bring your marked-up copy to class, or be prepared to email it to me. | **Forum Post 2**: What is Solnit’s argument? Summarize in your own words. What is your opinion of her argument, and why might others respond differently? (~250 words) |
|  | 8/31 | Wallace: “The *Negro Motorist Greenbook* and Black America’s Perpetual Search for a Home”  Brief reading on rhetorical devices TBD | **Short Assignment:** Whatis Wallace’s argument? Identify a technique, motif, or rhetorical strategy Wallace uses *more than once* to support her argument. Does this technique help to make the essay more persuasive, or not? (~500 words) |
| **3** | 9/5 | Read one or two short essays TBD |  |
|  | 9/7 | Discussion of progress and development of topics for Project 1 | **Forum Post 3:** Reflect on the essays you have read thus far. Have they enriched your understanding of what you can do in your own writing? As you develop your first essay topic, consider approaches you may wish to adopt from these works. Do you see mistakes or missteps in them that you hope to avoid? |
| **4** | 9/12 |  | **Peer Review**. Bringadraft of Essay 1. |
|  | 9/14 |  | **Peer Review** cont. |
| **5** | 9/19 |  | **Peer Review** cont. Bring revised, now complete (if somewhat unpolished) draft. |
|  | 9/21 | Choose two photo-essays from the Collab document “Photographic Essays Online Examples” to read/view. Be prepared to discuss in class. | **Project 1 First Draft Due Friday at 5pm.** |

**Project 2: Writing about Images and Words: Representing the Conversation of Writers/Scholars about Words and Images**

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| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| ***Wk.*** | *Date* | *Readings* | *Assignments* |
| **6** | 9/27 | Sontag: from *On Photography*.  Look also at photographs by [Stieglitz](http://www.moma.org/artists/5664), [Evans](http://xroads.virginia.edu/~ug97/fsa/gallery.html), [Arbus](http://www.artnet.com/artists/diane-arbus/) | **Forum Post 4:** How do you understand Sontag’s narrative of American photography? Trace a development she identifies, or choose a photograph (be sure to include a link if you choose this approach) to show an implication of her argument. (300+ words) |
|  | 9/29 | Mohr: “Beyond My Camera”  Berger: “Appearances,” excerpts from *Another Way of Telling* | **Forum Post 5**: Choose a photograph-text pairing from Mohr. Analyze the relationship between the image and the prose: how do they work in relation to each other? (~500 words) |
| **7** | 10/3 | NO CLASS – reading day |  |
|  | 10/5 | **MIDTERM CONFERENCES** – no class. Come prepared to your individual conference. |  |
| **8** | 10/11 | Read Mitchell “The Photographic Essay: Four Case Studies” | **Forum Post 6:** Jot down some passages in Mitchell that interest or confuse you, along with page numbers. Write brief freeform responses to them: ask questions, vent frustrations, etc. (No word limit) |
|  | 10/13 | McCloud: from *Understanding Comics*  “Posing Questions of Photographic Ethics” | **Unit 1 Portfolio due 5pm on Sunday, 10/16** |
| **9** | 10/18 |  | **Peer Review/developing topics for Essay 2**. |
|  | 10/20 |  | **Peer Review**. |
| **10** | 10/25 |  | **Peer Review. Have a complete draft ready by Monday, 10/24.** |
|  | 10/27 | Sullivan: “Why I Blog” Discuss hypertext. | **Essay 2 draft due Sunday, 10/30 at 5pm** |

**Project 3: Composing Words and Images together: taking a position on the relation of words and images by making a digital essay**

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| *Wk.* | *Date* | *Readings* | *Assignments* |
| 11 | 11/1 | Kress: “Reading Images” |  |
|  | 11/3 | Manovich, “Notes on Instagrammism” | **Forum Post 8**. |
| 12 | 11/8 | Sullivan, “Why I Blog” |  |
|  | 11/10 | Self, [“Kafka’s Wound”](http://thespace.lrb.co.uk)  Kafka, [“A Country Doctor”](http://thespace.lrb.co.uk/article/a-country-doctor-by-franz-kafka-translated-by-michael-hofmann/) | **Forum Post 9.** |
| 13 | 11/15 | **Library Visit in Alderman 421**  Cole, [“A Too Perfect Picture”](http://www.nytimes.com/2016/04/03/magazine/a-too-perfect-picture.html?rref=collection%2Fcolumn%2Fon-photography&action=click&contentCollection=magazine&region=stream&module=stream_unit&version=latest&contentPlacement=6&pgtype=collection&_r=1) | Send me a list/brainstorm of potential Essay 3 topics by Monday, 11/14 at 8pm. It doesn’t need to be definitive at this stage, but it should inform your thinking going into our Library research session. |
|  | 11/17 | McLuhan, from *Understanding Media*.  Discuss Cole also. | **Unit 2 Portfolio due Sunday, 11/20 at 5pm** |
| 14 | 11/22 | Wrap up discussion for Unit 3 readings | Develop topics for Essay 3 |
|  | 11/24 | **NO CLASS – Thanksgiving Recess** |  |
| 15 | 11/29 |  | **Peer Review** |
|  | 12/1 |  | **Project 3 Presentations** |
| 16 | 12/5 | **Last class** | **Project 3 Presentations** |
|  | 12/6 |  | **Project three due for grade Friday 12/9** |
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