

Moravian College

WRIT 100 M – *On the Media: Reading, Writing, and
Speaking the Images of the Day*

Dr. Joel Nathan Rosen, Assistant Professor in Sociology
PPHAC 311

Phone: 610/625-7814

Email: jrosen@moravian.edu

Office Hours: T & Th 4:00p – 5:00p/W 4p – 6p or By Appointment

Required Text:

- Hacker, Diana. *The Bedford Handbook for Writers*, 7th Edition. Boston: Bedford/St. Martin's Press, 2002.
- Access to NPR's "On the Media"
- Supplemental readings as necessary (also see BlackBoard (Bb) regularly)

****Check Black Board (Bb) Site Daily****

Bb Code: jnrcourse

Materials:

- Separate 8 ½" x 11 *Spiral* Notebook (or bound book)
- Separate Binder

Course Description:

This course, designed around the core tenets of sound academic writing, will explore various concepts and issues brought about by the study of media, broadly conceived. Our survey of the many ways that information is delivered will be anchored by an investigation of a diverse archive of media artifacts, industries, and technologies, which might range from the phonograph to photography, the cinema to networked hypermedia, from the typewriter to the textbook, and so on. In addition, we will examine the historical and material specificity of different media technologies and the forms of social life they enable, engage critical debates about knowledge, culture and power, and consider problems of reading and writing posed by specific media outlets and their processes, new and old.

Course Objectives and Purpose:

- To trace the rise of media outlets and types in American cultural life
- To define the notion of the message as defined by communication theorists
- To explore the vast realm of ideas relative to their place among the vastness of American social, political, and cultural life while defining their temporal and spatial significance
- To deconstruct the means with which any specific medium creates a cultural fount that cuts across any barriers, perceived or otherwise
- To combine all of the above in order to create better strategies for writing based on a variety of styles, audiences, techniques as befitting a college-level writer

Course Requirements:

Students will be required to keep a writer's almanac (minimum of five entries per week), write a research paper (topic to be negotiated) with an annotated bibliography, participate in a group component with both collective and individual responsibilities, write several essays of varying length, submit a final portfolio, and perform other tasks as befitting an introductory college writing course. Fair warning will precede any and all due dates.

Using a traditional grading scale, the breakdown of grades is as follows:

- | | |
|--|-----|
| • Writer's Almanac (to be checked periodically) | 20% |
| • Group Project (Collective and Individual Combined) | 20% |
| • Research Project | 20% |
| • Essays Combined | 20% |
| • Portfolio, Participation, and Other Misc. Tasks ¹ | 20% |

As I typically employ letter grades on written assignments, I offer the below list of how each letter translates numerically:

- A+=100/A= 96/A-=92
- B+=89/B=86/B-=82
- C+=79/C=76/C-=72
- D+=69/D=66/D-=62
- F=59-50 [actual score depends on the severity of the error(s)/student will be notified]
- Failure to turn in work translates into a *ZERO*

¹ This category denotes "minor" assignments and matters not specifically addressed in the above.

Grade Scale:

- A = 100-95/A- = 93-90
- B+ = 89-88/B = 87-84/B- = 83-80
- C+ = 79-78/C = 77-74/C- = 73-70
- D+ = 69-68/D = 67-64/D- = 63-60
- F = 59...

Grade Advisory – While I respect that students have to be grade conscious, it is imperative that students understand that:

I treat evaluations as professional—not personal!

Do not ask from me anything that steps outside the boundaries, and do not wait until *Zero Hour* to inquire as to your status. Moreover, it is your responsibility to keep abreast of your own grade calculations, and unless the circumstances are unique, I'll leave you to your own devices on that matter. Lastly, to save us all needless heartache, and in the interest of propriety and mental health, I also have to insist on a twenty-four hour grace period before I will speak to you about any returned work. You may find that this cooling off period is exactly what we both need to come together rationally and in the spirit of liberal learning.

Classroom Decorum and Expectations:

Attendance – Class attendance is mandatory and vitally important to your success. Failure to attend on a regular basis not only puts your grade in jeopardy but may also be met with a lowered mark for participation.

- There are no excused absences. If you have a legitimate emergency, it is your responsibility to bring it to the attention of your instructor at your earliest convenience.

