

# Multiple Multiplicities:

## An English 106 Syllabus

Created by:

Erin Chamberlain (edchambe@purdue.edu)

Wendy Long (wnlong@purdue.edu)

Amy Munson (atmunson@purdue.edu)

Susan Stenlund (sstenlun@purdue.edu)

Tory Vandeventer (tvandeve@purdue.edu)

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## **I. Overview:**

“An argument can be any text – whether written, spoken, or visual [or a combination of some or all of these] – that expresses a point of view” (Lunsford, Ruskiewicz, and Walters 4). Multiple Multiplicities reflects the complexities of life in both past and contemporary cultures. Using multicultural, multidisciplinary, and multi-narrative texts, students will learn to trace the intricacies of cultural and social issues through the lens of different genres and disciplines. They will articulate their investigation of these issues through process-based composition. We will be drawing from rhetorical theorists Sharon Crowley and Andrea Lunsford, cultural studies theorists Henry A. Giroux and Stanley Aronowitz and bell hooks and cultural literary theorists Delores la Guardia and Hans P. Guth in order to create a syllabus that reflects the “multiplicity” of the course design. All elements of this course reflect the objectives, goals, and outcomes of the Purdue University English 106 course.

## **II. Rationale**

This syllabus aims to create a space in which instructors can adapt the concepts seen here to fit their own areas of expertise while maintaining a consistent means of achieving the goals and outcomes set forth by the University. The goals defined by Multiple Multiplicities are designed to provide a useful foundation for our students to draw upon while they are at Purdue as well as their future careers. Additionally, because a multicultural approach can encompass several different forms, instructors will be able to choose what facets of multiculturalism they want their students to explore. For instance, this course may focus on local culture, pop-culture, global culture, or American culture. The readings chosen by the instructors will then reflect the specific focus. (For a more detailed explanation of the multiplicity of multicultural instruction, please see the Multicultural Education section in Part III -- Theoretical Background). Furthermore, it is our intent that all courses using this syllabus will achieve the goals outlined by the Introductory Writing Program while also providing a dynamic learning experience for first year composition students.

### III. Theoretical Background

#### a. Multicultural Education

Instructors who utilize multicultural approaches to teaching composition provide an invaluable tool which allows students to examine the “issues that confront us on the way to a richer pluralistic meeting of majority and minority cultures” (la Guardia and Guth *iii*). As the School of Liberal Arts articulates, “The central mission of the School of Liberal Arts is to educate every individual to live more knowledgeably, responsibly, and humanely. In all disciplines, we apply the lessons of the past to the present, often those of one culture to another.” As a result, students will look at the pluralistic cultural circumstance in which contemporary America finds itself by analyzing the issues surrounding cultural diversity and unity. As a result, students will be better prepared to take on the “challenge of honoring diversity while searching for the common center,” which, in turn, will provide an opportunity for them to think critically about their own cultural situations (*iii*). Furthermore, such an emphasis on multiculturalism provides students with a “framework by which to make sense of what sex, race, social class, and sexual orientation mean in contemporary American society” (Rosenblum and Travis 30). A multicultural education is “enriched by hearing [diverse] voices and by understanding” the contexts “in which the authors were writing” (Rico and Mano *xi*). Examining these issues allow students to learn about others and, ultimately, themselves (English 106 Goal 2). To this end, this course will incorporate readings by writers from diverse cultures that give rise to critical thinking. By analyzing multicultural texts, students will discover and assess similarities among different cultures, add their own insights to the discourse on multiculturalism, and appreciate the ways in which culture influences perspicacity and epistemology (Hirschberg and Hirschberg *xvii*). As a result, this syllabus will help students understand that they “can and should use writing for a variety of academic, civic, and personal purposes” (English 106 Goal 5).

Because multicultural instruction assumes many forms, instructors will be able to choose what focus they wish to explore with their classes and select texts accordingly. For instance, a class that emphasizes multiculturalism on a global level would use texts that reflect the experience of diverse global cultures. A class which focuses on multiculturalism in America may select readings similar to the ones listed in the “In Search of a Multicultural America” syllabus (see VIII -- c).

**b. Multi-Disciplinary Composition**

Because of the new direction of Introductory Composition at Purdue, 106 may be the only English class taken by many students. In order to best prepare each student for his/her future writing career at PU, this syllabus is designed to introduce students to multi-disciplinary approaches to writing and allow each student to investigate theories and issues behind writing for the different disciplines s/he will encounter in the future. As Ann Merle Feldman notes in *Writing and Learning in the Disciplines*, “Students entering college frequently find academic practices a mystery. They bring to the academic context rich and extensive personal experience and a desire to succeed, but they do not know how to make use of these resources” (xix). In an effort to achieve set goals, this course is designed to help students realize they are fully capable of participating in these academic conversations by combining analysis of personal experience with various forms of academic research (English 106 Goal 4). By writing about and for various academic disciplines, student will also learn the basics of different writing conventions for different areas of study, which will help prepare them for their particular fields. Also, toward this end, students will be taught to recognize different rhetorical strategies while working with different research formats and different source materials (English 106 Goal 7).

