

Writing in Academic Contexts II (WRPR 0101)

Theme: Language and Power

Meets T/Th 9:30-10:45am



Dr. Shawna Shapiro- <http://sites.middlebury.edu/shapiro/>

Contact info: sshapiro@middlebury.edu Phone: x5977 (campus) or 206.919.6060 (cell)

Office hours: (in Carr Hall 201): Mon 11am-12pm, 2-3pm; Tues/Thurs 3:30-4:15pm, or by appt

Course Description

Students in this class will continue building upon their identities as writers and thinkers, while engaging a complex, interdisciplinary theme, within a diverse and supportive classroom community. Class activities and assignments will focus on building rhetorical awareness, analyzing texts from a variety of sources, and conducting library research. Students will explore their voices and perspectives in class discussion and throughout all phases of the writing process, including planning, peer review, and revision. Each student will meet frequently with the instructor and will have opportunities for growth in oral communication as well.

The theme for this course is “Language and Power.” We will explore this topic by reading essays, editorials, and scholarly articles. We will also engage with film and other media to deepen course learning. Throughout the semester, students will be asked to reflect on the intersection of language and power in their own lives, as well as at educational institutions and in society at-large.

Student Learning Outcomes

- Develop an understanding of how language and power intersect in our personal and academic lives
- Engage deeply and critically with readings and concepts from many disciplinary perspectives
- Gain familiarity with academic expectations at Middlebury
- Write and revise a variety of academic essays, and offer useful feedback to peers
- Practice finding, evaluating, synthesizing, and citing secondary sources
- Build confidence and self-awareness in regards to reading, writing, research, etc.
- Improve abilities with oral expression, both in discussions and in presentations
- Use technology to contribute to course learning

Reading List

- 1) Graff, G., and Birkenstein, C. (2010 or 2014). *They Say, I Say* (2nd or 3rd edition,)- W. W. Norton. (Available online for around \$20. Some copies also available at LIB or on Canvas)
- 2) *Electronic readings*- Uploaded to Canvas. See [go/hub](#) for link. (See Course Calendar for specific dates and readings).

NOTE: Other handouts will be provided in class.

Expectations

In this seminar, we are a team, and each member of the team is essential. Therefore, you are expected to attend all classes on time, complete all readings when assigned, and turn in all work on time. Late papers, absences, and lack of preparation will be penalized. In the event of illness, please notify me (email or phone) before class that you will be absent. Extended absences must be approved by your commons dean and could have an adverse effect on your final course grade. I often send reminders and notes via email, so please check your email at least once every 24 hours.

Course participation includes discussion (both speaking and active listening), group work, and in-class reading and writing. In addition, you will meet with me and with our peer mentor on a regular basis. You will be graded on your class participation, the effort you put into the writing/editing/conferencing process, and the quality of your individual written work. Here are some things you can do to ensure that you can engage fully in class and can submit all of your work on time:

- Have a folder/notebook in which to keep course handouts and other materials
- Note all major deadlines (for this class and others) in your personal calendar
- Use multiple strategies to back up your work (Note: A computer crash is NOT an excuse for late work!)
- Be mindful about when and how you use technology in class (including impact on peers)

Assignments

You will complete a total of three papers, as well as some shorter reflection and response assignments. For longer papers, you will write at least two drafts—sometimes completing a third or fourth draft as well. Much of the work will be due to me electronically, although you may be asked to bring copies to class for peer review.

