

WRIT 135: Living in the Age of Anti-Heroes  
A First-Year Writing Course  
Fall 2016. M/Th. 11:10 am–12:20 pm. Green Hall 130  
A Blended Learning Initiative (BLI) Course  
Taught by Prof. González (ogonzale)  
Prof. G's Office Hours: M/Th 2:45–3:45pm and By Appointment

With a Digital-Learning Dimension  
In Collaboration with Computer Science Prof. Mustafaraj (eni.mustafaraj)  
& Teaching Assistant (TA) Eliza McNair (emcnair)  
Eliza's Office Hours: TBA  
Prof. M's Office Hours: TBA  
Digital Learning Website: <http://cs.wellesley.edu/~writ135/>  
Google Course Website: <https://sites.google.com/a/wellesley.edu/writ-135-01-fa16/>  
Class Email Listserv: WRIT-135-01-FA16@wellesley.edu

SYLLABUS version 8. AUGUST 19, 2016

### COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course will ask questions about the social significance of the antihero archetype. We will analyze varied versions of this predominant figure, as the epitome of “serious” storytelling in literary, cinematic, and graphic media. We will look at seminal graphic novels, at “prestige” television series, and contemporary Hollywood. We will ask questions about gender and genre, about race and erasure, the function of the cinematic gaze and the gutter of the graphic-novel page. We will digest essays in popular media that treat this contemporary phenomenon, and write about our own reception of these antiheroes, why they capture our imagination (or don't), and why we root for them despite their moral failings, or because of them. We'll also learn how to use digital tools (such as design and blogging software and social media) to bolster our written arguments.

### REQUIRED TEXTS

1. *The Outsider*, Albert Camus, tr. Sandra Smith. ISBN: 9780141198064  
NB: Please use only this translation. See me if you have trouble getting it.
2. *The Meursault Investigation*, Kamel Daoud
3. *The Sandman: Season of Mists*, Neil Gaiman
4. *Never Let Me Go*, Kazuo Ishiguro
5. *Beloved*, Toni Morrison

Note on the Texts: You might have a different edition of one (or more) of these texts (either because you've purchased one previously or you've checked it out of the library). I strongly advise you to use the editions I have suggested to the College Bookstore. During class discussion, I refer to specific passages on specific pages, and it will be difficult for you to follow the discussion if you have a different edition of the novel.

Provocative Content: Some of these texts contain violence, sexual situations, and other graphic content that might be offensive, or traumatizing. Please do a bit of research on Wikipedia or Google to anticipate any curricular challenges this Syllabus might present to you. Then talk to me to decide on alternate readings or assignments, if necessary.

## COURSE REQUIREMENTS

You should expect to write each week in this course, whether it is in-class writing, a short blog entry, a rough draft, or a final draft / revision. You should also expect to share your work frequently with your classmates and to provide meaningful and helpful editing advice. The assignments are briefly described below; you will be provided with more detailed instructions as the semester progresses.

- \* Blog Responses: Weekly, beginning Week 2, with some skipped weeks; 10 total (~1 paragraph each)
- \* Assignment #1: Visual or Literary Analysis Paper (4–5 pages)
- \* Assignment #2: Literature Review (4–5 pages)
- \* Assignment #3: Research Paper (6–8 pages)
- \* Assignment #4: A “Zine” (~6 double-page spreads; with literary & visual elements)
- \* Online Portfolio: A curated collection of your work, with introductory remarks reflecting on individual projects, and the process of invention and revision.

More on the Online Portfolio: TA Eliza McNair and Prof. M from Computer Science are the "go-to" persons for this dimension of the course. They will both have office hours independently to shepherd everyone safely through this exciting course content and set of digital-learning skills that represent the "value added" to this course!

