

Writing 1: Declare, Critique, Create, Adapt Winter 2020

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Sec 54: Tue/Thu 9:50-11:25a, Social Science 1 145

Secv55: Tue/Thu 11:40a-1:15p, Social Science 1 145

Office Hours:

- 3:30-4:30p Thursdays and by appt
- After class by appointment (sometimes I have a meeting)
- Fridays 10:30-11:30a, sometimes in person, sometimes on Zoom
- Office Location: Stevenson 268



avidali@ucsc.edu (email is the best way to contact me)

Welcome to Writing 1, which almost half of all UCSC students take. **I wish all students at UCSC had the opportunity to take this course**, because two quarters of writing courses (Writing 1 and Writing 2) is better than one writing course (Writing 2), and 20-30 weeks of writing instruction is typical at most universities. I believe that those who take this course will be more prepared for Writing 2, and I'm excited to get to know you all as you move toward being better writers.

But, I realize you may not be as excited about this course as I am. You may feel like it's a required course and you want to "get it over with." Or, you may feel like College 1 was pretty hard and you're worried about what's going to happen in this course. (Or you may feel both of these things.) For now, you'll just have to trust me: this course is going to teach you about writing and I think you're going to be glad you took it.

For every Writing 1 course, there are expectations of what you should be able to do at the end of the course. They are as follows:

- Identify and use rhetorical concepts (such as audience, purpose, context, or genre) to analyze and write about a variety of texts.
- Use strategies such as response, analysis, interpretation, or critique to produce writing that draws connections between texts and student writers' perspectives.
- Support their ideas through the use of examples, personal experience, observations, and/or appropriately cited source material.
- Compose projects through multiple drafts by revising for focus, quality of content and/or coherence.
- Implement strategies to edit their work according to genre and disciplinary conventions such as arrangement, language use, mechanics, or documentation style.
- Reflect critically on their processes for writing and analysis.

Put another way, this course will teach you *about* writing (in addition to *how* to write more effectively), how to study texts, and how to argue. It will also teach you how to draft and revise and how to know your strengths and weaknesses as a writer. It's a lot for one quarter, but you'll continue working on these issues in Writing 2.



This course is oriented around the theme of **genre**. In writing, genre loosely equates to a type of text, such as academic papers, billboards, cereal boxes, tweets – the list is endless!

The course is oriented around this concept because there are many genres of writing you'll need to master while in college (and beyond), so our goal is to learn how to approach and become proficient in new genres. This course is **not** focused on literature or literary analysis (though these are interesting and important pursuits); instead, we'll read a range of texts and write in various genres. I encourage you to toss aside the five-paragraph essay, embrace the "I" in your writing, and care about what you write. Further, this is not a grammar course. In fact, [studies](#) consistently show that the explicit teaching of grammar – such as worksheets and teacher comments in red pen – is ineffective (and super-boring). That said, if I see something going on in your writing at a mechanical level that I can help you address, I'll let you know.

Disability and Accessibility

Disability and access are at the center of my scholarship, teaching, and service. As such, I am dedicated to creating classroom spaces where all students can succeed, including students with disabilities or other needs. I work to make this classroom as accessible as I can, but I need your input about how you learn and how the class is working for you. *If you have a disability or think you have a disability and need accommodations to succeed in this course, I encourage you to contact the [Disability Resources Center \(DRC\)](#) **and/or** speak with me as soon as you can.* (The DRC is located in 125 Hahn Student Services building, by phone at [831-459-2089](tel:831-459-2089) or by email at drc@ucsc.edu.) While I do not require that you have documentation from the DRC, I do recommend that you speak to them about what they can offer you.

My access request: I ask that you refrain from strong scents (perfume, cologne, heavily scented lotions, etc.) when coming to my office (and in class if they are strong), as I have scent-triggered migraines. Also, I'm somewhat famous for not remembering things I don't write down, so please don't hesitate to remind me (that I'd email you, bring you a resource, etc.) if you don't hear from me or don't see me write down your request. Lastly, I identify as someone with anxiety and depression, which may or may not come into play.



