

# Community-Based Writing with Latinx Rhetorics in Milwaukee

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## RACHEL

With increased interest in community-engaged course design, instructors across the United States are looking for ways to encourage their students to become more connected with their local contexts and the larger communities surrounding their university's walls. Moving beyond a "feel good" approach to making college courses more meaningful, I think it is crucial that educators recognize the need for explicitly anti-oppressive and anti-racist approaches to education in our world today. As anti-immigrant sentiments and white nationalist hate crimes surge in the United States alongside an explicit anti-Mexican rhetoric guiding policies with the current administration, there is a kairotic urgency to de-center whiteness in our curricula, to support community-based organizing in Latinx and other marginalized communities, and to recognize oppression within our own practices and institutions. Building on the momentum of the recent special issue of

*Reflections*, “Community Resistance, Justice, and Sustainability in the Face of Political Adversity,” we present this course profile as one example of centering Latinx communities, activists, and scholars for graduate study in rhetoric and composition.

With so many graduate students teaching at universities and pursuing education as a profession, graduate seminars are an important starting place for programmatic engagement with community-based writing. Graduate courses can serve as an introduction to getting involved with the surrounding communities and local organizations in ways that may influence graduate students’ willingness to do similar community-engaged work in their own teaching and research. This course profile shares one example of community-based writing in my graduate seminar on Latinx Rhetorics and Community Writing at the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee (UWM). In addition to my brief comments on the course design, challenges, successes, and ideas for future iterations, this piece features writing by two graduate students who were enrolled in the class, Julia Anderson and Storm Pilloff. Julia and Storm share their perspectives on the class, our community-engaged writing, and potential implications for other instructors interested in teaching graduate-level courses on Latinx rhetorics. Julia and Storm have also helped me reflect on the strengths and areas for improvement for the course.

### *Course Design*

Throughout the process of designing this course, I had two major goals: to introduce students to a breadth of scholarship featuring scholars who work with community engagement and Latinx rhetorics and to find connections with local, activist work by and for the Latinx community in Milwaukee. According to Oxford Dictionaries (n.d.), Latinx is defined as “a person of Latin American origin or descent (used as a gender-neutral or non-binary alternative to Latino or Latina).” By naming the course “Latinx Rhetorics,” I wanted us to begin the course with an attention to the power, politics, and personal implications of language. I hoped that students would both examine Latinx approaches to rhetorical study in academia and understand the ways that Latinx communities use rhetoric in their daily lives, whether related to how they educate their children or organize for activism, etc. We began the course by reading Cristobal Salinas Jr.

and Adele Lozano's (2017) article, "Mapping and recontextualizing the evolution of the term *Latinx*," and listening to an NPR episode on the term Latinx for a bit of background about what it means to use the term "Latinx" as opposed to "Latino," "Latina," "Latin@," or another term (Hinojosa 2016). We also connected readings with our university's initiative to pursue the designation of a Hispanic Serving Institution (HSI). I assigned our Chancellor's news release from 2016 for the students to read about this initiative. The conflicting conversation that ensued about supporting efforts to diversify and support our students, while also noting tokenizing language about what these students could do for the university, connected well with Dr. Stephanie Kerschbaum's (2014) book, *Toward a New Rhetoric of Difference*. Students had the chance to discuss this in person with her during a class visit while she was on campus for a guest lecture on signs of disability.

From the start, I wanted to highlight the diversity of language, race, culture, and identity within communities that are considered Latinx. Not being Latinx myself, I also wanted to connect my students with scholars who are doing important decolonial and anti-racist work and also identify as Latino/a/x. On the weeks when we read their books, Dr. Steven Alvarez and Dr. Laura Gonzales joined us via Google Hangouts. I also wanted to include a guest speaker from Milwaukee, and I was thrilled when Christine Neumann-Ortiz agreed to join us in class. Christine is the director of the locally based, but internationally recognized immigrant rights' group, Voces de la Frontera. Christine's visit set us up well for getting involved in local Latinx community events, because on May 1, 2018, five of the students and I attended a march in Waukesha for the "Day Without Latinxs and Immigrants" to protest the 287g program, which trains local law enforcement officers to act as Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) agents. Students wrote blog posts about their experiences at the march and reflected on how our readings and discussions related to the local activism that Voces de la Frontera helps organize every day.