Eliza has created a beautiful website that contains \*her\* Online Portfolio (she took this course in its first iteration!), in the "Digital Learning" Website for our Course (<http://cs.wellesley.edu/~writ135/>), which is hosted by the Computer Science Department. On the Digital Learning website (<http://cs.wellesley.edu/~writ135/>), you will see examples of all the course assignments, including the Online Portfolio, Blog posts, and formal Assignments 1–4 (including the Zine!). There are also week-by-week tasks that are part of the Digital Learning component of this course. But don't worry—be happy. Eliza and Prof. M. will be shepherding you all through each task, which begin with simply becoming comfortable using Google apps (like Docs, and Drive, as well as Email). The skills you will acquire, beyond becoming better writers of expository prose, become progressively more sophisticated. By the end of the semester, you will know how to design for the Web, and have marketable software skills in graphic design: Adobe InDesign and PhotoShop!

The Regular Google Course website is: <https://sites.google.com/a/wellesley.edu/writ-135-01-fa16/>. Your Wellesley username and password grant you access to all the Google Apps we will use, including Google Docs (for the Blogging), Google sites (our Course Website), and more. More on these exciting details in class!

### Format for Papers:

All formal writing assignments submitted in this course must be typed, double-spaced, 12-point font and standard (1 inch) margins. You may use any software, including Google Docs, for the word-processing of your formal paper Assignments. Use MLA Style for your references to any secondary and primary sources: this is the citation style preferred in the Humanities. Please refer to your Hacker Writing Manual, and to the Purdue English Guide to MLA Citation: <https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/747/01/>. Also see the Library's Guide to proper citation styles in the Sciences: [libguides.wellesley.edu/citation](http://libguides.wellesley.edu/citation).

### Cautionary Reminder About Plagiarism:

Wellesley's General Judiciary cites the following definition of "plagiarism": "The unacknowledged use of another person's work, in the form of original ideas, strategies, and research as well as another person's writing in the form of sentences, phrases, and innovative terminology" (Brenda Spatt, *Writing from Sources*, New York: St. Martin's, 1983, 438).

I expect all of your work to be your own and to be appropriately documented. We will discuss citing sources and avoiding plagiarism more fully during the semester. If you have any questions about what constitutes plagiarism or how to appropriately cite your sources, feel free to come talk to me.

Moreover, the College fosters best practices in your scholarly writing and academic career via our Honor Code: <http://www.wellesley.edu/studentlife/aboutus/honor>. The College Honor Code expects a level of dedication to proper attribution of credit for any ideas and facts you rely on from other sources, with proper citation of these sources. The Honor Code states, "As a Wellesley College student, I will act with honesty, integrity, and respect. In making this commitment, I am accountable to the community and dedicate myself to a life of honor." This Code covers more than academic dishonesty, but that is the most important dimension of the Honor Code that pertains to this writing-focused course. There are formal procedures, and serious penalties, for any instances of violating this Code: <http://www.wellesley.edu/studentlife/aboutus/honor/procedures>.

#### DETERMINATION OF "SHADOWED" COURSE GRADE

As a first-semester First Year student, your final grade for this course will be "shadowed." That means that your final grade will not appear on your transcript: only whether you have passed the course (only Pass or No Pass is recorded on your permanent transcript). This policy is meant to minimize the importance of grades the first year of college, which is one of huge transition and adjustment to all manner of new experience. Full shadow grading policy: [www.wellesley.edu/registrar/grading/grading\\_policy/shadow\\_grading\\_policy/policy](http://www.wellesley.edu/registrar/grading/grading_policy/shadow_grading_policy/policy).

#### College Grading Policy:

Aside from this rule, be assured that Writing 135 adheres to the college's legislated grade definitions: [http://www.wellesley.edu/registrar/grading/grading\\_policy](http://www.wellesley.edu/registrar/grading/grading_policy). The "FAQs" of the grading policy are enumerated here: <http://www.wellesley.edu/registrar/grading/gradingpolicyfaq>. My hope is that you will approach the assignments in this course not merely as means to a particular grade or to simply gain "credit" but rather with genuine enthusiasm, a sense of creative and intellectual curiosity, and a willingness to take risks and stretch yourself as a writer, creator, and thinker.