My Style & Meeting with Me

This is my 20th year of teaching (gasp!), and I ran a writing program for eight years before I came to UCSC. However, this is only my second year at UCSC, so while I know a lot about writing and teaching writing, I'm still getting to know what students are like here. For this reason, you'll find that I'll ask a lot of questions. I also want you to come to me with questions. I work to maintain a comfortable classroom atmosphere, but I expect students to work hard, and I will reciprocate with feedback and support.

I believe in climbing big mountains with small steps (what Anne Lamott calls taking it bird by bird), so there will be many small assignments in this course. You should expect to do reading and/or writing for every class period. If you feel like you're struggling, it's best to come see me early – don't wait until you're in crisis.

Finally, I understand you all have lives beyond my course, and I encourage you to be in touch with me when your life and our class are not in harmony. That said, I have less patience and flexibility for students who aren't in touch with me and simply skip class with no warning or follow-up. Respect the time and effort I put into this course, and I'll do the same for you.

Assignments/Projects

This is a project-based course. This means that you'll do many smaller assignments - called **Prep Work** - that are low-stakes, culminating in bigger projects. It will be difficult, if not impossible, to do well on the projects without completing the Prep Work.

1. **Manifesto:** It's time to claim our voices and ideas in the form of manifestos. This unit is all about approaching a new genre (manifestos), studying it, and producing it. The idea is that you can replicate this ability with genres in the future (such as specific projects in other courses, workplace writing like memos and reports, etc.).
2. **Genre Critique & Redesign:** This is an academic analysis on a genre of your choosing, and we'll talk about how to avoid formulaic writing, be persuasive, and not lose your voice. You'll also produce a revised sample of the genre - in response to your critiques - that is more effective and engaging.
3. **Multimedia Genre Translation:** After giving the manifesto a little time to rest, you'll pick it back up and translate it into a photo essay or audio essay in a specific venue of your choosing (such as a photo essay for *The New York Times*).
4. **Plotting Metacognition:** In this end-of-term assignment, I'll ask you to plot a graph (with x and yaxes) that reflects where you are as a writer. More on this at the end of the course!



Meta Journal

As we'll discuss in class, loads of research shows that in order for what you are learning to really stick, you have to stop and think about what/how/why you're learning. Otherwise, you'll move out of this class and what you have learned will be wiped off your brain like pen off a dry board.

To do this, I'm asking you to keep a **Meta Journal**, where you will write about yourself as a writer. You will sometimes write in class and sometimes out of class. You should also use this journal for all your in-class writing. This is so it is all in one place, and so the smart things you do in class don't just wander off into random files on your laptop or scraps of paper in your bag.

Note that the Meta Journal entries are tied to our work in class. So once the due date for the entry has passed, you can't do that entry anymore. Here's what to do:

- **To create your Meta Journal, please create a Google Drive/Doc file and title it, "MJ First Name Last Name, W1." So mine would be "MJ Amy Vidali, W1." Then share it with me (at avidali@ucsc.edu).**
- INCLUDE THE DUE DATE ON EACH ENTRY. (You can also include the prompt if you want.)
- Add new information to the top of the file (not the bottom). This will just make it easier for both of us to navigate when I'm reading or you're pulling up information in class.
- If you want to add a page break (so things start a new page), hit Command + return/enter (Mac) or CTRL + return/enter. This is far more effective than hitting lots of returns to get something to the next page.

At the end of the course, you'll review your entries and plot your successes and what's left to learn in the Plotting Metacognition assignment.



Grading

In Fall 2019, I tried a new kind of grading called “contract grading.” It worked really well, so I’m using it again in this class, but because it’s new, I’ll make changes as we go and need your feedback. Let me explain how it works.