This course was open to students outside of rhetoric and composition, and included students enrolled in programs such as film, library and information science, women's and gender studies (WGS), and

literature. The range of disciplines in the classroom was an asset, and it extended the potential reach that the course objectives might have for teaching and conversations in other departments. The course objectives focused on students being able to:

- Understand the contributions of Latino/a/x writers and communities to theory and pedagogy in Rhetoric and Composition,
- Articulate the intersections of culture, race, language, gender, sexuality, and identity in Latinx scholarship,
- Write academic and public-facing texts about Latinx rhetorics and community writing, and
- Demonstrate an understanding of how community-engaged work can inform pedagogy and practice for contemporary composition.

The assignments included weekly reading, three posts (one highlighting a class discussion and two highlighting community events or spaces) on a blog that I host called “Writing & Rhetoric in Milwaukee,” a presentation proposal for how UWM can become more engaged with writing and rhetoric in the local community, and a final project. For the final project, students could choose to write either a seminar paper intended for scholarly publication or a pedagogical project for a course they would teach reflecting what we studied over the semester. This mixture of academic and public-facing genres seemed to work well in allowing the students to consider a variety of audiences for their own writing and different ways they could engage with the course content. The community-highlight blog posts covered a range of spaces and events that students connected with throughout the semester, such as an independent bookstore, a restaurant serving Puerto Rican and Wisconsin-inspired food, campus events highlighting transnational concerns in Latin America, a cultural advising center for Latinx students on campus, and more. For more information on the reading list and assignments, see the syllabus and materials in the Appendix.

### *Challenges*

One of the biggest challenges I faced with this course was the limitation of time with the amount of material and community

engagement I wanted to incorporate. I tried to balance enough reading to cover this expansive area of study while also allowing time for writing, conversation, and engagement with local events. For future iterations of the course, I would include more diverse (in genre and perspective) readings that more prominently feature material from Afro-Latinx communities. I would also give more time to two books: Gloria Anzladúa's *Borderlands/La Frontera* and her edited collection with Cherríe Moraga, *This Bridge Called my Back*. We could have used more than one class period (we met once a week) with those books to ensure that students had time to work through the challenging and important pieces in each chapter. Additionally, while I tried to include work on Chicana and Third World Feminisms, those are areas that I am learning about alongside my students, since I do not have formal training in these topics, but I am working to rectify that by reading important works in these fields that intersect with my own. Future iterations of the course would also include more updated references to Chicana/x, Latinx, and Afro-Latinx feminist scholarship that pairs well with the other concepts studied in class. I also included "Community Writing" in the title of the course and felt that I needed to incorporate readings on community writing and writing across communities. Those were helpful to see practical applications of some of the theory we read, but I could have designed a whole seminar on community writing as a subfield within the discipline. For future iterations, I will keep the focus on Latinx rhetoric and writing and allow the "community" aspect to be less about disciplinary conversations and more about community-based writing by Latinx authors, poets, and activists.

Now, we'll turn to the best part of the course profile: Julia and Storm's perspectives.

## **JULIA**

Taking courses outside of your own discipline is always unnerving. You never know if your writing style works, or if you know enough theory, or if the topic melds with your academic interests. As a graduate student in the coordinated degree program for WGS and Library and Information Science (LIS) departments at UWM, all of these concerns rang true as I stepped into the Latinx Rhetorics classroom. The class had been cross-listed through the WGS

department and I had been encouraged to take it by my advisor because it was one of the few graduate classes that coincided with my research interests. As a Chicana, I knew that I wanted to delve into topics that remain largely unspoken about on campus, and as an academic passionate about Chicana feminism, I wanted to explore the connection between rhetoric and resistance, but I was worried that I didn't have the rhetorical background to succeed in the class.

All my worries were eventually assuaged by the connections I was able to make between course content and my own research interests. Throughout the semester, the class was structured to incorporate a variety of academic perspectives. Rachel encouraged the melding of feminist, archival, and rhetorical theory for all my coursework, including the blog posts, community presentation, and final project. I think one of the main reasons I was successful in the class was the unrestricted interdisciplinarity, because it allowed me to investigate how rhetoric functions outside of the English department. Texts by familiar faces on the reading list helped to guide the melding of these seemingly unrelated theories, particularly Gloria Anzaldúa's (1987) *Borderlands/La Frontera* and *This Bridge Called My Back* edited by Anzaldúa and Cherríe Moraga (2004). Anzaldúa speaks of the freedom "to write bilingually and to switch codes without having always to translate," focusing on the oppressive nature of continuous translation, and using material conditions like "accommodat[ing] the English speakers," to support the theory of the flesh (Anzaldúa 1987, 81). For Anzaldúa, Moraga, and other Latinx feminist theorists, this theory suggests "the physical realities of our lives... fuse to create a politic born out of necessity," (Anzaldúa and Moraga 2015, 19) meaning that the rhetorical rules that dictate appropriate language usage leave the burden of translation to Latinx communities. This is sometimes witnessed in traditional archives that don't meet the needs of bi- or multilingual populations, even if their collections are by and about non-English speaking communities. Researchers and community members who seek out this material are often unable to access it without the assistance of a professional archivist, insinuating that their histories are not their own. Making sure that reference tools—such as finding aids and promotional materials like flyers and social media posts—meet the needs of multilingual patrons lends rhetorical agency to marginalized communities by prioritizing their language of choice. These explorations cement rhetoric as a

theoretical landscape with which feminists, WGS scholars, and archivists need to be actively engaging.