Formatting for Written Work

Unless specified otherwise, written assignments should be double-spaced, 12-point font (Times New Roman), with 1-inch margins. APA citation style will be used. Major papers should include a statement of the Honor Code: *"I have neither given nor received unauthorized aid on this assignment,"* with your signature. In class, we will talk more about academic integrity, and discuss ways to use sources appropriately. For now, please remember that **plagiarism** involves taking someone else's words or ideas, and using them as if they were your own. It can have very serious consequences, including academic suspension or even expulsion. For more information on using sources responsibly, visit https://owl.purdue.edu/owl/research_and_citation/using_research/avoiding_plagiarism/index.html

Grading

55% of your grade will be based on the final drafts of Papers 1, 2, and 3 (10%, 20%, 25%)

25% of your grade will be based on cover letters and other evidence of growth (10% for midterm portfolio, 15% for Extended Cover Letter)

20% of your grade will be based on class preparation and participation, early drafts of papers, short assignments (including free-writes) and other class work, including regular meetings w/ Prof S. and/or the Peer Writing Tutors (more info below).

Communication and Support

Communication and respect are very important to our course. I attempt to return all phone calls and emails within 24 hours and appreciate the same from my students. Your feedback is essential to the success of this course. I will give you opportunities to reflect on the course, both in class and anonymously, but I appreciate hearing from you **at any point** about your needs and experiences.

If you have a **learning issue of any kind** that might impact your studies, please be in touch, so I can make sure you have all of the support you need. Students who have Letters of Accommodation should contact me as early in the semester as possible to ensure that such accommodations are implemented in a timely fashion. For those without Letters of Accommodation, assistance is available to eligible students through the Disability Resource Center (formerly called Student Accessibility Services- visit [go/ADA](#) for more info). Please contact Jodi Litchfield or Michelle Audette, the ADA Coordinators, for more information: Michelle Audette can be reached at maudette@middlebury.edu or 802-443-2169 and Jodi Litchfield can be reached at litchfie@middlebury.edu or 802-443-5936. All discussions will remain confidential.

Although I will be meeting with you frequently, both during scheduled appointments and in office hours, I hope you will also make use of support from the following:

Peer Writing Tutors: Charley Burlock (mburlock@middlebury.edu)

Maddy Stutt (mstutt@middlebury.edu).

*NOTE: You may also work with other peer or professional tutors from CTLR- see [go/writingcenter](#) for schedules and other info.

Library Liaison: (for help with finding, evaluating, and incorporating secondary sources, using library resources, and more!) **Carrie Macfarlane-** cmacfarl@middlebury.edu (x 5018). More info and online appointments at <http://go.middlebury.edu/carrie>

CTLR (go/CTLR): Peer tutoring for all subjects, including drop-in writing tutors Sun-Th evenings. Professional staff available for writing, math/quant, time management, and other learning issues.

Digital Media Services (go/dmt): Assistance using a variety of digital tools. Available for drop-in and scheduled appointments.

Counseling Services ([go/counseling](#)): Can help with emotional and social challenges, including stress, anxiety, and adjustment to Middlebury. Individual and group options available, in addition to **24/7 after-hours phone support**.

Anderson Freeman Center- ([go/afc](#)): Intercultural Center in Carr Hall, designed to provide a 'home' for students who have been historically underrepresented or marginalized in higher education. Great place to relax, make new friends, cook, etc. My office is there as well 😊

Course Overview: Major Papers

**Note: See calendar for due dates. More details on all of these papers will be forthcoming in class..*

Paper 1- Summary/Response (2-3 pp.)

Choose one of the four articles/essays we have read thus far, and write a short formal paper that includes a summary of the author's main argument (with occasional examples/illustrations from the text), and evaluation of whether or not you think the argument is valid (with supporting evidence), and a discussion of the overall significance/implications of the article for our understanding of language and power. (NOTE: The "response" for this paper is an academic, rather than personal, response. We'll talk more about this in class.)

Paper 2- Media Analysis Essay (~4 pp.)

In this paper, you will analyze a novel, short story, film, or television show (i.e. a "media artifact") using concepts related to our course theme, "Language and Power." Your thesis-driven paper will answer the question "What does this media artifact illustrate [or complicate] about language and power?" Your analysis should focus on one of our course themes, such as *accent stereotypes, linguistic profiling, asymmetrical talk, language and identity*, etc. (In class, we will identify specific concepts you might use in your analysis and practice employing them together.)

