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WRPG 101 Fall 2019 M, R 1:30-2:45  
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### **U.S. Culture and Academic Writing for International Students: The Multilingual United States**

Language, including written language, mediates much of our cultural and social lives. While we may often look at language as merely a neutral conduit for transmitting ideas from one mind to another (which, importantly, it does do), language serves other, more nuanced roles in society, such as working as a gatekeeper to academic and professional success, and signaling important racial, ethnic, and class identities, among others. In this course we will examine the phenomenon of language and language diversity in the context of the United States as a multilingual country. The history of linguistic diversity in the United States can be characterized as a history of tension and contradiction, reflecting both the assimilation of the linguistic heritages of Native Americans, immigrants, and people with disabilities, and the resistance to this assimilation.

**Course Description:** This course will introduce you to aspects of United States culture while also teaching the forms, conventions, and expectations of U.S. academic writing. Because the course fulfills the U.S. Diversity graduation requirement, it focuses on important conversations on race, ethnicity, nationality, disability, and language. Through course readings, class discussions, and assigned writing, you will examine some of the diverse identities within the U.S. and develop a critical understanding of the issues of power and privilege that shape the interaction between dominant and subordinate groups.

You will also learn about U.S. academic writing: writing analytically, crafting thesis statements, supporting claims with evidence, organizing an argument, finding sources that answer your questions, understanding (and avoiding) plagiarism, and understanding writing as a process. Although our main focus will not be the accurate production of grammar or writing mechanics, you will learn how to edit academic writing to produce written products that are more error-free.

**Learning Outcomes:** This course fulfills the US Diversity graduation requirement. When you successfully complete this course, you will be able to:

- explain ways in which the United States is complex and diverse;
- analyze how issues of position, power, privilege, and language affect diverse groups in the U.S.;
- explain how multiple identities, including multiple linguistic identities, shape how one sees the world and engages with it;
- meaningfully convey one's own experiences in the United States and elsewhere navigating diverse linguistic and cultural landscapes;
- engage productively in small group and large group discussion with classmates who have different perspectives;

- develop strategies for close and careful readings of texts that provide deeper understanding of authors who bring differing sets of cultural and literary assumptions to writing;
- employ a functional, recursive writing process when composing assignments;
- formulate a thesis-driven argument with supporting evidence;
- place sources into conversation with each other;
- summarize, paraphrase, and quote sources so as to avoid plagiarism;
- produce writing that is, for the most part, grammatically and mechanically correct;
- make use of “writing as a tool of thought” (Rosenwasser & Stephen, 2015) to arrive at a deeper, more informed understanding of a complex social issue.

### **Required materials**

Lai, T. (2011) *Inside Out and Back Again*. Harper

Spiral bound one-subject notebook (\$1.69 at the College Bookstore)

Select Readings on Moodle, including

Selections from *Tongue Tied: The Lives of Multilingual Children in Public Education*. O. Santa Ana (ed.). Rowman & Littlefield, 2004.

Selections from *Writing Analytically*, by David Rosenwasser and Jill Stephen

Shin, H. and Komisky, R. (2010) “Language Use in the United States”. American Community Survey Reports (ACS-12).

T. McCarty, M. Romero, & O. Zepeda. “Reclaiming the gift: Indigenous youth counter-narratives on Native language loss and revitalization.” *American Indian Quarterly* 30, 2006

Other materials as provided

## Course Requirements

### **Graded Writing: 50% total**

**Assignment 1: 5%**

**Assignment 2: 10%**

**Assignment 3: 15%**

**Assignment 4: 20%;**

You will complete five papers in this course:

Assignment 1: Language Memoir

Assignment 2: Close Reading

Assignment 3: Position paper/argument

Assignment 4: Analysis of complex issue

For each paper, you will engage in a writing process that generally requires prewriting, drafting, giving and receiving feedback, revising, and editing. You will likely come to see that this process is recursive, not linear.

For each paper, you will write a thoughtful first version and then revise after receiving peer review and instructor feedback. All papers (and all drafts unless otherwise noted) must be shared in a printed, hard (paper) copy. Final drafts must be submitted with a cover page (available for each assignment on Moodle). Citations and references must conform to APA 6<sup>th</sup> edition guidelines. Please make use of the APA citing guide on the Dickinson library website: <http://libguides.dickinson.edu/citing/apa>

Specific details about each assignment will be discussed in class and distributed on moodle. Assignments will generally be evaluated on the basis of demonstrated achievement as determined on a rubric that addresses the purpose of the writing, the rhetorical effect, use of a writing process, and grammatical and mechanic accuracy.