That said, I encourage you to approach this class as you would a graded course; do not assume that receiving "credit" is automatic. It must be earned. Consider also: To receive a minimum of a D in this course (the minimum grade required for passing), you must attend class in accordance with the Writing Program attendance policy below, and submit ALL work on time (including short exercises, drafts of papers, peer editing comments, and final assignments).

All submitted work must be satisfactory. Papers with a significant number of grammatical or structural errors are not considered satisfactory. Anyone whose final work contains many errors cannot earn higher than a C in the course and is in fact at risk of not obtaining credit for the course (in which case the course must be retaken).

## ASSIGNMENTS IN DETAIL

### Blogging:

Thoughtful Journal Responses (~1 paragraph long) posted the day before a class meeting (Sunday for a Monday class, or Wednesday for a Thursday class). The Blog post responds to a Professor prompt to the assigned text or to a previous student response for that week. Blog posts are due no later than 8pm on the day before class meets, Sunday or Wednesday. (I go to bed early!)

You will blog approximately every week—see Blogging Schedule. You can skip blogging two times with no penalty, in addition to the holiday weeks.

Blogging Procedure: I will post a Google “Doc” with a reading question to start off the blogging for the week. Read the prompt and add your blog posting (approx. 1 paragraph) and save it. You should at least glancingly comment on the previous response if you are not the first student to post. Note Well (NB): Save your Journal Responses in your own word-processing program first, so you don’t lose your work.

More on Blogging: Anyone is welcome to respond to the Journals, at any time, and I encourage you to do so. I also encourage you to take notes of the readings: jot down questions, circle passages you don’t understand, note passages that connect to another reading or to a Journal Response.

None of the online writing is graded, but credit is given or not given for having done the work on time and thoughtfully in response to the Prompt or students’ responses. I assign this task to spur discussion and deepen engagement with the readings. Later on, they will help you frame your experience and understanding of the course as a whole, becoming part of your Online Portfolio, the final work.

Blogging begins Week 2, and Skips October Break Week and Thanksgiving Week.

### Blogging Schedule:

Skip first week of semester, then: Blog once each week, skipping up to 2 weeks as needed, and also skipping the holidays listed below.

Week 02: Sun. 09/04—Wed. 09/07

Week 03: Sun. 09/11—Wed. 09/14

Week 04: Sun. 09/18—Wed. 09/21

Week 05: Sun. 09/25—Wed. 09/28

Week 06: Sun. 10/02—Wed. 10/05

Week 07: NO BLOGS—OCTOBER BREAK!

Week 08: Sun. 10/16—Wed. 10/19

Week 09: Sun. 10/23—Wed. 10/26

Week 10: Sun. 10/31—Wed. 11/02

Week 11: Sun. 11/06—Wed. 11/09

Week 12: Sun. 11/13—Wed. 11/16

Week 13: NO BLOGS—THANKSGIVING BREAK!

Week 14: Sun. 11/27—Wed. 11/30

Week 15: Sun. 12/04—Wed. 12/07

## Formal Assignments and Due Dates (subject to revision):

### Assignment 1: Literary-Visual Analysis

Assignment Guide #1 Handed Out Mon. 9/12

Rough Draft (RD1) Due in Class Th. 9/22

Prof. G's Feedback on RD1 Th. 9/29

Final Draft (FD1) Due in Class M. 10/3

### Assignment 2: Literature Review

Assignment #2 Guide Handed Out Th. 10/6

Topic for Assignment #2 Due Th. 10/13

Rough Draft #2 (RD2) Due M. 10/20

Prof. G's Feedback on RD2 Th. 10/27

Final Draft #2 (FD2) Due M. 10/31

### Assignment 3: Research Paper

Assignment #3 Guide Handed Out Mon. 11/7

Rough Draft #3 (RD3) Due M. 11/14

Prof. G's Feedback on RD3 Th. 11/17

Final Draft #3 (FD3) Due M. 11/21

### Assignment 4: Literary-Visual "Zine"

Workshop with Emily Belanger Mon. 11/21 (TBD)