You will reference at least 1 course reading to support your analysis. You will also reference at least 1 outside source that provides background information about the artifact. We will have in-class workshops on how to find relevant secondary sources and how to develop a structure that best facilitates your argument, including evidence from the work you are analyzing.

Midterm Portfolio- Revision of Papers 1 and 2, plus Cover Letter

Paper 3- Research Project (5-7 pp.)

For this paper, you will develop a narrow research question to explore related to our course theme of "Language and Power." Your goal will be to synthesize (not just summarize) the research on that question, and to discuss why the findings are significant to our understanding of language and power. This project will allow you to build up your research skills, including finding and evaluating sources, incorporating quotes and examples effectively into your writing, and citing appropriately (APA style). You will complete a number of smaller assignments to help "scaffold" the writing process, including a project proposal, a "living" bibliography (Google doc), an outline or other planning draft, and occasional written reflections on the research process. Possible topics for this assignment will be provided in class.

Extended Cover Letter (3-5 pp., due with Paper 3 final draft)

For this final piece of writing, you will reflect on your relationship to academic literacy, using readings and experiences from our course as evidence. You will develop a thesis statement about yourself as an academic reader and writer, referencing Paper 3 (and possibly your research log) to support that statement. You will also integrate at least **one** of our course readings to contextualize your reflections.

Questions you may wish to consider for this paper include:

- 1) How would you characterize your identity as an academic writer? Is that identity ever in conflict with other identities?
- 2) What have you struggled with the most as an academic reader/writer/researcher?
- 3) What are your greatest strengths and/or contributions as an academic reader/writer/researcher?
- 4) What strategies and habits work well for you as an academic reader/writer/researcher? What seems to work for other people but NOT for you?
- 5) What role do you expect academic literacy to play in your future at Middlebury? What goals do you still want to work toward, regarding academic reading/writing?

As stated earlier, be sure to reference the writing you have done for this course (especially Paper 3), and at least one of our course readings.

COURSE CALENDAR (tentative, although no major due dates will change)

Sept 10 (T)- Course Overview. In-class peer survey research. Preview Boroditsky.

Sept 12 (Th)- Read [Boroditsky](#) (2011) and [Burkley](#) (2017, blog post)
[Theme: language and thought]

Due in class, hard copy: summary/response (~2pp.) from peer survey

Sept 17 (T)- Watch/read Pinker- "[Language as a Window](#)" (see Canvas for links to illustrated audio and transcript). [Theme: language and social relationships].

Be prepared to share a story/scene that illustrates a point/concept from the talk.

Also in class: Work in groups on summary/response (Paper 1).

Sept 19 (Th)- Read *They Say, I Say* (Ch 1-5)- possibly before drafting Paper 1. ☺

Due in class, 3 copies: Full draft of Paper 1. In-class peer review.

Due Sun 9/22 (on Canvas): Revised draft of Paper 1.

[All week: meetings w/ SS and/or PWT about Papers 1 and 2]

Sept 24 (T)- [Tannen "Power of Talk"](#) (1995) and [McBee, 2018- NYTimes](#)

[Themes: Asymmetrical talk; Language & Gender]

Sept 26 (Th)- [Fattal, 2018- Atlantic](#). Post to online discussion about accent stereotypes.
[Theme: Accent bias in media]

*Sept 27 (Fri): Fall Faculty Forum- Extra Credit opportunity!!!

Oct 1 (T)- Baugh (2003) **AND/OR** Dunstan & Yaeger (2015) (both on Canvas)
[Theme: linguistic profiling].

Oct 3 (Th) –Continue previous discussion. Also read TSIS Ch 7 and Ch 14/17 (“Analyze This”). In class: Workshop for Paper 2 (Media Analysis).

*Bring laptop/device.

