

# Writing Workshop I (WRPR 0100)

Theme: Language and Power

Dr. Shawna Shapiro

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## Course Description

This course is designed to build students' skills in academic reading, writing, research, and analysis. We will review topics such as thesis development, essay organization, academic style, and grammar. In addition, we will conduct and present library research. Students will learn strategies for formulating research questions, locating relevant sources, incorporating source material into their writing, and citing sources using APA style. They will complete multiple drafts of each essay, receiving feedback from classmates, peer tutors, and the instructor throughout the process. Students will develop greater awareness of their strengths and areas for improvement as writers, and will become more aware of the literacy practices most relevant to their academic goals and interests.

The theme for this course is "Language and Power." We will explore this topic by reading essays, scholarly articles, and select pieces of fiction and poetry. 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.

If you'd like to know more about me (your professor), including links to my past courses, please visit <http://sites.middlebury.edu/shapiro/>

## Student Learning Outcomes

- Develop a greater understanding of how language and power intersect in our personal and academic lives
- Gain familiarity with academic expectations at Middlebury—particularly in regards to writing
- Engage deeply and critically with a variety of readings from many disciplinary perspectives
- Contribute extensively to in-class discussion
- Practice finding, evaluating, synthesizing, and citing sources
- Write and revise a variety of academic essays, and offer useful feedback to peers
- Use technology to contribute to course learning
- Build confidence and self-awareness in regards to reading , writing, research, etc.

## Reading List

- 1) Graff, G., and Birkenstein, C. *They Say, I Say* (2<sup>nd</sup> edition,- black cover- without extended readings). W. W. Norton.  
(Available online for less than \$20. Some copies also available at bookstore)
- 2) *Electronic readings*- Uploaded to Canvas. See [go/hub](#) for link.

(See Course Calendar for specific dates and readings)

NOTES: Other handouts may be provided in class.

Please keep all readings and handouts in an organized notebook or binder!!

## Expectations

In this seminar, we are a writing 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. You are expected to contribute to class discussion through both speaking and listening. 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, interviewing, oral presentations, and a good deal of 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. You are also expected to be organized, including backing up your work regularly, and to have an effective system for keeping track of deadlines and appointments.

## 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 plagiarism and how to avoid it, please visit <http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/589/01/>

## Assignments

You will complete a total of four 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.

## Grading

60% of your grade will be based on the final drafts of papers (10%, 15%, 20%, 15%)

20% of your grade will be based on the cover letters and other evidence of growth in the midterm and final portfolio (10% for each portfolio)

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.

## 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 are feeling overwhelmed or frustrated, I hope you will let me know as soon as possible, so I can help you get the support you need.

If you have learning issue of any kind that might impact your studies, please communicate with me and/ or the ADA office, so that we can make a plan to accommodate you. See <http://www.middlebury.edu/campuslife/diversity/ada/> for more information.

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

**Peer Writing Tutors (PWTs):** Katie Allman ([kallman@middlebury.edu](mailto:kallman@middlebury.edu)) Possible add'l.

**Library Liaison:** Carrie Macfarlane- [cmacfarl@middlebury.edu](mailto:cmacfarl@middlebury.edu) (x 5018)

**CTLR:** <http://www.middlebury.edu/administration/ctrl> (Peer tutors for all subjects including drop-in Sun-Th eve. Also professional tutors for writing, quantitative skills, and time management/ learning resources)

**Anderson Freeman Center ([go/afc](#))-** Inclusive community, particular support for underrepresented and/or traditionally marginalized students.

**Counseling Services- ([go/counseling](#))-** Support on all kinds of emotional/social issues, including adjusting to college life!

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## 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- Rhetorical Analysis (3-4 pp.)

In this paper, you will analyze the rhetorical strategies used in a speech, newspaper editorial, or other text about a current and controversial issue. You will reference course readings as a framework for your analysis, and will develop a thesis that outlines the key rhetorical strategies used by the author, and evaluates their

effectiveness. In class, we will learn about rhetorical elements you might focus on for your analysis, including ethos/logos/pathos, metaphor, allusion, and style. We will also have a library research workshop, in which you will learn how to find relevant sources for your analysis.

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

### **Paper 3- Research Project (6-8 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, an annotated bibliography, a research log, an outline or other planning draft, and a Writer’s Memo. Possible topics for this assignment will be provided in class.

### **Paper 4- Critical Reflection on Language, Power, & Academic Literacy (4-5 pp.)**

For this assignment, you will draw on your learning from the class to examine your own experiences with academic literacy. You will develop a thesis statement about your relationship to academic literacy, and will use examples from your life, as well as references to course material or other sources, to illustrate your argument.

Questions you may wish to consider for this paper include:

- 1) What has your journey been like as an academic reader/writer, before and during this class? What moments have most stood out to you? What struggles have you faced?
- 2) What do you envision for yourself for the future? What role might academic literacy play?
- 3) Do you ever feel that your academic “identity” conflicts with your other identities?
- 4) How do your experiences compare with what we’ve read/discussed in class? (required)**
- 5) Do you have any critiques of U.S. academic culture?

You may also wish to make reference to papers you’ve written in this or other classes, as additional evidence.

## **Final Portfolio- Revision of Paper 3 and Paper 4, plus Cover Letter.**

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### **COURSE CALENDAR (tentative)**

**Feb 14 (T)-** Course Overview. In-class survey research on language and power.

**Feb 16 (Th)-** Watch Pinker- “Language as a Window” (with transcript).

Read Borodisky (2011). (Theme:Language and Thought).

