

WR 152: Writing, Research & Inquiry with Digital/Multimedia Expression Beyond Human Hands: The Rise of AI-Infused Creations

Instructor Name and Pronouns: Dr. Pary Fassihi (she/her)

Office Location: YAW 320

Course Days: T/TH

Course Times & Location:

Section L1: 11am-12:15pm; CAS 316

Section M1: 12:30-1:45 pm; CAS 314

Instructor Email: pfassihi@bu.edu

Office Hours: Thursdays: 2-5pm (By appt. In-person or Zoom)

Other days/times available by advance arrangement;

Zoom link is available on Blackboard

Course Credits: 4 credits + 3 BU Hub Units (1. Writing, Research, and Inquiry; 2. Research and Information Literacy; 3. Digital/Multimedia Expression)

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 **Beyond Human Hands: The Rise of AI-Infused Creations**. We will be exploring the dynamic interplay between writing, creativity, digital content creation, and the world of artificial intelligence (AI). As generative models influence human-machine collaboration, understanding their implications, challenges, and opportunities becomes crucial for writers, researchers, and digital content creators. We will delve into the historical context,

technical foundations, and ethical considerations surrounding Generative AI and writing. We will conduct research on Generative AI, assess AI-generated content, and collaborate on digital projects. Key discussions will revolve around the history, evolution and ethics of Generative AI as well as its implications for the future.

Course Objectives

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.

You will receive instruction in and demonstrate proficiency in each the following five areas:

Expression

Students will be able to craft and deliver responsible, considered, and well-structured arguments using media and modes of expression appropriate to the situation.

Remediation

Students will remediate all or part of their 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

Technology Awareness

Students will be able to demonstrate an understanding of the capabilities of various communication technologies and be able to use these technologies ethically and effectively.

Design

Students will be able to demonstrate an understanding of the fundamentals of visual communication, such as principles governing design, time-based and interactive media, and the audio-visual representation of qualitative and quantitative data.

Metacognition

Students will regularly reflect on and evaluate their peers' and their own performance on digital/multimedia tasks.

Books and Other Course Materials

All of our course content will be electronic scholarly and non-scholarly articles, blog posts, videos and podcasts, which will be housed on our course site.

Required: ChatGPT 4-o Subscription: We will primarily be working with ChatGPT 4-o in this class. In lieu of a textbook for this course, I am asking you to get a ChatGPT 4-o subscription for the semester. If you already have one, great! Although this is a required component of the course, if it is not possible for you to get this subscription for whatever reason, please come to me to discuss other options.

Courseware

Our class has a Blackboard site that contains the syllabus, assignments, and other course-related materials. We will also be using Perusall for our course readings. You can log in to our Blackboard page at: <http://learn.bu.edu/>. We will also be using ChatGPT Plus (all students will be required to subscribe to ChatGPT Plus, which they will then be reimbursed for by the Writing Program).

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/>

Additional Resources

In-Person Audio Recording Studio: The Geddes audio recording studio is available by advance appointment; availability may be limited. Students may record solo or in groups of 2-3. Please contact Frank Antonelli (fantonel@bu.edu) for scheduling. Geddes also has a first-come, first-served isolation pod for quiet recording (bring your own equipment).

In-Person Tutorial Sessions: For hands-on tutorial sessions introducing the basic functions of various Adobe applications, such as Audition and Premiere Pro, please contact Dan Rabinowitz (rabinowitz@bu.edu).

