

English 382 Special Topics in Multimodal Composition  
**Composition and Critical Citizenship**

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Office Hours: T&Th 1:20-2:20 or by appointment (Art Building 347)

Course Website: <https://canvas.uw.edu/courses/1138944> (to be published)

## COURSE DESCRIPTION

When the word composition is mentioned in a college setting, you might instantly think about argumentative essays, literature critiques, and journal articles that are loaded with jargons from a particular discipline. The Latin origin of the word composition (*componere*), however, means “put together” or “arrangements”. Therefore, composition does not equate only those literary genres, but could be a work of music, literature, or art that takes various forms.

The main task of this multimodal composition course is to explore and experiment with forms of composition that matter to you. Although linguistic mode (use of alphabetic words) is often privileged in certain academic contexts, it is important to acknowledge that there are also other modes of communication (i.e. aural, visual, gestural, spatial), which are essential and effective for the purpose of intellectual exploration and expression in academic and other public spaces. That’s why our course materials include not only scholarly sources but also popular sources, such as comic novels, photographs, news articles, and video clips.

Throughout the quarter, we are going to explore the following questions:

- What is composition?
- What does citizenship mean from a local or global perspective?
- What role could composition play in cultivating a critical citizenship?



## COURSE MATERIALS

- Readings posted on Canvas
- (Recommended) *Writer/Designer: A guide to Multimodal Composition* (Arola, Sheppard, Ball 2014)

- Knowledge and materials students bring into the class (i.e. additional reading materials you recommend for the class discussion session you facilitate, such as journal articles, short novels, infographics, comics, video clips, music, podcast)
- Works created by students in this course
- A laptop that you can bring to class
- A headphone (for occasional use in class)

## COURSE GOALS

1. **Actively engaging in course materials and furthering your own thinking on** multimodal composition and critical citizenship;
2. **Producing complex multimodal work** that demonstrates awareness of audience, context, and stakes; engages specific genre conventions; incorporates appropriate evidence; and strategically combines selected modes;
3. **Locating, evaluating, and ethically using research** sources and multimodal assets;
4. **Collaborating with other stakeholders** (peers, the instructor, UW librarians) to create, critique, and revise multimodal texts;
5. **Gaining facility** with hardware, software, online platforms, and other tools used to produce multimodal content; and
6. **Reflecting on learning and drawing connections** between coursework and out-of-class interests, communities, life goals, and career plans.

## REQUIREMENTS AND ASSIGNMENTS

Grades in English 382 will be computed by points, with 400 points equaling a 4.0, 320 points a 3.2, and so on. All late submissions will receive 2-point deduction each day. Discussion facilitation and presentations cannot be rescheduled but can be switched after negotiating with your peers.

### 1) (60 points) Contribution to the class

- **Class participation.** This class relies on active and thoughtful participation to make it work. I have the following expectations about class participation: a) students attend class consistently and promptly; b) students come to class having read the readings carefully and critically; and c) students participate in class in an active, thoughtful, and respectful manner.
- **Peer reviews.** Students will constantly read peers' works and provide feedback that is specific, actionable, and tied to what we are learning and practicing. Expectations and strategies for effective peer review will be discussed at the beginning of the quarter.

### 2) (120 points) **Short assignments.** Each of the following 8 short assignments is scored on a 15-point scale, and you are guaranteed 12 points if you complete the requirements (see Canvas). You can earn higher scores by demonstrating exceptionally thoughtful, thorough work.

- 4 bi-weekly multimodal reading responses (i.e. audio/video recordings, interactive presentations, digitals, comics, infographic, poster)
- Citizen autobiography

- Citizen autobiography revisited
- 2 Technical workshop reports (UW Learning Technologies workshops)
- Group project component assignments (not graded)

3) (20 points) **Leading discussion** (20-30 minutes, individually or in a 2-person group).