**Due in class, hard copy:** Summary of survey findings, plus personal response (~2pp)

**Feb 21 (T)**- Lakoff & Johnson- “Metaphors” (1980) ; Tannen -“Fighting” (1998)  
(Language and Thought—esp. metaphor).  
Work in groups on summary/response (Paper 1).

**Feb 23 (Th)**- *They Say, I Say* (Ch 1-5). **Due in class, 3 copies:** Full draft of Paper 1.  
In-class peer review and Writing Workshop.

**Due Sunday 2/26** (Canvas): Revised draft of Paper 1

[Mon 2/27, 4:30pm in RAJ]: Optional talk (E.C. or alternative to Rohatyn 3/9-3/11: “Ideologies & Attitudes Surrounding Language among Dominicans,” by Jacqueline Toribio]

**Feb 28 (T)**- “Reading Rhetorically” (scanned pdf) and *They Say I Say* Ch 7 and 12.  
(Rhetoric and Persuasion)

Post speech or newspaper editorial to Canvas for rhetorical analysis practice.

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

**Mar 2 (Th)**- Mini-presentations with findings from rhetorical analysis.  
In-class planning/outline workshop for Paper 2.  
Also look at sample rhetorical analysis.

**Mar 7 (T)**- **Due in-class, 3 copies:** Full draft of Paper 2.  
Peer review & Writing Workshop.

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

**Mar 9 (Th)** –Tannen- “Power of Talk” (1995). (Language and Gender)  
Writing Workshop for Paper 2.

**Mar 9<sup>th</sup>-11<sup>th</sup>** (Th-Sat)-: Rohatyn Conference on Language & Identity. Attend **at least 1 talk**.  
[in lieu of class on Tues 3/14]

**Due Saturday Mar 11<sup>th</sup>:** Post 1-page summary/response to online discussion.

**Due Sunday Mar 12<sup>th</sup>:** Respond to two peers’ posts.

**Mar 14 (T): Class CANCELED**—though you’re welcome to gather to work on Paper 2 ☺

**Mar 16 (Th):** In-class screening of Do I Sound Gay? Optional reading: Armstrong, 2006 on  
“Homophobic Slang.” (Language and Sexuality; Linguistic insecurity).

Due by **Mar 17 (Fri):** Post to online discussion about film and themes (Canvas)

**Due Sun 3/19:** Post research topics and additional sources in APA to Canvas (discussion).

**Mar 21 (T):** Discuss research project. Look at sample proposals. 2pm: Research workshop.

**Due Wed 3/22** (Canvas discussion): Proposal for research project, including rationale and  
annotated bibliography of 3-5 main sources, using APA citation.

[Meetings w/ SS and PWTs all week re: Midterm Portfolio]

**Mar 23 (Th):** Portfolio Workshop. **Bring 3 hard copies of cover letter** for peer review.

**Due Fri 3/24 (or extension by request)** (Canvas): Portfolio I: Final drafts of Papers 1 & 2, plus Cover Letter.

**March 27-31: SPRING BREAK** (continue working on research project)

\*\*\*\*NOTE: Some readings after this point may change, but due dates will remain the same.\*\*\*\*

**Apr 4 (T):** Lippi-Green “Teaching Children to Discriminate” (1997).  
Dunstan & Yaeger (2015); (Language and Prejudice).

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

**Apr 6 (Th):** Baugh- “Linguistic Profiling” (2003). (Language and Prejudice, cont’d).  
Intro/outlining workshop for Paper 3- bring computer/device.

**Apr 11 (T):** Mini-presentations (4-5 min ea.) on in-progress research.  
Writing Workshop for Paper 3.

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

**Apr 13 (Th):** *They Say I Say* Ch 10 and 14 and sample research papers (pdf).  
Writing Workshop. **Bring 3 hard copies** of outline/intro for Paper 3.

**Due Sunday 4/16** (Canvas): Full draft of Paper 3.

**Apr 18 (T):** Gross- “Bitch” (1994) and Pinker- “Language of Swearing” (filmed lecture)  
(Power and Profanity).

[All week: Meetings w/ SS]

**Apr 20 (Th):** McWhorter TED talk- “Txting is Killing...J/K” (Language, Power, Tech).  
*They Say, I Say*, Ch 8 and 9. Writing Workshop for Paper 3.

[Fri 4/21: extra credit opportunity- URO Spring Student Symposium]

**Due Sunday 4/23** (Canvas): Revised draft of Paper 3

**Apr 25 (T):** Bartholomae “Inventing” (1985) and Read, Francis, & Robson “Playing Safe” (2001)  
(Academic Literacy and Identity/Power).

**Apr 27 (Th):** Shen “Identity” (2001). Planning workshop for Paper 4.

**May 2 (T): Due: Bring 3 hard copies of Paper 4** for peer review. Other topic TBD.

[All week: Meetings w/ PWT re: Paper 4]

**May 4 (Th):** Tannen “Agonism”- in *They Say, I Say*. Writing Workshop

**Due Sunday 5/11** (Canvas): Revised draft of Paper 4.

**May 9 (T):** Portfolio Workshop. Course response forms.

[All week: Meetings w/ SS and/or PWT re: Paper 4 and Portfolio]

**May 11:** Course wrap-up/takeaways

**Due Sunday May 14: extensions by request** (Canvas): Portfolio II: Final drafts of Papers 3 & 4, plus Cover Letter.