

**WRIT 030.307: Critical Writing Seminar:
The Politics of Home**

TR 4:30-6:00

WILL 214

Dr. Alison Traweek

traweek@sas.upenn.edu

Open office hours Weds 2-5, Mark's Cafe (Van Pelt Library basement)

Office hours by appointment only Tues and Thurs 2-4 (location varies)

I.

Course description

As a critical writing seminar, this course provides an introduction to college-level academic writing, and culminates in the production of multi-draft research paper. As a freshman seminar, it offers an introduction to the discipline of sociology.

Home: at its simplest, home is the physical space of residence, the place we return to regularly, and where our belongings are stored. More broadly, though, home is the feeling of familiarity, comfort, and belonging. It is both something we are born into and something we have to create for ourselves. In this class, we will think about the idea of home as the site of identity creation as well as how the concept of home overlaps with political entities like city, state, and nation. By studying several essays and poems as well as the film *The Wizard of Oz*, and guided by Jan Duyvendak's sociological study on home, this class will encourage students to explore the different meanings of home and think about the politics of identity as they construct a series of essays of their own.

How this class works

This is not a lecture class where you will be passively soaking up knowledge, but rather a place for discussion, collaboration and debate. We will spend our class time thinking together about how interpretation and argumentation work, and will examine our own writing and the writing of our peers with an eye to figuring out how to make our scholarship as effective as possible.

Informed participation is the key to a productive semester. Read your texts actively and critically, and come to class ready to debate. Not all students participate in the same way, however, and the most important contributions to a discussion are not always those that are made first, or most frequently, or most insistently. Within the bounds of your own personal style, I demand that you take risks and think out loud. Apart from occasional mini-lectures, I will act primarily as a guide and referee to make sure that our discussions stay on track and respectful. Beyond that, you are in charge of the direction of discussion, and the more engaged you are, the more interesting and rewarding the class will be for all of us.

Readings

The readings for this course fall into three groups: the first is the primary texts, the subject of our course; the second is the secondary text, an academic work related to our primary texts; and the third is a selection of writings about reading and writing. The first provides the subject matter for your own writing, the second provides a model for academic writing in the discipline and on the subject, and the third offers instruction on how to write effectively.

The following text is required, and will be available in the Penn Book Center, 34th and Sansom. If you choose to get your book elsewhere, please be sure to order the same edition by using the ISBN given below.

- Jan Willem Duyvendak, *The Politics of Home*. Palgrave Macmillan, 2011. 9780230293991.

A digital coursepack with a selection of essays and poems will be made available at the start of the semester.

You are also required to obtain the following grammar, which is not on order at any bookstore but is easily available online from Amazon and elsewhere by using the ISBN provided:

- Christine Hult and Thomas Huckin, *The New Century Handbook*, 4th ed. Pearson Longman, 2008. 0205553680.

II.

Major assignments (subject to change)

Book outline and summary (150-200 words)
Literature review (1400-1600 words, 5 or more sources)
Public argument (600-750 words)
Cover letters (1-1.25 pages)
Resume (1 page)
Peer reviews, outlines, in-class writing

Note on Assignment Submissions

Most assignments are due by 11:59PM on dates listed on the schedule; anything submitted after the deadline will lose a letter grade per day, and will not receive feedback. If you want feedback on a late assignment, please visit the writing center or see me in office hours.

Please bring two hard copies of assignments or your laptop to class in order to facilitate your peers' and professor's reviews. All assignments must be submitted to the Canvas site, where individual assignment links are provided.

Grading Policy

Final grades are based on:

- Participation and appropriate engagement in class, including responsible and respectful use of technology;
- Timely submission of all assignments;
- Quality of assignment submissions;
- Quality of work based on portfolio assessment.

Note that grades are not negotiable, and will not be discussed over email. Final grade changes are made only in the event of a mathematical error.

Grading breakdown

Coursework (including Midterm Portfolio): 45%

Final Portfolio: 45%

Participation: 10%

Failure in any category of the final portfolio assessment means a failure on the portfolio and retake of the writing seminar. Wrong, empty, corrupt, or missing midterm and final portfolios will drop one full grade per 24 hour period from due date and time.

Please note that technology issues are not a valid excuse for late or missing assignments; students are encouraged to avail themselves of the many computer labs around campus in the event of personal computer problems.

