Welcome
In the syllabus that follows you will find descriptions of the goals, work and expectations underwriting this course. Syllabi can feel overwhelming. Just know that I am always happy to clarify or discuss what is outlined here and what my rationale is for designing the class as I do. This syllabus represents an initial attempt to make the course as transparent as possible. That said, there is absolutely no shame in having a question or a concern. I plan to check in often regarding what you are learning and how I can help to make this class as generative and productive for you as possible. Don’t hesitate to start a conversation!

Required and Recommended Course Materials

Books (Available via campus bookstore)
The Parable of the Sower by Octavia Butler

Additional readings will be provided via links and PDFs on Canvas as needed.

Odds and Ends

- an active Google Account (required)
- accounts for various social media services (Wordpress, YouTube, etc.) (TBD)

Our Purpose

Our purpose this quarter is to develop your ability to do rhetorical work.

Specifically, when I say rhetorical work, I mean that this course is designed to help you better navigate issues of purpose, audience, genre, and medium in your own work and the work of others. In this class our focus will be the rhetorical work of writing about literature; however, these lessons are transferable.

For example, when you are given a project in your workplace, I want you to be better able to establish and analyze the goals, purposes and expectations of that project and to adapt your work accordingly.

Additionally, when you walk into a history or a science class at Pierce (or another college), I want to have helped prepare you to consider the contexts of the communicative work (writing, reading, and otherwise) that you’ll be asked to do. When you are given a writing assignment, I want you to be able to ask yourself questions like -- what work is my writing supposed to do? For whom? For what purposes? And, I want you to be better equipped to act on the possibilities made available by asking these kinds of questions.
In your life beyond work and school, I want you to feel empowered to critically read and compose within the ecology of technologies and messages we find ourselves entangled with in the twenty-first century.

Throughout the quarter we will consider the array of choices available to us as composers and the constraints we are faced with when we compose for particular purposes, for particular audiences, and with particular materials.

**SOME LONG TERM GOALS**

This class will help you to:

- reimagine, redefine, and better understand the complexity of *writing as composing*.
- develop skills and awareness related to your own composing and composing processes.
- develop composing and self-assessment strategies that will enable you to confidently approach a variety rhetorical situations in your academic, professional and personal lives.
- craft compositions for specific audiences and rhetorical ecologies by effectively recognizing, adapting, and employing genre conventions.
- develop research skills by learning when and how to incorporate and account for the work of others in your own composing.
- compose within and across multiple modalities (words, sounds, images...) and media (paper, hypertexts, video...).

**COURSE OUTCOMES**

The activity and work of this class will oscillate between holistic, big picture stuff and more seemingly nuts and bolts considerations of composition across academic, professional and personal situations.

We will compose things that do the work of more conventional essays. We will also produce compositions in mediums and genres that go beyond some of our notions of writing or composing as strictly words on a printed page.

All of this activity and work will support the process of meeting the course outcomes. Our expectation is that English 107 will help students to:

1. Appreciate value and meaning of literature
2. Write unified, coherent analytical essays that develop and support a thesis statement
3. Critically analyze literary works through the application of theoretical approaches
4. Explicate literary works through the appropriate use of literary terminology
5. Practice the skills of information competency in research
6. Apply the writing process in the composition of expository and argumentative essays
7. Recognize historical, social, philosophical, psychological, and cultural contexts for literature

HOW WE WILL ACCOMPLISH ALL OF THESE THINGS

Projects assigned in my courses ask students to experiment with a variety of materials and to become more aware of the materials and ecologies within which they compose. My project designs foreground the constraints and affordances of different mediums, platforms and genres. Such multimodal activity, I believe, helps to initiate explorations of how particular materials, technologies, and tools work, for whom they work, and how they might still be re-imagined to do different kinds of work for different people and communities.

Our work this quarter will be rooted in multiple projects. These projects consist of multiple components that each ask you to work with a different set of things. We will also engage in readings that resonate with the things we are making. This reading and your responses to it will offer you a chance to practice the moves of responding to and utilizing the ideas and work of others.

CRITERIA FOR SUCCESS

Here’s where we talk grades…

Our class will operate using a contract for grading, a contract that values your labor and the work you do in order to fully engage the course. My intention in using this contract is to offer each of us a chance to experience composing and learning not as a strictly finite task that is either already mastered or simply needs to be mastered, but instead as an ongoing act of dialogue, invention, risk taking, concern for others, and, yes, even failure. My intention is to facilitate as close as we can a classroom-as-studio approach in which we each play a generative role in one another’s learning.

Conventional grading requires us to over-simplify the otherwise complex processes of learning, processes that require from us a commitment to experimentation, to ambiguity, to taking risks, to listening and responding, and ultimately, to having a space for the productive failures that lay the groundwork for growth. The grading contract does not focus on assigning letter or number grades to individual projects or assignments. This means that while activities, compositions and projects will receive feedback both from me and from your peers, they will not be assigned grades.

