

# EWRT 2: Critical Reading, Writing and Thinking

## Fall 2024 CRN: 00930

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**Location:** Online (Asynchronous)  
**Office hours:** Mon/Wed/Friday  
12-1 p.m. on Zoom & by appointment

### Welcome and Course Description

Welcome to EWRT 2! This class is a transfer-level course that focuses on developing critical thinking skills in the context of reading and writing. As a class, we will work on writing analytical and argumentative academic essays based on our reading and discussion of complex analytical and imaginative texts. Our work is progressive in nature: homework assignments help you integrate reading, language, and thinking skills to produce essay writing that meets university standards. Towards the end of the quarter, you will develop a documented research paper that draws on outside research.

### Course Overview

This EWRT 2 section focuses on applying critical theory to analytical and contemporary imaginative texts. Through the complex texts, we will learn how to strengthen interpretive and analytical reading skills. These texts also provide models for writing. But, in order to develop as a writer and thinker, you will learn not only through reading and examining written models but also by immersing yourself in writing and thinking activities. You will learn to identify the underlying beliefs, assumptions, or frames that inform the readings and your own opinions, develop writing topics that reflect your interests, and create well-supported, structured arguments from the evidence that you gather and the opinions that you form about them. Towards that end, you will conduct outside research to locate appropriate (including scholarly) sources and integrate them in a documented research paper.

In this class, you will be challenged and supported. Weekly synchronous Zoom meetings are available for you to try out your ideas with me (the instructor) and even your peer community, if you wish. The Zoom office hour meetings are intended to be a safe space to explore ideas from the assigned texts and get constructive feedback from others. Though the structure of our class stresses that language learning and the development of critical thinking skills specific to academia are better fostered in a synchronous social setting (rather than alone, isolated), there is plenty of opportunity for you to do work on your own time. My goal as a teacher is to help you further improve your reading, writing, critical thinking, and research skills. Through my collaboration with you, I expect to learn as an instructor and welcome feedback and questions from you. Please feel free to talk to me any time you need individual support. I look forward to working with you!

PREREQUISITE: EWRT 1A or EWRT 1AH

### Required Texts

- *The Line Becomes a River: Dispatches from the Border* by Francisco Cantú
- *Dust Child*, by Nguyen Phan Qué Mai
- *On Earth We're Briefly Gorgeous* by Ocean Vuong
- *A Man of Two Faces* by Viet Thanh Nguyen

Books are available for order online: <https://deanza.edu/bookstore/textbooks/index.html>. Financial aid only works through the college bookstore. If you do not have financial aid, you can borrow the books through the college (or local) library, or purchase the books cheaply from online vendors. Be sure to obtain your books by the end of week 1 (September 27).

## Student Learning Outcomes (SLO)

By the end of the class, you will be able to:

1. Apply critical thinking skills to writing and complex readings.
2. Demonstrate academic (analytical, argumentative) writing based on reading of complex texts.
3. Demonstrate analysis, comparison, synthesis, and documentation of independent research.

## Course Objectives:

1. Develop critical and analytical skills in the reading and analysis of a variety of texts.
2. Develop a sequence of argumentative and analytic essays with integrated reading that demonstrates the interdependence of reading, writing, language and thinking.
3. Utilize MLA guidelines to format essays, cite sources, and compile a works cited page.

## Assignments and Grades

To achieve these goals and objectives, you can expect to complete the following (you will need to earn above 70% to pass):

Your grade will be determined as follows:

- Complete 3 essays: (325 points total)
  - Apply violence theory to *The Line Becomes a River* (100 pts)
  - Apply one critical perspective from *Critical Theory Today* to *On Earth We're Briefly Gorgeous* (100 pts)
  - Research specific topic from *A Man of Two Faces* and build an evidence-based argument, along with a final oral presentation (125 pts)
- Additional writing process work: (~75 points total)
  - Peer reviews (give/receive feedback for essays)
  - Essay pre-writing (includes journaling, outlining, etc.)
- Reading and class participation (100 points total)
  - Reading assignments
  - Reading questions and asynchronous discussions
- Extra credit available (see below and top of page 4)

**Homework posts.** Your homework in this class will be posting written assignments on Canvas. These will be designed to help you write each essay. You will get estimates of how you are doing throughout the quarter, so that you can adjust your performance accordingly.

