Writing and Inquiry in the Liberal Arts: Resisting the Attention Economy

Our attention is a scarce resource: there’s a finite amount of it. And it is very valuable to the digital technology companies who want to get—and keep—us hooked on their products. In the so-called digital age, it can be difficult, if not impossible, to opt out of the “attention economy.” In this class, we will read and write about our relationship to digital technology and what it means to resist it.

We will read, write, and talk about the ideas generated in our texts with the goal of exploring genre differences across academic disciplines. The purpose of this course is to understand the function of academic writing and to develop the rhetorical moves necessary to read and write in multiple contexts. The skills you develop will transfer to other disciplines, where you will practice in more detail the discipline-specific conventions of academic writing and research. English 185 is an introduction to academic writing at the college level. You aren’t expected to know everything coming in, but you will be engaged and challenged even if you’re already a confident writer.

Required Texts

You don’t always have to be doing something. You can just be, and that’s plenty.

Alice Walker
Shared Learning Objectives for First-Year Writing:

**Disciplinary Awareness**

Demonstrate awareness of the connection between writing and inquiry across a range of disciplines and purposes.

**Reading**

Adapt reading strategies for a diverse range of texts, attending to the purpose and context of both the reader and writer.

**Rhetorical Awareness**

Ask meaningful questions about writing situations and unfamiliar genres using rhetorical concepts such as audience, purpose, exigence, situation, and community.

**Adaptability**

Make purposeful choices about multiple dimensions of writing such as argument, organization, evidence, language, and design.

**Research**

Locate, evaluate, and integrate research sources ethically and fittingly for a writing purpose.

**Processes**

Adapt writing processes to different contexts and occasions, using flexible strategies and tools for discovering and reviewing ideas, giving and receiving feedback, revising and editing writing, and working with other writers.

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**Stacy Bell**

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Use this Zoom link for all classes and meetings:

https://us02web.zoom.us/j/9436280428?pwd=U2FWZk9Jb2FPTXNSUiplQWtPdzIzUT09
### Schedule of Classes and Assignments

Classes will meet synchronously every Tuesday

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Topic</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>August 20</td>
<td>Introduction</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>August 25</td>
<td>Stand out of Our Light</td>
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<tr>
<td>September 1</td>
<td>Summarizing and Quoting Essay Due</td>
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<td>September 8</td>
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<td>September 15</td>
<td>September 15</td>
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<td>September 22</td>
<td>How to Do Nothing</td>
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<td>September 29</td>
<td>Entering the Conversation Essay Due</td>
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<td>October 6</td>
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<td>October 13</td>
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<td>October 20</td>
<td>Researched Writing</td>
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<td>October 27</td>
<td>Researched Essay Due November 17</td>
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<td>November 3</td>
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<td>November 10</td>
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<td>November 17</td>
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<tr>
<td>December 8</td>
<td>Last day to submit Reflective Final Exam</td>
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### Everything Else

#### Assessment

I use a labor-based grading contract to determine your final grade. You can find detailed information about labor contracts [here](#) and [here](#).

If you complete every assignment satisfactorily, and if you attend at least 13 of our 15 synchronous classes, you will automatically earn a B in the class. Satisfactory completion means that your essay meets the basic criteria in the assignment rubric. If it does not, you will have the opportunity to revise it until it meets the criteria.

To make an A in the course, in addition to completing the essays and attending classes, you must complete a reflective final exam. If your final exam meets the criteria in the exam rubric, congratulations! You get an A!
Attendance, aka Zoom Life

In order to earn a B in the course, you must attend 13 of our 15 synchronous class sessions. In addition to our synchronous classes, there will be other required Zoom sessions for small group work, peer editing, etc. In order to be “present” on Zoom, you must turn your camera on. Zoom allows you to create backgrounds and avatars. Please choose a background if you wish, create an avatar, and put your preferred name in your profile. If you want to share your pronouns, you can add them to your Zoom profile, but that is not required.

We all have days when we can’t show up, so you can miss two classes without penalty. During synchronous classes, keep your camera turned on unless you need to take a break—your avatar will be a placeholder. I don’t mind if you take necessary breaks as long as you keep your camera turned on for most of the class. Our ability to create a meaningful experience and build community will be enhanced if we can see each other. If using the camera will pose a real hardship for you, please communicate with me directly and we will find a solution. If you need help with Zoom or Canvas, follow the links below to Oxford’s IT specialists.

Writing Center: Oxford has an excellent Writing Center and peer-tutoring program with well-trained student tutors who can help you with any writing task. Visit the website or center to find out about available hours and scheduling appointments with tutors.

Honor Code: The work you submit for class must be your own. If you use another author’s words or original ideas in your writing, you must give credit to the author using correct citation style. If your essay contains citation errors, you will have to correct them before you receive a completion grade. If you are concerned about plagiarism, make an appointment to meet with me.

Office of Accessibility Services (OAS): OAS will offer qualifying students academic accommodations such as alternative testing, notetaking, interpretation, etc. Students must register and request those services. To do so, contact OAS at oas_oxford@emory.edu or 770.784.4690.

Counseling and Career Services
CCS provides many services at no cost to help address students’ personal and career development needs, including personal counseling, career counseling, and psychiatric services. To schedule an appointment, call 770.784.8394.

For technical issues with Canvas, click on the “Help” tab. You’ll find many resources, including a 24/7 hotline: 844 765-2516. Many technological problems can be resolved by submitting questions to Oxford’s AskIT.