My experience is that traditional grading is not only horrible for me (as I have to regularly sort and rank students), but that it reinforces existing inequities among students and makes students resistant to taking risks and learning new things. Equally important, traditional grading systems don’t line up with what I know about the teaching and learning of writing (which is informed by a *lot* of scholarship), which is that becoming a better writer is about learning a process, not mastering a product.

Contract grading addresses these issues by making a list of course tasks that must be completed to get a B. This takes the haggling over grades out of things, it honors all the work you are doing (which will make you improve), and it lets you focus on what you need to work on, not “everything to get an A.” This type of grading is not harder or easier than traditional grading. It’s just different. For weaker writers, it more clearly rewards all the work the course requires - and this is the work you need to do to improve as a writer, so the B is earned! For stronger writers, it pushes you to go further and really develop new skills, rather than leaning on previous knowledge.

The basic rule is this: *if you do everything in the “contract,” which I am calling “The List for a B Grade” (or The List), you’ll get a B in the course.* The same list, and a chronological version, are at the end of this syllabus for you to track your progress.

THE LIST FOR A B GRADE

Prepare for the writing projects (complete eight of nine assigned)

Manifesto	Prep Work 1A	Prep Work 1B	Prep Work 1C	
Genre Critique/Revision	Prep Work 2A	Prep Work 2B	Prep Work 2C	Prep Work 2D
Multimedia Translation	Prep Work 3A	Prep Work 3B	Prep Work 3C	

Write full drafts (one may be a 75% draft)

manifesto genre critique/redesign multimedia translation ~~plotting metacognition~~

Participate in workshops

manifesto genre critique genre redesign multimedia translation ~~plotting metacognition~~

Submit revised final drafts (one of the first two can be submitted three days late)

manifesto genre critique/redesign multimedia translation plotting metacognition

Reflect on your writing and submit Meta Journal Entries (complete five of six assigned)

Entry #1 (required)	Entry #2	Entry #3
Entry #4	Entry #5	Entry #6

Talk to me about your work

Attend required conference ~~Come to office hours outside conference before week 7~~

Come to class

Have no more than one *unexcused* absence

IMPORTANT:

- To meet expectations and get credit for items on “The List,” all work (Prep Work, full drafts, final drafts, etc.) must be submitted ON TIME unless otherwise arranged (see late policy).
- To get credit on “The List,” you need to meet the expectations for each assignment. So if you show up 30 minutes late for workshop or only make small revisions on a final draft when major changes were required, you won’t get credit. I’ll ask you to resubmit. If I ask you to resubmit more than twice (either the same assignment or two different ones), you’ll need to come meet with me to talk through expectations and we’ll draft a written agreement for the plan going forward.

You will receive narrative feedback, but not grades, on your projects. Because I won’t be constrained by “justifying a grade,” the feedback I give will give you will be **direct** and give you a clear sense of how you’re doing. (This should avoid the feeling of, “the teacher said I did some things well and some things badly and I don’t know why I got a C+.”) To keep track of what you are doing on The List, look in the Gradebook on Canvas and/or map on the tracking sheet (last page). I will be marking all items as either “complete” or “incomplete.” Because I am not using points, all assignments on Canvas have zero points (and there is obviously no “grade”).

If you don’t meet the requirements on The List for a B grade, your course grade will be a C+ or lower and is at my discretion. This includes the assignment of non-passing grades (C- or lower). My assessment for those who do not meet the requirements on The List will be based on my holistic appraisal of your writing in the course according to the Writing 1 course outcomes (see page 1 of this syllabus) and whether I think you need to take the course again to be successful in future college writing.

That said, I will automatically assign a D or F grade if you do not submit a first and final revised draft of each major assignment. (Cases of academic dishonesty will follow my plagiarism policy.) Further, any student who has more than four unexcused absences (20% of the course) will receive a D or F grade. To be clear, these are not the only ways to receive a non-passing grade in this course, but they are surefire ways!

