

## Policy Statement and Tentative Schedule

### English Composition II: Dance, Literature, and Writing. Spring 2007

#### Welcome!

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#### Required Texts and Supplies:

- *Dance in Poetry: An International Anthology of Poems on Dance*. Ed. Alkis Raftis. Princeton, NJ: Dance Horizons/Princeton Book Company, 1991.
- Austen, Jane. *Pride and Prejudice*. New York: Signet, 1996.
- Shange, Ntozake. *For Colored Girls Who Have Considered Suicide/When the Rainbow Is Enuf*. New York: Bantam.
- Shakespeare, William. *Othello*. New York: Signet.
- Satrapi, Marjane. *Persepolis: The Story of a Childhood*. New York: Pantheon, 2003.
- Your handbook from 101, or if you do not have one, purchase: Faigley, Lester. *The Brief Penguin Handbook*. Second edition. New York: Penguin, 2005.
- A hardbound composition notebook or a folder with pockets (purchase at bookstore).
- A separate notebook for class notes and handouts. Three-ring is recommended.
- File folders for handing in essays.

*Although they are*

*Only breath, words*

*which I command*

*are immortal*

Words of Sappho, Greek poetess, dancer, and teacher, 6<sup>th</sup> Century, B.C.

***“But really, writing has nothing to do with luck. It has everything to do with hard work, confidence, bravery, organization, business sense, and intuition.”***

Valerie Smart, Westfield State College Graduate and Published Writer, quoted from an address given at the English Department's Spring 2003 Student/Faculty Gathering.

*"I look for dancers who have rubato in their bodies. I believe that dance is not what you do from one movement to the next, it's what happens in between those two movements with the body."* Dancer and choreographer, Alvin Ailey, in his autobiography

*" . . . at the still point, there the dance is."* Poet, T.S. Eliot

*"The best things happen when you're dancing."* From Irving Berlin's musical/movie *White Christmas*.

*"Yes, to dance beneath the diamond sky with one hand waving free,  
silhouetted by the sea, circled by the circus sands,  
with all memory and fate driven deep beneath the waves,  
let me forget about today until tomorrow."* Singer Bob Dylan's "Mr. Tambourine Man"

*"Art is an elastic sort of love."* Early- to mid-twentieth century dancer, singer, civil rights activist Josephine Baker.

### **Statement of Intent:**

In this section we will explore the relationship between dance, writing, and literature. We will read and write about texts that have dance as a significant element in their plots, characterizations, and/or settings, or that employ dance for symbolic purposes. Such texts include Ntozake Shange's choreopoem, *For Colored Girls Who Have Considered Suicide When the Rainbow Is Unuf* and Jane Austen's *Pride and Prejudice*, and films such as *Rent*. We will also study texts powerfully rendered in dance, such as selections from Shakespeare's *Othello* and African American spirituals, comparing these texts to dance productions such as Alvin Ailey's *Revelations*, and writing about how these texts have been interpreted in movement. Finally, we will consider how we might use dance or other movement activities ourselves for interpreting what we read and discovering new ideas for our own writing.

**No prior dance experience is required for this course--just a willingness to try out new things.** All of us need to work together to create a positive environment where students will feel comfortable trying out new things. Alternatives will be given to students if something feels too far outside the comfort zone, but I strongly encourage students to cultivate an open mind and support each other. No grades will be given for movement or dance ability.

Each week we will usually spend one day in Ely 233, our regular classroom, and one day in the dance studio (usually Thursdays). I have noted on the schedule when we will meet in the studio; however, this is subject to change. Such changes will be announced in class or sent to you via e-mail. While you do not need to wear dance attire, I recommend loose and comfortable clothing when we are planning to be in that space. Street shoes should not be worn in the studio (socks or slippers are fine). Food and drink, except for water in plastic

containers, is also not allowed. On days we meet in the studio, it would be best if you did not bring a lot of stuff with you (you will need your notebook and whatever text we are currently reading and writing utensils).