**c. Multi-narrative Texts**

Finally, in *Multiple Multiplicities*, students will be “reading” multiple narratives. The readings for this course will include standard written texts, but will also utilize texts in other media including art, film, web pages, and public spaces as mandatory texts for reading and class discussion. As Aronowitz and Giroux suggest, in the postmodern world, as a homogeneous culture is lost, as students try to come to terms with a harsh world, as formerly hidden voices begin to be heard, students need to know that the curriculum is relevant to them and that they do have their own places in the world. Richard Fehlman writes of using film in the classroom as a way to find this relevancy for students in the 1990s. In the first decade of the 21<sup>st</sup> century, this should be extended to web-based and other digital material as students spend more time in a digital world as well as artistic and cultural material as students find themselves in a global, multicultural world.

One of the outcomes of Purdue’s English 106 is for students to “demonstrate an understanding of the basic elements of visual rhetoric.” In *Multiple Multiplicities*, by “critically interpret[ing] and evaluat[ing] a variety of types of texts in a variety of media” (English 106 Goal 3), students will begin to understand the elements of visual culture, enabling them to include such forms in their products. As the instructor teaches methods for reading and understanding these texts in various media, students will learn to recognize and “understand the inherent rhetorical situation of writing” (English 106 Goal 6). Using multiple narratives from various media within multiple disciplines, emphasizing multicultural aspects of society in English 106 should engage the students and help them to grow as critical thinkers, writers, and creators.

## IV. English 106 Goals

The Introductory Writing Committee at Purdue University has developed eight goals outlining the expectations of all English 106 courses. These goals encompass the rhetorical situation and strategies, the writing process, visual rhetoric, peer-review and personal reflection, and writing conventions. Each Multiple Multiplicities syllabus will incorporate these goals into its course design. In addition to the course-wide goals, the Multiple Multiplicities Syllabus Group has outlined six goals that match the theoretical background of the multicultural, multidisciplinary, multi-textual course approach.

<b>a. Purdue University English 106 Goals</b>	<b>b. Multiple Multiplicities English 106 Goals</b>
1. To help students develop effective and efficient processes for writing by providing practice with planning, drafting, revising, and editing their writing in multiple genres using a variety of media.	1. To enable students to analyze multicultural texts in order to discover and assess similarities among different cultures and add their own insights to the discourse of multiculturalism
2. To provide students with opportunities to write as a means of discovery and learning about themselves; as an integral part of inquiry about the material, social, and cultural contexts they share with others; and as a means of exploring, understanding, and evaluating ideas in academic disciplines.	2. To introduce students to multidisciplinary approaches to writing and allow each student to investigate theories and issues behind writing for the different disciplines s/he will encounter in the future.
3. To help students develop their abilities to create, interpret and evaluate a variety of types of texts integrating verbal and visual components.	3. To enable students to participate in academic dialogue through analysis of personal experience and various forms of academic research.
4. To prepare students for writing in later university courses across the curriculum by helping them learn to articulate, develop, and support a point through both first-hand and archival research.	4. To help students recognize various rhetorical strategies and writing conventions within different disciplines.
5. To help students understand that they can and should use writing for multiple academic, civic, and personal purposes.	5. To help students critically examine the various types of texts that inundate them daily in their worlds.

<b>a. Purdue University English 106 Goals</b>	<b>b. Multiple Multiplicities English 106 Goals</b>
6. To help students understand the inherent rhetorical situation of writing.	6. To allow students to express their assessments of the multiplicity of texts they encounter by creating multi-textual compositions.
7. To teach students to use the conventions of form, style, and citation and documentation of sources that are appropriate to their purposes for composing in a variety of media for a variety of rhetorical contexts.	
8. To demonstrate that coherent structure, effective style, and grammatical and mechanical correctness contribute to a writer's credibility and authority.	



## V. Course Requirements and Primary Texts

### Course Requirements

Students will be reading a standardized composition text as well as supplemental materials in preparation for producing their own work. They will be composing 8000-10000 words of polished drafts and 2000-3000 words of reflective responses to readings and peer work. There will be four major projects for which students will be expected to plan, draft, revise, edit, and proofread their work.

### Required Texts:

All instructors using this syllabus will have students purchase Everything's an Argument 2<sup>nd</sup> edition (without readings) by Lunsford, Ruskiewicz, and Walters for composition instruction. They should also have students purchase A Pocket Style Manual 3<sup>rd</sup> edition by Diana Hacker or access Purdue's On-line Writing Lab for stylistic issues. It is expected that instructors select additional readings to supplement each unit and help enhance student understanding of the cultures being discussed with each of those units. See sample reading lists to follow for examples of additional readings included with several different syllabus themes. In addition, instructors may wish to consult the following books as resources for the various projects in the class.

- Reading Critically Writing Well for the critical autobiography and proposal (ISBN: 0-312-39047-5)
- The Call to Write for the visual/multimedia argument (ISBN 0-321-08497-7)
- The Bedford Guide for College Writers for the visual/multimedia argument (ISBN: 0-312-39632-5)

## VI. Overview of Goals and Assignments (Table)

The following table outlines the ways in which the four basic projects; Critical Autobiography, Synthesis/Analysis, Proposal and Multi-Media Argument, fulfill the goals for both 106 in general and the specific goals for Multiple Multiplicities.

