

## **COLLEGE COMPOSITION I (WRI 120 – CCI)**

---

First-year students immediately engage the Academic requirements of the Triad by enrolling in WRI 120: College Composition I (CCI), a course which sets the foundations for the written expression and argument that will continue through their college careers. Each CCI course is organized around a theme; the essays of each course develop around this theme.

**Students must enroll in WRI 120/CCI in their first year.** All first-year students should consider several options for CCI in drafting their first-semester schedule. Those who are unable to register for the course in the fall should expect to do so in the spring.

**Transfer Credit:** Transfer students may, upon approval of the Registrar and the Director of Undergraduate Writing, fulfill the College Composition I requirement through appropriate performance in an acceptable composition course taken at the previously attended institution. Students seeking such credit should make a transfer credit request at the Office of the Registrar (registrar@warren-wilson.edu, CPO 6354, 828.771.2086).

**AP Credit:** Academic credit toward the CCI requirement may be granted to enrolled students who receive scores of 4 or 5 on the College Board Advanced Placement Test in English Language and Composition. Students seeking such credit should contact the Director of Undergraduate Writing who will request that the student submit a portfolio of expository writing. Exemption of the CCI requirement is at the discretion of the Director (Dr. Gary Hawkins: ghawkins@warren-wilson.edu, CPO 6253, 828.771.3718).

Below you will find a list of WRI 120: CCI courses offered this fall along with a description of each course. Use this information, along with meeting time, to select courses that interest you and fit your schedule.

### **CCI COURSE DESCRIPTIONS: FALL 2008**

---

#### **F01: Exploring Ritual in Contemporary Culture**

**Caroline Mercurio**

TTTHS 8:00am - 9:20am

Explore your world through an anthropological lens by writing about the practice and implications of ritual in contemporary culture. Rituals permeate all aspects of life, evolving as cultures change, but often they are rooted in ancient rites of passage, linking modern rituals to the rituals of our ancestors and allowing us to see how we've changed. What do our rituals show us about ourselves? Reflections of spiritual sickness and technological hyperactivity? This course will examine the subject of ritual by focusing on contemporary culture, including the rituals of pop culture, religion and politics and how they are imitated through modern trends in writing, art, film, music and

style. Required reading will include ethnographic essays and articles from a wide variety of sources, ranging from *The Journal of Ritual Studies* to *Rolling Stone* to classics by notable authors. Four substantive essays will be required, each revised extensively in workshop, where the class will focus on writing strategies, grammar and punctuation, and techniques for successful editing and revision. All students will keep a “ritual journal,” developing writing itself as a ritual for personal reflection. The final project will be a lengthy narrative essay exploring your personal rituals and how they have shaped your life.

**Caroline Mercurio** graduated from Appalachian State University with a BA in English and earned her MFA in Writing at Vermont College. In 2002, she founded *Hunger Mountain*, The Vermont College Journal of Arts & Letters, for which she continues to serve as Managing Editor. She also teaches writing online for Kennebec Community College in Fairfield, Maine. Publications include *Vermont Magazine*, *Louisiana Literature* and *Asheville Poetry Review*.

**F02: Topic TBA \*\* CORRECTION \*\***

**Staff**

MWF 8:00am - 9:20am

**F03: The History and Preservation of Our National Parks**

**Justin Gardiner**

MWF 9:30am - 10:50am

Through considering a wide range of historical, political, literary, and natural-science based texts, this course will center on the past and present state of our National Park System. Discussions will range from the abstract level of cultural theory to the concrete data of an ecologist working in the field. First and foremost, however, students will be expected to think as writers: analyzing and crafting arguments, compiling and presenting research, and always being attentive to the nuts-and-bolts of strong composition. We will begin our course by surveying some of the key evolutionary strands in America’s concept of Wilderness, and then move to consider the preservation of our nation’s first parks: Yellowstone and Yosemite. The final portion of the class will center largely on independent research, with each student compiling a report—in addition to the formal writing assignments—on a National Park of one’s own choosing. Discussion, workshops, and student presentations will all be essential components of the course.

**Justin Gardiner** is the 2008-2009 Joan Beebe Teaching Fellow. He has received BAs in English and Philosophy from Whitman College, and is a 2005 Graduate from Warren Wilson’s MFA Program for Writers. He has taught English overseas; Natural Science in Jawbone Flats, Oregon; and Poetry and Creative Writing at the Governor’s School of the Arts in Greenville, South Carolina. His poems have appeared, and are forthcoming, in journals that include *The New Orleans Review*, *ZYZZYVA*, *The Ledge*, *Zone 3*, and *The River Oak Review*.