Course Requirements and Assignments

- Assigned readings
- Frequent low-stakes writing exercises, including homework, in-class writing, and reflective writing
- Contribution to and completion of WR cumulative portfolio
- Frequent and varied activities and assignments engaging and creating digital multimodal/ non-linguistic texts
- A semester-long research project culminating in a formal academic research paper of 8-10 pages that includes at least one form of non-linguistic supporting media (e.g., images, audio, video, data visualizations)
- A remediation of your research into one or more digital multimodal/non-linguistic genres (e.g., podcast, short film, poster)
- Regular peer review
- Instructor conferences
- Regular class attendance and active participation

Course Policies Grading and Evaluation

This class uses an approach to grading called **ungrading**, in which I do not assign grades to your work. Research has decisively demonstrated that grades are terrible gauges of students' learning. It has also shown that traditional grades decrease students' intrinsic motivation and enjoyment of learning, and increase their anxiety and fear of failure. Conversely, my goal is to create a classroom space that maximizes freedom and growth, where we function as allies rather than adversaries and where you cooperate with classmates rather than compete with them.

This approach is rooted in the following feminist and antiracist pedagogical principles:

- Constructing a community characterized by trust, respect, collaboration, and care;
- Producing a democratic space by reducing the hierarchy between students and teachers;
- Empowering students to think critically and take control of their learning;
- Honoring a diversity of experiences;
- Challenging typical learning ideals.

I will not be *grading* individual assignments, but rather asking questions and making comments that engage your work rather than simply evaluate it. The intention is to help you focus on working in a more organic way, as opposed to working as you think you're expected to. Of course, BU asks that I submit a final grade for each enrolled student. Therefore, **everyone who participates in our course community and completes the homework, papers, presentations and self-reflections will get an "A."** You will be in charge of keeping track of your completed assignments on a shared grading sheet with me. You will be responsible for checking off each completed task/revision in a timely manner. I will periodically check your sheet to make sure you are keeping up with it, and will inform you if your grade is being jeopardized. The only way to jeopardize your grade is if the tasks are not being completed in a timely manner (see the Late and Missed Assignments policy below), there are frequent absences and tardies, and/or your work is plagiarized (see the Academic Integrity section below).

It is important to keep in mind that an A grade is not a guarantee. Lower final course grades will also be based entirely on what you do:

What You Do	Course Grade
Fulfill the responsibilities described above, and listed on our grading sheet given to you in class plus optional contributions such as active presence and participation in class and outside of class, forming a writing group, sharing skills or resources with classmates, seeking out and reflecting on a Writing Center or librarian consultation, etc.	A
	A- (i.e., missing a couple of contributions on the grading sheet)
Fulfill the responsibilities described above.	B+
Fulfill most of the responsibilities described above and on our grading sheet, especially timely submission of drafts and revisions of major assignments; have generally good attendance	B or B-
Submit one or more major assignments excessively late or without a draft; miss several more classes than the absence policy allows	C-range
Miss one or more major assignments; miss more than two weeks' worth of class	D/consider withdrawing/F

With this Ungrading approach, instead of your grade, here's what I do want you to focus on!

- Actively engage in the work of the course.
- Determine what participation in our community looks like for you – in our physical classroom, online activities, Blackboard, and wherever you can best contribute and learn. Listening and reflecting can be just as important as speaking and questioning. Writing is not an independent exercise, so I encourage you to focus a good amount of your energy on helping your peers, reading their work, championing their accomplishments, and offering feedback that pushes them in their own writing process.
- Reflect on your own work. This course is about process, not product, and so writing about our own writing is one of the most important work we'll do.

In addition to giving you feedback on your work, throughout the semester, I will let you know if you are meeting the expectations of the course through a grading sheet which you will use to keep track of your progress and assignments as well as your absences/tardiness. Finally, if this process causes more anxiety than it alleviates, see me at any point to confer about your work in the course to date.

Instructor Feedback

I am committed to providing you with timely written or oral feedback on one draft of each major assignment and written feedback 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; I will do my best to return comments on final versions within two weeks.

In addition to giving you feedback on your work, at the end of each major assignment I will let you know if you are meeting the grading expectations.

