

**EWRT 1A**  
**Fall 2024**  
**Writing on Climate Change**

Instructor: Sherwin Mendoza, mendozasherwin@fhda.edu

Class Meetings: Tuesdays and Thursdays, 9:30 a.m. – 10:20 a.m.

Class Location: Room S72

Office Hours: Mondays 11:00 a.m. – 12:15 p.m., and Tuesdays 11:00 a.m. – 12:15 p.m.

Office Hours Location: The IIS Division Main Office (in the Multicultural Center)

**EWRT 1A Student Learning Outcomes**

1. Practice writing as a multi-step process including planning and revising with attention to varying purposes, audiences, and rhetorical strategies.
2. Read and analyze rhetorically and culturally diverse narrative and expository texts from a variety of perspectives.

**Writing on Climate Change**

When I started college many years ago, I felt like the earth's atmosphere was stable, and that I would have better opportunities than my parents, which would allow me to lead a more comfortable life than they had. I simply assumed that if I worked hard in school, I would be able to find a good job and buy a house. I had a U.S. passport, so I felt like I could go anywhere. I felt like I would be able to get money, and with that money, I could easily get things like new computers and video game consoles that I couldn't get when I was younger. I grew up in Florida, and I did not like the heat and humidity, but I never imagined that the weather would get more uncomfortable, and I never thought that climate-related disasters would ever overturn my life.

Now, though, we are living in a very different world, one that is rapidly heating up, and one that will be much more unpredictable than the one I thought I was living in when I started college. However, rather than dwelling on images of the end of the world, this course will instead focus on what we and our communities can do to adapt to climate change and prevent its worst possible effects. Early in the quarter, we will engage with “solar punk,” a literary genre, aesthetic, and movement that imagines and takes steps towards building sustainable futures. Midway through the quarter, we will transition to focus on ways we might address climate change through two research-based essays. In the first, you will do research that will allow you to critically evaluate efforts to address climate change within the field that you are hoping to join. In the second, you will recommend to the people of California to accept, reject, or modify a climate-related project that is receiving funding from the California state budget this year.

**Textbooks**

All of the course texts will be free and available online. This course will have three major texts:

1. *Cities of Light: A Collection of Solar Futures*

2. *Writing, Reading, and College Success: A First-Year Composition Course for All Learners*
3. Selected chapters of the enacted 2024-25 California state budget summary.

Additionally, you will read articles and web pages that will help you to learn about the state of the field that you intend to major in as well as an item related to climate change in the enacted 2024-2025 budget for the State of California. As necessary, we will also use resources for improving specific writing skills such as those provided by the De Anza English Department, the Writing and Reading Center at De Anza, and the Purdue OWL.

### **Short Schedule of Polished Writing Assignments**

Week 3: Revised Timed Essay (500-800 words)  
Week 4: Solar Adaptation (600-800 words)  
Week 6: Your Field's Response to Climate Change (900-1200 words)  
Week 8: Policy Brief/Persuasive Essay (1200-1500 words)  
Week 11: Reflective Essay (600-800 words)

### **Short Schedule of Timed Writing Assignments**

Week 2: Timed Essay 1  
Week 7: Timed Essay 2

### **Detailed Class Schedule**

Week 1: September 23 - September 29  
Course introduction, prepare for Timed Essay 1, begin reading *Cities of Light*

Week 2: September 30 - October 6  
Write Timed Essay 1, prepare for group video presentation on *Cities of Light*

Week 3: October 7 - October 13  
Group video presentation, revision of Timed Essay 1 due

Week 4: October 14 - October 20  
Solar Adaptation essay due, begin Your Field essay

Week 5: October 21 - October 27  
Continue Your Field essay

Week 6: October 28 - November 3  
Your Field Essay due, prepare for Timed Essay 2

Week 7: November 4 - November 10  
Write Timed Essay 2, begin Policy Brief

Week 8: November 11 - November 17  
Continue Policy Brief

Week 9: November 18 - November 24  
Policy Brief due

Week 10: November 25 - December 1  
Holiday November 28  
Revise essays

Week 11: December 2 - December 8  
Revise Essays, Reflective Essay due

Final Exams December 9 - December 13

### **Class Policies**

Please be aware of these course policies:

- Attendance at the Tuesday and Thursday face to face meetings is mandatory. Participation for each course meeting, including attendance, will be worth five points.
- Late assignments will be automatically penalized by Canvas. **Do not wait until the last minute!** If you turn in an assignment after 11:58 p.m. on the day it is due, then you will receive a late penalty of 10% of the possible points.
- For major assignments (assignments worth 100 or 200 points), the maximum late penalty will be 10%.
- For short assignments, in addition to the penalty of 10% for the first day late, for every day thereafter you will receive an additional penalty of 10%, up to a maximum penalty of 50%.
- I will normally grant extensions on due dates if you e-mail me **before the assignment is due**. To receive an extension, you will need to explain why you need it and how much extra time you will need, and I will grant it if I feel that doing so would be reasonable and fair.
- You will need to turn in short writing assignments such as brainstorm, proposals for topics, and outlines before you turn in major assignments. Those short assignments should allow me to check your progress in the writing process for each of the major assignments and give you feedback.
- I may drop you from the class if you fall more than two weeks behind. If you fall one week behind the assignments, I will e-mail you so that we can make a schedule for you to catch up. If you have no contact with me for two consecutive weeks, I may drop you from the class.
- This course will comply with conditions set in accommodation letters sent from De Anza's Disability Support Programs and Services (DSPS) division. If you feel like disability accommodations will help you to succeed in this course, visit <https://www.deanza.edu/dsps/> or the DSPS office on campus to learn how to apply for DSPS services.

