

# Muir College Writing Program 40

## — Winter 2020 —

as of 01/08

*In this course, we will read and write about the kinds of arguments that characterize the disciplines that make up a liberal arts education. Your writing, for the purposes of MCWP, will engage in analysis, synthesis, and argument in response to non-fiction and fiction texts. You will be asked, in order, to analyze one published academic article to determine the elements of its argument, synthesize two arguments to create your own, and write your own argument informed by three texts including a book. The formal writing assignments build one upon the other, so it is important to consider connections between them.*

### DATA

This syllabus pertains to the following sections:

- **Section 04** (991380): **2-3:20 p.m. Monday & Wednesday @ HSS 2346A**
- **Section 32** (000168): **3:30-4:50 p.m. Monday & Wednesday @ HSS 2333B**

**Instructor: Thomas Conner**

Email: [tconner@ucsd.edu](mailto:tconner@ucsd.edu) (Subject line of ALL emails MUST contain “MCWP”)

**Office: HSS 2326** (in the hallway directly across from our classroom)

**Office hours: 5-6 p.m. Mondays & Wednesdays**

**Required texts** (available at the Price Center UCSD Bookstore):

- MCWP 40 Reader for Winter 2020: *Privacy Data Rights*.
- Hacker, Diana, and Nancy Sommers. *A Writer's Reference*, **9th** edition (for the Muir College Writing Program). Bedford-St. Martin's, 2018.
- Angwin, Julia. *Dragnet Nation: A Quest for Privacy, Security, and Freedom in a World of Relentless Surveillance*. Times, 2014.

**Grading:** Muir 40 is taken for a letter grade only. You must complete all assigned work and participate in all course activities in order to receive a passing grade in the course. Failure to do so will affect your grade negatively. Course grade breakdown is as follows:

- **Paper #1:** Analysis (including drafts, workshops, and activities) 20 %
- **Paper #2:** Synthesis (including drafts, workshops, and activities) 30 %
- **Paper #3:** Fiction Analysis (including drafts, workshops, and activities) 40 %
- **Portfolio Reflection** 5 %
- **Participation** 5 %

### LOGISTICS

**Writing responses and exercises:** At various times, informal responses are required. Writing exercises — such as the MediaWatch exercises — may be written in or outside of class. The intention of these assignments is to engage in the critical analysis of texts and to develop possible connections between class discussions and the texts. It is important that you develop your own critical responses. These will be collected throughout the quarter.

**Workshops:** Since this is a writing class, part of the class will be devoted to workshopping your writing assignments. In order to receive credit for this part of the class, you must upload and bring drafts of your assignment(s) to class at appointed times for workshopping with your peers. Also, you must give your peers concrete suggestions for improving their work.

**My written feedback:** Per MCWP department policy, I will give you written feedback on only the *first* and *final* drafts of each assignment. In between, you should make the most of the peer review workshops we have in class, as well as seek help from the Writing and Critical Expression Hub ([commons.ucsd.edu](http://commons.ucsd.edu)) or OASIS ([oasis.ucsd.edu](http://oasis.ucsd.edu)). Do not email drafts to me, asking me to “look them over.” You may bring drafts of your writing to my office hours for discussion. This feedback policy is designed to support you as a writer while encouraging you to develop your abilities as an independent writer and reviser of your own work.

**Portfolio:** You are responsible for keeping all copies of all pieces of writing submitted throughout the quarter, as well as back-up copies. If an assignment is lost or missing, you are responsible for replacing it. At the end of the quarter, you will submit your final portfolio, which includes all completed assignments (including all drafts with comments on them).

**Delivery of assignments:** Follow these instructions, as well as any additions or amendments announced in class, to deliver your work for discussion and grading. The slightest deviation or failure here can adversely affect your grade. Each draft of each assignment must be delivered in two separate ways: (1) uploading an electronic copy to Turnitin via Canvas before class time, and (2) bringing printed copies to classes (see the schedule below) for workshopping. (Turnitin.com is an online database that checks your paper for matches with websites, student papers, etc. Failure to submit your papers to Turnitin will result in an F for the course.)

**Late work:** Late papers are not accepted unless special arrangements are made with me ahead of the due date. Missing a draft due date and time will lower the assignment grade by one-third for every 24-hour period, including weekends. Late drafts will not receive comments from the instructor. After three missed 24-hour periods of any draft, the assignment will receive an F.

**Email:** Check your [ucsd.edu](http://ucsd.edu) inbox and Canvas daily for course announcements. I only respond to emails sent from your [ucsd.edu](http://ucsd.edu) account. If contacting me by email, use appropriate email etiquette and a professional tone. Contact me by email for quick questions and scheduling only; for in-depth discussions or revision work, come to office hours. I respond to emails within 24 hours, except on Saturdays. University policy forbids me from discussing grades via email.

