ENGL 370: Critical Writing (Online)
UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH DAKOTA
Fall 2017, Aug 21 - Dec 13
Section 820
3 Credit Hours

Instructor: Dr. Jillian Linster

Contact Information

Email: Jillian.Linster@usd.edu

- Email is the best way to contact me. You can expect a reply within 24 hours on weekdays, or within 48 hours over the weekend. If you have not heard back from me after that amount of time, please try emailing again.

Office hours: By appointment, online only (several options available; email for info)

*Please note:* For all communication regarding this course, we are required to use the regular USD email system. You can use the D2L system as a backup (it will automatically forward to my USD email account), but you should *never* email me from a non-school (Gmail, Yahoo, Hotmail, etc.) account; if you do, all I will be able to do is respond asking you to email me again from your USD account.

Catalog Description

This course, which meets the University’s upper-division critical writing requirement for graduation, is an interdisciplinary writing course on a specific topic or theme. Course content includes readings from across the disciplines and emphasizes advanced research-based critical writing skills.

Detailed Course Description: “What’s in a Name?”

What’s in a name? That which we call a rose by any other name would smell as sweet.

- William Shakespeare, *Romeo & Juliet*

The name of a man is a numbing blow from which he never recovers.

- Marshall McLuhan

Does it matter what we call something? A person, a group, a phenomenon? How much impact does a particular name have on the nature of a person or thing? In this advanced writing course we will consider the personal, cultural, social, mental, and emotional significance of naming choices, both self-selected and given. Our shared exploration of this line of inquiry will enhance and hone your research, interpretive, and argumentative skills via multiple writing assignments and other vigorous intellectual and cooperative activities.
Course Prerequisites
Students must have completed one of the following: ANTH 211, CJUS 202, ENGL 201, ENGL 205, ENGL 283, ENGL 284, POLS 202, SOC 211 or UHON 211 and must have 60 credits completed or in progress.

Required Texts


Access to a handbook. Many of you likely have access to McGraw-Hill’s Connect Composition 3.0 from prior writing classes; a link on our D2L homepage will get you to Connect. ISBN: 978-1259995903

Additional required readings will be made available online via D2L.

A Note on Sensitive Content
Please be aware that some of the subject matter for this class is sensitive and may at times make you uncomfortable. Our online classroom is an open learning environment, and I encourage the free exchange of ideas; however, any forms of hate speech or bigotry will not be tolerated. If you feel you have been treated unfairly, whether by another student or myself, please contact me as soon as possible, and I will do all I can to rectify the situation.

Content warnings will be provided to identify potentially disturbing material. (If a content warning is not provided for material you think should have one, please let me know so that I correct the error.) If you encounter content that is potentially triggering for you, please contact me immediately about alternate reading material/media options.

Please note: This course does not promote any particular political ideology. You are encouraged to voice your opinions, both in support of and against material presented in our texts and through the media we encounter. The online classroom is a space for open discourse and exchange of ideas, but discriminatory, racist, sexist, or otherwise offensive remarks will not be tolerated.

Assignments
Major Writing Assignments: Two essays will comprise the major portion of your final grade: a shorter, in-depth name exploration (25%) and a longer, extended evaluation and analysis of naming practices (45%). You will have multiple choices regarding how you approach each assignment and the topic you choose to write about; detailed prompts and deadlines will be provided in accordance with the course schedule. Both essays will be evaluated according to written criteria made available to you online well in advance of the
due date. Submissions must be made in MLA format, or they will earn reduced points. Feedback for these longer assignments will take up to two weeks to be returned to you.

**Reflective Writing Assignments:** During the semester you will produce regular responses (300-500 words each) to assigned readings, videos, discussions, and other course content. Your reflections should demonstrate thoughtful engagement with the topic and reflect your best writing skills. A prompt for each reflection will be provided on the Discussion board where your assignment will be posted. I will provide private, individual feedback on reflective responses when they are scored in the D2L grade book (within one week of the assignment deadline). All together, these responses constitute 15% of your final grade.