To receive a grade higher than a B, you must meet all the criteria in The List and submit a portfolio due at the finals period with revisions to major projects. I will provide more detail on portfolio requirements in week 8. I will assess the portfolio and assign a B+, A-, or A by considering the Writing 1 course outcomes (see page 1 of this syllabus) and your ability to exceed expectations articulated on the assignments. Grades above a B are reserved for superior work, and you will need to meet with me to discuss your plans to submit a portfolio.



Being Respectful and Not Being Tied to Your Cell Phone

I find that most students come to class with great ideas and are respectful to other students and to me. But occasionally students get a little over-excited or are disrespectful. If necessary, I’ll refer to university policy on student conduct, but mostly, I’ll contact you privately if an issue arises. Should you feel uncomfortable or unsafe in our course, please tell me immediately (during class or after). There is **NO** room in this course for disparaging anyone in our class or engaging in hate speech.

My cell phone policy is straightforward: *put it on vibrate and do not keep it on your desk while in class.* If you need to check in, please do so quickly and then promptly put it away. If you need to return a call or text, step into the hall (but don’t make this a regular thing – it’s distracting). You get one warning if you are distracting our class with your phone; if it happens again, I will not accept your work for that day (what a bummer). Same goes for laptop and tablet use that wanders from class purposes.

Attendance and Late Policy

There are two types of absences: excused and unexcused. Excused absences are typically negotiated with me in advance (or as soon as possible in case of emergencies). In the case of excused absences (including absence as a DRC accommodation), I will accept the work due in class for that day and/or allow you to make up work (sometimes through alternate assignments). Note that a work schedule that conflicts with this class is not an excused absence – it's best to wait and take the course when you can attend.

Unexcused absences are days you miss class for reasons you choose not to discuss with me, or for reasons that aren't likely excused (you're tired, feel like surfing, etc.). Unexcused absences will make it hard to do well in this class. For unexcused absences, work due that day receives no credit, and in-class work cannot be made up.

Because this is not an online class, **you must be present in class for the entire day you submit assignments to receive credit for them** (except excused absences). All required work must be submitted by Canvas due dates (at 9:30a the day the work is due). Late work on full drafts and final drafts will lower your overall course grade by 1/3 for each 48-hour period it is late (so a B+ becomes a B, etc.).

Everyone gets **one free extension** of three days on one of the final drafts. You don't have to tell me why - just tell me when you want to use it.



Writing Resources! (You Already Paid for Them!)

UCSC has several Writing Centers, and *everyone* should go:

- o [Westside Writing Center](#) (in Oakes but serving all)
- o [Kresge's Writing Center](#)
- o [Crown Writing Center](#)

[Learning Support Services](#) offers writing support! You can sign up for individual session, work in the Writing Studio (a free-form writing space), or drop-in.

McHenry Library offers [reservable study/writing spaces](#). Sometimes it's great to get away from laundry and friends to get writing done...

[The National Student Campaign Against Hunger and Homelessness](#) and [other sources](#) note that many (if not most) college students do not get enough to eat at some point in their college careers. There are many [food pantries on campus](#).

There are several [campus options for mental health support](#). Some are confidential and some are not.

[Hate and bias incidents](#) can be reported to the Dean of Students. Again, keep in mind that most university staff are "mandated reporters," so ask about confidentiality up-front.

While our campus offers [early education/preschool](#), resources for students (and faculty/staff) with children or other dependents are generally lacking. All nursing mothers are welcome to bring their children to class. Also, I understand that schooling and after-care are often disrupted, and in these cases, please feel free to bring your child to class (and I will do the same!). I suggest you bring headphones for your child in case our conversation involves adult topics.

The [Lionel Cantu Queer Center](#) offers many resources, from a clothing closet to crisis resources.

[The First Generation Initiative](#) seeks to create inclusive environments for first-generation students (of which there are many on our campus!).

Visit: [African American Resource and Cultural Center](#), [American Indian Resource Center](#), [Asian American/Pacific Islander Resource Center](#), and [El Centro: Chicano/Latino Resource Center](#).



