

ENG 112 JM — Composition and Literature Spring Semester 2013-14

Bret Nye

Office – Bachelor Hall 292

Office Hours – Monday/Wednesday 11:30-1:00 and 2:30-4:00, and any time upon appointment

Email – nyeba@miamioh.edu

Days/Times We Will Meet For Class – Monday and Wednesday 1:00 – 2:20 p.m.

Location – Bachelor Hall 250

Course Description

English 112, Composition and Literature, is a writing course focused on writing critically and analytically about texts — “texts” broadly defined as including literary, disciplinary, public, and popular texts; print and digital texts; and visual and aural texts, as well as verbal print text. The course explores the relationship between writing and reading and interrogates how knowledge and meaning are constructed through analyzing and writing about texts. Through four overlapping units, called “inquiries,” ENG 112 teaches you various tools for textual analysis and “critical reading” with the aim of producing a new text — your own critical response to what you have read.

ENG 112 will help expand your understanding of what constitutes a text; will teach you techniques for interpreting, critiquing, and evaluating texts; and will help you write academic arguments about texts for academic, disciplinary audiences. The course draws on the fields of rhetoric/composition to help you develop rhetorical knowledge about writing contexts and composing processes, on literary studies to help you develop critically aware strategies for critical reading and interpretation, and on creative writing to help you explore and use alternative modes of expression.

The core text for our course, so to speak, will be the full discography of what I believe to be one of the most important rock bands in the world today, Arcade Fire. We will discuss this alleged importance in class, as well as the overall importance of their art form in general, that being rock music, in terms of its sociocultural impact. We will explore rock music as an imperative form of protest, as a necessary public/democratic art form, and as an accessible font of social criticism. We’ll be using the “text” of Arcade Fire as a prime example of a contemporary rock band, and we’ll be using their entire discography in order to both cover a great deal of ground in these respects and to take an interesting look at the development of a major artist on the scene today.

To use this “text,” we’ll be working with quite a bit of music in class to practice how to *read* songs. In one sense, we’re looking at each song and each album as artistic expressions, musical overtures meant to convey particular feelings, ideas and, in some cases, narrative. We will also build upon our own notions about the ideas brought up within the album, and we’ll research and hone our ideas in class in order to work towards producing a few papers and a creative assignment.

Course Goals

By the end of ENG 112, you should be able to:

- Write with a sophisticated understanding of how texts work — how texts hold multiple meanings and have multiple effects depending on audience, context, and perspective.
- Engage in critical, close reading, making arguments using textual citation as evidence.
- Conduct research-based inquiries into the rhetorical, literary, historical, and/or cultural contexts of a particular text or group of texts.
- Write effectively for specific audiences and for specific purposes, especially for academic contexts and disciplinary audiences.

- Locate, evaluate, integrate, and cite sources effectively and ethically.
- Articulate and reflect critically on your own reading and composing practices, including your rhetorical decisions about the production and delivery of writing.

This course fulfills the goals of the Miami Plan, which you can read about in *CCM*.

Required Texts and Materials

-College Composition at Miami (Volume 66). 2013-14 edition. Available at campus bookstores. If you took English 111 this year then you already have this.

-Arcade Fire's Entire Discography – I'll discuss in class how we'll access their work. Basically we'll use whatever free (and legal) streaming service you prefer to listen to their music.

-We will also be reading a variety of shorter texts, a few theoretical essays and such. We'll even take a look at some photographs, film clips, etc. I will provide all of these shorter texts for you in class, through the Niihka site.

Major Projects and Course Requirements

Primary Inquiry	Project / Requirement	Percentage of Final Grade
1. Close/critical reading	Critical/analytic essay demonstrating use of close/critical reading inquiry. Focused on one song from Arcade Fire's oeuvre. Final paper = 3-4 pages.	20%
2. Cultural/historical interrogation	(a) Annotated bibliography with paper proposal. Final Version = 5 sources.	10%
	(b) Critical/analytic essay demonstrating use of historical and/or cultural inquiry. Focused on Arcade Fire and secondary research. Final paper = 5-6 pages.	20%
3. Creative and critical application	Creative project inspired by an Arcade Fire song. Options are essentially limitless, though you must choose a song and use its themes/aesthetic as the platform for your own creative/artistic project.	20%
4. Engaged Reflection	Portfolio of works produced in ENG 112, including any revisions completed and an extended reflective essay on the coursework. Final project = 3-4 pages of new writing.	10%
Participation	Participation includes in-class activities and workshops, homework, short in-class writing assignments, Niihka forum postings, engagement in class, engagement in peer review, etc.	20%
TOTAL		100%