**Zoom office hours.** I will hold office hours on Monday, Wednesday, and Friday each week (the times may vary slightly from week to week, depending on student requests). You can request Zoom meetings with me, or drop-in on small group sessions (where several people from the class attend at once). The latter can be very helpful because you are discussing in a group from your class.

**Extra credit.** You can earn extra credit (up to 10% of final course grade) if you participate in supplemental instruction (SI) through the Writing and Reading Center (see page 4). Supplemental instruction includes regular tutoring (4 sessions). **If you are unable to schedule/do all 4 tutoring sessions via the WRC, you can substitute one of them with a session with me.** Please email me (to confirm) before you start supplemental instruction.

**You must complete all 3 essays to pass** (they are minimum requirements). Letter grades will be assigned based on points earned from assignments. I will assign traditional + (88-89%) and – (90-92%) grades (but there is no C- at De Anza College).

## Late Papers

You may turn ONE paper in late without penalty if you make an arrangement with me, but it should be submitted within ONE week of the original due date. Otherwise, a late paper will be marked down a ½ a letter grade for each day past the due date.

## The System

This course is [online](#) and [asynchronous](#), which means that at the beginning of each week you will log into our Canvas site and review the to-do list at the top of the module (Module 1 = week 1, etc.).

You will also be required to submit short homework assignments regularly. (Submitting an assignment inside the window period listed for that assignment in Canvas is sufficient.) Attending optional Zoom office hour meetings and submitting written work each week constitute “attendance” for this online class.

## Canvas

We will use the Canvas course management system for EWRT 2. The Canvas page for this course is available by logging into <https://deanza.instructure.com> using your MyPortal login credentials (your student ID and password that you use to register). You will see a “tile” for the course on your dashboard. There is also a Canvas app for your phone, which I highly recommend you download. [The app can send you weekly notifications, or notifications for each assignment \(please turn on notifications in your “settings”\)](#). You can work on some assignments using your phone, but a computer would give you access to more Canvas tools and make learning more accessible.

Here are some of the things we will use Canvas for:

- assignments and interactive asynchronous discussions
- your scores on all assignments will be recorded in Grades.
- links to weekly class meeting and office hours will be under the Zoom tab on the left hand column in Canvas, as well as your Canvas calendar.

## Technical Prerequisites

You will need to have the following to do this course (please contact me ASAP if you cannot meet these prerequisites):

- Consistent internet connection or access to Wi-Fi
- Access to a computer (a smartphone is not recommended)
- Basic computer skills (knowledge of word processing, online tools such as Google Docs, etc.)
- Basic internet skills (use of browsers, uploading, downloading, and converting files, etc.)
- A quiet workspace. This is not related to technology but is important for EWRT 2.

## Attendance and Feedback

Submitting written work each week constitutes “attendance” for this online class. Not attending for two weeks in a row may result in a non-passing grade for the course. Obstacles will arise from time to time, but let’s try to do the best we can in the class and support each other in the process. Please reach out to me when you need help, an extension, or just to chat. Communication is key to your success in this class. I want to be flexible but also support you so that you can finish the course. Please contact me in the event that an emergency or any other situation keeps you from doing class work.

## Workload

This is a reading and writing course and as such, you are asked to do a good amount. I suggest setting aside specific time periods each week to do your work (for example, 2-3 hours every Tuesday, Thursday,

and Saturday). Having a routine is *very* important for successful completion of any course. And remember, the units attached to a class is meaningful: for every unit, 2-3 hours of out-of-class (i.e., homework) time is expected. That means that our 5 unit class requires about 10+ hours of homework (reading, writing, discussion) each week. It's a lot, I know. But when you successfully complete this course, you are going to be so proud of yourself for moving that much closer to transfer!

## Writing and Reading Center

Any student may receive assistance at the Writing and Reading Center:

<https://www.deanza.edu/studentsuccess/>

Students who get support have a better chance of succeeding in this class. To encourage you to get support, we are partnering with the [Writing and Reading Center \(WRC\)](#) to provide a menu of options and formats to fit your individual needs. Options include Zoom tutoring sessions, workshops, and group tutoring.