All assignments are due on the assigned due date; late assignments will be penalized 10% of the total assignment grade for each day that it is late. If a medical or personal crisis makes it difficult for you to complete an assignment, let me know so that we make an alternate plan.

### **Attendance and Engagement: 20% total**

**Attendance and participation 15%**

**Courageous Contribution 5%**

#### *Attendance policy:*

You are granted three absences (excused and unexcused) over the course of the semester for sickness, personal emergencies, religious observation, or other college approved reasons. If you incur more than three absences, you will lose at minimum 5% of the course grade for each additional absence. Students with more than six unexcused absences will be unable to successfully complete the course. Absences in excess of the three allotted will have a negative impact on your ability to meet other course requirements (such as class participation, peer reviews, and journal sharing). If there are medical or personal issues that prevent your regular and consistent attendance in the class, please communicate with me as soon as possible.

Attendance is taken at the beginning of each class. If a student comes to class late, she or he is responsible for informing the instructor, in order to update the attendance.

### *Class Participation:*

Robust classroom participation is an expected part of most US college classes. Students in this class may come with varying degrees of familiarity and comfort with this kind of engagement. An important part of the learning in this course is to support not only students' college-level writing, but also to develop academic discourse skills, such as academic discussions and active class participation.

What does active participation look like for this course?

- You are present and engaged in every class – both physically and intellectually. A part of this involves taking care of your needs before you come to class. Given that we share only 75 minutes for each class meeting, making a habit of getting up and leaving for a few moments to make a phone call or use the restroom, is generally considered inappropriate.
- You put in consistent effort to listen to and understand the viewpoints of others in the class, both peers and the instructor.
- You ask questions to the instructor and to peers if you don't understand them. This may be during class in some cases, or after class (office hours, email) in other cases.
- Unless there is clearly defined reason (looking at a reading, looking up a word), please do not use electronic devices during class. Devices present a distraction to yourself and others, and they often prevent us from putting in the sustained effort and engagement that is necessary for learning.
- You engage in peer review with an eagerness and a willingness to help others improve their drafts. **You always have a complete rough draft, and you carefully read the drafts of your peers for peer review.**
- You work collaboratively with people when in small groups and peer review groups. Collaboration means recognizing your own strengths (and sharing those strengths) while also acknowledging that your partners will bring differing and complementary strengths to be recognized and shared.

If it appears that a student is not actively participating in the class, the instructor will request to meet with the student to better understand the nature and quality of the student's engagement, and identify, as needed, areas that the student can improve. Students who make progress toward deeper engagement and participation can be receive full credit for this criterion.

### *Courageous Contribution:*

Given the nature of the course material, in which you are being asked to engage in deep and ongoing reflection about difficult issues such as race, ethnicity, language, and discrimination, it is important that everyone in the class shares perspectives honestly and openly, even if expressing these perspectives is difficult or the perspectives are contrary to what other students or the instructor has expressed. These "courageous contributions" to our class conversation may occur inside or outside class (for example, sharing something courageously during office hours, by email, or in an assignment). Students should strive for at least one "courageous contribution" during the course, although it is my expectation that such contributions will be common.

### **Course journal: 15% total**

Because writers benefit from frequent writing, students will complete a weekly journal based on a set of prompts to choose from. These prompts may direct you to observe and write about how you are developing your writing process, your language learning goals, or your reactions to course content. The journal will also include in-class “entrance tickets” – short warm-up writing assignments that we will regularly complete at the beginning of class.

The journal is a space for you to write about things you are thinking, feeling, and experiencing without the pressure of an assigned grade on the quality of the writing. Students will be responsible for writing weekly and throughout the course, will be asked to share from their journal what they have been writing about. Students will be selected at least one time throughout the semester to share what they have been writing; students who are unprepared to share will lose 5% from the journal.

The journal will be collected and evaluated on a complete/not-complete basis at least twice over the semester. For each entry, please include the date you complete it and the prompt number that you are writing on.

### **Revision Clinic: 10%**

Students are required to revise and resubmit at least one paper (assignments 1-3) before the end of the semester. Students will meet with the instructor or Writing Associate for a “Revision Clinic” meeting, in which we will review feedback from the previous draft and identify key areas for revision. In addition to the “Revision Clinic” grade, which is based on the quality and depth of the revision, the assignment will also be re-graded on the basis of the revision. By permission of the instructor, students may revise and resubmit more than one paper for re-grading.

### **Self-Assessment of Learning: 5%**

At the beginning of the course, students will be asked to identify their own learning goals and objectives for the course. Students will periodically review these goals and self-assess their progress toward achieving these goals. At the conclusion of the course, students will provide an assessment of how well they have achieved their own goals, as well as the overall course goals, through a short open-ended form (provided by the instructor). Students will also be asked to identify how they will continue developing as a writer, beyond this class, during their time at Dickinson.

