ENG 1101: ENGLISH COMPOSITION I

FIRE, DISEASE, DISASTER:
CATASTROPHE AND THE SHAPING OF URBAN PUBLIC SPACE

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                and by appointment
Websites:
http://openlab.citytech.cuny.edu/groups/engl-1101-fire-and-disease-shaping-public-space

http://safa.brooklynhistory.org/gold-f11/

COURSE DESCRIPTION:
We tend to think that the city in which we live has been designed in response to the dreams and visions of architects and urban planners, but the built environment is not just a series of structures – it is also a network of codes and regulations that represent human responses to past catastrophic events. In this class, we will consider the ways in which the urban space of Brooklyn has been shaped by fire, outbreaks of disease, and catastrophic events. As we do so, we will explore the history of the Brooklyn neighborhoods that surround our school and make connections between its past and our present.

This course is part of a learning community with Professor Sanjive Vaidya's ARCH 1100 and 1140 courses. Prof. Vaidya and I will be meeting throughout the semester and have planned some connected learning experiences between the three classes. Students must be enrolled in all three classes to take any one of them.

There are two other things that make this course notable. First, it is a hybrid course, which means that many of our course sessions will take place online. We will be using City Tech's new platform for teaching and learning, the City Tech OpenLab, for our course (more about that below).

Secondly, the course is part of an exciting project at the Brooklyn Historical Society called "SAFA: Students and Faculty in the Archives." The goal of that project is to have first-year students experience archival research and to begin working with archival materials early in their college careers. As part of this project, we will be making six trips to the archives throughout the semester to use archival materials from the BHS. All of our visits will take place on Thursdays and will be noted on the course schedule.

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

GENERAL EDUCATION STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES
- Students will demonstrate proficiency in written discourse
- Students will demonstrate proficiency with advanced multimodal digital content creation systems
- Students will understand and use basic research techniques.
- Students will locate, evaluate and synthesize information from a variety of sources.
- Students will identify, analyze and evaluate arguments as they occur in their own and others work.
- Students will develop well-reasoned arguments.

REQUIRED COURSE TEXTS AND MATERIALS:
- *They Say/I Say*, ed. Gerald Graff and Cathy Birkenstein (2nd Ed.)
  http://www.amazon.com/They-Say-Matter-Academic-Writing/dp/0393924092
- Various handouts, online articles, and PDF files
- Ability to print out course readings – you must bring readings to class.
- A reliable computer/internet connection at home or school

COURSE REQUIREMENTS AND GRADES:
- Three formal essays (Essays 1 & 2: 10%. Essay 3: 20%. — 40% total)
- Course blog (10%)
- Multiple informal essays, including in-class and online writing (5%)

- Final Research Project (20%)
- Midterm and final exams (5% and 10% — 15% total)
- Regular attendance and active classroom participation (10%)

COURSE WEBSITES:
- We will be using City Tech's new, open-source platform for teaching and learning, The City Tech OpenLab http://openlab.citytech.cuny.edu/ , for most of our course postings this semester. Our course site will have two parts: a discussion area with forums and collaborative documents, and a blog on which we will allow post. To access the OpenLab, you will need to register with your CityTech email account (if you haven't activated your CityTech email, you will need to go to the Help Desk on the 6th Floor Computer Lab of the General Building).

  Each week, you must post at least one substantial blog post on the site. Additional work will be required to demonstrate attendance for online sessions.

- At the end of the semester, we will post our final projects on the BHS SAFA blog (http://safa.brooklynhistory.org/gold-f11/)

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. To be counted as present for an online session, you must post a blog post or discussion-board response (depending on the assignment) by 5pm on the day of the class session.

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. If you need to communicate with someone outside of class, kindly leave the classroom.

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 at least 24 hours 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.

All formal papers should be submitted electronically through the course website. Details to follow.

