Travel, Mobility, and Identity
Course Syllabus

Course Description:

French philosopher Michel Serres identifies the traveler, the wanderer, as someone who is fortunate enough to possess “so little identity that he recognizes that his name is no-one”—think Arya Stark learning to become a Faceless Man, sort of—and thusly “accumulates in his body passages, landscapes, customs, languages and mixes them…the mingled waters of all the rivers of the world beating in his arteries” (*The Five Senses* 258). In this course we will consider the links between mobility, motility, and identity, while gaining an overview of contemporary travel writing and the changes in its goals and emphases in the twenty-first century. Using a variety of media (images, music, film, literary texts), we will be looking at how space and the self are co-articulated by movement. We will consider various literary forms, mainly nonfiction, as well as a variety of digital media to explore how travel undoes the certainty of knowledge and presents alternatives to normative codes of narrative and mobility. We will navigate tensions between the familiar and the strange. We will do all of this, of course, while also learning to write strong, thesis-driven academic prose.

This is a composition course specially designed for students in the FLAIR learning community. The theme reflects a history of critical concerns for scholars working in foreign languages and international relations, and the assignments are designed to develop important critical reading and writing skills crucial to participate in academic and professional conversations in those fields. This is also, in large part, a distance-learning course, so most of our conversations about course readings and about the writing process will take place online. You should familiarize yourself with the Course Den platform, which is where you will find assignments, discussions, media, and most of the readings, and with completing and submitting work online. In service of the QEP and in order to help students develop skills that can be applied across the disciplines, the FYW program’s 1101 course:

- Focuses on the needs, interests, and skill level of students when choosing texts and sequencing assignments, scaffolding assignments to advance the students’ critical reading, writing, and thinking skills throughout the semester;
- Chooses length-appropriate and level-appropriate texts, consisting primarily (but not exclusively) of non-fiction;
- Teaches the skills of summary, critical analysis of texts, and argumentative synthesis;
• Develops a range of assignments that focus on a variety of analytical writing tasks, including at least two distinct types of writing over the three major out-of-class essays (possibilities include, though are not necessarily limited to: summary, reader response, autobiographical narrative, critiques, problem/solution, ad analysis, rhetorical analysis, description, argumentative synthesis);
• Creates grammar lessons and assignments to teach students about a range of grammatical issues and to track student progress on those issues.

General Learning Outcomes for ENGL 1101:

In service of the QEP and in order to develop skills that can be applied across the disciplines, students will:
• Demonstrate an understanding of the role of rhetoric in the construction of effective academic writing
• Hone critical reading and critical thinking skills
• Develop facility with the whole writing process from invention through revision
• Complete a range of assignments that highlight different rhetorical strategies and different methods of critical analysis
• Develop the skill of summarizing an argumentative text, identifying and conveying in the student’s own words the main and supporting arguments and the evidence used to support these arguments
• Develop the skill of effectively conveying and analyzing the significance of a text, through the student’s engagement and dialogue with the text
• Develop the skill of critical analysis, both analyzing the components of an argument in texts and mounting an effective argument of the student’s own
• Develop the skill of synthesis, understanding how to analyze, integrate, and summarize the ideas from multiple texts while the student makes an argument of his/her own
• Become proficient in accurate paraphrasing, citing, and documenting of a text
• Complete specific assignments aimed at competence in 1101-level grammar and writing mechanics, with an understanding of the application and relevance of these skills outside the context of the FYW classroom

Required Texts:

Most of the required readings—professional articles, short works of creative nonfiction, and excerpts from longer works—will be found on Course Den, in the section labeled, predictably, “Required Readings.” Readings are organized there according to the order in which they should be read and include all of the bibliographic information you will need to cite them correctly in your work.

You will also need to bookmark this resource: Purdue Online Writing Lab (OWL). Periodically, I will refer you here to practice basic writing skills, formatting, and documentation of sources. Otherwise, this is a great resource for help writing and revising your work, and we will be using this in place of a writing handbook.