**Office hours:** Drop-in office hours are a time when you can come to my office to seek individual or group help with course material (readings, concepts, etc.) and assignments. You are encouraged to come by. However, office-hour meetings generally only last 5-10 minutes, so make sure you have *specific questions* or sections of your paper in mind that you would like help with. If you have a legitimate, unavoidable conflict (i.e., class or work) that coincides with my office hours, you may contact me to make an alternate time to meet. Email me at least two days in advance and provide me with all your available times.

**OSD Accommodation:** According to the Office for Students with Disabilities (OSD), “Students requesting accommodations for this course due to a disability must provide a current Authorization for Accommodation (AFA) letter issued by the OSD. Students are required to present their AFA letters to the MCWP Program Representative/OSD liaison in advance so that accommodations can be arranged.” Contact OSD at (858) 534-4382, [osd@ucsd.edu](mailto:osd@ucsd.edu), or the office at University Center 202. Be aware that such accommodations are not retroactive.

## CONDUCT

**Attendance:** The program has a strict attendance policy because of the nature of its curriculum. Therefore, if you miss more than two classes in the quarter, you will not pass the class. This includes absences due to illness, medical appointments, travel plans, and so on. If you are late or leave early twice by more than 5 minutes, it will count as an absence. Once class begins, you are expected to stay through the class. Class participation, including being prepared to discuss the assigned texts, is crucial to this course. If you do not prepare or participate in class, you will be counted as absent. If necessary, the instructor will employ exams and quizzes to ensure participation.

**Participation:** Participation means contributing to class discussions, asking questions and providing feedback. It means being here in *body* but also being present in *mind* — alert, focused, paying attention and, most importantly, actively adding to everyone’s learning. It means being prepared to discuss the assigned texts, which means reading them. Always bring your reader and assigned texts to class. Assigned readings are to be completed before class. Come prepared to discuss the material thoughtfully. If you do not participate in class, you will be counted as absent.

**Respect:** Be respectful to classmates and your instructor. Any comments or actions that instigate or contribute to a disrespectful or hostile environment in the classroom will not be tolerated. Any individual who, as a result of their words or behavior, silences their classmates will be held accountable. Silence all electronic devices. Do not check email or text messages in class. Unauthorized use of electronic devices will affect participation.

**Wellness:** Be mindful of your personal health and well-being throughout the term. As stated above, you may be absent (no more than) twice during the term. Bank these opportunities, and use them when needed — particularly when you become ill. Be considerate of others, and stay home if you are contagious. This course (and no doubt others) will demand much of you, so be sure to balance that with rest, exercise, and attention to your own needs.

**Academic Integrity:** Students are expected to do their own work as outlined in UCSD’s Policy on Academic Integrity. Plagiarism includes, but is not limited to, failure to correctly cite quotations, summaries, paraphrases, and ideas from print or online sources. Plagiarism is strictly prohibited. See sections on plagiarism and integrity in the reader appendix and in *A Writer’s Reference*. When in doubt, ask me for clarification. In addition, students are expected to do their own work as outlined in the UCSD Policy on Academic Integrity (access via senate.ucsd.edu), including the translation of work written in a language other than English. Also, it is against the policy to “recycle” a paper written for one course and turn it in for credit in another course, including any Muir Writing courses. Ignorance of the conventions of academic honesty and integrity is not an excuse. All cases of suspicious, inappropriate, or academic misconduct are subject to disciplinary action, which can include suspension or dismissal.

**Online Course Evaluations:** Each MCWP student is asked to complete an online Course Evaluation at the end of the term. A link to the evaluation, along with instructions for accessing and completing the evaluation, will be emailed to your ucsc.edu account.

## SCHEDULE

(as always, subject to changes both minor and major)

### Week 1

**Monday 01.06**

***In class:*** Welcome! Discussion of class expectations, syllabus details, argument basics, and reading methods. Introductions.

**Wednesday 01.08**

***Before class:***

— Read “Making Good Arguments: An Overview” and “Assembling Reasons and Evidence” [READER: Appendix]

— Read A1 [A Writer’s Reference (AWR)]; section E is optional.

***In class:*** Discuss readings, analysis vs. summary, and warrants. Discuss academic integrity. Introductory reflection assignment. Introduce Paper 1 prompt.

### Week 2

**Monday 01.13**

***Before class:***

— Read Chilson’s “Creating a New Federal Agency ...” and Singer’s “The Government Protects Our Food and Cars ...” [READER] and locate each article’s claims, reasons, and evidence; bring to class an outline of each argument.

— Read A2, A3, and A4 [AWR].

— Prepare first MediaWatch exercise.