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 may lower your final grade, and missing a significant amount of class may lead to failing the course. If you become ill at any point during the semester, do not come to class. If you have a special obligation that will require you to miss classes (e.g., religious observances, family obligations), please talk with me at the beginning of the semester. Refer to the chart below for an overview of the process for addressing absences:

Number of absences*	1-2	3-4	More than 4
Student action steps	<p>Communicate with your instructor</p> <p>Stay up to date on the syllabus and course work</p>	<p>Communicate with your instructor about consequences to your grade.</p> <p>Make concrete arrangements with your instructor for completing missed assignments</p>	<p>Reach out to advising and/or AD for First-Year Success</p> <p>Review deadlines for drop, withdraw, etc. and make a plan in conjunction with advising and instructor</p>
Instructor action steps	<p>Make course materials available on Blackboard</p>	<p>Communicate with student by email about absences</p> <p>Work with student to make a plan for moving forward</p> <p>Consider contacting CAS advising and/or student's AD for First-Year Success</p>	<p>Contact CAS advising and/or student's AD for First-Year Success</p> <p>Determine (in consultation with advising and a WP director) the best course of action and notify student of deadlines (drop, withdrawal)</p>

*Not including students with [religious observances](#), [official athletic travel letters](#), [bereavement leave](#), or [jury duty](#).

Late and Missed Assignments

You are allotted a time bank of 3 days that can be used in 24-hour units to extend the deadline of your final/revised assignments beyond their due dates. This time bank will be tracked on the Google doc. that I share with you. This eliminates the need to request extensions and allows you some flexibility in managing your workflow. After you use up your time bank, you would need to email/talk to me if you anticipate needing an extension. Please note that we will regularly work with exercises and drafts in class. If you are late with these assignments, you will be unable to participate fully in the class.

Resources

CAS Writing Center

The CAS Writing Center offers free, one-on-one appointments with well-trained peer writing consultants for students to discuss their work for WR courses. These writing consultations are collaborative conversations in which you can expect to be actively involved. Our consultants will not edit or correct your work for you, but they will ask you questions and offer suggestions to help you do your own best work.

Consultants will work with you at any stage in the drafting or revision process, and on any type of assignment for your WR course, including non-academic and creative writing assignments, presentations, and multimedia projects. The Writing Center strives to be an inclusive space for students of all identities and all linguistic and cultural backgrounds. We are particularly eager to support multilingual students, first-generation college students, and anyone else who is hoping to build their confidence and skill as a writer.

To ensure that we can offer support to as many students as possible, students can typically book one 45-minute consultation each week. You can schedule an appointment by visiting our website: <http://www.bu.edu/writingprogram/the-writing-center/>

Academic Integrity

In this class, we will discuss conventions for using and citing sources in academic papers and in other genres we study. 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 CAS code, which can be read online:

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

AI-use Policy

Writing Program AI Use Guidelines

At orientation, you learned that it is only allowable to use generative AI tools (such as ChatGPT) to “generate ideas, words, designs, or any other type of work product” when the use of AI has been authorized.

In general, please note that the following AI uses are authorized across all WR classes:

- Using AI tools to learn about or translate terms or vocabulary words (*not* translate entire papers)

- Using AI tools to offer you feedback on whether your grammar and usage conform with standard academic English. (Note: There may be times when the choice not to use standard academic English in your writing is appropriate and/or effective.)

It is not necessary to cite the AI tool for these two Writing Program-authorized uses.

Given that our course is an AI-intensive one, and we will be actively using ChatGPT and other Generative AI tools, our policy will be more expanded compared to the above. For details on our course-specific AI policy, [please read this document closely](#).

Please keep in mind, I will offer guidance on if and how to cite the AI tool ([MLA](#), [APA](#), [Chicago](#)).

Additional Resources

Additional student resources can be found [here](http://www.bu.edu/wpnet/resources-1-2/) (<http://www.bu.edu/wpnet/resources-1-2/>).