Goals	Critical Autobiography	Synthesis/Analysis	Proposal	Multi-Media Argument
106 Goal 1		*	*	*
106 Goal 2	*	*		*
106 Goal 3			*	*
106 Goal 4	*	*		*
106 Goal 5		*		*
106 Goal 6	*	*	*	*
106 Goal 7	*	*	*	*
106 Goal 8	*	*	*	*
M M Goal 1	*		*	
M M Goal 2	*	*	*	*
M M Goal 3		*		*
M M Goal 4	*	*	*	*
M M Goal 5	*		*	*
M M Goal 6			*	*

## VII. General Weekly Overview

The following is a skeletal outline for common readings and primary assignments. Additional readings and activities will be designated by individual instructors.

### UNIT ONE – CRITICAL AUTOBIOGRAPHY

#### Week One

Classroom: Introduction to 106 – Syllabus and Schedule & Autobiography Unit

Computer: Writing Sample to assess student competency. Technology self-assessment and sign ups for “Technology Teaching Groups” (At pertinent times in the semester, as a lead-in to the multimedia project, groups will present mini-lessons and, as possible, lead other students in completing an activity using the technology. Possible technologies for teaching groups: Advanced Word, Dreamweaver, Flash Animation, and i-video. Classroom and conference time may be used to help students prepare these presentations. Instructors can develop this as they choose as a weighted assignment.)

Conferences: Discuss Writing Samples

Reading Critically Writing Well chapter 2 pages 12-23

#### Week Two

Classroom: Discussion of readings and rhetorical strategies for autobiography

Computer: Explore web-based autobiographies (i.e.

<[http://xroads.virginia.edu/~HYPER/HADAMS/ha\\_home.html](http://xroads.virginia.edu/~HYPER/HADAMS/ha_home.html)>)

Conferences: Continue discussing writing samples

Reading Critically Writing Well chapter 2 pages 58-69

#### Week Three

Classroom: Continue discussion of readings and pre-writing strategies.

Computer: Teaching presentation and opportunity for practice from the “Flash Animation” group. Suggest that students work toward autobiographical issues in their animation.

Conferences: Addressing individual writing concerns, based on drafts and previous assessments.

#### Week Four

Classroom: Finish discussion of readings and second draft due.

Computer: Introduction to MLA and APA documentation through the OWL powerpoint presentations and a practice assignment.

Conferences: Addressing individual writing concerns, based on drafts and previous assessments.

### UNIT TWO – ANALYSIS/SYNTHESIS

#### Week Five

Classroom: Introduce Analysis/Synthesis Unit

Computer: Introduction to web-based research and analysis and evaluation of the quality of sources.

Conferences: Small group work on analysis

Everything's an Argument chapters 1-3

**Week Six**

Classroom: Discuss readings and topic approval

Computer: Based on evaluative rubrics from previous class, students present exemplary samples of research sources.

Conferences: Small group work on analysis

**Week Seven**

Classroom: Discuss readings – classroom instruction on synthesis.

Computer: Teaching presentation and opportunity for practice from Dreamweaver group.

Conferences: Revision strategies

**Week Eight**

Classroom: Finish discussion of readings and second draft due.

Computer: Introduction to on-line peer review and discussion tools (i.e. MOO)

Conferences: Revision strategies

**UNIT THREE - PROPOSAL****Week Nine**

Classroom: Introduce Proposal Unit

Computer: Look at examples of on-line proposals

Conferences: Discipline specific proposal analyses

Readings: *Everything's An Argument* chapter on proposals

**Week Ten**

Classroom: Discussing readings and proposal concepts

Computer: Teaching presentation and opportunity for practice from the Advanced Word teaching group emphasizing charts, tables, and other visual enhancements for proposal presentations.

Conferences: Discipline specific proposal analyses

Readings: *Everything's An Argument* chapter on proposals

**Week Eleven**

Classroom: Discussing readings and proposal concepts

Computer: Draft of Proposal due for peer workshops (in person or on-line exchange)

Conferences: Student-guided discussion/instruction

**Week Twelve**

Classroom: Finish discussion of readings and second draft due

Computer: Teaching presentation from i-video teaching group.

Conferences: Student-guided discussion/instruction

**UNIT FOUR – MULTI-MEDIA ARGUMENT****Week Thirteen**

Classroom: Introduce Multi-Media Unit

Computer: Explore/Read Multi-Media (i.e. audio, print, cyber, visual, film, etc.)

Conferences: Group work

The Bedford Guide for College Writers chapter 22

**Week Fourteen**

Classroom: Discussing multi-media texts

Computer: Time to work on multimedia projects with instructor and “expert students”  
input and aid.

Conferences: Group work

**Week Fifteen**

Classroom: Group work

Computer: Draft of Multi-Media Argument due for peer workshops as groups showcase  
their drafts using the technology they have chosen.