***DUE: MediaWatch 1 exercise*** (upload before class)

***In class:*** Discuss readings. Discuss approaches to Paper 1. Discuss main claim statements.

**Wednesday 01.15**

***Before class:***

— Read and annotate The NYTimes’ “Why Is America So Far Behind Europe on Digital Privacy?” and Politico’s “Mark Zuckerberg’s Wednesday Testimony” [READER] and locate each article’s claims, reasons, evidence, and warrant; bring to class an outline of each argument.

— Write first draft of Paper 1.

***DUE: Paper 1/Draft 1*** (upload & bring 2 copies to class)

***In class:*** Workshop Paper 1/Draft 1. Discuss readings.

### Week 3

**Monday 01.20**

**MLK HOLIDAY — No class**

**Wednesday 01.22**

***Before class:***

— Read my feedback on Paper 1 / Draft 1. Begin developing and revising your paper.

— Read C2-C5 [AWR].

**DUE: Paper 1/Draft 2** (upload & bring 2 copies to class)

**In class:** Workshop Paper 1/Draft 2. Discuss readings and rubric.

#### Week 4

**Monday 01.27**

**Before class:**

— Read MLA-1, C4 [*AWR*].

— Revise Paper 1/Draft 2.

— Read and annotate Balkin & Zittrain’s “A Grand Bargain to Make Tech Companies Trustworthy.” [*READER*] and locate the article’s claims, reasons, evidence, and warrant; bring to class an outline of its argument. (You will read the Nyst article on your own; it will not be discussed in class.)

**DUE: Paper 1/Final Draft** (upload, no copies to class)

**In class:** Reflection on the process of writing the paper. Discuss readings. Go over Paper 2 prompt and introduce synthesis.

**Wednesday 01.29**

**Before class:**

— Read MLA-3c [*AWR*].

**In class:** Discuss synthesizing sources and conference expectations.

**Friday 01.31**

**DUE: Paper 2/Draft 1 (upload by 2:30 p.m.)** (upload & bring a hard Copy with my feedback to your conference)

#### Week 5

##### **Individual conferences, Round One**

*Classes do not meet this week. There will be no regular office hours.*

Each student will meet with me individually for 20 minutes. In these meetings, we will discuss your current draft and any questions you have regarding the course and upcoming work. These conferences are meant to be helpful and informative for you, and we will spend most of the time talking about your own writing. Come prepared with paper, pen, questions, and concerns. A missed conference is considered an absence.

**Before conference:** Read my feedback on your Paper 2 / Draft 1. Complete your pre-conference worksheet. Print the worksheet and your Paper 2 / Draft 1 containing my feedback, and bring these to conference.

**My conference is** \_\_\_\_\_ @ \_\_\_\_\_  
(day) (time)

#### Week 6

**Monday 02.10**

**Before class:**

— Revise Paper 2.

— Read *Dragnet Nation*, Chapters 1-5 (pp.1-79), taking reading notes that include page numbers and beginning to outline the broader argument.

**DUE: Paper 2/Draft 2** (upload & bring 2 copies to class)

**In class:** Workshop Paper 2/Draft 2. Discuss synthesis, and MLA.

**Wednesday 02.12**

**Before class:**

- Read *Dragnet Nation*, Chapters 6-10 (pp. 80-149).
- Prepare second MediaWatch exercise.

**DUE: MediaWatch 2 exercise** (upload before class)

**In class:** Discuss strategies for Paper 2/Draft 2 and the revision process. Discuss MediaWatch analyses.

Week 7

**Monday 02.17**

**PRESIDENT'S DAY HOLIDAY — No class**

**Wednesday 02.19**

**Before class:**

- Finish revising Paper 2.
- Read *Dragnet Nation* Chapters 11-15 (pp.153-224).

**DUE: Paper 2/Final Draft** (upload, no copies to class)

**In class:** Reflection on the writing process. Discuss Paper 3 prompt and writing an analysis of a book. Discuss the book and its analysis.

**Friday 02.21**

**DUE: Paper 3/Draft 1 (uploaded by 2:30 p.m.)** (upload & bring a hard copy with my feedback to your conference)

Week 8

**Individual conferences, Round Two**

*Classes do not meet this week. There will be no regular office hours.*

**Before conference:** Read my feedback on your Paper 3 / Draft 1. Complete your pre-conference worksheet. Print the worksheet and your Paper 3 / Draft 1 containing my feedback, and bring these to conference.  
**My conference is** \_\_\_\_\_ **@** \_\_\_\_\_  
(day) (time)

Week 9

**Monday 03.02**

**Before class:**

- Revise Paper 3.

**DUE: Paper 3/Draft 2** (upload & bring 2 copies to class)

**In class:** Workshop draft 2. Discuss Portfolio Reflection assignment.

**Wednesday 03.04**

**Before class:** Continue revising Paper 3. Report to me specific topics for today's focus workshops.

**In class:** Topic focus workshops.

Week 10

**Monday 03.09**

***Before class:***

- Revise Paper 3.
- Begin writing the Portfolio Reflection.