Inclusion in Our Community

Classroom Climate

In this class, we are committed to treating each other equitably and inclusively. We respect one another's dignity and privacy; treat one another fairly; and honor one another's experiences, beliefs, perspectives, abilities, and backgrounds, regardless of race, religion, language, immigration status, sexual orientation, gender identification, disability status, socio-economic status, national identity, or any other identity markers. We appreciate the language variation within our community, and as we develop strategies to communicate effectively in college and beyond, we recognize that the norms of academic writing, and of writing in general, are constantly evolving. We value open-minded inquiry, and we critically engage with ideas in diverse texts to learn about perspectives diverging from our own. We acknowledge that doing so may be uncomfortable at times, although it should not make anyone feel unsafe. We seek to challenge ourselves and help one another learn.

This commitment reflects values shared across the [Writing Program](#) and the [University](#). If you ever have any concerns about the classroom climate, you are welcome to reach out to me or, if it is more comfortable for you, to the [CAS D&I office](#) and its [Community Values & Resources Team](#).

Name and Pronouns

I will ask that all students share their names and pronouns at the beginning of the semester. Please feel free to use any name, given name, nickname, etc. that you wish: your name is not “too hard,” and I will work to pronounce it correctly. If you have questions or concerns, or if you need to make a change in your name and/or pronouns mid-semester, please do not hesitate to contact me at any point.

For further information on how to change your name at BU (and for additional support related to gender diversity), please click [here](#). You can also change your name on Blackboard by editing your profile.

Office of Disability and Access Services

I recognize 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 meet 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 & Access Services (<https://www.bu.edu/disability/>) 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 & Access 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 accommodations or what constitutes a disability, I invite you to speak with me or to Disability & Access Services.

Weekly Calendar (Schedule of Readings and Assignments)

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.

Please note: The Homework section on Blackboard will have more details each week for specific due dates and the daily activities.

(Schedule on next 3 pages)

Module 1: COURSE FOUNDATIONS				
In this module, you will begin to explore the course topic and to learn how research works in this discipline or area of study, including what is studied (in both written and digital/multimedia form) and how findings and ideas are communicated with others.				
Week	Dates	Topics and Activities	Assignments and Deadlines	Reading/Viewing/Listening Materials
1	Jan 21- Jan 23	Welcome and introduction to the course	Syllabus Review Student introductions Community Guidelines Introduction to Generative AI Review: A Brief History of Generative AI	Introduction to Generative AI Review: A Brief History of Generative AI
2	Jan 28 - Jan 30	Introduction to Generative AI Research Questions	Introduction Emails Portfolio Set-up/Review Literacy Narrative Due for any student who has not started a WR portfolio yet Last Day to ADD a WR course (Jan 27)	Reading: Five Things Every College Student Should Know About AI-assisted Writing (CAS Writing Program) Reading: A Simple Guide to the History of Generative AI Reading: Watch an A.I. Learn to Write by Reading Nothing but.... Reading: How AI chatbots like ChatGPT or Bard work – visual explainer
3	Feb 4 - Feb 6	AI Evolution: From Theory to Practice Scholarly Argument as Disciplinary Conversation	Digication portfolio set-up due 2/1 List of three sources due Reflection Assignment Due Research Prospectus Assigned	Reading: To ChatGPT, or Not to ChatGPT: That Is the Question! The ChatGPT Cheat Sheet
4	Feb 11 - Feb 13	Generative AI in Writing Developing a Research Question Scholarly and non-scholarly sources	Researching sources	Reading: Meta-Writing: AI and Writing Reading: Sarah Eaton on post-plagiarism and Maha Bali's response Reading: GPT Detectors Are Biased Against Non-native English Writers Reading: Will Artificial Intelligence Kill College Writing?

In this module, you will begin to explore the course topic and to learn how research works in this discipline or area of study, including what is studied (in both written and digital/multimedia form) and how findings and ideas are communicated with others.