Another commonality between my research interests and the course was the focus on community spaces and engagement. As a hopeful archivist and ardent feminist, I research the ways in which archival spaces reinforce hegemonic power dynamics that hinder accessibility and alienate communities. For one of the community blog posts, I expanded my approach to accessibility by analyzing the opportunity for rhetorical agency in UWM's Latinx digital archive collection (Anderson 2018). I chose to treat the digital archive as a community space because it documents and makes accessible a movement enacted by the Latinx community to challenge inequality on campus. This collection creates community by allowing Latinx-identified individuals to combat sentiments of symbolic annihilation and find unity through shared history. I engaged with several primary sources, working through research guides and metadata, and found that the university not only provides access to multilingual patrons, but is also conscientious of rhetorical agency by centering the narrative around activism and resistance. The open-ended nature of the blog posts allowed me to further probe the relationship between rhetoric and the archives, while also discovering the activist legacy of Latinx folks on campus. The focus on community spaces highlighted how rhetoric is not restricted to academia, and what it looks like as a community tool for activist purposes.

While academic writing is an important element to graduate-level classes, particularly if individual interests involve publication, graduate students seldom have the opportunity to develop other aspects of their writing, like syllabus construction. As an instructor for the WGS department, I spend a significant portion of every semester break writing and re-writing a syllabus to fit the credentials and goals of the department but have never had the opportunity to use these skills to push the limits of syllabi expectation.

For the final project in the Latinx Rhetorics course, Rachel allowed students two options: they could either write an academic paper specific to an academic journal or they could design their own course, which involved writing a rationale, syllabus, major assignment

prompts, and class activities. I chose to branch out from my usual work and focus specifically on writing a syllabus for a Latinx Feminisms class as both an act of resistance and a move for inclusion. This was beneficial to my academic development in many ways. First, the WGS department at UWM sorely lacks a diversity of classes that meet the intersectional standards of feminism. By writing a Latinx Feminisms syllabus, I was able to provide concrete ways that a class with this focus would benefit the department and the student body. Second, I was able to reimagine the WGS department as an intersectional space that works to accommodate its entire student body. The syllabus addressed racist and elitist undertones with a translanguaging approach policy that acknowledges the existence of multilingual students and encourages them to use all of their language skills in written coursework, online participation, and in-class presentations (Guerra 2016, 140). I challenged accessibility issues by incorporating open-source materials and experimenting with strategies to alleviate some of the financial burden that discourages prospective students. I also included an element of community engagement to course projects to reinforce the connection between theory, activism, and praxis. While I haven't yet had an opportunity to teach Latinx Feminisms, this has been an asset in approaching my department for curricular change.

My most important epiphany from Latinx Rhetorics was the realization that language was invisible to me. I could hear the differences in the way people spoke, but I had adhered to the idea that there was a singularly correct way to write and speak in an academic setting. As an instructor, I spent many semesters combing through student writing with red pen in hand, trying to shape their academic voices into something that fit traditional models of writing. It wasn't until I began studying rhetoric that I realized the colonial and racist implications behind a standardized, professional English. My reading and grading immediately changed. I focused less on run-ons and misspelled words and paid more attention to the thought process behind the writing style. UWM's diverse student body suggests that each student has a different language background that shapes not only the way they express themselves on paper, but the way that they critically think and engage with material. My expanded understanding of language development and use really allows students to grapple with the readings and assignments in ways that prioritize their situated knowledge rather than antiquated standards.

## STORM

For me, the appeal of community-engaged pedagogies comes from a desire to dissolve the boundaries between the “Ivory Tower” and others. Universities participate in exclusionary practices that are often sexist, racist, and ableist, among other forms of tacit discrimination. That environment not only begets itself, constantly reiterating the same version of power, but also breeds loneliness and tokenism in those of us who somehow slipped through the cracks despite not being like most academes. I am white and a lesbian (not very unusual in a humanities department), but I also grew up in foster care... sort of.