Conferences: wrapping up

**Week Sixteen**

Classroom: Presentations (May need extra computer classroom time)

Computer: Presentations

Conferences: wrapping up

## VIII. Sample Reading Lists and Assignment Sheets

### a. Reading List and Critical Autobiography

#### Sample English 106 Course: Multiple Mythologies

##### General Overview

“Multiple mythologies” centers upon the concept that myth as a cultural phenomenon is as diverse and flexible as the Multiple Multiplicity syllabus it is designed to fit. The idea of multiple multiplicity stresses the importance of multi-cultural, multi-narrative, and multi-disciplinary texts that “reflect the complexities of life in both past and contemporary cultures.” Myth not only runs through similar patterns in different cultures, but also can be expressed in many different forms that also reflect changing technologies in both oral and written traditions. It is also expressed in several mediums such as music, poetry, literature, prose, and, recently, in film and on the Internet. The variety of genres also allows students to explore different rhetorical strategies. There is no required format for the telling of a myth, and myths reflect race, gender, society, sexuality, and morals in ways that few other genres can match. Mythology helps students reflect on the past and compare it with the present, and see what this evolution reveals about the changes that have taken place through time and culture.

The following readings are a short sample of how one might structure the course. Each one is listed by unit, but it should be noted that many of these readings have various commentaries on gender, class, race, etc. and could be taught in several units. The order is at the discretion of the instructor, as well as any additional readings he or she would like to add to the list.

##### Introduction to Myth

- Campbell, Joseph. “The Four Functions of Mythology.”
- Portfolio of Creation Myths (*Dreams and Inward Journeys*).
- Groban, Joshua. “Two Myths.”
- Propp, Vladimir. “Morphology of the Folktale.”

##### Unit One: Critical Autobiography: The Myth of Identity

This unit focuses upon reading the autobiographies of authors who explore their identities through the lens of culture and their places within it.

- hooks, bell. “Writing Autobiography.”
- Sexton, Linda Gray. “Bones and Black Pudding.”
- Alvarez, Julia. “An Autobiography of Scheherazade.”
- Eisenberg, Deborah. “In a Trance of Self.”

##### Unit Two: Analysis/Synthesis: The Myth of Gender

Unit two emphasizes how to do analysis and synthesis in any genre. The readings demonstrate the multiplicity by including poetry, criticism, and short fiction; by using one theme—that of gender—students can also learn how to use analysis and synthesis to explore how patterns in myth frequently reoccur in different cultures and time periods.

- Lunsford and Ruskiewicz. *Everything's an Argument*. Chapters 1-3 (types of argument).
- Sexton, Anne. *Transformations*.
- Rowe, Karen E. "To Spin a Yarn: The Female Voice in Folklore and Fairy Tale"
- Carter, Angela. "The Tiger's Bride"
- Kincaid, Jamaica. "Girl"
- Millet, Lydia. "The Wife Killer"

### **Unit Three: Proposal: The Myth of Culture**

Each of the following readings break down particular "myths" about the social roles that exist in a particular culture, and what individuals must sacrifice in order to achieve that ideal. These authors not only criticize and reveal the problems inherent with these social roles, but also propose alternative solutions. Some of the readings also combine elements of the previous two units—autobiography, analysis and synthesis—to further make their points, and this will help students incorporate what they have learned so far.

- *Everything's an Argument* (proposal section)
- Updike, John. "On Being a Self Forever."
- Steinem, Gloria. "Ruth's Song (Because She Could Not Sing It)."
- Ryan, Joan. "Little Girls in Pretty Boxes."

### **Unit Four: Multi-Media Argument: Myth Remade**

The multi-media argument unit will attempt to show students how myth is reflected through different forms of multi-media today such as music and film, and how the myth evolves when it the form of argument is expressed through sight and sound. By adding music to this section, it will also allow the instructor to make comparisons between past oral traditions and present reminders of that past.

- *Everything's an Argument* (chapter 15)
- Zipes, Jack. "Breaking the Disney Spell."
- Selected Disney animated films.
- Audio sample, "The Bonny Swans," Loreena Mckennitt
- Audio sample, "The Lady of Shalott," Loreena Mckennitt (paired with Tennyson's poem).
- Heiner, Heidi Anne. *SurLaLune*. <<http://www.surlalunefairytales.com/>>.

## **Sample English 106 Assignment**

### **Critical Autobiography**

After reading and interpreting the autobiographical texts presented in this section, students will create their own autobiography that includes the following:

1. A use of culture, gender, class, religion, age, or race as a context.
2. The autobiography should identify the “myths” of whichever one they choose, and how they themselves do or do not fit into this mould.
3. A critical narrative that reflects the student’s identity within a particular context.

Goals fulfilled: Students will learn how to be self-reflexive, learn the genre of autobiography, understand the “multiple” factors that influence their lives, and become critically aware of them through examination of themselves as individuals within society.