Storyboard for Zine (RD4) Due Mon. 12/12

Final Draft of Zine (FD4) Due in Final Portfolio

### Online Final Portfolio

Distribute Portfolio Guidelines Mon. 12/5

Final Portfolio Due Th. 12/22

### Journal "Blog" Posts

10 total, approx. weekly, see Class Schedule

## COURSE POLICIES

**Participation:** Active and thoughtful participation is essential to this course. Not only do we learn from the observations and comments of our fellow classmates, but we also develop and expand our own thinking by articulating our ideas to others. Thus, it is critical that you come to class prepared and ready to engage meaningfully and respectfully in all class discussions and activities, and especially during peer evaluations of your writing.

In my experience, the most successful students have read carefully and engaged thoughtfully with the assigned material before every class. My advice is to read with a pencil or pen and come to class with questions and comments that arise from your readings. Bring your notes (especially questions) about the readings, and especially the films, to class! I also encourage you to come by office hours or make an appointment with me to talk about the course and/or your work; particularly for students for whom class participation is a source of anxiety, this can

be an excellent and perhaps more comfortable way to demonstrate your active engagement with the class. So is being a thoughtful blogger and active reader of the course blog entries.

**Classroom Etiquette:** Because we want to make the most of our classroom time and to foster a respectful, supportive, and engaged learning environment, please limit use of electronics to learning tasks focused on class discussion. This means that guided and limited use of a laptop, tablet, or smartphone is permitted only under these circumstances: in order to conduct guided in-class research, or read/follow the discussion of our primary texts, or to consult Class Website materials, etc. There might also be a need for small-group activities, or for accommodating a documented disability. But please check with me first. If your phone rings, and it is an emergency, please step outside to answer it to minimize disruption of the class proceedings. The reason for this limitation on using “smart” or electronic devices is this: recent scientific studies show that students lose focus and distract classmates by having open screens before them during class period. It’s important to maintain focused attention, and only use these devices for limited bursts of targeted study-related activity (look up the meaning of a word, look up an important passage in the text being discussed, and such). Do NOT fall into temptation— Facebook, SnapChat, and other “social media” are distractions that will limit your attention to the course materials, and checking these and other unrelated websites/apps during class will lower your participation grade.

**Attendance and Tardiness:** The policy governing class attendance is set by the Writing Program. I have little control over it, and only administer it. More than 4 class absences will be considered a reason for withdrawal from the course. The Policy states: “All sections of Writing require each student’s regular participation not only as a writer but also as reader, editor, and critic of her classmates’ work. Regular attendance is therefore required and expected. Any student who is absent more than 4 times will be asked to withdraw from the course. Please note that there is no distinction between excused and unexcused absences.” This policy does not mean that you can miss up to 4 classes without penalty; it is in place to standardize our attendance policy and to clarify excessive absence as grounds for withdrawal from the course. Because an occasional absence due to illness or emergency is sometimes unavoidable, I strongly advise you not to skip class for lesser reasons. Please let me know right away if religious observances will affect your attendance in this course.

Regular attendance is therefore mandatory. Most of our classes will be spent discussing specific passages from the text, or scenes from a film, or sequences from a graphic narrative. In order to have substantial discussions, you will need to keep up with the reading, and be prepared to share your responses to that reading during discussion (as well as through Blogged Journal Responses). I understand that students might miss a class during the semester. I appreciate an email letting me know that you are going to miss class or that you have missed class, but such a note is not expected or required. If you miss a class, you should try to get the class notes from another person in the course. It is fine to our blog asking whether someone would be willing to lend you her notes. But please do not ask me to meet with you to discuss “what happened in class.” Also, please do not email me to ask me “if anything important happened in class.” If, after you have reviewed the notes of a classmate, you have specific questions, I would be happy to meet with you to discuss them.

**Late Work:** To develop good writing habits (namely, avoiding procrastination) and to get the most out of our peer review sessions, it is especially important that you turn in all of your assignments on time. Late submission of a final draft will be lowered by half-a-letter grade for

each class day it is late. Please come see me or email me if you are having trouble getting an assignment done (the earlier you alert me to any stumbling blocks, the more we'll be able to work together to help you get it done).