The default grade for this course is a 3.1 (or a “B”) This means that if you do all the work that is asked in the manner and spirit that it is asked, if you engage in the expectations and procedures we develop and the projects we design for ourselves then you will have earned a “B” in the class. If you are absent, if you miss deadlines, neglect both individual and collective work, etc., you will receive a lower grade.

Contract Break-Down

Here’s a snap-shot of the contract meant to help you have a clearer picture of successfully meeting its expectations:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th># of Absences</th>
<th># of Late assignments</th>
<th># of Missed assignments</th>
<th># of Ignored assignments</th>
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<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>6 or less</td>
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NOTE: See below for descriptions of late, missed and ignored assignments.

“B”/3.1 - 3.4 Grades

You will earn a 3.1/“B” in the course if you meet all of the conditions outlined below.

1. Attendance and Participation

You agree to attend 88% of our scheduled class meetings. This means that you may miss up to 6 class sessions for any reason, no questions asked.

IMPORTANT —

If an assignment is not turned in due to an absence it will be considered late, missed, or ignored depending on when the assignment is ultimately submitted.

Lateness also impacts attendance. Getting to class 5 minutes after the start time will be considered late. Being late 4 or more times during the quarter will count as an absence.

This IS NOT an online or hybrid class. This class will very much take a workshop/studio approach. Much of the work we do will be in the face-to-face space of the classroom. There will be few, if any, lectures so you can’t expect to simply show-up and “take the test” or “turn it in online.”

Missing more than 6 classes will severely limit your ability to earn an “A” or “B” in the course. Missing more than 7 classes will very much limit your chances of earning a grade better than a “C.” If you miss 10 or more classes you can expect to receive an “F” in the class. If you anticipate attendance being an issue, I encourage you to find another section to take. If attendance becomes an issue over the course of the quarter, I strongly recommend you withdraw from the class by Nov. 9, 2017 (“Last Day to Withdraw”).

2. Sharing and Collaboration

As a participant in class you agree to work collegially and collaboratively with groups of your peers. We will work together to establish some ground rules for how we will work together.

Additionally, given the rhetorical nature of this course it is expected that you will do much composing in public and online and that the audiences for your work will often extend beyond me or the class. This is a valuable learning situation and nothing to fear. Our class is a space where we are meant to consider the implications for composing and thinking in public; however, it does mean that you will need to show some awareness of your privacy and that we as a group will have to commit to showing concern for each others’ privacy.

3. Assignments -- All work and composing

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<td>3</td>
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# of Absences
# of Late assignments
# of Missed assignments
# of Ignored assignments
While the purpose of this contract for grading is to liberate discussions of quality from more conventional grading systems, we will have some baseline expectations for the work that we do this quarter.

**Work is complete and on time.** You agree to complete all assignments and projects (big and small) in the manner and spirit with which they are assigned. This means that if a composition is assigned to be at least 500 words, its at least 500 words. (Not 100. Not 435.) Or, if you’re asked to discuss something as a group for 10 minutes. — you use the whole 10 minutes. Admittedly, sometimes expectations can seem arbitrary, and maybe they are. But that’s why the notion of manner and spirit is important. If an assignment prompts you to “explore” something, this might seem vague, or 1000 words might feel random, but the manner and spirit of the prompt is to offer you a framework for experimentation and to consider multiple angles, to ask and to think through some open-ended questions. So, I ask you to risk the assumption that the constraints of an assignment (length, medium, etc.) are a valuable part of the experience.

In terms of work being on time, teachers often preach that deadlines are important, and they are. But we all know that things happen. This grading contract, then, sets some parameters for what we’ll call late, missed, or ignored work (see “Breakdown” above and descriptions below).

**Revisions.** When your work is to revise a composition this means that you reshape, complicate, or extend your thinking and ideas. This could mean making new connections or turning up the volume on some previously minor element of the composition. Revision means not simply editing or cleaning up errors in your work. Perhaps most importantly, revision means being open to and taking seriously your peers’ and your teacher’s responses to your compositions.

**Copy Editing.** When it comes time to publish a draft of your compositions, it is expected that your work will be mostly free of spelling and grammatical mistakes. Copy editing is something all writers do — very few of us compose error free initial drafts. Copy editing is something that most of us also get help with — we have people read our stuff to just look for mistakes that might distract our audience. We will also engage in much informal writing that will need less copy editing than “final” drafts of projects, and while all the work your share should be clean enough to make some sense of, copy editing will carry more or less weight depending on the situation.

**4. Due dates and Deadlines**

The expectation is that you will turn in all your work on time. Late work interrupts our ability to collectively develop and respond to what we are composing. That said, things happen, so when an assignment is not turned in on time, we need to have a way of handling it. I will use three categories for assignments not turned in on time — late, missed and ignored.