Here’s what you need to buy:


These texts are both relatively cheap and can be found at the University Bookstore or purchased online. See next page for images of the covers, to help you get the right editions. Ebooks of these editions are also fine.
Course Policies:

**Attendance & Participation**
As in a regular class, your presence and participation are crucial to your individual success and to the cultivation of a learning community. Failure to participate as part of the community we are building here will negatively impact your grade. Students missing more than five discussions (explained below) should not expect to pass the course. Additionally, your active participation in class discussions and the submission of short scaffolding assignments designed to develop your individual writing process will be included as part of your overall grade—25% of it, to be exact (see breakdown of final grades below). Needless to say, you shouldn’t miss any classes during the first two weeks of face-to-face meetings.

**Online Classroom Etiquette**
“Netiquette” is a set of rules for behaving properly in an online environment—an online classroom, in this case. In an online learning environment, some of the generally accepted rules for communicating digitally will still apply; however, some will be slightly different from those with which you might be familiar. The following bullet points cover some basics to communicating in an online classroom:

- Be sensitive to the fact that you’re interacting with human beings via this fancy technology, and human beings possess different cultural, ethnic, and linguistic backgrounds, different abilities, and different political and religious beliefs. It’s okay to have intellectual disagreements or debates related to course content—in fact, it’s encouraged—but failure to do so respectfully will not be tolerated by me or the community. Personal attacks and racist, sexist, or classist responses carry a one-strike policy here. This isn’t Reddit.
- Use good taste when composing your responses in discussions. Profanity, which I personally enjoy, should be avoided in this context, both because you cannot anticipate the reactions of your peers and because it is wise to use all writing you do in this environment as an opportunity to practice developing your academic style. Also consider that slang can be misunderstood or misinterpreted, so be careful with it.
- Don’t use all capital letters when composing your responses as this is considered “shouting” on the Internet and is regarded as impolite or aggressive. It can also be stressful on the eye when trying to read your message.
- Be careful when using acronyms. If you use an acronym it is best to spell out its meaning first, then put the acronym in parentheses afterward, for example: Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs). After that you can use the acronym freely throughout your message.
- Use clear and consistent grammar and spelling, and avoid using text-messaging shortcuts.

**Email Policy**
University of West Georgia students are provided a MyUWG e-mail account. The University considers this account to be an official means of communication between the University and the student. The purpose of the official use of the student e-mail account is to provide an effective means of communicating important university related information to UWG students in a timely manner. It is the
student’s responsibility to check his or her email. Though I will often communicate with you about course content and assignments using Course Den and welcome you to do the same, please email only from your UWG account to discuss final grades (because FERPA) or with time-sensitive questions or information, as I am often likely to see this correspondence sooner.

Though I will often reply to your emails promptly, please allow 24 hours for a response during the week (48 hours over the weekend), before sending a follow-up email or message. Please also bear in mind that Toulouse, France is 6 hours ahead of Carrollton, Georgia, and this could cause a lag between when you send your message and when I see it, so planning ahead will be particularly helpful to you. Remember that email is another opportunity to practice good writing techniques—always include a greeting and a closing with your name. Also, be sure to proofread for clarity, spelling, and grammar. Remember: well-written, courteous emails will get you far in life, and are MUCH more likely to receive prompt replies.

**Assignment Submission, Late Work, & Revision Policy**

All written assignments should be submitted on Course Den in the appropriate Dropbox or Discussion location by midnight on dates they are due in the course schedule below. **Emailed files will not be accepted**, except in the case of verified server failure (like system-wide Course Den maintenance or something). All assignments should be double spaced in a 12-point plain font (i.e. Times New Roman) and follow MLA formatting guidelines (remember that OWL thing?). All assignments need to be completed in or converted to .DOCX or .PDF formats. I grade in Turnitin, which does not accept other file formats, and so your assignments will not be accepted if they are in another format, like Pages or .TXT, even though these are common file types.

Because I have a generous revision policy (outlined below), you may not submit assignments late under any circumstances. If you are having trouble with an assignment, come and talk to me well ahead of that assignment’s due date; I do not grant last minute extensions for assignments. It is your responsibility to regularly back up your work and to ensure that the submitted product is formatted correctly. Submission of corrupted files or “I thought I uploaded the file” are not accepted excuses for late work, so I strongly suggest you save your work to a USB drive regularly (backing your work up on Google Drive or another cloud service might also be advisable) and double check that ALL of your submissions to Course Den go through as planned.