Resources for beginning the autobiography:

Axelrod, Rise B. and Charles R. Cooper. Reading Critically, Writing Well: A Reader and Guide. 6<sup>th</sup> ed. Boston: Bedford/St. Martin’s, 2002. Chapter 2.  
Steinem, Gloria. “Ruth’s Song (Because She Could Not Sing It)”  
hooks, bell. “Writing Autobiography”

The paper should be a minimum of five pages, and should satisfy the following questions:

1. Is the autobiography written in close detail (i.e. description)?
2. Does the autobiography fulfill the three criteria above?
3. Is the autobiography a narration? Does it tell a story?
4. Does the autobiography have a wider social significance?

Assignment Objectives:

This assignment is intended to have students understand not only the stories of their own lives, but also the influences from a wider social context that have impacted those stories. After considering different multi-cultural, multi-narrative, and multi-media texts, students will be able to express their autobiography by using various rhetorical strategies. For example, they may write a traditional essay, or write creatively in with either poetry or fiction, use music, art, or even perhaps use technologies to tell their stories (or combine any of these). The use of the critical autobiography will also help students develop their skills in narration, description, analysis and even synthesis as students learn which details contain the most significance and the ways to express themselves most effectively to their audience.



**b. Reading List and Synthesis/Analysis****Fiction vs. Fact/facts:  
Exploring the Middle Ground through Composition****Course Description**

This course asks students to analyze and explore the middle ground between fiction and fact with an overlying goal of seeing that fiction/fact is more complicated than a simple binary opposition. Students will use the six basic themes of identity, education, history, science, nature and community as starting points for analyzing several works of fiction and drawing parallels between these works and contemporary cultural issues. Students will produce a number of writings which involve not only analyzing this middle ground, but also working with a variety of research techniques and developing rhetorical strategies through the construction of various arguments.

Students will write four essays (one per unit) in a process based system of workshopping drafts with peers and revising papers at least two times. Each paper will deal with one of the four readings and must then tie that reading to contemporary culture by analyzing one of the six themes. Students select the theme they wish to work with for each unit, but must use four different themes throughout the semester.

In class time will be used to discuss the readings and work on rhetorical strategies for constructing arguments. The course pack will serve as the basic composition handbook for the course and will also be used as an introduction to researching and MLA formatting. Supplemental readings will deal with the six themes in contemporary culture in addition to modeling different forms of argument and research.

**Readings***Everything's and Argument*

Unit One – Critical Autobiography

Supplemental Readings: *My Brother* by Jamaica Kincaid

Unit Two – Analysis/Synthesis

Supplemental Readings: *Frankenstein* by Mary Shelley

Unit Three – Proposal

Supplemental Readings: *Handmaid's Tale* by Margaret Atwood

Unit Four – Multi-Media Argument

Supplemental Readings: *To Kill a Mockingbird* by Harper Lee

**Sample Analysis/Synthesis****Analysis/Synthesis:**

This assignment focuses on analyzing various texts, preferably from multiple genres, and using those analyses to construct a synthesis of perspectives which also brings a new facet to arguments already on the table. Students should use this assignment to incorporate close readings of various texts, both primary and secondary, and see how those sources “speak” to each other and to the new argument being made.

Goals for Analysis/Synthesis:

1. Be able to identify socially related themes in a collection of readings and synthesize their arguments.
2. Identify how these themes tie fiction to current cultural and social issues.
3. Construct an argument which uses specific rhetorical strategies<sup>1</sup> to analyze a cultural situation and/or concern within the context of a particular discipline.
4. Research credible and relevant source material which relates to the overriding theme used to pull fiction into the constructed argument.
5. Utilize collaboration in peer workshop to strengthen individual arguments by peer review and revision.

**Minimum of 6 pages for final draft**

**Workshop draft of at least 5 pages.**

**6 sources required – must consist of at least 3 different kinds of source material.**

**MLA formatting requirements.**

## C. Sample Reading List and Proposal

### Multiple Multiplicities: In Search of a Multicultural America

#### Course Description

What is an American? This is the question the class will be exploring and attempting to define this semester. In this class, students will be reading, analyzing, and writing texts dealing with the fluidity of American culture.

We will attempt to “search for America” by reading a multitude of different “texts”, including histories, books, poems, music, art, photography, and web-based texts. Your job this semester is to critically explore how Americans and American culture is defined through these texts. How do these authors, artists, and musicians define and express the American experience? In what ways do these texts connect? Depart? How do they affect students’ original thoughts on what it is to be an American?

In this class, students will be composing four papers (one per unit). The composition process will be method-oriented, which means that they will work on generating ideas, researching, drafting, revising, and structuring final papers. The research aspect of the course is demanding. It is absolutely necessary for students to participate in all stages of composition as well as to keep up with course readings and contribute to class discussions.

#### Sample English 106 Course Overview

##### Unit 1 Weeks 1-4: *Re-Examining History: Finding Our Map*

“America: The Multi-national Society” by Ishael Reed

“The Cult of Ethnicity” by Arthur M. Schlesinger, Jr.

