

WR152: Writing, Research & Inquiry with Digital/Multimedia Expression

“I is for Ireland: Irish Children’s Picture Books In and Outside of Ireland”

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Course Credits: 4 credits + 3 BU Hub Units (Writing; Research and Information Literacy; Digital/Multimedia Expression)

Course Dates: TK

Course Time & Location: TK

Office Hours: TK

Course Description

Although we are often encouraged to write what we know, the best research writing is motivated by our interest in the unknown: What do we want to discover, how can we discover it, and what are the most effective ways to communicate our discoveries? These questions will drive our work in WR 152. Building on WR 120 or its equivalent, this class will help you cultivate your writing and research skills through a range of assignments, including a scholarly research essay in which you will be responsible for identifying and refining a topic, devising research questions, and answering those questions by finding and using a range of scholarly and non-scholarly sources. As a course that earns a Hub Unit in Digital/Multimedia Expression, WR 152 will also give you an opportunity to analyze different media and modes, such as podcasts, websites, and artwork, and to compose them yourself as you translate your academic writing into different forms for different audiences. Even as it will draw on the principles of traditional rhetoric, this is a course about the ways twenty-first century writers can communicate both ethically and effectively. No special technological knowledge is required.

The specific topic of this section is Irish children’s picture books. Focusing on critical and scholarly readings of modern Irish children’s picture books, we will explore the ways in which such literature functions as both visual and literary art. We will also examine how the genre of the picture book captures and constructs the experience of being a child. In addition, through the study of picture books, writing about picture books and the creation of our own picture books, we will discuss what it means to be Irish to a child both within and outside of Ireland.

Course Objectives

You will receive three Hub units for this class: Writing, Research and Information Literacy, and Digital/Multimedia Expression.

You will develop your abilities to:

- Strategically search for and select both scholarly and non-scholarly sources in different modes and media and read them with understanding, appreciation, and critical judgment
- Express yourself orally and converse thoughtfully about complex ideas
- Engage a range of sources in order to address research questions and to communicate findings in the form of responsible, considered, and well-structured arguments using different media and modes of expression as appropriate

- Produce clear, coherent work in a range of genres, modes, and styles; to demonstrate an understanding of the capabilities of various communication technologies
- Plan, draft, and revise efficiently and effectively, and help your peers do the same by responding productively to their work
- Reflect on how research, reading, writing, and editing practices differ for varied audiences, genres, modes, media, and purposes

Instructional Format, Course Pedagogy, and Approach to Learning

Although they differ in their subject content, all WR seminars share common goals and lead you through a sequence of assignments that emphasize a process of planning, drafting, and revising informed by feedback from your classmates and instructor. Seminar activities also give you opportunities to engage in focused scholarly inquiry and discussion.

In WR 152, you will undertake an extended research project related to our course topic. You will conduct individual and/or group research, exploring new ways to find, evaluate, and engage with information from different sources and in different formats. You will become better able to select and use information sources strategically to formulate and respond to research questions and to participate in scholarly and non-scholarly conversations about your topic. You will also become a more flexible writer by adapting your inquiry and its presentation for different audiences. Reflecting on your approach to writing and research will prepare you to adapt it to future occasions.

Books and Other Course Materials

Writing Text:

Turabian, Kate L., Gregory G. Colomb, and Joseph M. Williams. *Student's Guide to Writing College Papers*. Chicago: University of Chicago, 2010. (Required in all Writing Program classes; available digitally)

Critical Texts:

Bang, Molly. *Picture This: How Pictures Work*. San Francisco: Chronicle Books, 2000. (available digitally)

Picture books:

Colton, Nicola. *A Dublin Fairytale*. Dublin, Ireland: The O'Brien Press, 2015.

Waddell, Martin *Can't You Sleep, Little Bear?* Illustrated by Barbara Firth. New York, NY: Harper & Row, 1988. (copies will be provided)

Jeffers, Oliver. *The Incredible Book Eating Boy*. New York, NY: Philomel Books, 2007.

A laptop with at least 8 GB (gigabytes) of RAM (random access memory). Please check your laptop's RAM: [here are instructions](#). If you are financially unable to provide a laptop that meets the requirements for this section of WR 152, please let me know as soon as possible so we can make arrangements.

Courseware

Our class has a Blackboard site that contains the syllabus, assignments, and other course-related materials. You can log in to our Blackboard page at: <http://learn.bu.edu/>.

During the semester you will design a Digication website that will serve as a platform for your portfolio (see Assignments and Grading Criteria, below). You can access Digication at <https://bu.digication.com/>.

For your final project (authoring your own digital children's book) you may use any software application that are free to all student in the course, including any Adobe Creative Cloud applications (such as Adobe Illustrator), free Apple software (such as iBook Author), and any free web-based application (such as Canva).