**Participation:**
While you will first encounter course content individually and reflect and comment on that content independently, you will then be expected to engage intellectually and respectfully with one another’s writings and ideas. In the context of a wholly online course such as this, that engagement will take place in the forum of the D2L Discussion board and will involve both open conversation and more structured peer review activities.

The success of this class largely depends on your preparation and active participation, and points will be deducted from your participation grade for not demonstrating active engagement. Keep in mind, however, that quality is more important than quantity; a sheer quantity of posting does not in and of itself constitute active engagement with the course. Your participation grade accounts for the remaining 15% of your final grade.

**Grading**
Final grades will be calculated as follows:

- Essay #1: 25%
- Essay #2: 45%
- Reflective Writing: 15%
- Participation: 15%
- (Total points: 100%)

Overall course letter grades are assigned on a 10-point scale (90-100% = A, 80-89% = B, 70-79% = C, 60-69% = D, 59-0% = F). The two major essays will be graded on a +/- scale, according to the rubric provided on D2L. *No incomplete grades will be given.* Scoring and feedback on shorter assignments will be completed within a week of the submission deadline; for longer assignments, scoring and feedback will take up to two weeks.

**“Recycled Writing” Policy**
All writing submitted for ENGL 370 must be produced this semester—during Fall 2017—in order to meet the requirements for this course. Students who insist on “recycling” writing submitted to other courses will be dropped from the course for non-participation.
University Writing Center
The Writing Center is a place where students can meet with writing consultants to discuss their writing and get assistance with developing their writing skills. Any USD student, faculty member, or staff person may come to the Writing Center (online or in person) for individualized help with any writing. The Writing Center provides knowledgeable, experienced writing consultants who will work with students on a variety of writing, including the kind of writing you will be doing for this class. Students wishing to make an appointment with a consultant should email wcenter@usd.edu.

Technological Requirements and Student Support
For information about USD’s technical, academic and student support services, as well as how to take advantages of these services, please refer to the CDE Online Student Handbook. This document also contains important information pertaining to minimum technology requirements, registration information, as well as other university services and policies.

Submission to D2L and Turnitin
Drafts of the two major essays must be submitted to D2L, which is integrated with Turnitin.com. You will be provided designated dropboxes on D2L where you will upload your submissions. Be sure to begin the upload process well in advance of any deadline to provide leeway for technical difficulties. If you require technical support, contact the ITS Help Desk: http://www.usd.edu/technology/contact-the-help-desk

Attendance
Failure to submit work for two consecutive weeks will qualify as “absence” from the online classroom. You may be dropped for non-attendance.

Late Papers and Drafts
I will accept final drafts of the two major essays up to three calendar days past the original due date with a penalty of 10% for each day it is late. After three days, I will not accept any submissions, and you will receive a score of zero for the assignment. Failure to complete a rough draft of either of the two major papers on time will result in a 50% deduction off of the respective final paper score. Discussion posts (reflective writing assignments, peer reviews, and/or participatory responses) cannot be completed late or made up if missed, except at the sole discretion of the instructor, and will only be considered in extraordinary circumstances, on a case-by-case basis.

Fair Evaluation
Each student is entitled to a fair grade in each course in which he or she is enrolled. It is the right and the responsibility of an instructor to establish criteria for evaluation for each course that he or she teaches and to determine the degree to which an individual student
has fulfilled the standards set for the course. Students should be apprised that extraneous factors, such as eligibility for sorority or fraternity membership, for scholarship or financial aid awards, for athletics, for timely graduation, or for admission to graduate or professional schools, have no bearing on the determination of grades. The quality of the student’s overall performance with respect to standards for evaluation will be the only basis for judgment.