Module 2: Research as Exploration In this module, you will conduct open-ended research to develop and shape a research question that will drive your project. You will design and propose an executable research project, communicate research plans clearly in an audience-appropriate genre and style, respond productively to peer work and peer feedback as you revise, and reflect on research questions, writing, and practices in your own work and in work from assigned research genres.				
Week	Dates	Topics and Activities	Assignments and Deadlines	Reading/Viewing/Listening Materials
5	Feb 18 - Feb 20 Feb. 18 (Substitute Mon. Schedule of Classes)	No Class on Feb. 18 Peer Review Sessions; Revising & Editing Academic Papers	Research Prospectus Due Annotated Bibliography assigned	
6	Feb 25 - Feb 27	Ethical considerations in AI (Part 1) Rhetorical Ways of Thinking About Sources	Annotated Bibliography Workshops Last Day to DROP without a W grade (Feb. 25)	Reading: Managing the Risks of Generative AI Reading: The Risks of AI Are Real But Manageable
Module 3: Communicating Research to an Academic Audience In this module, you will apply the best practices of writing and digital/multimedia communication—planning, drafting, integrating feedback, and revising—to communicate your research to an academic audience with authority and precision in a well-structured argument. You'll engage a range of sources, analyze evidence using discipline-specific methods, revise your project design in response to feedback, and reflect on writing and researching for an academic audience.				
7	March 4- March 6	Ethical considerations in AI (Part 2) Research as Forming a New Question	Reflections Due	Listening: With AI, Artists Reckon with the Muddy Question of Authorship Viewing: What Exactly is 'Responsible AI?' in Principle and Practice?
8	March 8 - March 16	Spring Break – No Class		
9	Mar 18 - Mar 20	Ethical considerations in AI (Part 2) Research as Forming a New Question	Reflection Assignment Due	Listening: With AI, Artists Reckon with the Muddy Question of Authorship Viewing: What Exactly is 'Responsible AI?' in Principle and Practice?
10	Mar 25 - Mar 27	AI, Culture and Society (Part 1)	Research Paper Draft Workshop Annotated bibliography due	Reading: Virtual girlfriend, real love: How artificial intelligence is changing romantic relationships Reading: They Fell in Love with AI Bots. A Software Update Broke Their Hearts.
11	Apr 1 - Apr 3	AI, Culture and Society (Part 2)	Research Paper Draft Workshop Due: Research Paper Draft Reflection due Last Day to DROP with a W grade (April 4)	Reading: Artists vs. AI Reading: Generative AI and the Future of Work in America

Module 4: Remediation: Translating Your Research into a Digital Multimedia Genre In this module, you will further explore new genres and modes, highlighting how different contexts call for different kinds of research and expression. You will continue to practice composition and research while working in different genres and modes, exploring the affordances and challenges of digital/multimedia expression.				
Week	Dates	Topics and Activities	Assignments and Deadlines	Reading/Viewing/Listening Materials
12	Apr 8 - Apr 10	AI and Race	Research Paper Draft Workshop and Peer Reviews Due: Research Paper Draft	Reading: Black Artists Say A.I. Shows Bias. With Algorithms Erasing Their History Reading: Who is Making Sure the A.I. Machines Aren't Racist?
13	Apr 15 - Apr 17	AI's Environmental Impact & The Future of AI Style and Genre Research Remediation: Video Essays Adobe Creative Cloud (Adobe Express, Rush & Premiere Pro) Multimodal Composition and Creativity	Due: Research Paper Final Version Video Essay Short Proposal Due Last Day to take officially withdraw from the university or take a leave of absence (April 16)	Reading: These six questions will dictate the future of Generative AI Reading: What's the future of generative AI? An early view in 15 charts
14	Apr 22 - Apr 24	Video Essays (ctd) Revising Alternate Genre Projects Peer Feedback on Alternate Genre Projects	Portfolio Work Video Essay Workshop Video Essay Rough Draft Due	
Module 5: Closing Reflection In this module, you will reflect on learning in different genres and modes for different audiences and purposes and you'll consider how you can transfer your new knowledge to other areas of your studies and your life.				
15	Apr 29 - May 1	Course Evaluations; Portfolio Submissions Final Reflections	Video Essay Screening & Presentations Portfolio Requirements Due on Digication Last Day of Classes (May 1)-- No final exams for this course	