[All week: meetings w/ SS and/or PWT about Paper 2]

Oct 8 (T)- Read [Clemetson, 2007- NYTimes](#) [theme: “Articulate” speech]
In class: Mini-presentations of Paper 2 findings (3-4 min each).

Oct 10 (Th)- **Due in-class, 3 copies:** Full draft of Paper 2. Possible additional reading/video.

Due Sun 10/13 (on Canvas): Full draft of Paper 2

Oct 15 (T): Listen to (or read transcript) for [Codeswitch podcast- “Talk American.”](#)
[Theme: language, power, and identity]. Discuss research project- possible topics.

Oct 17 (Th): Read [Santos & Hauser \(2015, NYTimes\)](#) and [Saint Louis, 2017- NYTimes](#)
[Theme: language, power, and identity, cont’d]

Due Fri 10/18 (on Canvas): Research proposal, including 3 scholarly sources in APA citation format.

Oct 22 (T): FALL BREAK – NO CLASS

Oct 24 (Th): Research workshop part I with Carrie Macfarlane ([go/Carrie](#)).

Due Sun 10/27 (if requested by Prof. S): Revised research proposal.

Oct 29 (T): Research workshop part II with Carrie Macfarlane ([go/Carrie](#)). Also workshop portfolio cover letters. **Due in class, 3 copies** of cover letter for peer review. *Also bring laptop/device.

Oct 31 (Th): NO CLASS- work independently on midterm portfolio and research project

****Due Fri Nov. 1** (Canvas): **Midterm Portfolio:** Final drafts of Papers 1 & 2, plus Cover Letter.

*Nov 4 (Mon, 1:30pm): Talk by Vanessa Ruiz- Extra credit opportunity!

Nov 5 (T): [Wong, 2017- NYTimes](#) or [Holmes, 2018- HuffPo](#). [Theme: Profanity- h*ll ya!]

Nov 7 (Th): Read *They Say I Say* 13/16 “The Data Suggest.” Also sample research papers (Canvas) In class: Intro/outlining workshop for Paper 3.

*Bring computer/device.

[All week: Keep working on Research Project. Meetings available w/ SS and PWT]

Nov 12 (T): **Due** in class (paper or electronic): Research log, including link to working bibliography. Possible reading (e.g., sample papers on Canvas).

*Bring laptop/device for in-class work workshop/work time.

Nov 14 (Th): Peer Review Workshop. **Due in class, 3 copies:** Intro & outline for Paper 3.

Due Sun 11/17 (Canvas): Full draft of Paper 3, or sign up to meet with Prof S. and/or PWT on Mon/Tues/Wed.

[All week: Meetings available w/ SS and PWT]

Nov 19 (T): McWhorter TED talk- “[Txxting is Killing...J/K](#)” AND/OR [Shirky, 2019](#)

Optional: *They Say, I Say*, Ch 13 (3rd ed, pdf on Canvas). [Theme: Language, Power, Tech].

Nov 21 (Th): ONLINE CLASS – Contribute to online discussion (post 1x, respond 2x) Also keep working on research paper, and make sure to update research log.

Due Sun 11/24 (Canvas): Revised draft of Paper 3

Nov 26 (T): (Tentative) Read Shen, 1989 and/or Francis & Robson, 2001 (Canvas) [Theme: Academic Literacy and Identity/Power]. Also bring *They Say I Say*.

Nov 28 (Th): THANKSGIVING- (no class).

[All week: Meetings w/ PWT re: Paper 3 and Portfolio]

Dec 3 (T): **Due in class, 3 copies:** Extended Cover Letter (3-5pp.) for peer review. (Be sure to cite course readings and examples from your writing—including Paper 3).

Dec 5 (Th): Course response forms. Share course takeaways. Other wrap-up.

Due Sunday Dec 8 [extensions available by request] (Canvas):
Final draft of Paper 3, plus Extended Cover Letter.