ENG 1101: ENGLISH COMPOSITION I

COMPOSING ABSTRACTIONS

[a learning community with the Architecture Department]

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Section 5363
Room: M401
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Course Website: http://openlab.citytech.cuny.edu/abstractions/

COURSE DESCRIPTION:

In your college architecture classes and in your professional careers as architects, you will be required to think about space: how to contain it, how to create it, how to fill it, how to shape it.

While the practice of writing is much different than the practice of architecture, it shares some important similarities: the blank space of the page might be compared to an empty building lot; an outline is a blueprint in written form; the construction of arguments with strong supporting evidence mirrors the construction of buildings with sturdy infrastructure; the inclusion of a well-shaped sentence in a piece of prose recalls the flourish of a well-placed architectural detail.

In this course, we aim to practice the type of writing that you will be called upon to produce as architects. We will concentrate first and foremost on the skill of articulating details with fine-grained precision; we will also attempt to render abstract architectural form into well-shaped prose. Throughout the class, we will work on our observation of the world around us as we prepare to create new structures for it.

This course is part of a learning community that includes ARCH 1110 & ARCH 1191. All three classes will encourage creative, original, and unorthodox patterns of thought that make possible new understandings of familiar forms, materials, structures, and ideas.

Prerequisite: CUNY certification in reading and writing

COURSE OBJECTIVES:
    Writing Goals:
- Write clear and logical sentences using conventional spelling, grammar, punctuation, and syntax;

- Design reasonable, clearly articulated, well-organized essays that present persuasive arguments and well-supported assertions;
- Use various rhetorical modes of argument, including narration, description, comparison, analysis, and argumentation;
- Write a research paper that presents a thesis, develops an argument, considers several points of view, and utilizes properly-cited secondary material;
- Revise written work in response to feedback;
- Develop a personal prose style.

Reading Goals:
- Take pleasure in reading good writing;
- Listen to the sounds of the language you read;
- Read actively and carefully;
- Formulate questions and responses to course texts before they are discussed in class;
- Demonstrate the ability to paraphrase, summarize, quote from, and argue with assigned texts.

Computing Goals:
- Gain basic familiarity with the use of online tools such as blogs and wikis;
- Acquire skills in information fluency

REQUIRED COURSE TEXTS AND MATERIALS:
- A digital camera or cameraphone
- Various handouts, online articles, and PDF files
- A reliable computer/internet connection at home or school

COURSE REQUIREMENTS AND GRADES:
- Three formal essays (Essay 1: 10%. Essays 2 & 3: 20%. — 50% total)
- One research essay (20%)
- Midterm and final exams (5% and 10% — 15% total)
- In-class and online writing (5%)
- Regular attendance and active classroom participation (10%)

THE OPENLAB
This course will utilize the OpenLab (http://openlab.citytech.cuny.edu/), and open academic environment for the City Tech community.

COURSE POLICIES:
Attendance: Attendance is mandatory in this discussion-based course. Students who miss more than three classes for any reason other than a documented emergency will lose one-third of their final grade for each additional absence. Students who miss more than five classes

are likely to fail the course. If you miss class, you must contact your classmates to find out what you've missed. In-class writing assignments cannot be made up. Arriving after roll has been taken will count as a lateness and one-third of an absence.

Participation: The success of this course depends upon your regular and active participation in class discussions. To receive full credit for participation, you must make constructive contributions to our classroom discussions. This includes the completion of all reading and writing assignments.

Please do not read or write text messages in class unless asked to do so by Professor Gold, as this activity is distracting and disrespectful.

Deadlines: You must adhere to your assigned dates and times. All assignments must be prepared prior to the class meeting, according to the due date and time, and fully complete. If you need an extension, you must contact me <u>at least 24 hours</u> before the assignment is due to explain why an extension is necessary. Late work will be penalized by one-third of a grade for each day it is late.

You will be responsible for all assignments and deadlines regardless of absences. Hence, I strongly recommend that you have a contact person in the class from whom you can get assignments and notes in the event of an absence.

Paper Format: All papers must be typed and double-spaced. Use a legible 12-point font such as Times New Roman, and format your papers with 1" margins on all sides. Give your paper a creative title that sums up your argument. Citations and title formatting should conform to the MLA guidelines that we will discuss in class.

Revisions: Revision is an essential part of the writing process. Real revision involves a re-visioning and re-fashioning of the original paper, not just the completion of superficial corrections. Hand in revisions with the original essay and the original grading sheet. On the heading, indicate "Revision of Essay #" and the date on which you are handing it in.

Personal Conferences: <u>Meeting with me during office hours is one of the most important things you can do to improve your work.</u> If you cannot make it to my office hours, we can set up an appointment at a mutually convenient time. Email is the best way to reach me; I will attempt to respond to all messages within 24 hours.

Email Etiquette: In your email messages to me, please observe the rules of formal letter-writing etiquette: begin each message with a greeting ("Dear Professor Gold") and end each message with a closing ("Sincerely, Model Student"). Avoid texting language ("hey prof. g? How r u?"). Use standard punctuation and capitalization. Messages that do not comply with this etiquette will be deleted.

