

February 15, 2010

Dear Students Choosing a Section of WRIT 1133, 1633, and 1733,

On behalf of my colleagues in the University Writing Program, I'm providing information about our spring 2010 courses. Below, you'll find descriptions of individual sections. These have been on our website [<http://www.du.edu/writing/first-year.htm>], but I wanted to give them extra attention.

The WRIT xx33 courses at DU are not like most research-based courses that you've had previously or that exist in other universities. We know that almost all DU students have done researched writing before they take this course, either in high school, here at DU, or both. We also know from surveys that students' previous experiences have consisted primarily of summarizing, analyzing, and synthesizing readings: in other words, library or internet-based research. The xx33 courses will carry those skills further.

However, our courses will additionally focus on qualitative/observational research and quantitative/empirical research. They will explore how different types of writing matter for different disciplines. In fancy terms, we focus on the relationship between epistemology and rhetoric. Translated into layperson's language, that means understanding different ways of knowing and writing that are valued across campus and in the public realm. What counts as evidence, proof, and "a good style" in biology, for example, differs from what counts as evidence, proof, and a "good style" in art history. Furthermore, academic writers in any discipline communicate differently to one other than to readers in the general public.

Through guidance and practice, even strong writers extend their repertoires throughout their college years and beyond, as increasingly complex tasks demand ever more of them.

My colleagues and I look forward to teaching you. The WRIT xx33 courses inevitably produce fascinating writing on a wide array of topics. We look forward to reading it. Moreover, we enjoy teaching powerful new concepts and helping you grow as a scholar and writer.

Sincerely,



Professor and Director of Writing



*Descriptions follow on the next page*

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For updated descriptions or more information, see <http://www.du.edu/writing/first-year.htm>

# WRIT 1133 Course Descriptions

(Listed alphabetically by professor)

General Description: [All sections follow the same general goals and emphases, so if a certain professor isn't listed below, you can be certain that this general description applies to his or her course.] WRIT 1133 builds on WRIT 1122 by shifting attention from general rhetorical strategies to specific rhetorical strategies that shape different kinds of academic inquiry. The course introduces students to quantitative, qualitative, and textual research traditions. The goal? You will understand how writing varies in terms of the questions that writers pose, the kinds of evidence they use to answer those questions, and the nature of the academic or popular audience they address. The course teaches you how to shape research into substantive academic arguments, with attention to the ethical consequences of rhetorical choices. Students will complete at least 20 pages of revised and polished writing, in multiple assignments, as well as additional exercises.

## **Geoffrey Bateman**

Sections 9 & 26:

In this section of WRIT 1133, you will sharpen your research and writing skills by immersing yourself in Denver's cultural history, especially the rhetorical histories of race, gender, and sexuality that often have been overlooked by traditional accounts of the American West. Along the way, you'll conduct your own digital archival research, learn about Denver's local publics, and explore the cultural geography of a part of our city that interests you. You'll perfect your ability to analyze artifacts, work with scholarly sources, and frame your research for both academic and community audiences.

## **Kelsey Bennett**

Sections 4 & 14

Writing and Research: Discourses of the Visual Arts

The focus of this particular course centers around the examination and textual interpretation of visual images, the institutions that house them, and the ways we understand and write about the social/cultural functions of art and the artist. Our investigations into this topic will emphasize research methods in the disciplines of Humanities and Social Sciences. This includes engaging in library research, fieldwork projects, and drawing variously from interpretive (including image-based and text-based) and qualitative (surveys, interviews, and/or questionnaires) research techniques. Expect to spend a lot of time working vigorously in class and out of class on your own writing as well as giving and receiving constructive feedback from your classmates.

## **Jennifer Campbell**

Sections 19, 25, and 33

Work and Play: Research in the Real World

This section of WRIT 1133 will examine how people generate and communicate knowledge in personal, academic, professional, and civic contexts through readings and research projects ranging from annotated bibliographies to multimedia presentations. With an organizing theme of leisure and labor, students will hone their skills in working with published sources as they study how researchers across the disciplines investigate our occupations and preoccupations. Students will also conduct original research using surveys, observation and interviews, and textual analysis to learn more about topics that interest them and how to communicate their findings to different audiences in rhetorically effective ways.

**Kelli Custer**

Sections 29, 40, and 61

"Making the Strange Familiar and the Familiar Strange"

Using the premises of ethnographic research and writing, you will examine one subculture of your choosing - either one of which you are a part or one about which you know little. The ethnographic focus will both train you in a specific form of writing as well as a habit of mind when thinking about research. You will work with one project throughout the quarter, but you will approach it in separately graded steps, leading to a newly graded final project that carefully incorporates aspects of qualitative, quantitative, and textual research. This approach of working on one project will allow you to gain experience in researching and supporting a sustained research question through guided steps, thus increasing your confidence and fluency in writing and researching longer academic projects.