***DUE: Paper 3/Draft 3*** (upload & bring 2 copies to class)

***In class:*** Workshop Paper 3/Draft 3. Go over portfolio checklist.

**Wednesday 03.11**

***Before class:***

- Revise Paper 3. Continue writing the Portfolio Reflection.
- Collect and bring all class materials for your portfolio.

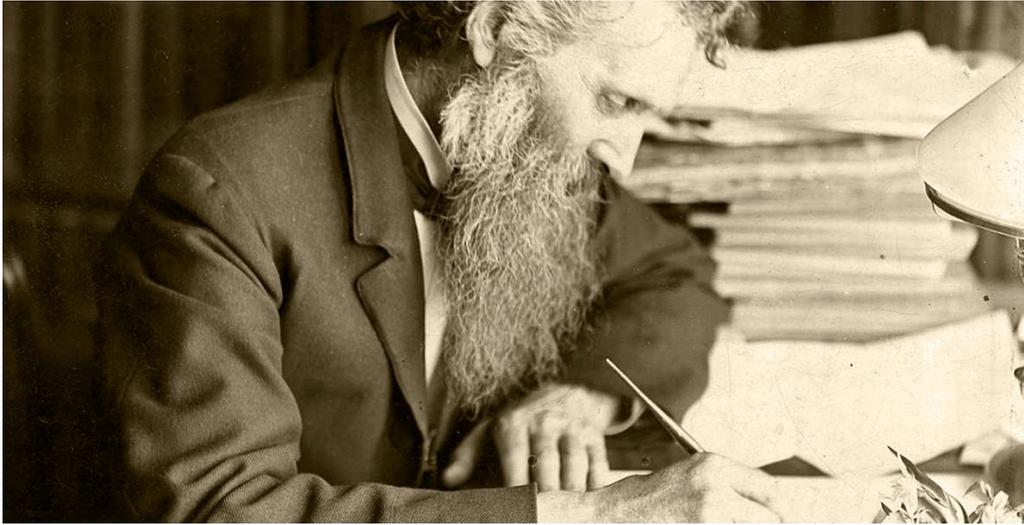
***Bring to class: Your latest draft of Paper 3***  
(DO NOT upload, but bring 1 copy to class)

***In class:*** Editing workshop. Assemble portfolios.

**Friday 03.13**

***DUE: Paper 3/Final Draft and Portfolio Reflection***  
(both uploaded by 2:30 p.m.).

*A word about our namesake, John Muir —*



**John Muir College** was the second college launched at UCSD in 1967. Our namesake, John Muir, was a writer and environmentalist who founded the Sierra Club, an organization charged with protecting natural resources and wild places.

The motto of John Muir College is “Celebrating the Independent Spirit,” which Muir himself embodied. You’ll hear claims that Muir “continues to inspire and inform the vision and core values of the college.” It’s not hollow boasting. Students seek out Muir College because it hails them as fellow independent spirits — promising young people who can carve a unique experience from the college’s flexible course offerings and channel their creative energies into self-directed lives of service to their fellow human beings. You’re fortunate to be a part of that apparatus, and I hope you make the most of it.

The “great men of history” trope aside, I’m proud to be affiliated with an institution bearing Muir’s name. He inspired me personally as a younger man, largely for his intent to experience his world. Muir did not wait for others to see the magnificent spaces of this continent — he went to see them himself. Muir walked. He walked and walked and walked. He walked a thousand miles across the entire South in 1867. He walked throughout the West and especially all over California. One of my favorite essays of his is “Flood-Storm in the Sierra.” Like me, Muir

loved a good thunderstorm. But whereas I like to enjoy them from my patio, Muir enjoyed this one not only unsheltered in the wilderness but by climbing high up a tree so he could ride it as it moved in the storm, listen to its creaks and whooshes, experience it in a different way. Muir made himself a direct witness to nature.

As a result, he was able to return to civilization and witness to lawmakers and businesspeople, encouraging them to view nature less as an economic resource than a spiritual one. He wrote extensively, more than 300 articles and 10 books, expounding on his naturalist philosophy. His activism influenced Congress to create Yosemite National Park and was instrumental in the formation of others (Sequoia, Mount Rainier, the Grand Canyon). This is not just a notable biographical fact — we’re still talking about Muir today and naming colleges after him because *he successfully argued for his ideas*.

I encourage you to read more about him. An excellent, short biography of him is *John Muir: Magnificent Tramp* by Rod Miller (Tom Doherty Assoc., 2005), very readable and engaging. The Library of America (a publisher whose mission is to keep many of the United States’ great works in print) has a splendid volume of his *Nature Writings* (Library of America, 1997), which includes his writings about the landscapes of California and elsewhere (and the essay mentioned above). Both are available in Geisel, along with scores of other titles and documents.