The participation grade is based on active presence in class, engagement in collaborative work, peer reviews, discussions, and collegiality; unexcused absences, serial late arrival, inappropriate use of laptops, and any use of phones during class will count against this grade. Missing days when collaborative work is done (including peer reviews) will affect the grade, along with the quality of your participation in class as a whole. Missed peer reviews will receive no credit unless I am notified in advance so that students can be partnered in a timely manner.

III.

Course Policies

Attendance is required.

Students who miss a class must make a reasonable effort to contact their instructor in advance. No later than their return to class, students must report the absence and the reason it occurred using the Course Absence Report system (CAR) in Penn InTouch. Be sure to submit documentation materials to your advisor in the event of an excused absence other than a religious holiday.

With few exceptions, no distinction is made between excused and unexcused absences. The following are regarded as excused absences:

1. Absences resulting from religious holidays
2. Absences resulting from legal obligations, e.g., jury duty
3. Documented family or medical emergencies

All assigned written work, including peer reviews, must be submitted on time, whether or not students are able to attend class; however, instructors may provide a 24-hour extension. This extension policy does not, however, apply to the mid-term or final portfolios, which must be submitted on time. A late portfolio will drop one full grade each day it is late.

A student's failure to provide an accurate explanation of missed class(es) will be regarded as a violation of academic integrity and reported to the Office of Student Conduct. Regardless of the reason for absence, students are responsible for learning what happened in class, whether by talking to a classmate or coming to office hours. Students who anticipate missing one or more classes should contact me ahead of time, just as they should make arrangements to meet with me immediately upon returning from an absence. Attendance means being physically and mentally present in the class, including refraining from using tech devices for non-class-related purposes, limiting non-class-related conversations, and staying on task during group or individual work.

On-time arrival to class is expected. Late arrivals will count against participation.

Late assignments will drop one full grade each day of lateness, and will not receive feedback. If you turn in late assignments and want feedback, you may visit the Writing Center or see me in office hours.

IV.

Writing Support

Students are encouraged to make generous use of the Writing Center while enrolled in their writing seminars as well as thereafter. Tutors in the Writing Center were nominated by their writing instructors for their outstanding work; the ten finalists chosen each semester from across the schools and disciplines are not only superb writers and peer reviewers, they are also well-versed in the assessment criteria of the writing seminars. In turn, they complete a semester of coursework and fieldwork devoted to writing pedagogy, co-taught by the director of the writing program and the associate director of the writing center. Students who use the Writing Center are thus assured of carefully selected, knowledgeable writing tutors.

Appointments and drop-in hours are available from Sundays through Thursdays from 10 a.m. to 10 p.m., and Fridays from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.

For more information, visit http://writing.upenn.edu/critical/writing_center/

Students with Disabilities

Please let me know if you anticipate any issues that might affect your performance in the class, for example related to the format or requirements of the course; or if you need to make any special arrangements or have emergency medical information you wish to share with me.

If you require disability-related accommodations, such as a note-taker, extended time on timed writings, or captioning, please register with the Office of Disability Services (ODS). Disabilities may include learning, psychiatric, or physical disabilities. ODS can assist you with finding out if you qualify for Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) accommodations.

Office of Disability Services
Stouffer Commons, Suite 300

3702 Spruce Street

Phone: (215) 573.9235

Email: sds@mail@zimbra.upenn.edu

Monday-Friday, 9:00am to 5:00pm

For additional resources, visit http://www.vpul.upenn.edu/lrc/sds/cs_resources.php

Plagiarism

Plagiarism: using the ideas, data, or language of another without specific or proper acknowledgment. Example: copying all or part of another person's paper, article, or computer work and submitting it for an assignment, cloning someone else's ideas without attribution, failing to use quotation marks where appropriate, etc.

Fabrication: submitting contrived or altered information in any academic exercise. Example: making up data for an experiment, fudging data, citing nonexistent articles, contriving sources, etc.

Multiple submission: submitting, without prior permission, any work submitted to fulfill another academic requirement.

Facilitating academic dishonesty: knowingly helping or attempting to help another violate any provision of the Code. Example: giving another student a copy of your paper to use; writing the paper for another student; helping another student on a take-home test.

Plagiarism Policy

- 1) In the Critical Writing Program, plagiarism is regarded as a university offense. Instructors are expected to report, in a timely fashion, all incidents of plagiarism to the director of the program.
- 2) Plagiarism in most instances will result in an "F" for the writing seminar, for it signals a failure to meet the basic expectations and perform the fundamental tasks of a writing seminar.
- 3) All parties to plagiarism are considered equally guilty. If a student shares coursework with another student and s/he plagiarizes it, both are considered guilty.