**Overview of course outcomes: At the end of this course, you should be able to**

- Identify, evaluate, construct, and organize powerful arguments addressed to different audiences.
- Read rhetorically and reflectively.
- Make and explore creatively and critically connections between dance, literature, and writing.
- Engage in library and on-line research, evaluate source material, and integrate source material into your own writing.
- Marshal varied types of evidence in support of claims and accurately document sources.
- Write using an engaging prose style, while adapting that style for different audiences.
- Identify and make revisions and corrections that would improve your own and others' writing.
- Produce final versions of your writing that show awareness of language and genre conventions appropriate to the rhetorical situation.

For a more detailed list of course outcomes, see the blue WSC Composition Program Brochure given to you during English Composition I.

**Attendance:** This class requires collaborative learning, so attendance is vital. Students who miss more than **two classes** will lose points off of their participation grade (10 per absence up to six absences). **Students who miss more than five classes, excused or unexcused, will likely fail the course, or will be asked to petition for a withdrawal (withdrawal from composition courses at Westfield requires documentation of extenuating circumstances).** Students will also be completing in-class writing and response assignments on a weekly basis. These may not be made up, although I will drop the two lowest grades.

Much of the work that we will be doing in this class involves discussion and interaction. Your success, as well as the success of your peers, depends upon your regular participation. This is especially true on days when rough drafts are due. Failure to attend class on these days means that you will not be given a peer response assignment, and this will affect your grade.

**Assignments:** I will assign both in-class and out-of-class essays, along with various other written and oral assignments. Unless otherwise notified, out-of-class assignments are due at the beginning of class on the date specified by the course outline. For each out-of-class essay, you will submit at least one rough draft before producing the final draft. You will also be expected to complete peer responses for each of these essays.

Assignments handed in late will be marked down (five points per day). **Failure to hand in a rough draft and peer response will lower the grade on your final draft considerably (see section on grading).** All drafts should be typed and double-spaced. Papers should be documented using the MLA or APA citation system. You will always need at least 2 copies of your rough drafts. Consider this an additional course expense. You should also retain a copy of all of your final drafts. Conferences with the instructor will be arranged when necessary. **Any exceptions to the above guidelines must be discussed with me in advance of due dates.**

**Grading:** Throughout the semester, we will discuss as a class the criteria for success connected with each formal assignment. For a general overview of departmental grading policies, see the blue WSC Composition Program Brochure. Your final grade will be based on the following assignments, each earning you up to a certain number of points:

- Formal Writing Assignment 1: Narrative/Analysis--Self and Movement, Complexity and Contradiction, 100
- Formal Writing Assignment 2: Reading and Response Journal, *Pride and Prejudice*, with Research Component, 100
- Formal Writing Assignment 3: Analysis/Evaluation Essay (Ailey's *Revelations*, Shange's *For Colored Girls*, and *Rent*), 100
- Formal Writing Assignment 4: Proposal Essay on Interpretations of *Othello*, 100
- Formal Writing/Creative Assignment 5: A Multi-genre Project with a dance option (*Persepolis* and selected poetry), 150
- Homework and In-class Writings: 145 (20 of which is for self-evaluation of participation and 25 of which is for final self-assessment)
- Four Peer responses: 80
- Participation: 225 (125 points of this for writing process)

**For a total of 1000 points.**

**Note that students who do not complete all of the formal writing assignments (Essays 1-5) will not pass this course.**

**Participation is graded as follows:**

**For a checkplus, the student will**

- make oral contributions to discussion several times per week in a way that forwards the discussion effectively (e.g., helps make the discussion more collaborative and constructive);
- encourage others to participate by asking provocative questions or noting agreements or disagreements; assist others in feeling comfortable with movement activities;
- show a willingness to try new things;
- listen to and draw on what others say in a supportive way;
- have no more than one absence;

- and show excellent preparedness for class (be completely up to date on readings and assignments).

**For a check,** the student will

- make regular contributions (at least once per class meeting) to discussion in a way that forwards the discussion effectively;
- be supportive of others in the class as they try new things;
- have no more than two absences;
- usually show thorough preparedness for class.