All Boston University students have free access to Microsoft Office (a suite of basic personal and professional computing software) and to Adobe Creative Cloud (a suite of design and multimedia communication software). Most BU courses require Microsoft Office or the equivalent. Many sections of WR 152 require one or more Adobe applications. Download your free Microsoft Office suite here:

<https://www.bu.edu/tech/services/cccs/desktop/distribution/microsoft/studentoffice/>.

Request your free Adobe Creative Cloud license here:

<http://www.bu.edu/tech/services/teaching/digital-multimedia-production/adobe-creative-cloud/request/>.

Assignments and Grading Criteria

In order to make the most out of WR 152 for you and your classmates, you will do a good deal of reading and writing. You will also study and compose digital multimodal or non-linguistic texts, such as a digital picture book. The type of multimodal/non-linguistic text may vary from one section to another. Specific course requirements for all sections are to:

- Develop a sustained research inquiry in which you explore a range of information sources and modes of research to help formulate and engage with research questions
- Communicate about your research in an academic essay that includes at least one form of non-linguistic supporting media (e.g., images, audio, video, data visualizations)
- Translate all or part of your research into one or more digital multimodal/non-linguistic forms (e.g., podcast, short film, poster) with a different purpose and/or for a different audience
- Prepare reading, drafts, and exercises as assigned so that you are ready to participate in class
- Attend at least one conference with your instructor
- Reflect on your learning throughout the term by maintaining a digital portfolio, which will include self-assessments from the beginning and end of the semester and offer an additional opportunity to practice digital/multimedia communication and design

Grading and Evaluation

Your final grade will be calculated as follows:

Participation:	5%
Assignment 1: paper:	10%
Assignment 2: planning/process assignments:	15%
Assignment 3: Final project (research essay):	25%
Final project (picture book)	25%
Oral Presentations on final project:	10%
Final Portfolio:	10%

Your final grade may also be adjusted to reflect your attendance as described below.

Participation and Attendance

Since this course is a seminar, your regular attendance and active participation are essential both to your own learning and to your classmates' learning. Under ordinary circumstances, missing more than one week of class will lower your final grade. Missing more than two weeks of class may lead to a failing grade for the course. If you have a special obligation that will require you to miss several classes (e.g., religious observances, varsity athletics), please talk with me at the beginning of the semester. Missed conference appointments will be counted as absences.

Late and Missed Assignments

Unless you make other arrangements with me in advance, graded assignments will be penalized by one-third of a letter grade for each day they are late. Please note too that we will regularly work with our exercises and drafts in class. If you are habitually late with your assignments, you will be unable to participate fully in the class.

I am committed to providing you with timely written or verbal feedback on one draft of each major assignment and written feedback and a grade on the final version of each major assignment. *You can generally expect my responses to your drafts within one week of your punctual submission of them; graded final versions will be returned to you within two weeks.*

Academic Integrity

In this class, we will discuss conventions for using and citing sources in academic papers. Cases of plagiarism will be handled in accordance with the disciplinary procedures described in Boston University's Academic Conduct Code. All WR students are subject to the BU code which can be read online:

<http://www.bu.edu/academics/resources/academic-conduct-code/>.

Chosen Name and Gender Pronouns

This course aims to be an inclusive learning community that supports students of all gender expressions and identities. While class rosters are provided to instructors with students' legal names, please let me know if you would like to be addressed by a different name than that listed in the StudentLink. You are also invited to tell me early in the semester which set of pronouns (she/her/hers, he/him/his, they/their/theirs, etc.) you

feel best fits your identity. If you have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact me. I use she/her/hers.

Office of Disability Services

I assume that all of us learn in different ways. If there are circumstances that may affect your performance in this class, please talk to me as soon as possible so that we can work together to develop strategies for accommodations that will satisfy both your learning needs and the requirements of the course. Whether or not you have a documented disability, BU provides many support services that are available to all students.

Disability Services is the office responsible for assisting students with disabilities. If you have a disability that interferes with your learning (whether visible or invisible, physical or mental), you are encouraged to register with this office. Disability Services will work with you to determine appropriate accommodations for your courses, such as additional time on tests, staggered homework assignments, or note-taking assistance. This office will give you a letter outlining the accommodations you need that you can share with your teachers; specific information about your disability will remain private. If you have any questions about accommodation, or what constitutes a disability, I invite you to speak with me or to Disability Services.

Course Schedule

This schedule is intended as a blueprint and is subject to change based on the needs of the class. Any changes will be announced in class and will be posted on Blackboard.

Week 1 **Orientation**

Unit 1: Course Foundations

In this unit we will begin to explore the topic of the course and focus on how research works within a specific community, such as a specific academic discipline or a particular journal readership. We will become acquainted with how the topic is analyzed and how findings and ideas are communicated with others.