Students will take turns leading discussion between week 3 and week 9. One week ahead of time, the discussion leader(s) should choose an additional reading that is interesting to them and relevant to the topic. When leading discussion, it is expected that you prepare by thoroughly reading the course readings, highlight key issues or themes that you deem to be significant, and pose questions in ways that engage others in discussion in order to deepen our understanding of the readings. In discussing texts, the idea is to shed light and connect the dots. When leading discussion you may wish to prepare a handout, focus on key passages or page numbers, prepare a summary or presentation, while also making sure to allow ample time for discussion. The idea is not to replicate what is in the reading via summary but to highlight key issues for discussion. Consider: What is especially important? What might be missing or obscured? Balance critique with recognition of value. Also bring genuine questions to the table.

4) **Projects.** There will be rubrics for all projects.

- (100 points) Group project: citizen participation/contribution/intervention
- (40 points) Group project presentation
- (60 points) Final project: showcase

5) **Extra credits**

- Students who attend and report on a third technical workshop can earn up to extra 10 points
- Students who create multimodal reading responses that utilize at least 4 modes throughout the quarter can write a 3-page reflective author's memo and earn up to extra 10 points

## CLASSROOM CULTURE

This is a workshop-based course that focuses on learning through doing and making. You will be given various opportunities, including during class meeting time, to practice skills and strategies integral to the course goals. Collaboration such as peer review and group project also makes space for sharing of knowledge and establishment of collegiality.

Students who participate actively in class will get the most out of the course, and I invite you to define what active participation looks like for yourself. You are welcome to use technologies such as laptops, tablets, or smartphones to support your participation in class. I ask that you be mindful of how your actions—including your technology use and your participation choices—affect your classmates. I am happy to discuss additional strategies with you.

Some classroom ground rules: listen carefully before responding, respect different perspectives, and engage with one another in a constructive manner. It's up to every one of us to make the class a safe and nurturing place.

## ACCOMMODATIONS

Your experience in this class is important to me. If you experience barriers based on a disability or temporary health condition, please seek a meeting with Disability Resources for Students (DRS) to discuss and address them. If you have already established accommodations with DRS, please communicate your approved accommodations to me at your earliest convenience so we can discuss your needs in this course and present documentation materials that will help me understand the kinds of accommodations that would be helpful.

## ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

The [UW student code of conduct](#) calls for students to practice “high standards of academic and professional honesty and integrity.” Plagiarism, or academic dishonesty, is presenting someone else's ideas, images, work, or writing as your own, instead of citing your sources. We will discuss ethical practices in class, and please consult with me if you are not sure how to cite a source.

## SCHEDULE OVERVIEW

A detailed daily agenda will be posted on Canvas before each class session. Please note that the course schedule, readings, and activities are subject to change. All readings and assignment materials are available on Canvas or online.

Class Topics and Readings	Due Dates
<b><i>Week 1 Composition as Inquiry and Communication</i></b>	
Day 1 Course introduction and framing; readings (in class): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Engaging in Group Work</i> (course handout)</li> <li>• <i>Modes and Meaning Systems</i> (O'Brien blog post)</li> <li>• <i>*Poor Writing Makes for Poor Science</i> (<a href="#">UW Today</a>)</li> </ul>	
Day 2 Multiliteracies; readings: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>A Pedagogy of Multiliteracies</i> (The New London Group, 1996)</li> </ul>	Citizen Autobiography due 10:00pm Sunday
<b><i>Week 2 Citizen as A Critical Reader (Part I)</i></b>	
Day 1 Understanding and analyzing multimodal projects; readings: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Writer/Designer</i> Ch.1-2 (p1-30), *design analysis (p31-39)</li> </ul>	
Day 2 Defining “genre” and “rhetoric”; readings: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>The Art of Being Persuaded</i> (Baker, 2014)</li> <li>• <i>*How to Have Better Political Conversations</i> (<a href="#">TED Talks</a>)</li> <li>• <i>*The Digital Writer</i>, p10-20</li> <li>• (1 genre reading)</li> </ul>	Multimodal reading response#1 due 10:00pm Sunday
<b><i>Week 3 Citizen as A Critical Reader (Part II)</i></b>	