Any one major essay can be revised. You may submit this revision at any time before the end of the semester. Revision grades will completely replace the initial grade; the two will not be averaged. It is not possible to receive a lower grade on a revision. In the unlikely event that you submit a revision worse than your original, I will, of course, keep the higher grade. **Plagiarized papers are not available for revision, nor can you submit a “revision” for an assignment you simply did not turn in.** Only substantial revisions that address all of my comments on the original essay will receive a grade change. Correcting sentence-level errors alone does not count as a substantial revision. Weekly assignments can never be made up, as they reflect both engagement and attendance.

**Plagiarism**

*Plagiarism & Academic Dishonesty* - The Department of English and Philosophy defines plagiarism as taking personal credit for the words and ideas of others as they are presented in electronic, print, and verbal sources. The department expects that students will accurately credit sources in all assignments. An equally dishonest practice is fabricating sources or facts; it is another form of misrepresenting the truth. Plagiarism is grounds for failing the course. See also, excessive collaboration.

*Excessive Collaboration* - By the end of the term in both ENGL 1101 and 1102, students should demonstrate the ability to produce independent writing (writing without collaborative assistance of peers, writing tutors, or professionals in the field) that shows an acceptable level of competence. Although
classroom activities and out-of-class assignments may highlight collaborative learning and collaborative research, *excessive collaboration* (collaboration that results in the loss of a student's voice/style and original claims to course-related work) is considered another form of academic dishonesty and therefore will not be permitted. Basing your essays on themes developed in online study guide materials, such as *Shmoop*, counts as excessive collaboration. Even if you change the language, if the ideas aren’t yours and they aren’t cited, you are plagiarizing.

*Recycled Papers* - I do not mind if you are working on a similar assignment in another course and would like to combine your efforts there and in my course; however, you must disclose to me your plan for modifying your work in other courses to fit the parameters of assignment sheets for my course (or the other way around).

*Role of the Writing Center* - The role of the Writing Center is to offer consultation in which tutors question, respond to, offer choices, and encourage revision in student essays. Tutors do not evaluate or prescribe solutions to problematic areas in student essays, and tutors are specifically trained to avoid appropriating the student's work. For more information, visit the Writing Center online at [http://www.westga.edu/writing](http://www.westga.edu/writing).

The University policies for handling Academic Dishonesty are found in the following document:

*Student Catalog*: "Rights and Responsibilities"; Appendix J. [http://www.westga.edu/handbook/](http://www.westga.edu/handbook/)

*University of West Georgia Honor Code* - At the University of West Georgia, we believe that academic and personal integrity are based upon honesty, trust, fairness, respect, and responsibility. Students at West Georgia assume responsibility for upholding the honor code. West Georgia students pledge to refrain from engaging in acts that do not maintain academic and personal integrity. These include, but are not limited to, plagiarism, cheating, fabrication, aid of academic dishonesty, lying, bribery or threats, and stealing.

The University of West Georgia maintains and monitors a confidential Academic Dishonesty Tracking System. This database collects and reports patterns of repeated student violations across all the Colleges, the Ingram Library, and the School of Nursing.

Additionally, you are responsible for safeguarding your computer account. Your account and network connection are for your individual use. A computer account is to be used only by the person to whom it has been issued. You are responsible for all actions originating through your account or network connection. You must not impersonate others or misrepresent or conceal your identity in electronic messages and actions.

**Any student caught plagiarizing even a fraction of an assignment will receive a grade of 0/F for the assignment in question and possibly for the course as well.**

*Students with Disabilities*
If you have any special learning needs, particularly (but not limited to) needs defined under the Americans with Disabilities Act, and require specific accommodations, please do not hesitate to make these known to me, either yourself or through Disability Services in 272 Parker Hall.