**Students who seldom speak in class, who have more than two absences, and/or who do not demonstrate preparedness will likely receive a check minus.**

**Process and Revision:** Each final paper will receive two grades: the first grade, for product, will be added into your formal writing assignment grade accordingly; the second grade, for process, will be added into your participation grade (worth 25 points per formal writing assignment). **Note, however, that failure to pass in a rough draft on the date the rough draft is due will leave you with a process grade of zero and will lower your final product grade by one grade. I grade using a check system, although checks may be translated into numerical and letter grades by using the following chart.**

When I compute grades at the end of the semester, numbers will correspond to the following letters (i.e., 925 and above equals A, 900-924 equals A-):

- A = 925
- A- = 900
- B+ = 875
- B = 825
- B- = 800
- C+ = 775
- C = 725
- C- = 700
- D+ = 675
- D = 625
- F = 624 and below
- Checkplus = 93
- Check = 80
- Checkminus=67

**Extra Credit Options:** Students may earn extra points if they undertake one of the following options (maximum total of 20 points allowed):

- Visit the reading and writing center to consult on a paper related to this or another course. 5 points per visit.

- Attend the theatre program's production of Macbeth and make a journal entry about the way movement is used in the play. 10 points. You will need to purchase tickets well in advance.
- Attend the XJ Kennedy poetry reading in early April (date to be announced).
- Additional extra credit options may be given during the semester.

**Academic Support: These services are intended for students of all ability levels.**

- Visit me during my office hours or make an appointment with me (see above).
- Visit the WSC Reading and Writing Center in Parenzo 218, #5569. Meet with a trained writing or reading professional to discuss your work.
- Visit Student Support Services, which offers weekly workshops on writing (phone 5462 for specifics). A consultant is also available to those students who have English as a second language.

If you have issues of concern related to your academic progress, which you feel I should know about, do not hesitate to approach me.

**Scholastic Dishonesty:** Plagiarism is a serious offense that may lead to failure for the course or even suspension from the college. All cases of plagiarism and misuse of source material will be reported to Academic Affairs. Please refer to the statement on plagiarism given to you during your 101 class (gold brochure). Retain note cards, drafts, and any other relevant materials for all major writing assignments. You may be required to submit these on request.

**Tentative Schedule, English Composition II: Dance, Literature, and Writing--Note that this schedule is highly subject to change.**

Homework	In-Class
<p><i>Tues, Jan 16</i></p> <p>Welcome and introductions. Review of syllabus and course expectations. Gallery walk. Student questionnaire. HW: Read in <i>Dance in Poetry</i>: Euripides, p. 48; Farber, p. 49; Fort, p. 52; Hughes, p. 66; Levertov, p. 80; MacEwen, p. 85; Moore, p. 102; Sandburg, p. 133; Untermeyer, p. 155; and Williams, p. 164.</p>	<p><i>Thurs, Jan 18</i></p> <p>Community building day. Creating a solid working environment. Meet in Ely 233, before heading for the studio. Dance and the individual.</p>
<p><i>HW for Tues, Jan 23:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Read handouts (narratives by dancers). Annotate handouts, generating questions, either about things you did not understand or issues worth discussing; and/or noting a quotation to which you had a strong response; and/or comparing points made by different dancers.</li> </ul>	<p><i>Tues, Jan 23:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Meet in the studio.</li> <li>• Images of dancers--self and other--telling our stories.</li> <li>• Discussion of readings.</li> <li>• Formal Writing Assignment 1 given out.</li> <li>• Invention work.</li> </ul>
<p><i>HW for Thurs, Jan 25:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Discovery draft of formal writing assignment 1, Narrative/Analysis essay. Bring 3 copies of your discovery draft to class on the 25th.</b></li> </ul>	<p><i>Thurs, Jan 25:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Discovery draft of Narrative/Analysis essay due. Bring three copies to class.</b></li> <li>• Class workshop--meet in Ely 233.</li> <li>• Considering the Rhetorical Occasion.</li> <li>• Peer response activity.</li> <li>• Sign up for optional conference.</li> </ul>
<p><i>HW for Tues, Jan 30:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Additional poems in <i>Dance in Poetry</i>, TBA.</li> <li>• Working on narrative/analysis essay.</li> </ul>	<p><i>Tues, Jan 30:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• More on the Rhetorical Occasion. Conventions of narratives.</li> <li>• Citation workshop.</li> <li>• Preparing to read <i>Pride and Prejudice</i>. Dance and society.</li> </ul>
<p><i>HW for Thurs, Feb 1:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Final draft of Narrative/Analysis essay. Be sure to turn in your final draft in a folder along with the peer response and draft with my comments, and any relevant invention work.</b></li> </ul>	<p><i>Thurs, Feb 1:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Meet in studio.</b></li> <li>• <b>Narrative/Analysis essay due. Turn in using a folder.</b></li> <li>• Introducing the Reading Response Journal.</li> <li>• Prereading activities. Contact improv--how others' movements affect my own.</li> </ul>
<p><i>HW for Tues, Feb 6:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Read Austen pp. 5-53 (Vol I, Chap 1-12).</li> <li>• First entries in response journal (see assignment sheet).</li> </ul>	<p><i>Tues, Feb 6:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Critical discussion and debate. Teasing out 18th-century British views of the world.</li> <li>• Representations of dance in the novel.</li> </ul>

