

HAUNTED AMERICA
College Writing: LIT 100-001-2008F
M/Th 8:30–9:45 BAT 148

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OFFICE HOURS
Monday 6-8 p.m.
(or by appointment)
BAT T-1, cube B1

As college students, it is now your privilege and obligation to begin to take part in discussions within the academic community. Your primary vehicle for entering these conversations will be your writing. In this course, you will improve your academic writing skills by practicing critical reading, analytical thinking, provocative questioning, effective researching, and professionalism. These skills are transferable to the wide variety of writing tasks you will complete in college, graduate school, and the outside world.

The theme that will frame our coursework this semester is **Haunted America**. Through our reading, writing, and class discussions, we will explore the haunted condition, how it is variously expressed in American culture, and why it may be especially prevalent in today's postmodern society.

✧ **Course Goals**

By the end of the semester, you should be able to

- exhibit clear, analytical thinking through your writing
- understand that writing is a process, a series of choices, and not simply a product
- attend to the role of the audience in your writing
- support your ideas with persuasive research
- demonstrate strong mechanical skills (spelling, grammar, and punctuation)

✧ **Course Texts**

- Graff, Gerald and Cathy Birkenstein. They Say, I Say: The Moves That Matter in Academic Writing.
- Zinsser, William. On Writing Well: The Classic Guide to Writing Non-Fiction.
- Rosen, Leonard J. The Academic Writer's Handbook.
- Urrea, Luis. The Devil's Highway.
- Wilde, Oscar. The Picture of Dorian Gray.

I will post additional readings on Blackboard.

✧ **Course Materials**

- One notebook (preferably recycled) with perforated pages for in-class writing and quizzes
- Laptop (optional): You may use a laptop for in-class writing, but I strongly suggest you handwrite all in-class assignments. You must write your final exam by hand, and you will be glad at that time if you've become accustomed to working without cut/paste capabilities.

Green Teaching Certification

This is a green-certified course. I encourage you to take the following measures to help make our class as green as possible:

- Minimize paper use by submitting major papers electronically (required)
- Use recycled paper for in-class writing
- Read e-reserve readings online rather than printing copies
- Recycle all used paper

❖ Requirements

ATTENDANCE: You cannot succeed in College Writing without regular, punctual attendance. *More than three unexcused absences may be grounds for failing the class.* An excused absence may be illness, an accident, religious observance, or competition in a University sporting event. You must notify me in writing in advance, when possible, of such absences and must provide a doctor's note for medical excuses.

Note 1: Frequent lateness will result in a significant reduction to your participation grade.

Note 2: Being absent or unprepared on workshop days will result in a 10% deduction from your paper grade.

READING ASSIGNMENTS: You are expected to keep current with reading assignments listed on the syllabus as well as any additional readings announced by me. You will be held responsible for the content of all reading assignments, even if we do not cover all readings during class discussions.

WRITING PROJECTS: You will complete four major essays, a number of short writing assignments, and a final exam. You must submit all major writing assignments to pass the class.

Major Papers: I will post to Blackboard specific instructions for each of these essays. See the "Essay Guidelines" section of this syllabus for more information.

Short Writing Assignments: These may take the form of short essays or in-class writing exercises and will be given either a letter grade or a check-scale grade (✓+, ✓, or ✓-).

Final Exam: This essay exam will be an opportunity to demonstrate what you have learned about writing in this course. We will complete one timed writing exercise toward the end of the semester to give you practice writing under exam conditions.

PRESENTATIONS: There will be two oral presentation assignments in this course. The first will be an exercise in which you will work in small groups to lead class discussion of a reading. The second will be a presentation of your research paper. See the "Presentation Guidelines" section of this syllabus for more information.

PARTICIPATION: Active participation in all class discussions, workshops, and other activities is required. Being a good participant means being prepared for class, making thoughtful comments during discussions, and showing respect and open-mindedness in regard to your peers' comments.

CONFERENCES: You are required to meet with me twice during the semester, once to discuss your Self-Portrait Narrative and once to discuss your research project. We will schedule conference appointments closer to each due date. You must submit a draft to me via Blackboard no later than 8:00 p.m. the evening before your conference.