Grading Scale and Policies

A 100-94%
A- 93-90%

B+ 89-87%
B 86-84%
B- 83-80%

C+ 79-77%
C 76-74%
C- 73-70%

D+ 69-67%
D 66-64%
D- 63-60%

F 59% and below

- All assignments must be submitted on time. Late major assignments will be downgraded $\frac{1}{2}$ **grade per day late** (For example, if your paper receives a B+ and it is one day late, its final grade will be a B-). For in-class assignments such as forum postings or peer review, if you are not there in class to complete them you must discuss with me how you will make these assignments up.

- We will develop and review the specific grading parameters for each major assignment as we get to them in class throughout the semester. However, keep in mind that this class revolves around your writing and your ability to effectively contextualize and comment on others' writing, according to the principles of rhetoric, textual analysis, and effective writing styles that we will be working with in class all semester. All writing you produce in ENG 112 should meet the following general criteria: (a) The writing meets the requirements and parameters for the assignment; (b) the writing is well-informed, respectful of others, grammatically competent and stylistically fluent, well organized, and indicative of your ability to effectively analyze texts and create your own texts.

- Grades for the four major assignments will also be conditional the first time out: in other words, I am allowing you to revise any one assignment that you wish in order to try for a higher grade. If you decide to do a revision to get a better grade for an essay, you will have until the end of the semester to revise it. Keep in mind that I expect thorough revision and editing if you wish to get a higher grade. It would also be helpful for you to stop in during my office hours to discuss further ways to revise.

- Participation is a vital component of ENG 112; in fact, it makes up 20% of your final grade for the course. There are a number of ways that you will be expected to participate and/or collaborate in ENG 112: this will include engaging in class discussions, reflecting on class assignments and you and your classmates' writing on the class Niihka site, submitting short assignments in and outside of class, working together on group projects, etc. We will also be doing peer review sessions for each inquiry at some point in the writing process and your willingness to engage in these sessions will figure into your participation grade.

Course Policies

Laptops

This class is based around usage of the Niihka class site you should have access to and the internet at-large, so you must bring your laptop in to class every day. If you forget your laptop, you may not be able to complete in-class assignments which feed into your participation grade. If you're having technical issues with the Niihka site or with your laptop, please let me know and we'll find a way past it, no problem.

Academic Integrity and Plagiarism

According to the Writing Program Administration, "plagiarism occurs when a writer deliberately uses someone else's language, ideas, or other original (not common-knowledge) material without acknowledging its source" (WPA Council, "Defining and Avoiding Plagiarism: The WPA Statement on Best Practices," (2003): <http://wpacouncil.org/positions/WPAplagiarism.pdf>). The assumption in ENG 111 is that the writing you submit is your own original writing — that is, produced originally for this class. The expectation is that you will appropriately identify

that portion of your work which is collaborative with others, or which is borrowed from others, or which is your own work from other contexts.

To keep up an academic integrity in your work and your writing, you must acknowledge the work of others whenever it enters into your own text. It's an important goal of this class that you begin to learn how to place yourself within the context of academic and social discourses, and to do this properly you must understand the essentials of academic honesty. We will discuss this concept early on and will continue to revisit our discussion throughout the semester. If you ever have doubts about whether or not you are using your own or others' writing ethically, please ask me.

For further details about Academic Integrity at Miami University — including a detailed list of examples of academic dishonesty and procedures and penalties for dealing with instances of academic dishonesty — see <http://www.muohio.edu/integrity/undergrads.cfm>. There is also an outline of the university's plagiarism policy in CCM.