“America” by George Potter

*In Search of America* ABC News Web site

<<http://abcnews.go.com/America/home.html>>

*Bury My Heart at Wounded Knee* by Dee Alexander Brown

*Scarlet’s Walk* by Tori Amos, plus accompanying literature

“Able to Laugh at Their People, Not Just Cry For Them” by James Sterngold

**Video Viewing:** *Smoke Signals*

**Paper Assignment:** Autobiography

##### Unit 2 Weeks 5-7: *Finding Our Name, Finding Our Home*

*The House on Mango Street* by Sandra Cisneros

“Freeway 280” by Lorna Dee Cervantes

“Signs from the Heart: California Chicano Murals” by Eva Sperling Cockroft and Holly Barnet-Sanchez

Georgia O'keefe online art exhibit <<http://www.okeefemuseum.org/indexflash.php>>  
 Everything's an Argument chapters 1-3

**Video Viewing:** TBA

**Paper Assignment:** Synthesis/Analysis

Unit 3 Weeks 8-12: *Finding Our Voice*

“Seventeen Syllables” by Hisaye Yamamoto

subsequent information on haiku poetry

Asian American women's online art exhibit

<[www.sla.purdue.edu/WAAW/AsianAmerican/](http://www.sla.purdue.edu/WAAW/AsianAmerican/)>

“This Blessed House” by Jhumpa Lahiri

“A Hindu Renaissance” by Deborah Kovach Caldwell

“How it Feels to be Colored Me” by Zora Neale Hurston

“My Name is Margaret” by Maya Angelou

**Video Viewing:** TBA

**Paper Assignment:** Proposal

Unit 4 Weeks 13-16: *Finding Our America Through Music and Images*

Music

“Grievance”, “Do the Evolution”, and “Bushleaguer” by Pearl Jam

“Born in the USA” by Bruce Springsteen

“Smells Like Teen Spirit” by Nirvana

“Home on the Range: Cherokee Edition” by Tori Amos

“This Land is Your Land” by Woody Guthrie

“Amerika” by Steve Earle

“Buffalo Soldier” by Bob Marley

“Fear of a Black Planet” by Public Enemy

“I'm Afraid of Americans” by David Bowie with Trent Reznor

“Allen Town” Billy Joel

“Pink Houses” by John Mellancamp

“Subdivision” by Ani DiFranco

(more to come)

Images

<[http://ralls.k12.TX.us/RES/2ndgrdpix/2ndgrade\\_usapics.htm](http://ralls.k12.TX.us/RES/2ndgrdpix/2ndgrade_usapics.htm)>

*In Search of America* web site <<http://abcnews.go.com/America/home.html>>

Hulton Archive <[www.hultonarchive.com/](http://www.hultonarchive.com/)>

<[corbis.com](http://corbis.com)>

(more to come)

Readings

“Columbine: Whose Fault Is It?” by Marilyn Manson

**Video Viewing:** *Bowling for Columbine*

**Final Project:** Multimedia Project

### Sample Proposal

#### Purpose:

This assignment calls for you to research, analyze, and make a decision about a specific topic. Proposals are challenging for writers because they must be presented clearly and persuasively (Lunsford, Ruskiewicz, and Walters 192). In your proposal, a comprehensible and effective plan of action must be expressed, and likely outcomes must be explored. Additionally, be sure to focus on audience and audience response. This particular assignment encompasses goals 1, 3, 6, 7, and 8 as set forth by Purdue University as well as goals 1, 2, 4, 6, and 7 as articulated by this course.

#### Assignment:

After reading Yamamoto's "Seventeen Syllables," Lahiri's "This Blessed House," and Angelou's "My Name is Margaret," choose one prevalent theme or issue from the readings that interests you. Next, begin to develop ideas for multi-media projects that will speak to your chosen issue(s). Once you have selected a general plan for the project, prepare a proposal for the anticipated project. Draw from information gleaned from *Everything's and Argument* and *Reading Critically Writing Well* as well as from the examples of proposals we have viewed in class.

This particular assignment will lead directly to our final project—the multi-media argument. After completing the proposal, you will begin to construct your proposed multi-media projects.

The proposal should include the following sections:

- Purpose
- Materials
- Description
- Feasibility and Cost
- Counterarguments
- Rationale

#### Requirements:

- MLA parenthetical format and works cited page
- format for proposals as discussed in class
- 12-point font, 1-inch margins
- 5-7 pages (1500-1750 words)
- at least 5 sources: 3 print sources and no more than 2 Internet sources

## **D. Sample Reading List and Multimedia Argument**

### **Multiple Multiplicities: A Search for Identity in a Multiplying World**

#### **Course Description**

Every new beginning is an opportunity to reflect on whence we have come, be intentional about where we are, and prepare for where we wish to go. In this composition class, as many of you begin your college life, you will be exploring through reading, writing, listening, and speaking the issue of self and identity in a complex, multiplying world. Who am I? What is important to me? What is my relationship to my world? How can I be intentional about that? Who do I want to become? In order to explore these issues, we will be thoughtfully reading, viewing, discussing, and performing memoirs, poetry, music, drama, films, websites, and other texts. You will be creating daily informal responses to the texts and your world, longer, formal compositions within each unit of thought, and a culminating multimedia project.