### **Grading Scale:**

A	93.5	C	73.5
A-	90	C-	70
B+	86.5	D+	66.5
B	83.5	D	63.5
B-	80	D-	60
C+	76.5	F	59 and below

**Plagiarism:** Plagiarism is a form of academic misconduct at Dickinson. As it states on the Academic Misconduct webpage, “Plagiarism may take a number of forms but to plagiarize is to use without proper citation or acknowledgment the words, ideas, or work of another.” In addition, **the use of online translators to complete assignments, quizzes or exams in a language course is also considered academic misconduct.**

This class is a safe place to learn how not to plagiarize. We will practice skills of summarizing, paraphrasing, and documenting sources through academic citation. If you are confused about the complex (and in some cases, culturally-specific) rules on citation, documenting sources, and academic honesty, please ask. Enrollment at Dickinson represents a commitment to abide by the College’s principles of academic integrity. Please read Dickinson's plagiarism and academic integrity policy, available at:

[http://www.dickinson.edu/info/20273/dean\\_of\\_students/867/community\\_standards/2](http://www.dickinson.edu/info/20273/dean_of_students/867/community_standards/2)

### **Where You Can Go for Support**

**My Office Hours:** I believe a lot of learning, especially learning about writing, takes place during one-on-one conferences, so I gladly welcome students who come during office hours to discuss assignments, course readings, or other topics. Feel free to make use of my office hours, which are Mondays from 9-12. My office is in the Writing Program Admin Offices (around the corner from the Writing Center) in Waidner-Spahr Library. You may also email me to ask to make an appointment with me at a different time and I will try to accommodate you. Please note that I will generally respond to email within 12-24 hours. I generally do not check email after 5:00pm during the week or during weekends.

**Writing Associate:** The Writing Associate for this course is Nhi Ly, who is also an English writing tutor in the Eberly Multilingual Writing Center. Nhi will support you as you develop your writing through the various assignments in the course. She will facilitate peer review, offer feedback to you on drafts, and attend several classes to assist with writing instruction. Nhi will report to me about your progress and let me know if you attended peer review sessions with her, if you brought a complete rough draft, and if you participated in the sessions you attended. Her role in the course is to support you as you develop the good habits of effective writers, which will then serve as a strong foundation for your entire academic experience.

**The Norman M. Eberly Multilingual Writing Center (MWC):** The MWC consists of both English and foreign language writing tutoring services. **The English writing tutors work with native and nonnative speakers of English**, and the foreign language writing tutors work with writers of Arabic, Chinese, French, German, Hebrew, Italian, Japanese, Portuguese, Russian, and Spanish. The MWC is located on the main floor (quiet side) of Waidner-Spahr Library.

Writers of all levels and abilities benefit from feedback in order to develop their ideas and grow as writers. Dickinson’s trained writing tutors can help you generate ideas, begin drafting, revise a rough draft, understand documentation styles, understand and respond to professor feedback, edit your writing – among other things. For more information on scheduling an appointment online, go to:

[http://www.dickinson.edu/info/20158/writing\\_program/677/appointments](http://www.dickinson.edu/info/20158/writing_program/677/appointments)

Students in WRPG 101 are *strongly encouraged* to work with MWC tutors on course assignments to make the most of their growth as a writer during this course. Generally speaking, students may be limited in the number of appointments they make at MWC if they exceed 20 scheduled appointments in one semester (not including appointments scheduled with their WA).

**Reference Librarians:** The library employs several reference librarians, trained professionals who help library users find information. Library staff can help you find information (books, articles and more), choose the most relevant databases, improve your research strategy, critically evaluate information, and cite sources properly. The reference librarian on duty has a little red flag hanging from the top of the door to indicate his or her availability to work with students.

**Accommodating Students with Disabilities:** Accommodating Students with Disabilities  
Dickinson values diverse types of learners and is committed to ensuring that each student is afforded equitable access to participate in all learning experiences. If you have (or think you may have) a learning difference or a disability – including a mental health, medical, or physical impairment – that would hinder your access to learning or demonstrating knowledge in this class, please contact Access and Disability Services (ADS). They will confidentially explain the accommodation request process and the type of documentation that Dean and Director Marni Jones will need to determine your eligibility for reasonable accommodations. To learn more about available supports, go to [www.dickinson.edu/access](http://www.dickinson.edu/access), email [access@dickinson.edu](mailto:access@dickinson.edu), call (717)245-1734, or go to ADS in Old West (lower level), Room 005.

If you've already been granted accommodations at Dickinson, please let me know as soon as possible so that we can meet to review your Accommodation Letter and complete your Blue Forms.