Attendance

Much of the learning in ENG 112 happens in class, via inquiry activities, writing assignments, class discussions of our assigned reading, and group interaction that cannot be easily made up or replicated outside of class. Class time will be highly interactive — requiring frequent participation, discussion, teamwork, in-class writing, and responding to writing. I'll do some lecturing, but this will not be the basis of the class. For this reason, attendance at all class sessions is expected. That being said, you are allowed a maximum of **4 unexcused absences** in this course. Having more than 4 unexcused absences will result in a lowering of your final grade for the course (by $\frac{1}{2}$ **grade** per additional absence). Of course, I understand that sickness, important university or personal events, and religious/cultural holidays will come up that may interfere with the timing of our class period. Please try to let me know about days you'll miss for these reasons well in advance, as early as possible in the semester, so that these absences can be excused.

Even though you are allowed 4 unexcused absences, please let me know if you will be absent for class in advance if you can. You will always be responsible for making up any work that you may have missed in class, regardless of your reason for being absent, so be sure to email me for any class you miss.

Technical Issues

Since our class assignments will always be turned in online at our class Niihka site, I'm sure we will come across some technical issues, since Niihka can be extremely fallible. However, it is always your responsibility as the sender/writer to submit files to me and to your classmates in an accessible, downloadable format. Therefore, it is absolutely essential to **always back up your work** and be prepared to turn things in on time. Problems with technology will **not** be accepted as excuses for late papers, though I am always willing to help you work these problems out assuming you get a hold of me in advance of the deadline. Finally, your papers should be submitted in .DOC format.

Resources

- *Your classmates.* Rely on one another for the questions you have regarding the readings, the work we're doing in class, software we may be using, etc. You all, both individually and as a collective, embody a vast bank of knowledge and experiences. You can use the Chat tool on Niihka to put questions out there for your fellow students.

- *Me.* I will do everything I can to assist you in succeeding in this course. Please feel free to meet with me during my office hours or another scheduled time. Email is a reliable way to contact me and I will try my best to respond in a timely manner, though asking questions about assignments the night before there are due is not a very good way to approach the coursework.

- *IT Support Desk* (<http://www.units.muohio.edu/mcs/suppctr/suppdesk/>). The support desk is the main point of contact for technology questions at Miami.

- *Equipment checkout at the library.* The King Library Circulation Desk checks out digital cameras and laptops to students. The digital cameras can be checked out for a four-hour period and students are allowed to leave the library with the camera. Laptops can be checked out for a three-hour period and they must be used inside the library. The Circulation Desk also offers for sale flash drives, digital camera memory cards, blank DVDs, and blank CDs.

- *Howe (King Library) and Windate (18 Peabody) Writing Centers.* The Howe Writing Center is located on the main floor of King Library. The Center is staffed with writing consultants from many different academic areas. In a one-on-one workshop, a staff member will consult with you concerning work-in-progress, final drafts, research style,

and many other aspects of writing. It is best to schedule an appointment ahead of time, but you may also walk in on days when they have consultants available. For further information, visit the student resources site at <http://www.units.muohio.edu/cwe/studentresources/>.

- If you have a learning disability, please speak to me early in the semester so we can discuss your learning style. I am willing to work with you to establish a plan for academic success and life learning. You can also obtain additional information and support from the Office of Learning Disabilities Services 513-529-8741 or The Office of Disability Resources 513-529-1541.

- *The Learning Assistance Center*. Provides tutoring and other academic services, including Writer's Bloc, a free, drop-in writing center, and a Learning Disabilities Program. It is located in the Campus Avenue Building. For more information, contact the Office of Learning Assistance at 513-529-8741 or Disability Resources at 513-529-1541.

- *The Student Counseling Service*. Located in the Health Services Center, this office provides a wide range of counseling services. For more information, call 513-529-4634.

- *Your Own Web Site/Server*. Every Miami student has a web space (called Universal Disk Space, UDS) for storing files and for designing and publishing a website. To publish web pages on the Internet, follow the instructions at <http://www.muohio.edu/wwwsetup>. Your web page address will be <http://www.users.muohio.edu/UniqueID/> (UniqueID should be replaced with your own unique ID).

- *Miami University Technology Guide* (<http://www.units.muohio.edu/mcs/information/policies/shtml>). This is a list of MU's policies on such matters as computer security, responsible use of computing resources, and MU Net account policies.