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: Meeting with me during office hours is one of the most important things you can do to improve your work. 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 ("How r u prof g?"). Use standard punctuation and capitalization. Messages that 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:

* = Class meets at Brooklyn Historical Society (brooklynhistory.org)
\# = Online class session

UNIT 1: APPROACHING THE ARCHIVE

8/30   Opening Ceremonies
9/1   Jennifer Egan, "Reading Lucy" [PDF]

9/6   *They Say/I Say* pp. 1-30
9/8*   BHS Visit 1: Introduction to the Brooklyn Historical Society
        Elliott Shore, "Same Object, Different Audiences"
        [http://archivejournal.net/journal/2011/02/same-object-different-audiences/]

9/13   **Essay 1 Due**
        Meg Norcia, "Cracking a Civil War Code"
        [http://archivejournal.net/journal/2011/02/cracking-a-civil-war-code/]
9/15\# Jorge Luis Borges, "The Library of Babel" and "Funes, The Memorius"
        They Say/I Say pp. 30-67

9/20   Gabrielle Dean, "The Archeology of Archival Practice: Disciplinarity and Disorder"
9/22\# Matthew G. Kirschenbaum, "Hamlet.doc? Literature in a Digital Age"

9/27   **Essay 1 Rewrite Due**
        Beagrie, Neil. "Plenty of Room at the Bottom? Personal Digital Libraries and
        Collections." D-Lib Magazine 11:6 (June 2005).
        [http://www.dlib.org/dlib/june05/beagrie/06beagrie.html]
9/29   No Class

UNIT 2: FIRE!!
10/4   No Class (Follow a Friday Schedule)
10/6* BHS Visit 2: Historical Overview of the 1876 Brooklyn Theatre Fire
        They Say/I Say pp. 68-91

10/11   **Essay 2 Due**
        Library Visit (Meet at the Mina Rees Library)
        They Say/I Say pp. 92-120
10/13* BHS Visit 3: Continued Examination of the 1876 Brooklyn Theatre Fire Records
        They Say/I Say pp. 121-150

UNIT 3: DISEASE!!
10/18   Excerpts from Steven Johnson, *Ghost Map*
        "The Ghost Map: An Animated Introduction" [http://vimeo.com/314807]
10/20\# John Noble Wilford, "How Epidemics Helped Shape the Modern Metropolis"

10/25   Richard Preston, "Crisis in the Hot Zone" [PDF]
 10/27* BHS Visit 4: Reading Historical Maps/Gabriel Furman Papers

11/1   Midterm Exam
11/3*   BHS Visit 5: Gabriel Furman Papers Continued
        Geoff Manaugh, "This Diseased Utopia: 10 Thoughts on Swine Flu and the City"
        [http://bldgblog.blogspot.com/2009/04/this-diseased-utopia-10-points-on-swine.html]

11/8   Foucault, from *Discipline and Punish* [PDF]
11/10# **Essay 3 Due**
        Mary Louise Pratt, "Arts of the Contact Zone"
        They Say/I Say pp. 151-192

UNIT 4: CATASTROPHE!!
11/15   Readings from the George Mason Blackout History Project
        [http://blackout.gmu.edu/archive/a_1977.html]
11/17* BHS Visit: Final Project Research

11/22   Readings from the George Mason Blackout History Project
        [http://blackout.gmu.edu/archive/a_1977.html]
11/24   No class

11/29   Harry de Quetteville, "Wayward Alzheimer's patients foiled by fake bus stop"
        [http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/newstopics/howaboutthat/2069467/Wayward-
        Alzheimers-patients-foiled-by-fake-bus-stop.html]
12/1#   Geoff Manaugh, "The Island of Forgotten Diseases"
        [http://bldgblog.blogspot.com/2007/07/island-tomb-of-forgotten-diseases.html]

12/6   Final Project Presentations
12/8#   **Final Project Due**
        Final Project Presentations

12/13   Final Exam – Part 1
12/15   Final Exam – Part 2

12/20   Closing Ceremonies