

## **WR 065 - RHETORIC AND CRITICAL THINKING II**

Instructor: Mike Cooper

Term and year: Summer 2021

Meeting days/times/locations:

DRCI Fridays 6/25/21 - 8/25/21 10AM-2PM

WR 65 focuses on rhetorical reading, thinking, and writing as a means of inquiry. Students will develop understanding and basic fluency with key rhetorical concepts, such as audience and purpose. They will also reflect on their reading and writing process and develop metacognitive awareness. Students will demonstrate understanding of MLA conventions for format and citations. Students will produce at least 2,000 words of revised, final draft copy, including at least one thesis-driven, minimum 1,000-word academic essay.

Recommended preparation: successful completion of WR 60 or placement test scores that place the student in WR 65. Credits: 4 Lecture 4

Learning Methods:

WR 65 is taught using thematic units. Each unit will contain multiple readings in a variety of genres (styles of text/communication) including traditional book chapters, newspaper articles, charts, podcasts, art, infographics, short stories, etc.) typical of what students will encounter in college coursework.

In addition to readings, each unit also contains 3-4 essential questions, a pre-reading activity, strategies for reading the texts, a journal writing activity, small group activity, unit writing task, and a metacognitive writing activity.

The goal is to improve communication and comprehension through reading and writing for an audience, and to create compositions that invite students to respond to challenging questions and to think critically about what they have read while engaging in complex conversations about essential human issues and debates.

**Course Learning Outcomes** (shared by all WR 65 classes at COCC)

<b>WR 65 Outcomes</b>
<b>Rhetorical Awareness</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Analyze and compare the role of voice, audience, purpose, and point of view in a variety of texts in different disciplines.</li></ul>
<b>Critical Thinking, Reading, and Writing</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Critically read, analyze, and evaluate a variety of college level texts,</li><li>Apply a range of reading comprehension and retention strategies for college level texts that represent varied contexts and purposes.</li><li>Select and evaluate sources that are appropriate for academic writing and research.</li></ul>
<b>Processes</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Demonstrate reading process strategies that facilitate comprehension, analysis, and retention.</li><li>Construct original writing that demonstrates use of process-based approaches to writing, including pre-writing, drafting, peer reviewing, revising, polishing, and publishing text.</li><li>Students will collaborate in the exchange of writing as both reviewer and author, generating and evaluating feedback as part of the revision process.</li></ul>
<b>Knowledge of Conventions</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Identify English language conventions to daily and academic writing that are appropriate for the writing situation.</li></ul>
<b>Metacognition and Transfer</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Explain and demonstrate how reading and writing strategies and processes apply to personal, professional, and academic goals.</li></ul>

## **Thematic Unit Outline:**

### **· Introduction to the theme:**

Students are introduced to the unit theme with 1-2 brief, thought-provoking paragraphs that attempt to connect the theme to students' prior knowledge or experiences. This introduction may also ask students to see the topic from a different perspective.

### **· Essential questions:**

These 3-4 questions “provide context for close reading, deep thinking, and critical response to the ideas and information presented in the assigned texts” (Williams, 2016, p. 6).

### **· Pre-reading activity**

Each unit contains one pre-reading activity that invites students to begin to contemplate the theme. These activities prepare students for the tasks of the unit by “activating prior knowledge, building schema, establishing the purpose for reading/writing, and posing essential questions” (Williams, 2016, p. 6). Example activities may include freewriting, responding to relevant videos or photos, small-group discussion, defining keywords or looking up vocabulary, previewing a text, etc.

### **· Strategies for reading**

Since each unit contains readings from a variety of genres/modes, students are provided with a brief overview of those genres and tips for reading within the genres.

### **· Readings/Texts**

The 7-8 texts (readings, videos, podcasts, etc.) for each unit are full-length, complex texts that expose students to college-level thinking and reading relevant to the theme. These texts:

- o Are representative of the reading and ideas students encounter as undergraduates
- o Draw from a variety of genres and disciplines
- o Represent diversity in terms of perspective, culture, language, experience, etc.
- o Pass the CRAP (Current, Reliable, Authority, Purpose) test

### **· Journal writing**

To prompt reflection on the texts and essential questions of the unit, each unit contains journal-writing activities that ask students to respond to one of the texts or a question that allows them to draw from personal experience.

### **· Small group, post-reading activity**

Each unit includes an in-class, post-reading group activity intended to “provide opportunities for students to process, clarify, and further engage with the information and ideas in the course texts” (Williams, 2016, p. 7). Example activities include group discussions, mini-presentations, debates, shared summaries, games, short quizzes, writing information on the board, etc.

### **· Unit writing task**

Each unit culminates with a writing project that asks students to synthesize and/or reference texts from the unit in response to a question, problem, or challenge.

### **· Metacognitive reflection**

After completing the unit writing task, students will reflect on their own reading and writing processes with a brief, metacognitive writing or in-class exercise. For information on creating effective metacognitive activities. Metacognition is “thinking about one’s own thinking.”

### **· End of Term Project**

Each class will complete at least one thesis-driven, academic essay at the end of the course. The final two weeks of the term will be devoted to creating a synthesis essay. Synthesis is reassembling parts into a new whole. We will explain our position based on the information we gained from the two thematic units. In other words, you will take what THEY SAY (the authors of the works we’ve read) and synthesize it into you what YOU SAY on the issues.