Week 2

Tue, June 9 *First Day of Class*

10-12:30 pm **Self-Assessment due** (on blackboard)

Discussion: defining the literature, syllabus, genre, audience

Reading due: Turabian's *Student Guide*

In-class Reading: Waddell's *Can't You Sleep, Little Bear?*

In-class Writing: a summary of *Bear*, self-assessment

Learning Goals: introduce topics, goals, and terminology

Wed, June 10 **Self-Assessment remediation due** (in class)

10-12:30 pm **Discussion:** Assignment 1, final portfolio, the picture as image, reading for understanding vs. reading for engagement, summary vs. analysis, prereading, notetaking

Reading due: Colton's *A Dublin Fairytale* and Bang's *Picture This: How Pictures Work*

In-class Writing: reflective

Learning Goals: practice rigorous analysis

Thur, June 11 Guest Speaker

10-12:30 pm **Reading due:** "Children's Literature and the Child Flaneur" by Eric L. Tribunella

Unit 2: Reaching an Academic Audience

In this unit, we will apply the best practices of writing and research—including planning, drafting, and revising—in order to communicate research with authority and precision to an academic audience. We will strive to practice revision not merely as polishing words on the page, but as continuing to rethink, research, and restructure our projects.

Week 3

Wed, June 17 **Bring selected picture book to class**

7-9:30 pm **Draft of Assignment 1 Introduction due**

Discussion: scholarly claims, refresher on introductions, draft workshop and draft workshop forms (DWFs)

Reading due: Turabian's *Student Guide*

In-class Writing: introduction to Assignment 1, DWFs for Assignment 1 draft workshop

Learning Goals: reviews patterns of writing

Fri, June 19 10-1 pm **Plagiarism activities in blackboard** (Academic Integrity: Avoiding Plagiarism and Academic Integrity AND Part 2: Quoting, Paraphrasing, Summarizing)
Draft of Assignment 1 due
Discussion: draft workshop
In-class Writing: filling out DWFs
Learning Goals: review conventions for using and citing sources; plan and draft efficiently and effectively

Week 4

Wed, June 24 7-9:30 pm **Discussion:** BEAM/BEAT, researching credible sources, Wikipedia, transitions, conclusions
Reading due: Turabian's *Student Guide* (89-103)
In-class Writing: Assignment 1 conclusion and transitions
Learning Goals: approach sources rhetorically

Fri, June 26 10-1 pm **field trip (details TK)**

Unit 3: Research as Exploration

In this unit, we will continue to focus on research practices, including how to develop a research agenda, analyze data and sources, and communicate findings. You will conduct open-ended research to develop and shape questions that will drive your project. During this unit, you will propose, design, and present on an executable research project that you will continue in the next unit of this course.

Week 5

Wed, July 1 7-9:30 pm **Final version of Assignment 1 due** (on blackboard)
Library Research
Discussion: Assignment 2, alternative genres, presentations
Reading due: *The Incredible Book Eating Boy* by Oliver Jeffers
In-class Writing: free writing
Learning Goals: identify the distinguishing features, audience, purpose of new genres

Unit 4: Gateway to Remediation: Introducing a New Genre

In this unit, we will further explore new genres and modes, perhaps with a new purpose and audience in mind, highlighting how different contexts call for different kinds of research and expression.

Fri, July 3 10-1 pm **DME Support**
Discussion: research genres, preparing for presentations
Reading due: Turabian's *Student Guide* (pgs. 127-128)
In-class Writing: free writing
Learning Goals: reflect on research questions and practices

Week 6

Wed, July 8 7-9:30 pm **Draft of Assignment 2 (planning assignments) due**
Discussion: draft workshop
In-class Writing: filling out DWFs

Learning Goals: plan and draft efficiently and effectively

Fri, July 10 10-1 pm Guest speaker
Final version of Assignment 2 (planning assignments) due (on blackboard)
Discussion: Assignment 3, rethinking organization, Digication
In-class Writing: "Wordless Project," organizing Portfolio, setting up Digication
Learning Goals: apply principles of style to improve prose clarity

Unit 5: Remediation: Translating Your Research into a New Genre and Mode

In this unit, we will continue to practice composition and research while working in different genres and modes, exploring the affordances and challenges of digital/multimedia communication.

Week 7

Wed, July 15 7-9:30 pm **1st Draft of Assignment 3 (essay) due**
Discussion: draft workshop
In-class Writing: filling out DWFs
Learning Goals: plan and draft efficiently and effectively

Fri, July 17 10-1:00 pm. **2nd Draft of Assignment 3 (essay) due**
Discussion: draft workshop
In-class Writing: filling out DWFs
Learning Goals: plan and draft efficiently and effectively

Unit 6: Closing Reflection

In this unit, you will reflect on what you have learned in this course and consider how you can transfer your new knowledge to other areas of your studies and your life.

Week 8

Wed, July 22 7-9:30 pm *Last Day of Class*; Course Evaluations
Final version of Assignment 3 (essay) due (on blackboard)
Oral Presentations due
Discussion: draft workshop
In-class Writing: filling out DWFs
Learning Goals: connect the semester's learning to other contexts
Portfolio due (email link) by end of exam period