Tardiness – Tardiness to class is not only detrimental to the learning process but quite disruptive and unfair to those who make it to class on time regularly. Recurring tardiness shows a lack of respect for the classroom, the instructor, and one's fellow students and will not be tolerated. Therefore, once the door has been shut, you will not be permitted to enter.

Deadlines – Assignment deadlines are exactly that. Students are expected to comply with deadlines in accordance with all rules, guidelines, and expectations of each assignment proffered. Failure to do so will result in a tendering of no-grade for work not done to expectation or submitted on time. The policy for late papers is as follows:

- On minor assignments, you will be allowed to turn in one late assignment as long as it is within twenty-four hours for a ten point deduction. After your

- one exception, you will no longer enjoy this luxury
- Do not expect me to have to chase you down in order to turn in assignments!

Participation – Classroom discussions are a big part of the learning process. Your participation is not requested—it is required. Failure to do so is both in bad taste and could conceivably be detrimental to your ability to learn effectively.

Disruptions – Disruptive behavior, including talking, unengaged behavior, i.e. reading a book, magazine, or newspaper, sleeping, chronic tardiness alongside loud entrances, and any other unfortunate breach will not be tolerated. Learning is an active process, and failure to actively engage not only threatens the individual’s ability to learn but also affects others.

Academic Honesty – You are all responsible for knowing and adhering to the code of academic honesty here at Moravian College. For those of you unfamiliar with this code, it can be found on pages fifty-two through fifty-seven in your student handbook.

Please Note: It is your responsibility to see to it that these expectations and guidelines are met satisfactorily and consistently. I take the classroom quite seriously, and I expect all of you to do the same as well.

Out of Class Submission Expectations:

- a title page with a suitable title, your name, the course, section, and my name all spelled correctly
- 12 font (in black) with default margins and spacing set at 1.5 to double
- page numbers
- a *References* section (if necessary) at the end of the work done in the most recent citation form of your choice (depends on your major and other factors)²
- for every unedited internet site there must be at least ***two*** published sources
- with few exceptions, single & two-digit numbers (*zero through ninety-nine*) are to be spelled out; three digits are to be written numerically
- be wary of overuse of abbreviations and/or contractions
- a staple in the upper **left hand** corner (no frilly covers)

Please Note that all in-class work must be done in blue or black ink

On Writing and Research:

As this instructor is particularly driven by written expression, you should expect that there will be an emphasis placed on written expression in this course. I should also like you to know from the start that I spend a great deal of time

² Work not properly cited will not be graded and could be brought to the Academic Standards Committee under a charge of plagiarism. If you have questions, please seek me out. Also, *Wikipedia* and other types of non-academic encyclopedias will under no circumstances be considered legitimate sources!

pouring over your writing and expect that you will read and explore my commentary on all things ranging from content to grammar, punctuation, and syntax. Please try to check your ego at the doors and realize that this is a learning experience while convincing yourself that blips and missteps are all part of the process.

You should also note that where applicable, this instructor expects his students to deal directly with all matters relating to the citation process. Failure to do so will be dealt with harshly with penalties ranging from a zero on work not properly documented to a formal report to the proper academic disciplinary committee.

A Note on Individual Accommodations:

Students who wish to request accommodations in this class for a disability should contact Mr. Joe Kempfer, Assistant Director of Learning Services for Disability Support, 1307 Main Street (extension 1510). Accommodations cannot be provided until authorization is received from the office of Learning Services.

The medium is the message.
—Marshall McLuhan in *Understanding Media* (1964)³

Schedule of Topics (*Each Channel = Two Weeks*):

Take 1:

Getting Started (course expectations and guidelines documentary film); Establishing a Topic; The Paragraph; Narrative Writing

Take 2:

The Thesis Statement; Explanatory Writing

Take 3:

Critical Reading & The Persuasive Essay

Take 4:

The Research Process; Reeves Library

Take 5:

The Poetry within Words; Writing for Readers & Listeners; The Letter

Take 6:

Tweaking Voice & Style; Writing for Audio & Rhythm

Take 7:

Putting It All Together

All Major Due Dates Announced at Least Two Weeks Prior

³ McLuhan, Marshall. *Understanding Media: The Extensions of Man*. New York: Signet Classic, 1964: 23.