Conference One: Sept. 2—Sept. 11

Conference Two: Nov. 3—Nov. 13

❖ Paper Guidelines

FORMAT: Papers must be typed, double-spaced, with one-inch margins on all sides. Use Times New Roman 12 pt. font. Do NOT add a cover page. In the upper left corner of the first page, list your name,

course number, instructor's name, and date. In the far right of the heading area on each page (including the first page), place your last name and page number. See The Academic Writer's Handbook pp. 42-49 for a sample.

SUBMISSION: Papers must be submitted via Blackboard by 8:00 p.m. on the due dates listed on this syllabus. Computer failures, Blackboard malfunctions, and other acts of God are NOT valid excuses for not submitting on time. Back up your work and submit early to avoid technical difficulties.

LATE PAPERS: I will accept late papers, but these will be marked down three percentage points for each calendar day late. Papers submitted more than a week late will automatically receive a failing grade.

EXTENSIONS: I will grant extensions under very limited circumstances. You must see me well in advance of the due date for an assignment to request an extension.

REVISION OPTION: You have the option to rewrite one of the first three major papers. To take advantage of this option, you must submit a rewrite proposal to me within one week after the original paper was returned to you. The proposal should outline the improvements you plan to make and why. If your proposal is satisfactory, you will have one week from the time I approve the proposal to submit your revised paper. I will grade your revised paper based on overall improvement and fulfillment of your proposal. Your final grade for the assignment will be the average of the two paper grades.

❖ **Presentation Guidelines**

GROUP PRESENTATION: For this project, the class will be divided into five small groups. Each group will be responsible for leading class discussion and providing writing prompts for one section of The Picture of Dorian Gray. Each group should plan to meet at least once before the presentation to discuss the book and decide how to structure the presentation and discussion. I strongly encourage each group to meet with me or discuss with me via email its proposed discussion questions and writing prompts. Completion of this assignment is part of your participation requirement.

RESEARCH PAPER PRESENTATION: These will be five-minute, informal presentations, the goal of which is to share with your classmates an overview of your research. The presentation is mandatory and will give you the opportunity to earn 1, 2, or 3 bonus points toward your research paper grade.

❖ **Other Policies and Information**

BLACKBOARD: I will post announcements, assigned readings, grades, and other information on Blackboard, so be sure to check our class page regularly. You can access Blackboard through my.american.edu or blackboard.american.edu.

COMMUNICATION: I check my email frequently during business hours and regularly during evenings and weekends. You can generally expect a fast response to emails. Please keep me informed of any concerns you are having about your work in the course; I cannot help you if you do not bring problems to my attention. Likewise, you must keep yourself informed of requirements by reviewing this syllabus, Blackboard, and handouts, and by listening closely to my instructions in class. Ignorance is never a valid excuse for not meeting course requirements.

SUPPORT SERVICES: If you experience difficulty in this course for any reason, please do not hesitate to consult with me. In addition to the resources of the department, a wide range of services is available to support you in your efforts to meet the course requirements.

Academic Support Center (x3360, MGC 243) offers study skills workshops, individual instruction, tutor referrals, and services for students with learning disabilities and ADHD.

Writing Support The Writing Center (x2991, BAT 228) is available to help students at any stage of the writing process. They provide free, one-on-one coaching and advice on writing to all AU students.

Counseling Center (x3500, MGC 214) offers counseling and consultations regarding personal concerns, self-help information, and connections to off-campus mental health resources.

Disability Support Services (x3315, MGC 206) offers technical and practical support and assistance with accommodations for students with physical, medical, or psychological disabilities. If you qualify for accommodations because of a disability, please notify me in a timely manner with a letter from the Academic Support Center or Disability Support Services so that we can make arrangements to address your needs.

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY: I take academic dishonesty very seriously, and I am required to report cases to the Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences. Please read the University's Academic Integrity Code closely, and be sure to ask me if you have any questions. The code is available online at: <http://www.american.edu/academics/integrity/index.htm>.

In writing papers, you must properly cite all sources (1) directly quoted, (2) paraphrased, or (3) consulted in any fashion. Sources include all printed material, any ideas or words you gather from interview or survey subjects, and any ideas or words you acquire from the Internet. Proper citation for this class means using MLA standards (guidelines available in The Academic Writer's Handbook).

It is also considered plagiarism to submit informal assignments such as drafts and response papers without properly citing sources and acknowledging intellectual debts.