Open Door Policy: Please talk to me before class, after class, in office hours, and/or by email, if you have any questions about any aspect of this course. I try to be flexible and keep an open mind, and want you to succeed in learning skills that will transfer into the outside world from doing the many activities I've designed for this course.

## ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

### Library:

We will use the library's resources throughout this course. In early April, we will have a library tutorial, which will show you how to locate sources relevant to our course assignments. In the meantime, don't be shy about going to the library, familiarizing yourself with the layout, asking questions about library collections, resources, and policies, and especially taking advantage of its excellent study spaces.

### Writing Tutors:

I encourage you to take advantage of the Writing Tutors, a group of trained peers who can provide help with your writing at any stage of the writing process and at any point during in the semester—for this course or any other. For more information, go to: <http://www.wellesley.edu/writingprogram/tutors>.

### The English Language Resource Center (ELRC):

The ELRC is a College resource, which caters to students who speak English as a second language. One-on-one tutoring is available for students who need additional linguistic support with issues relating to: grammar, reading comprehension, pronunciation and speaking, and other issues related to language acquisition. Coordinator: Alaina Farabaugh, [afarabau@wellesley.edu](mailto:afarabau@wellesley.edu).

### The Pforzheimer Learning and Teaching Center:

The PLTC (<http://www.wellesley.edu/PLTC/>) offers an array of services, including help with study skills and time management. It is located on the 3rd Floor of the Clapp Library. Also located at the PLTC is information and resources for those with disabilities. There is also the Disability Services at the College, where you may learn about how to request accommodations: <http://www.wellesley.edu/disability/requests>.

### Disability Accommodations:

Any student with disability accommodation needs should contact Jim Wice in Disability Services, 781-283-2434, [jwice@wellesley.edu](mailto:jwice@wellesley.edu), preferably during the first two weeks of class, so that he can review the request and notify me of the approved accommodations. If you have a disability that requires special accommodations to undertake the work in this course, please talk to me right away so we can work out a plan for you.

### Note about time management:

You will find in this and all your other courses that time management is crucial to your academic success, not to mention your ability to cope with anxiety and stress. I recommend using some

kind of calendar system that not only indicates due dates but also takes into consideration when to begin projects and how much time you anticipate taking for reading/paper assignments and test preparation. In this course, you may find that the reading requirements are at times intensive and will sometimes overlap with writing requirements, so budgeting your time in advance will keep you on top of things.

## CLASS SCHEDULE

Please Note—This is a “living” Class Schedule. It is subject to change as our class progresses. Please keep abreast of changes by checking email/class announcements.

§ = Text Available in Shared Google Drive Folder WRIT-135-Fall 16-Resources

§§ = Video Available in Shared Google Drive Folder WRIT-135-Fall 16-Resources

Recommended readings or screenings are only if you are interested in learning more about a particular topic. Assigned readings should be completed the day before they are listed.

### Unit 1. Introduction: The Classic Hero in Antiquity

Week 1:

Th. 9/1: Introductions

\* Excerpt from Beowulf § (in class)

### Unit 2: The First Adversary as Classic (Anti-) Hero

Week 2: BLOGGING BEGINS!

Mon. 9/5: LABOR DAY—NO CLASS!

Th. 9/8:

\* Paradise Lost, Book 1, John Milton §

Week 3: Blogging Continues!

Mon. 9/12:

\* Finish Milton discussion (Paradise Lost, Book 1)

\* Distribute Assignment #1 Guide

### Unit 3: Reading Comics or “Graphic Narratives”

Th. 9/15:

\* “The Vocabulary of Comics,” Scott McCloud §

Week 4: Blogging!

Mon. 9/19:

\* “A Hope in Hell,” The Sandman, Neil Gaiman §

Th. 9/22: Prof. G away at a conference

\* Class Replaced by Rough Draft Workshop (RD1)—come with RD1 in Google Doc format for easier sharing/editing.

