English 1SC - Applied Intermediate Composition for Scientists and Engineers
Composing Technology, Designing Information
Spring 2015, INTS 1125 MWF 9:10 – 10:00 AM

Instructor Information

Instructor: Sarah Lozier
Office Location and Hours: HMNSS 2307, MW 1:00-2:30 pm and by appointment
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Required Texts

Mitchell, David. *Cloud Atlas*

Maasik, Sonia and Jack Solomon eds. *Signs of Life in the USA: Readings on Popular Culture for Writers.* Boston: Bedford St. Martin's, 2012. 7th edition. Print.

Course Description:

English 1C, the third in the three quarter 1A/1B/1C series, is a writing intensive course that deals primarily with literary / cultural analysis and interpretation of signs (semiotics). This course focuses on writing as a process which includes elements of invention, drafting, revising, and editing, and much of the course is dedicated to the development of these skills. In this course, students will constructively critique each others' writing in progress. Because writing skills correlate so directly with reading skills, we will be doing a great deal of reading in this course.

In this special "science-infused" version of English 1C, we will be focusing our attention on the cultural constructions of technology and information, and the scientific discourses of computation, cybernetics, and informatics. Though our current moment imagines technology primarily through the lenses of computers and the Internet, technology, like any other artificial/ non-natural construction in our world is conditioned by and for its cultural moment and subject to the whims of time and space. What is technology for us in California in 2015 is different from what was technology in Europe in the 15th century, and in China in the 3067. Keeping this in mind, this class will critically engage the cultural signs of technology to expand our notions of composition, writing, information, and expression. We will focus most of our attention on contemporary (late 20th – early 21st century) texts, but this historical view of technology as culturally conditioned will always inform our conversations, as the title of the class "Composing Technology" indicates.

In keeping with the critical themes of this course, this class will make use of multiple textual forms, both for "reading"/consuming and for "writing"/composing. In addition to the required texts listed above, we will "read" televisual texts and hypertextual, interactive texts that will be provided to you. Besides our consumption of interactive media, your final "essay" will be a collaborative project built out of the hypertextual composition tool, Scalar. In this way, we can critically ask, not only, what are our cultural conditions and assumptions about "technology," but also, what are our cultural conditions and assumptions about composition. To put it bluntly: this class expects you to compose and design arguments beyond Microsoft Word and Text Edit. Indeed, it asks you to challenge your compositional skills beyond text and beyond language, to include image, video, sound, interactivity, and non-linearity.

Class Policies

Attendance: Your success in this course depends on regular attendance and active participation. As a writer's workshop, your presence and constructive participation is crucial. Attendance may be taken daily, and unexcused absences, late arrivals, and early departures will ultimately affect your ability to pass the course.

Late Work: All essays must be submitted via Safe Assignment on iLearn by the start of class on the due date. Absence from class does not extend the due date. Depending on the circumstances, late work may or may not be accepted. Late work that is accepted will be lowered by 1/3 of a letter grade per week day that it is late (eg: If an essay is one day late, it may drop from a B- to a C+).

Required Formatting: All papers must be in correct, current MLA format. This includes document formatting, such as 1 inch margins, New Times Roman 12 pt. font, and consistent double-spacing, in addition to source documentation. While I will do my best to make resources available for you to follow MLA format, it is your responsibility to use these resources and know if your assignments are in the correct format.

iLearn and Rmail: This course will make heavy use of the online iLearn system, which is located at iLearn.ucr.edu. Check the site daily because important instructions for completing assignments, as well as class announcements, will appear there. Log into the iLearn site using the same username and password that you use for UCR R-mail. Be sure to check your UCR e-mail account daily also.

Quizzes: Quizzes involving invention work or reading comprehension may be administered without prior notification. I am likely to give more quizzes if it becomes clear that students are not completing the assigned writing and/or reading.

Students with Disabilities: If you believe you have any special needs or disabilities, please contact the Services for Students with Disabilities office (SSD—http://www.specialservices.ucr.edu) so that they can work with me to ensure that your needs are met.

Writing Assignments

This course will have 3 primary types of writing assignments: Blog Posts, Essays, and the Scalar Project. Blog posts will occur weekly and should be 500 words each (+/- 5%). Essays will occur twice throughout the quarter and should be 1000-1500 words. The Scalar Project will be a collaborative project that you will undertake with a group of students. The guidelines for this will be forthcoming, but since it is a major part of your final grade, you can expect it to be a significant endeavor.

Blog Posts: Each week, you will be responsible for posting 500-word "Think-Pieces" to the class blog. These are NOT informal writings, but are instead meant to be short formal writing pieces through which you critically reflect on some aspect of the week's reading, viewing, or class discussion. I will provide you a set of leading questions to prompt your thinking each week, and will be looking for the sophistication of thought and attention to compositional detail in these posts. Your blog posts are worth 25% of your final grade.

The course blog is hosted by Tumblr and can be found at the URL composingtechnology.tumblr.com. At the present moment, this blog is password protected. The password is ENG1scSpring2015. This is a site hosted by my personal tumblr account so I will be sending invitations to each of you via email to become a contributing member of this blog. Note: this will require that you join tumblr. If you are uncomfortable doing this, please let me know BEFORE the first blog post is due so that we can come up with an alternative solution.