**Late assignments.** Late assignments are assignments turned in no later than 48 hours after the initial due date and meet the additional requirements for that particular assignment (length, use of sources, etc.).

**Missed assignments.** Missed assignments are work turned in more than 48hrs. from the due date, but less than a week from the original deadline. For an assignment to be missed it must still meet the additional requirements for that particular assignment (length, use of sources, etc.)

**Ignored assignments.** There are two types of ignored assignments. The first type are assignments that are not turned in at all, for any reason. The second type are assignments that are submitted but incomplete. For example the assignments is supposed to be 500 words, but is only 100.
TO NOTE — Assignments can move between these categories. For example, you may submit something on time and it doesn’t meet the criteria and is considered an ignored assignment; however, if you can resubmit it within 48 hrs meeting the criteria that assignment becomes “late” and not “ignored.”

Grades above a “B.”

3.5 - 4.0/“A” Grades

Again, if you complete all the work of the course in the manner and spirit in which it is assigned, and fulfill the baseline expectations of this contract you will earn a “B” in the course.

Earning an “A,” then, requires that you exceed and go beyond the expectations for the work of the course.

This quarter, then, to earn an “A” students will:

• consult with a writing center tutor at some stage for each of your projects this quarter. Students must submit documentation from the Writing Center and compose a summative reflection to me in order to receive this credit.

• schedule to meet with me twice during the quarter to discuss projects-in-progress. One of these meetings should happen prior to mid-quarter. Meetings during the second half of the quarter must happen no later than one week prior to the end of the quarter.

• use feedback from the instructor, peers, and other readers to substantially revise (or remediate) one of the class projects.

Grades below a “B.”

Earning a grade below a “B” — “C,” “D,” “F” — happens when you begin to miss class, neglect the expectations for assignments, or otherwise break the contract outlined above. Of course I don’t think anyone begins a class with the intention of earning a low grade. The contract is designed to help us navigate the challenges that I will pose to you via our daily work and projects and the challenges that our circumstances beyond the classroom might throw at us in a given quarter. That said, what is non-negotiable is that in order to earn a “B” you must meet the expectations outlined in the contract above. Please do not hesitate to talk with me if you have concerns about your standing in the class. I want to help you in anyway I can, and the only way I can do that is if we both make an effort to be in touch and aware of what’s going on.

Plagiarism

Throughout the course we will be working with the complexities of accounting for the work of others in our composing. If questions come up for you regarding plagiarism do not hesitate to discuss your concerns with me. This course is a space where such questions will emerge and can and should be explored. There is no shame in having a question or uncertainty and it is always better to ask and take some additional time than to risk failing an assignment or even the class.

Generally, plagiarism is defined as the misrepresentation of the ideas or work of another as one’s own, and is considered unacceptable within any community of ideas. When in doubt: CITE.

SUPPORT and RESOURCES
From Access and Disability Services (ADS) to Multicultural Services to Tutoring, a variety of support services exist at Pierce College.

Students in need of additional support for any reason should seek out the appropriate services so you can make necessary arrangements. If you are not sure where to go or who to seek out please speak with me so I can help you get where you want to go. If I do not know the answer to a question I will always be more than happy to help you find out who does have an answer.

A good starting point is the Support Services page on the Pierce College website:

http://www.pierce.ctc.edu/dist/supportservices/

Again, do not hesitate to have a conversation with me about support and services. Your success is important to me and I’m willing to help you find what you need.

NON-DISCRIMINATION

Pierce College is committed to creating quality educational opportunities for a diverse community of learners. Pierce does not discriminate against its students or employees based on race, color, national origin, religion, sex, age, disability, or sexual orientation In this class we will strive to maintain an open atmosphere with shared respect for all differences.

CONTACT ME

Email (jloa@pierce.ctc.edu) is the best way to contact me. Typically, you can expect a reply to an email within 24 hours; however, response times for emails received over the weekend will vary and may not receive a reply until Monday.

I do have an office phone. The # is 253-964-6312. I recommend emailing me first. I will not check my voice mail as often as my email, so the reply time will be faster.

Stopping in to see me during my office hours or making an appointment to meet with me are both an expectation and a great way to have questions answered, receive feedback and to talk about the work of our course. I will do my best through out the semester to work with you so, again, don’t hesitate to initiate a conversation.

IMPORTANT DATES

Registration:

Friday, October 6 — Last Day to Drop w/o Class on Transcript

Friday, October 13 — 50% refund for classes running Sept. 25 - Dec. 8

Thursday, November 9 — Last day to withdraw from class

No Classes:

November 10 (Veteran’s Day) — College Open

November 22 — College Open
November 23 - 24 (Thanksgiving) — College Closed

November 27 — College Open