The Dean's standard policy for any of the above offenses is failure of the course.

Regarding "one paper submitted for two classes" (aka "double-dipping"): you may not submit one paper for assignments in two different classes without the express permission of both instructors.

❖ Grading

Self-Portrait Narrative	10%	Other Writing	15%
Rhetorical Analysis	15%	Final Exam	10%
Research Paper	25%	Participation	10%
Op-Ed Essay	15%		

PASSING GRADE FOR COLLEGE WRITING: A grade of 'C' or higher is required to fulfill the university writing requirement.

❖ Course Schedule

This is a projected schedule and is subject to change. I may post additional materials and assignments to our Blackboard site. Schedule changes and additional assignments will always be announced in class/via email.

DATE	READING DUE	WRITING DUE
Aug. 25 (M)	Urrea, <u>The Devil's Highway</u>	
Aug. 28 (Th)	Urrea, <u>The Devil's Highway</u> Zinsser, ch. 1 Lamott, "Shitty First Drafts" (Bb.)	Complete syllabus quiz on Blackboard
Sept. 1 (M)	No Class—Labor Day	
Sept. 4 (Th)	Urrea, <u>The Devil's Highway</u> Zinsser, ch. 2-7	

DATE	READING DUE	WRITING DUE
Sept. 8 (M)	Zinsser, ch. 8, 9, 14	Workshop: Self-Portrait draft due in class (4 copies)
Sept. 11 (Th)	Zinsser, ch. 10	Self-Portrait due Fri., Sept. 12, 8 p.m.
Sept. 15 (M)	Fowkes, “Melodramtic Specters” (Bb.)	
Sept. 18 (Th)	Findley, “Stephen King’s Vintage Ghost Cars” (Bb.)	
Sept. 22 (M)	Marshall, “Salem’s Ghosts and the Cultural Capital of Witches” (Bb.)	
Sept. 25 (Th)	Diamond, “Twilight at Easter” (Bb.)	Rhetorical Analysis due Fri. Sept. 26, 8 p.m.
Sept. 29 (M)	Library Visit	
Oct. 2 (Th)	Wilde, <u>The Picture of Dorian Gray</u> , ch. 1-3 <i>What Every Student Should Know About Avoiding Plagiarism</i> (skim)	1 dialectical journal entry (post to Bb. before class) Research Proposal due Fri., Oct. 3, 8 p.m.
Oct. 6 (M)	Wilde, ch. 4-7	1 dialectical journal entry (post to Bb. before class)
Oct. 9 (Th)	Wilde, ch. 8-11	1 dialectical journal entry (post to Bb. before class) Preliminary Outline and Annotated Bibliography due Fri., Oct. 10, 8 p.m.
Oct. 13 (M)	Wilde, ch. 12-15	1 dialectical journal entry (post to Bb. before class)
Oct. 16 (Th)	Wilde, ch. 16-end Graff and Birkenstein, Intro, ch. 1	1 dialectical journal entry (post to Bb. before class)
Oct. 20 (M)	Graff and Birkenstein, ch. 3	
Oct. 23 (Th)	Graff and Birkenstein, ch. 4-5	4-5 page Research Paper draft due Fri., Oct. 24, 8 p.m.
Oct. 27 (M)	Graff and Birkenstein, ch. 6-7	
Oct. 30 (Th)	Graff and Birkenstein, ch. 8-10 Poe, “The Tell-Tale Heart” (Bb.)	
Nov. 3 (M)	N/A	Workshop: Draft due in class (4 copies)
Nov. 6 (Th)	Research Paper Conferences—No Class	
Nov. 10 (M)	Research Paper Conferences—No Class	
Nov. 13 (Th)	N/A	Research Paper due Fri., Nov. 14, 8 p.m.
Nov. 17 (M)	Research Project Presentations	
Nov. 20 (Th)	Research Project Presentations	
Nov. 24 (M)	Zinsser, ch. 20-23 Read several Opinion pieces, bring favorite to class	
Nov. 27 (Th)	No Class—Thanksgiving	
Dec. 1 (M)	<i>TBA</i>	
Dec. 4 (Th)	<i>TBA</i>	Op-Ed due Fri., Dec. 5, 8 p.m.
Dec. 8 (M)	Final Exam—8:30-11:00am	