Incompletes: Incomplete grades will not be given except under extraordinary circumstances, and even then, the student must have completed course work at a passing level and must complete a written agreement with me regarding the completion of the work.

New York City College of Technology Policy on Academic Integrity: Students and all others who work with information, ideas, texts, images, music, inventions, and other intellectual property owe their audience and sources accuracy and honesty in using, crediting, and citing sources. As a community of intellectual and professional workers, the College recognizes its responsibility for providing instruction in information literacy and academic integrity, offering models of good practice, and responding vigilantly and appropriately to infractions of academic integrity. Accordingly, academic dishonesty is prohibited in The City University of New York and at New York City College of Technology and is punishable by penalties, including failing grades, suspension, and expulsion. The complete text of the College policy on Academic Integrity may be found in the catalog.

Plagiarism: DON'T DO IT UNDER ANY CIRCUMSTANCES!!!! The penalties for plagiarism in this course include failure of the course and additional academic sanctions; I will report all incidences of plagiarism to City Tech's Academic Integrity Officer. If you are confused about what plagiarism is or have questions about how you should avoid it, please contact me before your paper is due. Do not, under any circumstances, hand in plagiarized work.

Students With Disabilities: Any student who has a need for accommodation based on the impact of a disability should contact me privately to discuss the specific situation as soon as possible. I will work with the Student Support Services Program (Atrium 237 – 718-260-5143) to coordinate reasonable accommodations for students with documented disabilities.

Syllabus Disclaimer: Any part of this syllabus may be revised during in the semester at the sole discretion of the instructor.

COURSE RESOURCES:
City Tech Learning Center: Atrium G-18, (718) 260-5874
The Atrium Learning Center provides a wide range of free academic support services to City Tech students, including computer facilities, tutoring assistance, and workshops. Tutors in the Learning Center can help you focus and develop your papers; please visit the center as often as possible this semester.

The Ursula C. Sherwin Library: Atrium Fourth Floor, (718) 260-5485
It is my hope that you will become intimately familiar with the library this semester. During the semester, we will meet with a librarian for a session on the effective use of online resources and literary databases.

Course Schedule:

	READING	WRITING

8/28 Introductions   Join course group/blog

UNIT 1: URBAN SPACE

8/30 unphotographable.com   Write three unphotographable moments;
      E.B. White, "Here is New York"   post on course blog

9/4 Mumford, "What is a City?", video   Two more unphotographable moments
9/6 Poe, "Man of the Crowd"   Blog post: describe the texture of a moment
                                  of city life

9/11 Walt Whitman, "Crossing Brooklyn Ferry"
9/13 Walt Whitman, "Crossing Brooklyn Ferry" **Paper #1**: "My New York: Urban
                                  Textures"

9/18 No Class
9/20 David Dunlap on NY Street Signs   Blog post: photos + writing – case study on
                                  an element of urban life

9/25 No Class
9/27 Paul Goldberger, "Wave Effect"   Blog post on an architectural building/detail
                                  in NYC that you admire (+ photos)

UNIT 2: WRITING ABOUT ARCHITECTURE

10/2 *Writing About Architecture*   3 unphotographable moments
10/4 *Writing About Architecture*   Blog post – review a NYC building

10/9 *Writing About Architecture*   Draft of Paper #2
10/11 *Writing About Architecture*   **Paper #2: Urban Shapes** (write a paper
                                  that connects examples of a single geometric
                                  shape around NYC

10/16 *Writing About Architecture*   Blog post: City sounds
10/18 *Writing About Architecture*   Blog post: response post to reading

10/23 **Midterm Exam**

UNIT 3: TECHNOLOGY AND THE CITY: RESPONSIVE SPACES

10/25 Dan Hill, "The Street as Platform"   Blog: response post to reading

10/30 Dan Hill, "The Street as Platform"   Blog: Photo essay – "The Street as
                                  Platform"
11/1 Paul Goldberger, "Digital Dreams"   **Paper #3: Street as Platform**

11/6 Portfolio Review: The Living   Blog post on a project by The Living
11/8 Open Reading   Find an article on architecture whose ideas
                                  and language you admire and share it with

the class on the course blog

11/13	Penelope Green, "Yours for the Peeping"	2 unphotographable moments on privacy
11/15	Christopher Allen, "Intimacy Gradient and Other Lessons from Architecture"	Blog post on urban intimacy

UNIT 4: FINAL PROJECTS

11/20	Final Project Workshop	Draft final project proposal
11/22	No Class	
11/27	Final Project Workshop	
11/29	Final Project Workshop	**Final Project: Annotated Bibliography**
12/4	Final Project Presentations	**Final Project Draft Due**
12/6	Final Project Presentations	**Final Project – Blog peer review**
12/11	Final Project Presentations	**Final Project Due**
12/13	No Class	
12/18	Final Exam, Part I	
12/20	Final Exam, Part II	