- This course will abide by the college-wide policies of De Anza College, including those pertaining to academic integrity, which are available from this page: [https://www.deanza.edu/policies/academic\\_integrity.html](https://www.deanza.edu/policies/academic_integrity.html)

## **Policy on Plagiarism and Artificial Intelligence**

In this class, you cannot receive credit for work that is clearly plagiarized. Such work will receive 0 points. However, if you explain to me the circumstances, motivations, and methods for plagiarizing, at my discretion I will allow you to make up the assignment, but with an appropriate late penalty.

The output of AI chatbots such as ChatGPT should appear in work that you turn in only if you provide MLA-style documentation for that work. If you draw significant material from any outside source, including an AI chatbot, MLA-style documentation is required, whether you paraphrase or directly quote the source. To not provide appropriate documentation would constitute plagiarism.

In general, one of the major ways for you to avoid plagiarism will be to provide correct MLA-style documentation for work not written by you. Conversely, penalties for not providing correct MLA-style documentation will be severe, up to 80% of the possible points for any assignment.

Finally, penalties may be severe if work that you turn in is not easily distinguishable from AI. Written work with the following characteristics may be subject to severe penalties:

- Inaccurate documentation or a lack of documentation (especially paraphrases without citations)
- Identifiable similarity to chatbot output (including a lack of specificity, bizarre errors, a confident tone that avoids uncertainty, and a tendency to produce lists)
- Similarity with responses from classmates, which suggests that they were produced by the same AI query
- A preponderance of material that seems detached from you and your own voice in assignments that ask you to express your own opinions or to draw from your lived experience
- Inconsistency with other work that you have done for this class
- Work that seems disconnected from the conversations, prompts, and other course materials that are tied to the specific context created by this class. For example, unexplained jargon is common in AI output.

To maximize your learning in this class, and to avoid grading penalties, I advise you to be very cautious about copying and pasting text from generative AI or other automated tools (such as programs that translate, paraphrase, or in other ways rewrite input, whether written by you or an outside source). In some circumstances, I will encourage you to use such tools in academically appropriate ways. I strongly encourage you to ask me about any automated tool that you would like to use in this class.

## **Online Communications**

Outside of class, the best way to contact me is over e-mail. I normally check e-mail early in the morning, and I will do my best to respond to you the morning after you e-mail me or possibly before.

Every Sunday, I will post an announcement with the week's schedule. The schedule should include readings/videos for the week as well as assignments due that week. The announcements should also preview how the assignments for the week lead to major assignments in following weeks. If you have any questions about the week's schedule, please e-mail me.

The other primary form of online communication will be through assignments on Canvas. Many of the assignments in this class are short assignments that are steps in completing major assignments. I will prioritize grading those and providing feedback to you so that you can continue on to the next step in completing the major assignment. If you turn a short assignment in on time, you should receive feedback in the assignment's comment box within two days, but in most cases, the feedback will be very short. For major assignments, you should expect detailed feedback, also in the comment box of the assignment. If you turn in a major assignment on time, you should receive detailed feedback within ten days (but in some cases, in less than a week).

In a typical week, you will have three or four assignments due on Tuesday through Thursday, and one assignment due on Friday through Monday. I will try to avoid making multiple assignments due between Friday and Monday.

### **Class Participation**

On every day we are scheduled to meet as a class, a 5-point class participation assignment will be due in Canvas. To receive full credit for class participation on a given day, you need to both attend the full class and do the class participation assignment on Canvas. If you do the Canvas assignment and you are late to class, your participation grade will drop by one point, and if you are absent, your participation grade will drop by two points.

### **Timed Essays**

One-hour timed essays will be assigned in Weeks 2 and 7, with a chance to make up a non-passing timed essay in Week 10. In order to pass this class, you must complete two timed essays and pass at least one of them.

### **Appointments and Rewrites**

During Weeks 9, 10, and 11, you will have the opportunity to make 30-minute appointments with me to discuss revisions on your policy brief. If you revise the essay and the grade for the revised essay is higher than the grade for the previous draft, the higher grade will replace the lower grade. If time permits, you will be able to revise the "Your Field" essay as well.

### **Grades**

<u>Assignment</u>	<u>Points</u>
Timed Essays (50 points apiece)	100
Revised Timed Essay (Week 3)	100
Group Presentation Video	100
Solar Adaptation Essay (Week 4)	100
“Your Field” Essay (Week 6)	200
Policy Brief (Week 8)	200
Short Assignments/Discussions (5 - 10 points apiece)	About 200
Reflective Essay (Week 11)	50
Total	About 1,050

**Grading Scale:**

- A 90% + two timed essays, at least one passing timed essay
- A- 89% + two timed essays, at least one passing timed essay
- B+ 86% + two timed essays, at least one passing timed essay
- B 80% + two timed essays, at least one passing timed essay
- B- 79% + two timed essays, at least one passing timed essay
- C+ 76% + two timed essays, at least one passing timed essay
- C 70% + two timed essays, at least one passing timed essay
- F Below 70% or less than two timed essays or no passing timed essay