*Americans with Disabilities Act* - Students with a documented disability may work with UWG Disability Services to receive essential services specific to their disability. All entitlements to accommodations are based on documentation and USG Board of Regents standards. If you need course adaptations or
accommodations because of a disability or chronic illness, or if you need to make special arrangements in
case the building must be evacuated, please notify your instructor in writing by the end of the second full
week of class and include a copy of your Student Accommodations Report (SAR), which is available only
from Disability Services. Students are entitled to accommodations if they deliver the SAR to the
instructor no later than the end of the second full week of class.

Students with documented special needs may expect accommodation in relation to classroom
accessibility, modification of testing, special test administration, etc. This is not only my personal
commitment: it is your right, and it is the law! For more information, please contact Disability Services at
the University of West Georgia.

Extra Credit
Learn not to expect extra credit. Do the work that gets you credit in the first place.

Taking Notes
Learning to take comprehensive detailed notes is an absolutely critical skill for your college years. You
are expected to take notes as you read independently and to structure your responses to texts around those
notes, referring to specific ideas and passages from course materials. Though I will not be monitoring this
stage in your writing process, it will be apparent from the quality of your work whether you kept good
notes on the thoughts and questions you had as you read or not. I recommend highlighting or underlining
ideas you find interesting or that seem important to you, language or concepts you do not understand,
vocabulary with which you are unfamiliar and will need to look up, and moments in course readings you
think you might be able to use as evidence for the arguments you will make in assignments and
discussion posts. Use different colors or symbols to indicate which of these each moment you’ve marked
reflects. You can do this digitally or on printed copies.

About the Writing Center
The University Writing Center works with students and other members of the UWG community to
improve writing skills. It is located in TLC 1201, and you can make an appointment by calling 678-839-
6513, emailing writing@westga.edu, or through Grades First. The Writing Center’s website, listing this
semester’s hours, is www.westga.edu/writing. Tutors in the Writing Center are trained to discuss ideas
with you, read drafts, and work through revisions of essays. They do not proofread for you. Tutors are
familiar with MLA, APA, Chicago/Turabian, and other citation formats.
Graded Assignments and Evaluation Procedures:

Participation and Short Assignments: 25%

This grade can be a significant asset or liability for borderline students. You are responsible for keeping up with the reading, displaying your knowledge of the texts by being active in class discussions online, and submitting process work and short assignments. These requirements are explained in more detail below. You can boost this grade by attending at least one e-conference with me.

Discussions of Reading Assignments – For each class period’s reading/viewing assignment, you will find a discussion topic or a specific writing prompt listed on Course Den. These will often be posted in advance, so you can use them to guide your reading and note taking and get ahead; however, you are required not only to submit your original response as a new thread, but to respond to 2 other submissions (or threads) on a given reading as well, so you must be attentive to these discussions on a weekly basis even if you submit your own initial post in advance of the due date. All new threads must be submitted by midnight on the date listed for each discussion topic in the course schedule. All replies must be posted by the end of the week (midnight Sunday). At that time, the discussions for that week’s readings will close permanently, meaning your participation in these discussions cannot be made up for credit if missed. You may only miss five of these discussions, in part or in total, if you intend to pass the course.

In these discussion posts, you will be responsible for demonstrating your knowledge of the reading (my video mini-lectures will help with this) and for constructing clear, succinct critical questions or observations in paragraph form. Please note that these are not reading responses in the sense that you tell me whether or not you liked the reading or agreed with it unless I specifically ask you to do so. I value your opinions, of course, but the point of these short assignments is to practice academic interrogation and argumentation, like that which you will be required to do in your essays, in a low-stakes setting.

Imagine these discussions as the most substantial replacement of class time. Were we meeting face to face, our class meetings would be discussion-centered. You would come in having read and made notes on the assigned material, and we would discuss it as a class. Online discussions work the same way, and as such, will be graded for completion and averaged together at the end of the course. This means that all serious engagements with course readings and other students’ posts will receive full credit. Exceptional responses will receive extra points. Scant submissions that dialogue with the readings only vaguely will receive only partial credit. You will receive no credit for ungenerous responses to your peers. I will drop the lowest of these from the final grade. I will often, but not always, respond to your posts with questions or helpful comments, as I will be participating in these discussions as well, but your scores for these posts will be kept privately in the gradebook. For select weeks, I will post a video or textual recap of our discussions, too. These will help contextualize the conversation we’re having toward the goals of each essay assignment. (Should these discussions fall flat because you are not keeping up with the reading or taking care to respond thoughtfully in each case, this discussion-based class format will be replaced by graded quizzes, which will surely be less fun.)