Because the emphases in the class are your identity and your relationship with the complex world around you, much of the class is discussion and performance / presentation oriented. As such, we will be discussing the nature and concerns of context and audience as we realize there is no single view, nor a single “right answer.” In large part, your audience will be your classmates; therefore, respect for others’ ideas and beliefs is always of utmost importance. You should feel comfortable expressing yourself freely with respect and compassion for all.

#### **A Multiple Multiplicities Syllabus**

The multiple nature of this class will be emphasized through the readings students examine and discuss and the compositions and projects they create. Multicultural readings from history and the contemporary world will examine issues of identity in relation to race, gender, social status, and sexuality. The multi-disciplinary aspects of the class in great part derive from a broad humanities base of literature, history, and the visual and performing arts; however, students will also have the opportunity to examine themselves in relation to their own disciplines and to research and explore disciplinary issues. Throughout the course, students will “read” texts from multiple narrative media including written text, film, digital text, musical text, and visual text. They will in turn create responses including various narrative media.

#### **Unit One: Critical Autobiography**

After reading various autobiographies and memoirs, students will decide how they want to portray their life in writing.

#### **Section One: Multicultural Memoirs / Autobiographies**

Sandra Cisneros, “Only Daughter”

Amy Tan, “Two Kinds”

Excerpt from Obasan by Joy Kogawa

Excerpt from I know Why the Caged Bird Sings by Maya Angelou  
 Excerpt from Angela's Ashes by Frank McCourt  
 David Sedaris, "Twelve Moments in the Life of the Artist"

### Section Two: Historical Memoirs / Autobiographies

Four Autobiographical Narratives of Zitkala Sa  
 Excerpt from The Narrative of Frederick Douglass  
 Excerpt from Hospital Sketches by Louisa May Alcott  
 Excerpt from Some Memories of a Long Life by Malvina Shanklin Harlan

### Section Three: Autobiography and Biography

Truman Capote, "A Christmas Memory"  
 A&E Biography "Truman Capote"  
 Internet exploration and critique of online autobiographies

## Unit Two: Synthesis / Analysis

After reading, analyzing, and exploring poems, songs, art pieces, and other texts dealing with basic themes of life, students will choose a theme or issue of significance to them, find texts that represent the theme in their life, and write an analysis / synthesis based on their chosen texts.

A biography of one of the poets will be included in this unit.

### Theme One: Love

Poems by Shakespeare, Marvell, Elizabeth Barrett Browning, T.S. Eliot, Sandra Cisneros, Gary Soto and possibly others + Love Songs yet to be chosen and art pieces showing love.

### Theme Two: Death

Poems by Byron, Houseman, Tennyson, Robert Browning, Dylan Thomas, and possibly others + songs of memorial such as "Candle in the Wind" and art pieces that show various aspects of death.

### Theme Three: Life

Poems by William Carlos Williams, H.D., Sandra Cisneros, Gary Soto, Langston Hughes, Walt Whitman, Emily Dickinson, and others + Songs and art pieces

## Unit Three: Proposal

This multifaceted unit will explore drama as text and the rhetorical choices performers must make when presenting these texts. Students will explore the rhetorical strategies of the playwrights and the significance of choices made by directors and actors when presenting plays for various times and places. They will research the historical

significance of the plays and propose, as director, a vision of the play that will be informed by its historical significance, but will emphasize meaning for a contemporary audience.

**Scenes for Two Characters:**

Diane Samuels, from Kindertransport

Hanif Kureishi, from Borderline

Frank McGuinness, from Someone Who'll Watch over Me

Anthony Shaffer, from Sleuth

Yasmina Reza, from Art

**Longer Plays:**

The Importance of Being Earnest by Oscar Wilde

Our Town by Thornton Wilder

Show parts of Shakespeare in Love as fictional biography

**Unit Four: Multimedia Argument**

Using all we have discussed of biography and autobiography throughout the semester, students will choose an individual significant in their culture or discipline (real, celebrity, or historical) to create a “biography” through their a variety of their choice of media.



# Multimedia Project

## Multiple Multiplicities: A Search for Identity in a Multiplying World

**Objective:**

Using visual, written, and other kinds of text, students will show their understanding of visual rhetoric, digital technology, and composition strategies to compose a multifaceted presentation based on academic research.

**Assignment:**

Throughout the semester, you have read, seen, pondered, and written texts about the world you inhabit and your place in it. You have interacted with your own and other cultures, various academic disciplines, and a variety of textual media.

**You will now continue this work by choosing an individual who is either important in your discipline or significant within a particular culture and create a “biography” of the individual.**

You will conduct extensive research on the individual and his/her contributions to the discipline or culture. As you do this, think about various rhetorical issues. What “argument” are you making about this individual? What do you want to emphasize? What might you leave out? How will you present your choices?

With all this in mind, create a multimedia presentation using your choice of techniques. Options include, but are by no means limited to, documentary style film, website, and power point presentation with narration.

**Requirements:**

10-15 minute presentation

Minimum 5 sources

Visual and audio component

**Evaluation:**

The students and instructor will create a rubric based on content; visual, oral, and written rhetorical strategies; and composition conventions to evaluate the multimedia projects.