## **F04: What is Nature? The Challenge of Environmental Writing**

**Erik Moellering**

MWF 11:00am – 12:20pm

“Nature.” Perhaps the first image that springs to mind is of a particular landscape—mountain, river, prairie, or ocean. Yet, what exactly is “nature”? If we expand our list, moving from simple microbial life to more complex animals and geological processes, we must also soon take stock of the variety of man-made artifacts—creations that inevitably derive from “natural” materials. How, and in what ways, are the telephone and the tree different? Does humanity’s self-consciousness and capacity for language set it apart from other natural forms? Contemplations of this order quickly diminish the hope of developing an airtight definition of “nature”; they do, however, expose intriguing cultural and political forces that influence our understanding of nature and environment.

With the history of American environmental writing as scaffolding, this course examines the extremely slippery term “nature” and wrestles with the often contradictory claims as to what constitutes a “natural” object, lifestyle, and socio-political philosophy. This is, above all else, a course in composition, and therefore we will focus on the rhetorical structure—logos, ethos, pathos—and stylistic attributes of the texts we encounter this semester. With this foundation, students will have the opportunity to emulate certain writers’ strategies, and, at other points, veer radically from them. In addition to the study of the craft of writing, this class focuses on developing lucid and muscular critical thought. We will hone our skills through group discussion, a reading journal, supplemental media, and a series of writing workshops. In the final paper/project, students will research and incorporate a particular “problem” or “situation” that directly impacts the local environment.

**Erik Moellering** is an actor, poet, and dancer. He recently completed an M.A. in English at James Madison University and is excited to burrow into the Asheville arts scene where he hopes to create vital, interdisciplinary, and ensemble-focused theater.

## **F05: Logic and Rhetoric: American Identities**

**A. Michael Matin**

TTHS 11:00pm - 12:20pm

In this course – through reading, group discussion, and frequent writing – we will explore the subject of American identities. Readings will include short stories, essays, and poems by a variety of American writers who examine the subject of Americanness. Among the topics considered: what does “national” identity mean in a country that is largely composed of immigrants and their descendants? How do race, ethnicity, and class affect one’s sense of identity as an “American”? How does the region one inhabits impact one’s sense of oneself as an “American”? Writing assignments will mostly take the form of essays (including one research essay), although we will also write creative narratives and brief response papers to the readings. Additionally, we will read and discuss each other’s work as a group, and an important aspect of the course will be the giving and receiving of constructive criticism. Our discussions and readings will help you

to improve your skills as a writer and tinker and to profit from sharing your writing and ideas with others.

Although **Michael Matin** specializes in twentieth-century British and postcolonial literature, he has a strong secondary interest in American literature and culture. He enjoys traveling, playing the piano, and spending time with his daughters.

### **F06: Introduction to Writing About Literature and Culture**

**David Bradshaw**

TTTHS 1:00pm - 2:20pm

How to write about the literature given to us by William Shakespeare, Emily Dickinson, George Orwell, Ellen Bryant Voigt, Herman Melville, Edna St. Vincent Millay, Charles Dickens, and others; that is the business of this section of College Composition I. In the course, students will focus on selected literary works as they work to write more correctly and cogently.

**David J. Bradshaw** is a longtime member of the English Department and former chair. He stays in touch with students, following their progress throughout their college careers and beyond graduation.

### **F07: What is Nature? The Challenge of Environmental Writing**

**Erik Moellering**

MWF 1:00pm – 2:20pm

“Nature.” Perhaps the first image that springs to mind is of a particular landscape—mountain, river, prairie, or ocean. Yet, what exactly is “nature”? If we expand our list, moving from simple microbial life to more complex animals and geological processes, we must also soon take stock of the variety of man-made artifacts—creations that inevitably derive from “natural” materials. How, and in what ways, are the telephone and the tree different? Does humanity’s self-consciousness and capacity for language set it apart from other natural forms? Contemplations of this order quickly diminish the hope of developing an airtight definition of “nature”; they do, however, expose intriguing cultural and political forces that influence our understanding of nature and environment.

With the history of American environmental writing as scaffolding, this course examines the extremely slippery term “nature” and wrestles with the often contradictory claims as to what constitutes a “natural” object, lifestyle, and socio-political philosophy. This is, above all else, a course in composition, and therefore we will focus on the rhetorical structure—logos, ethos, pathos—and stylistic attributes of the texts we encounter this semester. With this foundation, students will have the opportunity to emulate certain writers’ strategies, and, at other points, veer radically from them. In addition to the study of the craft of writing, this class focuses on developing lucid and muscular critical thought. We will hone our skills through group discussion, a reading journal, supplemental media, and a series of writing workshops. In the final paper/project,

students will research and incorporate a particular “problem” or “situation” that directly impacts the local environment.