**Richard Colby**

Sections 34, 48, and 58

This section of WRIT 1133 is devoted to the MMORPG World of Warcraft. While immersing yourself in the game, you will conduct qualitative, quantitative, and text-based research on the World of Warcraft community and gameplay in order to craft documents that will effectively meet the rhetorical needs for that community. This will be an academically rigorous writing course that will involve learning through play, analysis, and research of the game. You will be expected to play/subscribe to the game during this course, so you need to have access to a laptop that can run the game for in-class work.

**David Daniels**

Sections 21, 41, 49, 62

Students in this section of WRIT1133 will read George Ritzer's The McDonaldization of Society and borrow his critical framework to conduct research on topics relevant to consumer culture and mass production. Students will engage in three academic research traditions (interpretive, qualitative, and quantitative) and will also analyze and produce non-academic documents.

**Jon Fowler**

Sections 7, 22, 50

We will explore the distinct intellectual traditions in the university by reasoning and writing about texts, objects, and people. We'll focus on the underpinnings of research more than on conducting primary research within any particular discipline.

**Jeff Ludwig**

Section 44

Researching the Community of DU.

In this section of WRIT 1133 we focus on using various approaches of research—both primary and secondary—to “write” the academic and social community of DU. What characterizes the academic community of the University of Denver? What is DU’s history as an academic institution? What current social subcultures exist at DU, and how do these contribute to attitudes about learning? What attitudes about learning are held by current students, faculty, or administrators? We’ll pursue these questions as academics, using different research methods alongside process-based writing to explore the

relationship between the social and educational environment at our university. While the research we'll conduct will drive our inquiry and writing, you'll also get a significant amount of hands-on practice in gathering, synthesizing, and analyzing research in a variety of *academic* rhetorical situations. This will provide you with argumentative and rhetorical strategies for use in your writing throughout your academic experience at DU.

**Alba Newmann Holmes**

Sections 10, 37, 51

In this course, students will have the opportunity to propose and conduct their own research projects—drawing upon a variety of sources: from texts, to interviews, to your own observations in the field. Together we will consider different "ways of knowing" encouraged within the humanities, the social sciences, and the natural sciences and how our own research and writing can participate in or respond to these.

**Kamila Kinyon**

Sections 1, 24

This course will introduce you to qualitative, interpretive, and quantitative research. We will draw on methods used, for example, by anthropologists, sociologists, and journalists. In constructing papers for both academic and popular audiences, you will conduct research not only through studying texts, but also through direct observation, interviews, and/or collection and analysis of numerical data.

**Jennifer Novak**

Sections 11, 23, 38

Should scientists make arguments about religion? Should religious authorities comment on science? In this class, we will investigate how scientists, priests, physicians, and professors respond to questions surrounding science and religion to see how different groups define, understand, and research scientific and religious truths in very different ways in order to reach very different conclusions. Readings include: Karen Armstrong's *The Case for God*, Richard Dawkin's *The God Delusion*, and Andrew Newberg and Mark Waldman's *How God Changes Your Brain*. In the second half of this class, you will design and execute your own qualitative research study of your choosing, and then repurpose this project for a popular audience.

**John Tiedemann**

Sections 6, 17, 31

VERUM FACTUM: Writing, Rhetoric, and the Invention of Knowledge  
in, across, and out of the Academy

The theorist of rhetoric Giambattista Vico is known for, among other things, having coined the phrase "Verum esse ipsum factum," which may be translated in two paradoxical ways: "Truth itself is fact" and "Truth itself is made." This paradox — that what we call truth is at one and the same time given, like facts, and created, like fictions — lies at the heart of the rhetorical practice of invention, i.e., the process of discovering and/or creating new ideas. In this class, we'll practice strategies of invention across a range of academic disciplines and in both academic and public spheres. How do humanists invent original arguments about verbal and visual artifacts? How do social scientists invent original arguments about human cultural practices? How do public intellectuals use what they have learned in an academic setting to invent original arguments for use in a public one? The writing that you do in this class will be

largely self-directed: I'll provide you with the tools, rules, and raw materials with which to invent, but the invention itself – the discovery and creation of new ideas – will be up to you.