<p><i>HW for Thurs, Feb 8:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Read Austen, pp. 53-113 (Vol I, Chap 13-23).</li> <li>• Response journal entries.</li> </ul>	<p><i>Thurs, Feb 8:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Meet in studio.</b></li> <li>• TBA.</li> <li>• Response journal check.</li> </ul>
<p><i>HW for Tues, Feb 13:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Read Austen, pp. 115-172 (Vol II, Chap 1-12).</li> <li>• Response journal entries. Editing logs where necessary.</li> </ul>	<p><i>Tues, Feb 13:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Enhancing reading and response through research. Citing sources accurately in our response journals.</li> <li>• Info and issue questions--gallery walk.</li> <li>• Signing up for journal conference.</li> </ul>
<p><i>HW for Thurs, Feb 15:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Finish Austen.</li> <li>• Response journal entries.</li> </ul>	<p><i>Thurs, Feb 15:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Meet in Ely Library for Information Instruction. No class on Feb 20 (Tuesday follows a Monday schedule--don't forget your conference on either Feb 16, 20, or 21st).</b></li> </ul>
<p><i>HW for Thurs, Feb 22:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Completing research assignment and response journal. Response journal due on the 22nd at the beginning of class.</b></li> </ul>	<p><i>Thurs, Feb 22:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Meet in studio.</b></li> <li>• <b>Response journals due. Sharing what we have learned through research.</b></li> </ul>
<p><i>HW for Tues, Feb 27:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Read essays on body/mind split (handouts).</li> <li>• Read selected spirituals.</li> <li>• Read selected poems in <i>Dance in Poetry</i>.</li> </ul>	<p><i>Tues, Feb 27:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Challenges to the mind/body split in western culture.</li> <li>• Dance and culture; dance and ritual.</li> <li>• Discussion of readings--concrete lang.</li> <li>• Alvin Ailey's <i>Revelations</i>.</li> </ul>

<p><i>HW for Thurs, March 1:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Informal writing assignment and readings TBA. Participation self-evaluation.</li> </ul>	<p><i>Thurs, Mar 1:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Meet in studio.</b></li> <li>• Ailey's <i>Revelations</i>--constructing stories with dance.</li> <li>• Artifact activity.</li> </ul>
<p><i>HW for Tue, March 6:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Read Shange's <i>For Colored Girls</i>. Informal writing assignment. (Pages TBA).</li> </ul>	<p><i>Tue, March 6:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What is a choreopoem?</li> <li>• Reading deeply.</li> <li>• Discussion of text and context.</li> </ul>
<p><i>HW for Thurs, March 8:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Finishing Shange's <i>For Colored Girls</i>. Informal writing assignment.</li> </ul>	<p><i>Thurs, March 8:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Meet in studio.</b></li> <li>• Rendering Shange's work in movement.</li> <li>• Writing vividly about our experiences.</li> <li>• Have a good spring break.</li> </ul>
<p><i>HW for Tues, March 20:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>TBA.</b></li> </ul>	<p><i>Tues, March 20 and Thurs, March 22:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Viewing and discussing <i>Rent</i>.</li> <li>• Formal writing assignment 3, Analysis/Evaluation essay, assigned.</li> </ul>
<p><i>HW for Tues, March 27:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Discovery draft of Analysis/Evaluation essay. Bring 3 copies to class on the 27th.</b></li> </ul>	<p><i>Tues, March 27:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Discovery draft of Analysis/Evaluation essay. Have 3 copies with you for workshop.</b></li> <li>• Class revision workshop.</li> <li>• Peer response. Sign up for conferences.</li> <li>• Powerful beginnings.</li> </ul>
<p><i>HW for Thurs, March 29:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• TBA</li> </ul>	<p><i>Thurs, March 29:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• TBA. Don't forget conferences.</li> </ul>