Blog Post Peer Review: In addition to the blog post that you will write each week, you will be responsible for providing a critical, 100-word comment to two of your peers' blog posts which will be due the Monday following each post. This will be your blog post peer review. These comments should seek to further the thought-process, ideas and conversation begun by your peer in their post. As such, leading questions are encouraged, particularly if you provide some commentary in the form of an "answer" to your question. Please note that this is NOT an invitation to troll, attack, or otherwise inappropriately participate in an online dialogue/forum. Your blog post peer review is worth 5% of your final grade.

Essays: Unlike other composition classes in the 1ABC series, you will only write two essays in this course. For each essay you will receive a prompt and explicit guidelines as to my expectations. Each essay will require a close, critical analysis of a text, as well as at least one outside source. I will be expecting writing that indicates your status as having passed English 1A and 1B, so will be expecting structure, organization, and a clear thesis statement supported by appropriate examples from the text. Finally, each essay must include some kind of semiotic

analysis to make an argument about your text and what it indicates about our culture; in other words, none of these essays will be reports or research papers. Each essay is worth 20% of your grade.

Essay Peer Review: Writing is a process. Feedback from your peers is a vital part of that process. Not only does input from your peers enable you to rethink and re-vision your own work, but critically reading the work of others trains your eye to eventually transfer those skills to the reading of your own work. Hence, peer review is mandatory for this class. If you miss a peer review day or neglect to bring a complete rough draft with you to class, the overall grade of the essay will drop 2/3 of a letter grade (i.e. a C+ would drop to a C-).

Scalar Project: The last 3 weeks of the quarter will be given to your Scalar Project. While the focus of this project is the expansion of your thought-process and style related to composition, you must compose something about the main course text, *Cloud Atlas,* a book-based text that, as you will see, similarly expands the limits of what writing and composition can be. This will be a collaborative composition project in which you and 2-3 peers compose an essay using the USC-hosted and designed writing software: Scalar. This platform offers scholars and critics a hypertextual platform to compose arguments supported by multimedia content that does not rely on a linear form of "reading." The software has been out of beta for less than 2 years, and represents a cutting-edge tool for composing scholarly articles. Some class time will be devoted to teaching you the software, but part of this assignment will require that you learn to use Scalar and see what it allows you to do. It has an open API so for those of you who are computer scientists, I encourage you to get creative and expansive in your design/writing style. You will receive more specific and focused guidelines to this project when we get closer to this part of the quarter.

Revision Policy: Because writing is a process, and ultimately everything you write is a draft (in that it can always be improved) I do not want to discourage you from the revision aspect of writing. Therefore you will have the option of revising one of your two essays in order to receive a higher grade (it will be the average grade of the two pieces). In keeping with the overall theme "Composing Technology," your revision must not only improve your argument, but also re-vision it into a new form: a Buzzfeed-style listicle or quiz. Your revision must be submitted to both me AND the buzzfeed community, and the success of your composition in the community will affect your grade. Revisions may only be submitted after week 8, so you can expect more information on this to be forthcoming around week 7.

Plagiarism and Academic Misconduct: This section is taken from the Academic Integrity Brochure for Students (http://conduct.ucr.edu/).
"At the University of California, Riverside (UCR) honesty and integrity are fundamental values that guide and inform us as individuals and as a community. The academic culture requires that each student take responsibility for learning and for producing work that reflect their intellectual potential, curiosity, and capability. Students must represent themselves truthfully, claim only work that is their own, acknowledge academic disciplines and engage honestly in all academic

assignments. Misunderstanding of the appropriate academic conduct will not be accepted as an excuse for academic misconduct. If a student is in doubt about appropriate academic conduct in a particular situation, he or she should consult with the instructor in the course to avoid the serious charge of academic misconduct."

Plagiarism is the "copying of language, structure, or ideas of another and attributing (explicitly or implicitly) the work to one's own efforts. Plagiarism means using another's work without giving credit. Examples include but are not limited to":

• "copying information from computer-based sources, i.e., the Internet"
• "allowing another person to substantially alter or revise your work and submitting it entirely as your own"
• "copying from another student's examination, quiz,... or homework assignment"
• "submitting for academic advancement an item of academic work that you have previously submitted for academic advancement" without prior authorization from the faculty member supervising the work.

"Unauthorized collaboration" is also inappropriate. If I suspect that you have committed an act of academic misconduct, I will discuss it with you and file a report with the Student Conduct & Academic Integrity Programs (SCAIP). You may receive a zero on the assignment and an "F" in the course. Further disciplinary action may also be taken by SCAIP. If you ever have a question about plagiarism or other academic conduct, please ask me before you turn in any work that may be problematic.

Grade Break-Down:

Blog Posts – 25%
Blog Post Peer Review – 5%
Essay 1 – 20%
Essay 2 – 20%
Scalar Project – 30%

Grading Scale:

100 – 97% A+	72 – 70% C-
96 – 93% A	69 – 67% D+
92 – 90% A-	66 – 63 % D
89 – 87 % B+	62 – 60% D-
86 – 83% B	59 – 0 % F
82 – 80% B-	
79 – 77% C+	
76 – 73% C	

*A C (not a C-) is required to pass this class.
** All writing assignments (blog posts, essays, and Scalar Projects) must be completed to pass this course.