As long as projects incorporate multimedia elements, evaluation will be based on rhetorical strategies and critical content rather than choice of media. A beginning technology group may choose to complete an oral presentation with a visual component such as a “poster” or a simple power-point presentation. An intermediate group may add animation to the presentation or create a more complex web-space. An advanced group may choose to create a documentary style film using editing equipment or i-movie. All options are equally acceptable.

## e. Sample Reading List for Multiple Multiplicities – English 106

### Unit I: Critical Autobiography

#### A. Identity through Poetry:

- Walt Whitman “Song of Myself”
- Allen Ginsberg (excerpts from “Howl”),
- Anne Sexton (“O Sylvia” and others)
- Sylvia Plath: “Lady Lazarus”, “Ariel”, “Morning Song”
- Robert Lowell (selections from *Life Studies* and *For the Union Dead*)
- W.D. Snodgrass (“Heart’s Needle” and others)
- Ani DiFranco: “IQ” (audio – spoken word)

#### B. Identity and Disability:

- A. Manette Ansay: *Limbo*
- Lucy Grealy: *Autobiography of a Face*
- Geneva E. Bell: *My Rose: An African American Mother’s Story of AIDS*
- Kate Millett: from *The Loony Bin Trip*

#### C. Identity and Religion/Ethnicity:

- Maxine Hong Kingston: *The Woman Warrior: Memoirs of a Girlhood Among Ghosts*
- Mary Helen Ponce: *Hoyt Street*
- Richard Rodriguez: *The Hunger for Memory: The Education of Richard Rodriguez* (could relate to Henry Adams’ *The Education of Henry Adams* available through UVA’s American Studies program hypertext at: [http://xroads.virginia.edu/~HYPER/HADAMS/ha\\_home.html](http://xroads.virginia.edu/~HYPER/HADAMS/ha_home.html))
- bell hooks: from *Bone Black*
- Mary McCarthy: *Memories of a Catholic Girlhood* or from *How I Grew*
- Mary Crow Dog: from *Lakota Woman*
- Israel Zangwill: *The Melting Pot* (drama)

### Unit II: Synthesis/Analysis Argument

#### A. Gender and Identity:

##### 1. Constructions of Femaleness/Femininity/Womanhood:

- Ibsen: *A Doll’s House*
- Jamaica Kincaid: *The Autobiography of my Mother* or from *A Small Place*
- Charlotte Perkins Gilman: “The Yellow Wallpaper”

- Gloria Anzaldua: from *Borderlands/La Frontera*
- Lorrie Moore: stories from *Birds of America*
- Aimee Mann: “Susan” (from Bachelor No. 2 – audio)

## 2. Constructions of Masculinity:

- Richard Wright: “The Man Who was Almost a Man”
- Ralph Ellison: selections from *Invisible Man*
- Flannery O’Connor: “A Good Man is Hard to Find”
- Chinua Achebe: selections from *Things Fall Apart*
- Pablo Neruda: selections from *Isla Negra*

### *Unit III: Proposal*

#### A. Proposing Social Change:

- Karen E. Rosenblum and Toni-Michelle C. Travis: framework essay from *The Meaning of Difference* (constructions of difference)
- Tony Kushner: *Angels in America* (drama)
- Langston Hughes: selected poetry (from *Selected Poems*)
- Gwendolyn Brooks: selected poetry
- Harper Lee: *To Kill a Mockingbird*
- Alice Walker: from *The Color Purple*
- Shirley Jackson: “The Lottery”
- Susan Glaspell: *Trifles*
- Upton Sinclair: from *The Jungle*
- Louise Erdrich: from *Tracks*
- Terry Tempest Williams: from *Refuge*
- Edward Abbey: from *The Monkey Wrench Gang*
- Denise Levertov: from *Here and Now*
- Nadine Gordimer: “Once Upon a Time”
- Mark Mathabane: from *Kaffir Boy*
- Athol Fugard: *Blood Knot*

### *Unit IV: Multimedia Argument:*

#### A. War and Resistance

##### 1. WWII:

- H.D.: selections from *Trilogy*
- T.S. Eliot: selections from “The Wasteland” – read by the author (audio)  
<[http://town.hall.org/Archives/radio/IMS/HarperAudio/011894\\_harp\\_ITH.html](http://town.hall.org/Archives/radio/IMS/HarperAudio/011894_harp_ITH.html)>

- Sylvia Plath: “Daddy”
- Elie Wiesel: selection from *Night*
- Kurt Vonnegut: selection from *Slaughterhouse Five*
- David Guterson: scenes from *Snow Falling on Cedars* (video)
- Yukio Mishima: “Patriotism”

2. Viet Nam:

- Mark Baker: *Nam* (selections)
- Joseph Conrad: selection from *The Heart of Darkness*
- scenes from *Apocalypse Now* (video)
- Dead Kennedys: “Holiday in Cambodia” (audio)
- Yusef Komunyakaa: “Facing It”

3. Current Events

- Ani DiFranco: “To the Teeth” (audio)
- Michael Moore: *Bowling For Columbine* (video / DVD)

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