<p><i>HW for Tues, April 3:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Final draft of Analysis/Evaluation essay. Be sure to turn in your final draft in a folder along with the peer response and draft with my comments, and any relevant invention work.</b></li> <li>• Reading in <i>Othello</i>, TBA.</li> </ul>	<p><i>Tues, April 3:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Meet in studio.</b></li> <li>• <b>Final draft of Analysis/Evaluation essay due. Turn in using a folder.</b></li> <li>• Context and background information for reading of <i>Othello</i>.</li> </ul>
<p><i>HW for Thurs, April 5:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Readings in <i>Othello</i>. Informal writing assignment.</li> </ul>	<p><i>Thurs, April 5:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Interpreting <i>Othello</i> in dance. Comparing interpretations.</li> <li>• Formal writing assignment 4, Proposal essay, assigned.</li> <li>• Invention work. The art of persuasion.</li> </ul>
<p><i>HW for Tues, April 10:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Discovery draft of Proposal essay. Bring 3 copies to class on the 10th.</b></li> </ul>	<p><i>Tues, April 10:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Discovery draft of Proposal essay due. Have 3 copies with you for workshop.</b></li> <li>• Class revision workshop. Focus on endings.</li> <li>• Peer response. Sign up for conferences.</li> </ul>
<p><i>HW for Thurs, April 12:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• TBA.</li> </ul>	<p><i>Thurs, April 12:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Incorporating research into our arguments.</li> </ul>
<p><i>HW for Tues, April 17:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Final draft of Proposal essay. Be sure to turn in your final draft in a folder along with the peer response and draft with my comments, and any relevant invention work.</b></li> <li>• Reading <i>Persepolis</i>, pages TBA.</li> </ul>	<p><i>Tues, April 17:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Final draft of Proposal essay due. Turn in using a folder.</b></li> <li>• Context and background information for reading of <i>Persepolis</i>.</li> <li>• Dance and resistance.</li> </ul>
<p><i>HW for Thurs, April 19:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Finish reading <i>Persepolis</i>. Informal writing assignment.</li> </ul>	<p><i>Thurs, April 19:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Meet in studio.</b></li> <li>• Reading and interpreting <i>Persepolis</i>. Art and politics intersecting with dance. Dance as a tool for persuasion. Generating info and issue questions.</li> </ul>
<p><i>HW for Tues, April 24:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Research assignment.</li> </ul>	<p><i>Tues, April 24:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Finishing <i>Persepolis</i>.</li> <li>• Final formal writing assignment, Multi-Genre piece, assigned.</li> </ul>

<p><i>HW for Thurs, April 26:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reading in <i>Dance in Poetry</i>, TBA.</li> <li>• Proposal for final assignment due.</li> </ul>	<p><i>Thurs, April 26:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Meet in studio.</b></li> <li>• Invention work for final assignment.</li> </ul>
<p><i>HW for Tues, May 1:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Discovery drafts of Multi-Genre assignment. Bring 3 copies to class of the written portion(s) on the 1st.</b></li> </ul>	<p><i>Tues, May 1:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Discovery draft of Multi-Genre assignment due. Have 3 copies with you for workshop.</b></li> <li>• Class revision workshop. Stations.</li> <li>• Sign up for conferences.</li> </ul>
<p><i>HW for Thurs, May 3:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Don't forget your conference.</li> <li>• TBA</li> </ul>	<p><i>Thurs, May 3:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• TBA.</li> </ul>
<p><i>HW for Tues, May 8:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Final draft of Multi-Genre assignment due. Be sure to turn in your final draft in a folder along with the peer response and draft with my comments, and any relevant invention work.</b></li> </ul>	<p><i>Tues, May 8:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Meet in studio.</b></li> <li>• <b>Final draft of Multi-Genre assignment due. Turn-in using a folder.</b></li> <li>• Class sharing/performance.</li> <li>• Concluding remarks.</li> </ul>