Plagiarism & Academic Misconduct

If you're struggling with how to incorporate the ideas of others into your writing, or you're so stressed that you're considering taking someone's work and turning it in as your own, **come talk to me and we'll figure it out**. If I suspect that you have plagiarized, I'll begin with a private conversation with you. In many cases, we can figure out what went wrong and you can take another swing at it. In other cases, I will charge you with plagiarism and formally write you up, following UCSC's [Academic Misconduct guidelines](#). For more on what constitutes plagiarism, talk to me.

SCHEDULE

*You should follow along in **Canvas Modules or Syllabus** (but not with this syllabus), which contains links to all required work.*

WEEK ONE

Tue, 1/7: Introductions

Thu, 1/9: Prep Work 1A (introductions); Meta Journal Entry #1

WEEK TWO

Tue, 1/14: Prep Work 1B (studying manifestos)

Thu, 1/16: Prep Work 1C (audience, manifesto topic)

WEEK THREE

Tue, 1/21: Stay on Track

Thu, 1/23: Full Draft of Manifesto; Workshop; Meta Journal Entry #2 due (in class time)

WEEK FOUR

Tue, 1/28: Final Draft of Manifesto; Prep Work 2A (formulaic writing); Meta Journal Entry #3 due (in class time)

Thu, 1/30: Prep Work 2B (argument, project ideas)

WEEK FIVE

Tue, 2/4: Stay on Track

Thu, 2/6: Prep Work 2C (summary, proposal)

WEEK SIX

Tue, 2/11: Prep Work 2D (genre analysis)

Thu, 2/13: Stay on Track

WEEK SEVEN

Tue, 2/18: Full Draft of Genre Critique; Workshop; Meta Journal Entry #4 (in-class time)

Thu, 2/20: Full Draft of Genre Redesign; Workshop

WEEK EIGHT

Tue, 2/25: Final Draft of Genre Critique and Redesign; Stay on Track; Meta Journal Entry #5 (in-class time)

Thu, 2/27: Prep Work 3A (audio essays)

WEEK NINE

Tue, 3/3: Prep Work 3B (proposal)

Thu, 3/5: TBD

WEEK TEN

Tue, 3/10: Full Draft of Multimedia Genre Translation; Workshop; Meta Journal Entry #6 (in-class time)

Thu, 3/12: Plotting Metacognition Full Draft; Workshop

finals: Wed, 3/18 @ noon: Final Draft of Multimedia Genre Translation; Final Draft of Plotting Metacognition

THE LIST FOR A B GRADE (chronological version)

MANIFESTO

Prep Work 1A	Prep Work 1B	Prep Work 1C
Entry #1 (required)	Entry #2	Entry #3
full draft		
workshop		
final draft		

GENRE CRITIQUE AND REDESIGN

Prep Work 2A	Prep Work 2B	Prep Work 2C	Prep Work 2D
Entry #4	Entry #5		
full draft			
attend required conference			
workshop (critique)			
workshop (redesign)			
final draft			

Come to office hours outside conference before week 7

MULTIMEDIA GENRE TRANSLATION

Prep Work 3A	Prep Work 3B
Entry #6	
full draft	
workshop	
final draft	

PLOTTING METACOGNITION

full draft
workshop
final draft

Have no more than one *unexcused* absence

- **One full draft can be a 75% draft
- **One final draft can be three days late
- **Complete eight of nine Prep Work assignments
- **Submit five of six assigned Meta Journal Entries

IMPORTANT:

- To meet expectations and get credit for items on “The List,” all work (Prep Work, drafts, final drafts, etc.) must be submitted ON TIME unless otherwise arranged (see late policy).
- To get credit on “The List,” you need to meet the expectations for each assignment. So if you show up 30 minutes late for workshop or only make small revisions on a final draft when major changes were required, you won’t get credit. I’ll mark it “Incomplete” and ask you to resubmit. If I ask you to resubmit more than twice (either the same assignment or two different ones), you’ll need to come meet with me to talk through expectations and we’ll draft a written agreement for the plan going forward.