Week 5: Blogging!

Mon. 9/26:

\* The Sandman: Season of Mists, Neil Gaiman (Ep. 0 through ∞, skip 4)

Th. 9/29:

\* Prof. G returns feedback on RD1

\* Finish Gaiman

Unit 4: Graphic Narratives 2: The Superhero and 1980s Revisionism

Week 6:

Mon. 10/3:

\* FINAL DRAFT ASSIGNMENT #1 (FD1: Literary-Visual Analysis) DUE

\* Books 1 & 2 of The Dark Knight Returns, Frank Miller §

Th. 10/6:

\* Finish Miller and Graphic Narrative Unit

Recommended: The Dark Knight by Christopher Nolan §§

Unit 5: Writing Interlude: Researching Secondary Sources

Week 7: NO BLOGGING!

Mon. 10/10: FALL BREAK—NO CLASSES

\* Distribute Writing Assignment #2—Literature Review Guide with Topics

Th. 10/13:

\* Graff, “They Say, I Say” §

\* Topic for Assignment #2 (Literature Review) Due

\* Researching Secondary Sources Workshop

Unit 6: The Modern Antihero

Week 8: BLOGGING RETURNS!

Mon. 10/17:

\* Part 1 of The Outsider, pages 3–54, Albert Camus, trans. by Sandra Smith

Th. 10/20:

\* Continue with Part 1 of The Outsider

\* Workshop Rough Draft for Assignment #2 (RD2)—Share your Google Doc of RD2 with Prof. G!

Week 9: Blogging!

Mon. 10/24:

\* Finish Camus' Outsider, Part 2, pages 57–111

Unit 7: The Postcolonial Antihero

Th. 10/27: NO CLASS—TANNER CONFERENCE!

\* Begin Daoud, The Meursault Investigation, Chapters I–VI, pp. 1–64

\* Prof. G Returns Written Feedback on RD2

Week 10: Blogging!

Mon. 10/31:

\* FINAL DRAFT #2 (FD2: Literature Review) DUE

\* Continue with Daoud, Chapters VII–X, pp. 65–106

Th. 11/3:

\* Finish Daoud, Ch. XI–XV, pp. 107–43

Unit 8: The Posthuman Antihero

Week 11: Blogging!

Mon. 11/7:

\* Begin Ishiguro, Never Let Me Go, Chapters 1–4

\* Distribute Assignment #3 Guide

Th. 11/10:

\* Finish Part One of Never Let Me Go

Week 12: Blogging!

Mon. 11/14:

\* ROUGH DRAFT #3 (RD3: Research Paper) DUE—Share Google Doc version with Prof. G!

\* Finish Part Two of Never Let Me Go, Kazuo Ishiguro

Th. 11/17:

\* Finish Never Let Me Go

\* Prof. G Returns Feedback on RD3

Week 13: No Blogging!

Mon. 11/21:

\* FINAL DRAFT #3 (FD3: Research Paper) DUE

\* Zines Workshop with Emily Belanger, Research Librarian at Clapp (TBD)

Th. 11/23: NO CLASS—HAPPY THANKSGIVING!

Unit 9: The Postmodern Antihero

Week 14: Blogging Returns!

Mon. 11/28:

\* Begin Part 1 of Beloved, Chapters 1–8

Th. 12/1:

\* Finish Part 1 of Beloved, Chapters 9–18

Week 15: Last week of Blogging!

Mon. 12/5:

\* Continue with Beloved, Chapters 20–23

\* Distribute Final Online Portfolio Guidelines

Th. 12/8:

\* Finish Beloved, Chapters 24–28

Unit 10: Writing and Editing Visually and for the Web

Week 16: No Blogging!

Mon. 11/ 12: Last Day!

\* Rough Draft (STORYBOARD) of Assignment #4 (Zine) Showcase

\* Conclusion

Th. 12/22: ASSIGNMENT 4 (ZINE) FINAL DRAFT incorporated in Online Portfolio

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WRIT 135-Fall '16 SYLLABUS. DRAFT v.8