**Resolving Complaints about Grades**
The first step in resolving a complaint about grades is ordinarily for the student to attempt to resolve the problem directly with the course instructor. If that attempt is unsuccessful, the student may bring the matter to the Department Chair, who will assist the instructor and the student in reaching a resolution. Grade appeals not resolved with the assistance of the Department Chair may be directed to the Office of the Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences (for undergraduates) or to the Dean of the Graduate School (for graduate students), provided that the grading decision at issue would affect the student’s final course grade. The student initiating the grade appeal should be prepared to show that the grade was decided unfairly. According to South Dakota Board of Regents Policy 2:9, any academic appeal must be initiated within thirty calendar days from the date that the student received notification of the grade, unless the grade is assigned within fifteen calendar days of the end of the term. In that case, any appeal must be initiated within fifteen calendar days after the start of the next term (fall, spring, or summer).

**Statement on Freedom in Learning**
Under Board of Regents and University policy, student academic performance may be evaluated solely on an academic basis, not on opinions or conduct in matters unrelated to academic standards. Students should be free to take reasoned exception to the data or views offered in any course of study and to reserve judgment about matters of opinion, but they are responsible for learning the content of any course of study for which they are enrolled. Students who believe that an academic evaluation reflects prejudiced or capricious consideration of student opinions or conduct unrelated to academic standards should contact the dean of the college that offers the class to initiate a review of the evaluation.

**Assessment Disclaimer**
Any written work submitted for this course may be used for purposes of program review and/or faculty development.

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**Academic Integrity**
The College of Arts and Sciences considers plagiarism, cheating, and other forms of academic dishonesty inimical to the objectives of higher education. The College supports the imposition of penalties on students who engage in academic dishonesty, as defined in the “Conduct” section of the University of South Dakota Student Handbook.

No credit can be given for a dishonest assignment. A student found to have engaged in any form of academic dishonesty may, at the discretion of the instructor, be:

- Given a zero for that assignment.
- Allowed to rewrite and resubmit the assignment for credit.
- Assigned a reduced grade for the course.
- Dropped from the course.
- Failed in the course.

**Disability Accommodation**
Any student who feels s/he may need academic accommodations or access accommodations based on the impact of a documented disability should contact and register with Disability Services during the first week of class or as soon as possible after the diagnosis of a disability. Disability Services is the official office to assist students through the process of disability verification and coordination of appropriate and reasonable accommodations. Students currently registered with Disability Services must obtain a new accommodation memo each semester. **Please note:** If your home institution is not the University of South Dakota but one of the other South Dakota Board of Regents institutions (e.g., SDSU, SDSMT, BHSU, NSU, DSU), you should work with the disability services coordinator at your home institution.

Ernetta L. Fox, Director
Disability Services, Room 119 Service Center
(605) 677-6389
Web Site: [www.usd.edu/ds](http://www.usd.edu/ds)
E-mail: disabilityservices@usd.edu

**Diversity and Inclusive Excellence**
The University of South Dakota strives to foster a globally inclusive learning environment where opportunities are provided for diversity to be recognized and respected.
Student Learning Outcomes
This course fulfills the following goals of the University of South Dakota Institutional Graduation Requirements: BOR Writing Intensive Requirement: Students will demonstrate advanced research-based writing skills.

As a result of taking courses meeting this goal, students will:

1. Students will complete formal writing assignments that entail research drawing from sources that are documented using a recognized style such as APA, Chicago, MLA, a journal-specific style, etc. Assessment: Annotated bibliography, final research paper
2. Students will be able to critique the validity and effectiveness of arguments presented by others in the field. Assessment: Course readings, discussion posts, and final research paper
3. Students will use a planning/drafting/revising process that incorporates self-assessment and/or peer review and includes instructor feedback. Assessment: First essay, reflective writing, and final research paper
4. Write using standard American English, including correct punctuation, grammar, and sentence structure. Assessment: Reflective writing assignments, discussion posts, drafts, and all other major writing assignments