## WRIT 1633 Course Descriptions

**Note:** WRIT 1633 is a writing course for advanced first-year students, emphasizing rhetorical strategies for different academic and civic audiences and purposes. The course has a significant research component, emphasizing the same research traditions as 1133. Course sections focus on a coherent set of texts, usually on an issue or theme. The Writing Program provides information on individual sections each quarter. (See below.) Prerequisite: WRIT 1122 or 1622, plus one of the following: admission to the Honors Program; score of three or better on AP Language and Composition or Language and Literature exam, or four on the IB English or specific permission of the director of writing.

(Listed alphabetically by professor)

### Geoffrey Bateman

#### Section 3

#### The Gender of Homelessness

This section of WRIT 1633 will focus on the gender of homelessness and include a service-learning component. In partnership with The Gathering Place (TGP), students will gain first hand experience working with women and children who are homeless or living in poverty. Students will read a range of texts that address the issues of poverty and gender and about the ethics of community engagement to build a framework for their work at TGP. As a part of their service, students will collaborate with women at TGP who cannot read or write to create an oral history narrative about these women's lives for a book project that staff and clients are currently working on. Later in the quarter, students will also volunteer at Project Homeless Connect and reflect on their experience as a way to gain a clearer understanding of the barriers that people who are homeless face. Students will also write essays that analyze the contemporary rhetoric of homelessness and a literature review of social science research related to gender and homelessness.

### Kamila Kinyon

#### Section 1

Through the topic of memory, this course will introduce you to qualitative, interpretive, and quantitative research. We will discuss how memory may be encoded in material objects, texts, films, archives, or institutions such as museums. We will also discuss ways in which traditions are reinvented and reconstructed. You will research memory through a variety of methods used, for example, by anthropologists, sociologists, and journalists.

### Jeff Ludwig

#### Sections 2, 5

#### Multimodal | Writing the Community of DU.

What characterizes the academic community of the University of Denver? What is DU's history as an academic institution? What current social subcultures exist at DU, and how do these contribute to attitudes about learning? What attitudes about learning are held by current students, faculty, or administrators? We'll pursue these questions as academics, different research methods to explore the relationship between the social and educational environment at our university. But we'll also compose these topics as members of this community, using multiple mediums of presentation to translate our research to audiences inside and outside of DU (including websites, blogs, audio and video essays, ad

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For updated descriptions or more information, see <http://www.du.edu/writing/first-year.htm>

campaigns, etc.). This combined research/multimodal compositional approach will provide you with argumentative and rhetorical strategies for use in your writing and composing throughout your academic experience at DU.

## WRIT 1733 Course Descriptions

1733 Courses are open only to Honors Students. Please see <http://www.du.edu/writing/documents/LetterAboutHonorsWriting8-08.pdf>

(Listed alphabetically by professor)

### Rodney Herring

#### Literacy in the Twenty-First Century

Only 50 years ago, a crisis of literacy centered around the question of “why Johnny can’t read.” Over the next half century, literacy faced something more like an identity crisis. By the 1980s, scholars were debating the value of cultural literacy, and in the twenty-first century, we’re torn between thinking of literacy as a single form of access to technology—digital literacies or “electracy” (Ulmer)—or as multimodal access—a “plurality of literacy” (UNESCO) or “multiliteracies” (Selber). But what is at stake in how we conceive of literacy—and in what we call it? This course will introduce students to scholarly conversations about literacy, about its definition and its value, about its role and its achievement in twenty-first-century education. Students will write rhetorical analyses in Units I and II and will perform qualitative research in Unit III to discern what counts as “literate” in different disciplines (their own if they’ve chosen a major) In Unit IV, students will consider literacy’s contribution to the civic good and, as introductions to their portfolios, write reflective essays linking rhetoric (as learned in this class) to their level(s) of literacy (both from prior experience and as developed in their college education) to citizenship (at present and as they see themselves in the future).

### Blake Sanz

Traditional sections of WRIT 1133 examine various means by which research is conducted in the University: how does an ecologist’s way of examining the effects of global warming differ from a psychologist’s way of investigating the success of a new method of counseling? How do these differ from methods of research used by an archeologist studying the culture of Borneo? In other words, WRIT 1133, generally speaking, is a class that introduces you to ways of knowing things and communicating what you discover.

In this particular section of WRIT 1733, we will narrow our focus to various ways that creative artists (musicians, novelists, visual artists, etc) conduct research at a University. Are these methods at all similar to that of the biologist, or the psychologist, or the archeologist? Should they be? What do we expect from these “researchers” and how do those expectations compare to what we expect of research in other fields? What methods overlap, what methods are distinct? In general, what does it mean to “conduct research” as a creative artist working at a university? These are some of the questions we will explore.