Day 1 The rhetorical triangle and kairos; readings: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>The Digital Writer</i>, Ch.2 (p39-74)</li> <li>• <i>Seizing the Memes of Production</i> (<a href="#">Seattle Weekly</a>)</li> <li>• (Student-selected text)</li> </ul>	
Day 2 Source evaluation in the digital age; readings: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Can You Tell Fake News from Real</i> (<a href="#">NPR article</a>)</li> <li>• (Student selected text)</li> </ul>	Technical workshop report#1 due 10:00pm Sunday
<b>Week 4 Citizen as An Ethical Author (Part I)</b>	
Day 1 Arguments and stance; readings: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Everyone's An Author</i>, Part III (p269-324)</li> <li>• <i>*Why Facts Don't Change Our Minds</i> (<a href="#">The New Yorker</a>)</li> <li>• (Student-selected text)</li> </ul>	
Day 2 Argument and stake; readings: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>How to Win A Political Debate in 5 Easy Steps</i> (<a href="#">TED Talks</a>)</li> <li>• (Student-selected text)</li> </ul>	Multimodal reading response#2 due 10:00pm Sunday
<b>Week 5 Citizen as An Ethical Author (Part II)</b>	
Day 1 Knowing yourself (ethos) and your audience; readings: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Writing for Whom?</i> (Magnifico, 2010)</li> <li>• Ads on the video game magazine</li> <li>• FB event</li> <li>• (Student-selected text)</li> </ul>	
Day 2 Ethics of writing/composition <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Rhetorical strategies (ethos, pathos, logos) review presentation</li> <li>• UW Bothell news</li> <li>• (Student-selected text)</li> </ul>	Technical workshop report#2 due 10:00pm Sunday
<b>Week 6 Citizenship 101</b> (forming groups for group project@Day 2)	
Day 1 Community and citizenship; readings: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>The Idea of Community</i> (Day)</li> <li>• (Student-selected text)</li> </ul>	
Day 2 Conceptualization citizenship; readings: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>What Is Citizenship?</i> (TED Talks/Youtube video)</li> <li>• <i>What Is America?</i> (Jesse Gordon)</li> <li>• (Student-selected text)</li> </ul>	Multimodal reading response#3 due 10:00pm Sunday

<b>Week 7 Citizenship as A Social Construct (Part I)</b>	
Day 1 Language, authenticity, and creativity <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>2b or Not 2b?</i> (David Crystal)</li> <li>• <i>Language, Localization, and the Real: Hip-Hop and the Global Spread of Authenticity</i> (Alastair Pennycook, 2007)</li> <li>• (Student-selected text)</li> </ul>	
Day 2 Global Citizenship, readings: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Global Citizenship Is...</i> (UNESCO video clip)</li> <li>• <i>What Does It Mean to Be A Citizen of the World?</i> (TED Talks)</li> <li>• *An origami artist and NASA physicist (<a href="#">Great Big Story video</a>)</li> <li>• (Student-selected text)</li> </ul>	
<b>Week 8 Citizenship as A Social Construct (Part II)</b>	
Day 1 Citizenship - a transnational perspective; readings: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Persepolis</i> (<i>Veil</i> excerpts)</li> <li>• <i>Jerusalem: Chronicles from the Holy City</i> (Guy Delisle, excerpts)</li> <li>• *<i>Flexible citizenship</i> (Ong, 1999) (Introduction)</li> <li>• (Student-selected text)</li> </ul>	
Day 2 Citizenship as Capital and Privilege <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Globally Privileged Citizenship</i> (Choules, 2006)</li> <li>• <i>My Life As An Undocumented Immigrant</i> (Vargas, 2011) (<a href="#">New York Times Magazine</a>)</li> <li>• (Student-selected text)</li> </ul>	- Multimodal reading response#4 due 10:00pm Sunday - Citizen Autobiography Revisited due 10:00pm Sunday
<b>Week 9 Cultivating Critical Citizenship</b>	
Day 1 (group project draft peer review) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• (Student-selected text)</li> </ul>	
Day 2 Final project showcase introduction <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• (Student-selected text)</li> </ul>	Group project due 10:00pm Sunday
<b>Week 10 Group Project Presentation and Showcase Workshop</b>	
Day 1 Group project presentation (1) + Showcase draft peer review	Extra credits due 10:00pm Friday
Day 2 Group project presentation (2), Showcase workshop, course wrap-up	Showcase due 10:00pm Sunday