**To get verification for supplemental instruction (SI) credit (i.e., extra credit)**, please tell your tutor, workshop leader, or counselor at the beginning of the session, so they email me once the session is done. (You can also screenshot your tutoring session.) Tutoring and workshops can help you improve your writing, work on reading comprehension, practice grammar concepts, or learn new time management strategies. Academic (and mental health) counseling can help you with academic planning or give you support to get through online learning. For more details, see our Canvas site.

### Recommended timeline for SI:

- Complete Activity 1 by Friday, October 25<sup>th</sup> (end of week 5).
- Complete Activity 2 by Friday, November 8<sup>th</sup> (end of week 7).
- Complete Activity 3 by Friday, November 22<sup>nd</sup> (end of week 9).
- Complete Activity 4 by Friday, December 6<sup>th</sup> (end of week 11).

The idea of supplemental instruction is to encourage you to use resources to help you throughout the quarter. Don't try to complete all your activities at the end--it won't help you as much, and you probably won't be able to get them done due to scheduling issues.

If you have questions or are not sure where to start, don't be shy-- just ask me, or contact the WRC at [SSCWRC@fhda.edu](mailto:SSCWRC@fhda.edu).

## Academic Honesty

Be academically honest. In other words, do not plagiarize or use another person's words without giving that person credit. Any time you use writing or ideas that are not your own in an essay, you must cite your source(s). I am be happy to answer any questions about how to cite properly. If you receive a non-passing score on an essay due to plagiarism, you will *not* be able to rewrite it. This might result in you failing the class. By taking this class, students agree that all required out-of-class papers will be submitted to Turnitin.com for textual similarity review.

If you are having trouble developing your own words or ideas, or you find it difficult to correctly give credit to your sources, you can always ask me for help.

## Support Services and Special Accommodations

### Undocumented Students

This is a very challenging time to be an undocumented student. First, I want to be clear that you belong here—in this class, at De Anza, and in the broader community. Second, I want to call your attention to De Anza’s Resources for Undocumented Students: <https://www.deanza.edu/students/undocumented.html> And let me know if you have any questions.

### **Student Success Center**

The Student Success Center is open Fall 2024 and available for in-person and Zoom tutoring and workshops (for many academic subjects, including writing) between 9:30 am- 6:30 pm. **All SSC Zoom links and schedules are located in one convenient place.** Go to <https://www.deanza.edu/studentssuccess/> and follow the links in the Service Updates to add yourself to the non-course **SSC Resources Canvas** site, then click on Modules to find current schedules and links. This is updated frequently, so please, **ALWAYS** access SSC Zoom tutoring and workshops from within SSC. **After-hours and weekend tutoring** are available through NetTutor and SmartThinking: <http://deanza.edu/studentssuccess/onlinetutoring/>

### **De Anza College DSPS Syllabus Statement**

De Anza College views disability as an important aspect of diversity, and is committed to providing equitable access to learning opportunities for all students. Disability Support Services (DSS) is the campus office that collaborates with students who have disabilities to provide and/or arrange reasonable accommodations.

- If you have, or think you have, a disability in any area such as, mental health, attention, learning, chronic health, sensory, or physical, please contact DSS to arrange a confidential discussion regarding equitable access and reasonable accommodations.
- If you are registered with DSS and have accommodations set by a DSS counselor, please be sure that your instructor has received your accommodation letter from **Clockwork** early in the quarter to review how the accommodations will be applied in the course.

DSS Phone: 408-864-8753

On the web: <http://www.deanza.edu/DSS/>

Email: [DSS@deanza.edu](mailto:DSS@deanza.edu)

### **De Anza College Mental Health Statement**

Life at college can get very complicated, especially during the pandemic. You may sometimes feel overwhelmed or lost. You may experience stress, anxiety or depression, or struggle with relationship difficulties. Many of these issues can be effectively addressed with a little help.

De Anza’s Mental Wellness Center helps students cope with difficult emotions and life stressors. The center is staffed by experienced, professional psychologists and counselors, who are attuned to the needs of college students. The services are **FREE** and completely confidential. Find out more at <http://deanza.edu/psychologicalservices/> or by calling 408-864-8868.