Process Assignments – This category encompasses any short exercises or developmental writing assignments I assign. In lieu of reflections on course readings, I will sometimes ask you to complete short writing assignments related to your major assignments during this time. These assignments will ask you to do things like: practice thesis statements, introductory paragraphs, and concluding paragraphs; write short summaries, paraphrases, and utilize the correct quotation of paragraphs from the reading; and effectively challenge an author’s argument or use it to support one of your own. Often, you will be able to revise and use this material in your major assignments later. Though I will give you feedback on these
assignments, you will receive full credit for seriously attempting them, as with class discussions. Sometimes, these will be public, and other students will be invited to respond with questions or constructive feedback; other times, only you and I will see them, and only I will give you feedback.

**E-conference Guidelines** – I recommend that students have an individual conference with me during my virtual office hours at least once during the semester. We can meet via Skype or g-chat, but you must set up a date and time with me in advance. For these conferences, students should send in advance a draft (however rough) of the essay in progress or revision and be prepared with a list of questions, so we can discuss the work at hand to the student’s maximum benefit. In addition to your own questions about your draft, which can focus on whatever aspect of the draft you feel needs work, I will be asking you questions about the draft in order to help you think about revision strategies. These conferences are optional, but the better prepared you come to talk about your draft, the more useful they will be to you.

**Essays & Projects: 75%**

Students will complete 3 major written assignments. These assignments include:

1. **Summary/Response Paper (2-3 pp.) – 25%**
2. **Critical/Rhetorical Analysis Paper (3-5 pp.) – 25%**
3. **Application/Reflection Paper/Project (5-7 pp. or digital equivalent) – 25%**

Specific assignment sheets and standard rubrics will be distributed on Course Den before each essay is due.

Please note that the number of assignments you see here and the relative weight of each one is designed to encourage to you take your time planning and developing each essay and to take advantage of the opportunity to revise your work. They are all weighted the same because you can revise them.

You will receive graded assignments with letter grades only. You can imagine them numerically like this: A+=98%; A=95%; A-=92%; B+=88%; B=85%; B-=82%; C+=78%; C=75%; C-=72%; D+=68%; D=65%; D-=62%; F=50%

Note that students must have a C or higher to progress to the next course.
Please note that all readings need to be completed by the date they are listed on the syllabus and will be central to class activities/posts required on that day. All readings are found on Course Den unless otherwise specified.

This reading schedule is subject to change as is necessary for the success of the class. I will never add additional required reading or graded assignments. You will be notified of any changes in class and via Course Den.

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<th>Week 1 (in person)</th>
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<td>8/11 – Introductions</td>
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<th>Week 2 (in person)</th>
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<td>8/16 – Read: Robin Davidson, “Against Travel Writing”</td>
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<td>8/18 – Read: Edward Said, “Introduction to Orientalism”</td>
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<th>Week 3: Walking About</th>
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<td>8/23 – Read: Rebecca Solnit, “The Solitary Stroller and the City”</td>
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<td>Discuss: Solnit</td>
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<td>8/25 – Read: Michel de Certeau, “Walking in the City”</td>
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<td>Discuss: Certeau</td>
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### Week 4: Cosmopolitan Travel

8/30 – Read: Geoff Dyer, “Travel Day”  
Listen as you read (seriously): Ray and Bob – “Air Travel” (1962)  
Discuss: Dyer  
Review: Assignment Sheet for Essay 1 & Examples (see video)

9/1 – Read: Catherine Lu, “The One and Many Faces of Cosmopolitanism”  
Discuss: Lu

### Week 5: Backpacking, Hiking, Trekking

9/6 – View: The Loneliest Planet (Netflix and don’t chill.)  
Discuss: The Loneliest Planet

9/8 – Read: Scott Tobias, Review of The Loneliest Planet & discussion* in Spoiler Space (A.V. Club)  
Process Assignment: Practice Summary (Use They Say, I Say, Pt. 1 “They Say” to complete this assignment.)

