

PROF. ELIZABETH (BETSY) WHEELER
UNIVERSITY OF OREGON
OFFICE HOURS: MF 10-11:30, 238 PLC
EWHEELER@UOREGON.EDU

WEDS. 9-11:50
253 PLC
32106

CONTEMPORARY U.S. LITERATURE AND POPULAR CULTURE: A WRITING-INTENSIVE SEMINAR

This course takes an intersectional approach to contemporary literature and popular culture from the United States. We also focus on interdisciplinary cultural studies and the mastery of scholarly writing. The reading list includes body theories poised at the intersection of gender, race, sexuality, class, and ability and applies them to three case studies: hip hop's gendered bodies, queer studies of disability and the environment, and historical trauma in graphic novels. We will take these theories apart to see what we might learn for our own writing. We will hone the crafts of scholarly writing, especially grants and turning papers into publishable articles. For the term project students have three options: writing the first draft of an article on the course topics, taking a previous essay and revising it into an article, or writing a grant proposal.

REQUIRED READINGS

Six books for sale at the Literary Duck and on reserve at Knight Library. Sharing books also works.

Tricia Rose, *The Hip Hop Wars*; Eli Clare, *Exile and Pride: Disability, Queerness, and Liberation*; Jeremy Love, *Bayou* Volumes 1 and 2; Craig Thompson, *Habibi*; Malek Alloula, *The Colonial Harem*

Other readings are available under Course Documents on the ENG 660 Blackboard site.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

Students will gain:

1. Familiarity with contemporary U.S. literature and popular culture.
2. Familiarity with feminist, queer, disability, race, and intersectionality theories.
3. Expertise with genres of scholarly writing, especially articles and grant proposals.

WEEKLY SCHEDULE

WEEK 1 Introduction and hip hop videos

WEEK 2 Tricia Rose, *The Hip Hop Wars*. Writing discussion: researching journals.

WEEK 3 Eli Clare, *Exile and Pride: Disability, Queerness, and Liberation*; Kimberlé Crenshaw, "Mapping the Margins: Intersectionality, Identity Politics, and Violence against Women of Color." Writing discussion: revising an article.

WEEK 4 Mel Y. Chen, excerpts from *Animacies: Biopolitics, Racial Mattering, and Queer Affect*; Successful grant proposals by Matthew Hannah and Tara Fickle. Grant panel.
FINAL PROJECT PROSPECTUS DUE.

WEEK 5 Malek Alloula, *The Colonial Harem*; Craig Thompson, *Habibi*.
Writing discussion: Taming the review of literature.

WEEK 6 Jeremy Love, *Bayou* volumes 1 and 2; Qiana J. Witted, "Of Slaves and Other Swamp Things: Black Southern History as Comic Book Horror." Writing discussion:
Revising complex theoretical sentences.

WEEK 7 Elizabeth A. Wheeler, "Moving Together Side-by-Side: Human-Animal Comparisons in Picture Books." **FINAL PROJECT DRAFT DUE.**

WEEK 8 GROUP A PROJECT WORKSHOP. Read today's project drafts.

WEEK 9 GROUP B PROJECT WORKSHOP Read today's project drafts.

WEEK 10 GROUP C PROJECT WORKSHOP Read today's project drafts.

ASSIGNMENTS

FINAL PROJECT PROSPECTUS: Due Week 4.

FINAL PROJECT DRAFT: Due Week 7.

ELEVATOR PITCH: Due Weeks 8-10.

FINAL PROJECT: Due Monday, June 8.

FINAL PROJECT There are three options:

OPTION I: A term paper, envisioned as an article draft, based on course topics. Roughly 5000-8000 words.

OPTION II: An article ready to submit for publication, substantially revised from a previous essay. Roughly 5000-8000 words.

OPTION III: A complete grant proposal ready for submission to a particular funder. Length and format conform to funder's guidelines. The grant could be for a scholarly project or another type of initiative (a community endeavor, a curriculum enhancement, a public event, a creative writer's retreat)

FINAL PROJECT PROSPECTUS Due Week 4. Content varies with option chosen.

OPTION I: A description of the essay to be written (2-5 sentences); a list of three journals to which the essay could be submitted; and a bibliography of three readings not included on our course syllabus.

OPTION II: A copy of the original paper; a description of the revisions to be undertaken (2-5 sentences); a list of three journals to which your article could be submitted; and a bibliography of three comparator articles (the closest articles to your idea that you can find).

OPTION III: A description of the grant project; a list of three funders to which the grant proposal could be submitted; and a list of three comparator initiatives OR three successful grant proposals (not those we read in class) to use as models for yours.

FINAL PROJECT DRAFT Due Week 7.

OPTIONS I AND II: The first 2500 words of the essay.

OPTION III: The "project description" and "significance" sections of the grant proposal.

ELEVATOR PITCH Weeks 8-10. To be delivered at your project workshop before the class discusses your project.

QUESTIONS FOR ANALYSIS OF SCHOLARSHIP

What's original here?
What's the takeaway?
What's the elevator pitch?
What would you steal?
What are your favorite moments?
Are there any neat tricks—intellectually, rhetorically, stylistically?
Is there an enthymeme?
What's the “so what?”
How do they showcase their own ideas?
How do they handle the review of literature?
Are there topic sentences?
Is the writing clear?
Is there unnecessary or undefined jargon?
Are the sentences too long and complicated?
Are there loose ends, or are all the connections made?

DISABILITY ACCOMMODATION

Just let me know and I'll be glad to accommodate. For further accommodations please also see the English Department disability policy in the Graduate Handbook. Handy contacts to know: Accessible Education Center, 346-1155; <http://aec.uoregon.edu>.
Counseling Center: 541-346-3230; <http://testing.uoregon.edu>.