**Erik Moellering** is an actor, poet, and dancer. He recently completed an M.A. in English at James Madison University and is excited to burrow into the Asheville arts scene where he hopes to create vital, interdisciplinary, and ensemble-focused theater.

### **F08:What is Good?: Writing About Ethics**

**Marie Stevens**

TTHS 2:30pm - 3:50pm

Do we have a moral obligation to other human beings? Do we have a moral obligation to future human beings? Do we have a moral obligation to non-human animals and to nature and the physical world? What does it mean to behave ethically? Why should we act ethically? Is morality relative and time specific or absolute? These are some of the questions we will consider in this course through writing, reading, and class discussions. Our lives *demand* that we think deeply about these questions and refine the ability to speak and write clearly and insightfully about the issues from which these questions arise.

We will explore ethical notions as they relate to matters of war and conflict, issues of equality, and decisions of life and death. In-class preliminary writing will provoke your deeper consideration of these issues. Each of four major essays will engage you in a different kind of writing, involving you in precision response to a particular ethical issue. By the end of this course you'll sharpen your critical thinking and writing skills and deepen your thinking about ethics, morality, and what it means to be a good person.

**Marie Stephens** earned her B.A. from the University of Texas at Austin and her M.A. from the University of North Carolina at Asheville. Her specialties include Philosophy, Women's Studies and Critical Thinking. She also teaches in the Humanities Program at both the University of North Carolina at Asheville and at A-B Tech.

### **F09: Education & The Ways We Learn**

**Lorraine Harris**

TTHS 9:30 am – 10:50 am **\*\* CORRECTION \*\***

What sort of process is education? Does it matter how it's taught? Why were students at Columbia able to “train” their instructor to speak to them from the far right side of the classroom in only two weeks using nonverbal cues? Why does a famous attorney teaching at Harvard get such lousy reviews on Rate Your Professor.com? Why do most students sit in approximately the same spot in any classroom? Why did middle school students assigned the task of watching and describing each sunrise and sunset for a science class see a dramatic jump in their performance in all classwork? How do you expect that engaging in physical work within your learning community will change your education? How have experiments in education like North Carolina's Black Mountain

College affected mainstream education? What is your individual learning style? Is it a good fit with the traditional classroom? Do men and women experience their education in different ways? What goals do you have for your education?

With these questions as our focus we will read *Moo*, Jane Smiley's great novel about the life of a college, view videos of Jane Eliot's controversial experiment in teaching her young students what racism feels like, observe classes on campus and generate our own research into questions of interest to us. This course will help you to recognize the strengths and characteristics of your personal voice, how to use that voice credibly in your academic writing and beyond, learn to enter the conversation of criticism, do research that is pertinent and sophisticated, and, always, how to make an effective argument.

**Lorraine Harris** did her most significant learning in the Residential College Program at UNCG and went on to study American Literature at UNC. She has taught ESL in migrant labor camps, *Hamlet* to marines at Parris Island, poetry to medical students and literature and writing to students at USC and UNCA.

## **F10: Exploring Ritual in Contemporary Culture**

**Caroline Mercurio**

TTHS 11:00am - 12:20pm

Explore your world through an anthropological lens by writing about the practice and implications of ritual in contemporary culture. Rituals permeate all aspects of life, evolving as cultures change, but often they are rooted in ancient rites of passage, linking modern rituals to the rituals of our ancestors and allowing us to see how we've changed. What do our rituals show us about ourselves? Reflections of spiritual sickness and technological hyperactivity? This course will examine the subject of ritual by focusing on contemporary culture, including the rituals of pop culture, religion and politics and how they are imitated through modern trends in writing, art, film, music and style. Required reading will include ethnographic essays and articles from a wide variety of sources, ranging from *The Journal of Ritual Studies* to *Rolling Stone* to classics by notable authors. Four substantive essays will be required, each revised extensively in workshop, where the class will focus on writing strategies, grammar and punctuation, and techniques for successful editing and revision. All students will keep a "ritual journal," developing writing itself as a ritual for personal reflection. The final project will be a lengthy narrative essay exploring your personal rituals and how they have shaped your life.

**Caroline Mercurio** graduated from Appalachian State University with a BA in English and earned her MFA in Writing at Vermont College. In 2002, she founded *Hunger Mountain*, The Vermont College Journal of Arts & Letters, for which she continues to serve as Managing Editor. She also teaches writing online for Kennebec Community College in Fairfield, Maine. Publications include *Vermont Magazine*, *Louisiana Literature* and *Asheville Poetry Review*.