*I know the golden rule of internetting is “Never read the comments,” but in this case, I’m asking you to read the comments. In addition to providing a lively conversation about the film, this discussion roughly demonstrates what I’m looking for in the discussions on Course Den, so perhaps you’ll want to look at this before you make your first post—if you don’t mind spoilers.

### Week 6: Travel Journalism & Logos

9/13 – Read: Elliott Woods, “Garbage City”  
View: Mini-lecture on Rhetorical Appeals  
Essay 1 Due

9/15 – Read: Thomas Swick, “My Days with the Anti-mafia”  
Discuss: Woods & Swick

### Week 7: Pilgrimage & Pathos

9/20 – Read: Tom Bissell, “War Wounds”  
Process Assignment: They Say, I Say 1 (Use They Say, I Say, Pt. 2 “I Say” with this assignment.)

9/22 – Read: Murad Kalam, “If It Doesn’t Kill You First”  
Discuss: Bissell & Kalam

### Week 8: Experience & Ethos

9/27 – Read: Bill Bryson, Chp. 14 from In a Sunburned Country  
Process Assignment: They Say, I Say 2 (Use They Say, I Say, Pt. 2 “I Say” with this assignment.)

9/29 – Read: William T. Vollman, “They Came Out Like Ants!”  
Discuss: Bryson & Vollman

*9/30 – Last day to Withdraw with a grade of W from Full Term (non-eCore)-16 week courses.
**Week 9: Diaspora**  
10/4 – Read: James Clifford: “Diasporas”  
Discuss: Clifford  
Review: Assignment Sheet for Essay 2 & Examples (see video)  

10/6 – **Fall Break, No Class Requirements**

**Week 10: Refugee Texts**  
10/11 – Read/Explore: Granta’s collection of statements on the contemporary refugee crisis  
Process Assignment: Working with Appeals (see video)  
10/13 – Read: Claire Hajaj, “Raqqa Road: A Syrian Escape”  
Discuss: Hajaj

**Week 11: Dark Tourism**  
10/18 – Read: Tina Amirtha, *Why Death Tourism is Thriving* (*Vice*) and Isabelle Cossart, “I was the Face of Disaster Tourism” (*Buzzfeed*). These are super short! You can read them on your phones!  
**Essay 2 Due**  
10/20 – Read: Nick Osbaldiston, “The Role of Horror and Dread in the Sacred Experience”  
Discuss: DDT in Theory

**Week 12: DDT Cont.**  
10/25 – Read: Dimitar Kenarov, “Pop-art Radovan”  
Review: Assignment Sheet for Essay 3 & Examples (see video)  
Discuss: DDT in Practice

**Week 13: Traveling Without Moving**  
11/1 – Read: Sherry Turkle, “Virtuality and Its Discontents”  
Discuss: Turkle  
11/3 – Read: Mary Fuller and Henry Jenkins, *Nintendo and New World Travel Writing*”  
Process Assignment: Thesis Development & Comparative Thesis Statements (Use *They Say, I Say*, Pt. 3 with this assignment.)

**Week 14: Other Worlds**  
11/8 – Listen: Michael J. Massimino, *A View of the Earth* (*The Moth*)  
Discuss: Massimino  
11/10 – No assigned reading or discussion for this class period to help you get through next week’s novella. I recommend actually using this time in this way.
### Week 15: Imagining Time Travel

  Discuss: Wells 1

  Discuss: Wells 2

### Week 16

11/22 – **Thanksgiving Break, No Class Requirements**

11/24 – **Thanksgiving Break, No Class Requirements**

### Week 17

11/29 – No assigned reading for this class period.  
  **Essay 3/Final Project Due**

12/1 (Last Day!) – No assigned reading for this class period.  
  View: Course Wrap-Up  
  **All Revisions Due**

*There is no final exam in this class. Making a sincere effort to revise your work will demonstrate to me your cumulative progress over the course of the semester.*