To make a very long story short, I lived in a variety of homes throughout my childhood and adolescence, in different areas of the country, and I was classified as a “ward of the court.” This meant that when I reached adulthood, I was on my own. Much like students we call “working class” or “first generation,” I worked full time as a bartender and server throughout my undergraduate and master’s program. That didn’t seem unusual while I was in my undergraduate program—but it was very unusual in my master’s program. The two years it took to get my master’s degree were spent in seminar rooms with half of my classmates as funded teaching assistants while the other half of us were not. Despite me not being a teaching assistant, I took the pedagogy course. When we discussed extending deadlines and making exceptions for students who were struggling because they worked full-time, or other people with extenuating circumstances, I was impassioned and made the case for it, but never “came out” as someone who succeeded because I was granted those graces. While I was speaking, a funded classmate of mine interrupted me to say that since I wasn’t teaching, I didn’t know what it took to do “that work”—by which she meant, presumably, provide the support necessary to our most vulnerable students.

Since then, I have “come out” in academic classrooms and meetings. In conversations about pedagogy, language difference, access, and diversity, I continually draw on my background as a voice in the room that’s rarely there, if ever. Because of the way the borderline is manufactured around the institution, delineating it from the public it’s situated in, the voices that gain access to it are historically of privileged backgrounds. Seeing both this and the impatient

condescension with which other teachers spoke about their students, students like me, I found a home in rhetoric and composition. But I still find the way this field discusses language and difference to be too fixated on static and tokenizing markers.

Our Latinx Rhetorics class disrupted that. Thinking of community-based writing and rhetoric not only insists on collapsing the distinction between the “Ivory Tower” and others, it cultivated an environment where we, as graduate students, were encouraged to access our full range of rhetorical dexterity. Our own dialects or lack of facility with academic discourse were highlighted as tributes to the diversity in our classroom and markers of who we are, rather than deviations to be trained out of us. Knowledges gained from lived experience (like from our community project) was taken as evidence, just like our course readings. And we all *learned more* about writing and rhetoric by reading communities’ work, rather than relegating it as extracurricular.

My community project designed a writing assignment for a first-year research and writing class. I imagined a course in which we visit Milwaukee’s Latino Arts, Inc. and participate in one of their workshops wherein students aren’t just taught how to create a piece of heritage artwork, but also the significance of it in the Latinx community. From there, I ask students to do three things: write a rhetorical analysis of a piece or *constellation of pieces* of arts and/or crafts that have helped to organize a community of which they’re a part (I defined “community” *very* broadly), create their own piece of artwork for that community, and then reflect on moments of struggle, perseverance, what they learned in their new craft, and how this exercise contributes to their rhetorical toolbelt. A key component to this assignment is that students have to facilitate a dialogue with another member (or more!) from the community they’re researching in as a way to show how lived experiences contribute to the research process and rhetorical dexterity.

I had the opportunity to teach this assignment (minus attending Latino Arts, Inc.) immediately after taking Rachel’s course, and it worked better than I could’ve hoped. One student sanded a large rectangle of plywood down and learned how to use an electric

drill to create an American flag featuring the U.S. Air Force in its stars, which she then had hung in the medical clinic at her partner's Air Force base. Another student created a mural to be hung in the Black Cultural Center. Their reflections for this assignment began with them admitting their skepticism about how they would learn anything about rhetoric and writing from a community and crafts-based assignment, and then concluded with many writing teachers' favorite refrain: "Now I see rhetoric everywhere!"

Notable texts we read in Rachel's class, for me, are Stephanie Kerschbaum's (2014) *Toward a New Rhetoric of Difference* and Ana Milena Ribero's (2016) "Citizenship" from *Decolonizing Rhetoric and Composition Studies*. I appreciate Kerschbaum's insistence that we need to "consider [our] students not in terms of single identifiers but as the embodiment of a complex set of identifications that must be considered together, rather than independently from one another" (Kerschbaum 2014, 10). This way of attending to difference helps to more wholly humanize people rather than relying on single demographic markers—like "working-class," or "African American," or "Hispanic," or "citizen." Ribero writes, "...citizenship and the (non)citizen are caught in a complex co-constitutive relationship, a relationship replete with race, gender, sex, and class implications that aim at maintaining a homogenous ahistorical idea of US citizenry" (Ribero 2016, 36). I was struck by the fact that for DREAMers to gain citizenship, they had to necessarily criminalize their parents. This "citizen—(non)citizen binary" (Ribero 2016, 37) results in fucked up consequences. In class, while trying to work these thoughts out, all I could manage to say was "fuck citizenship." Our classroom, disrupting the idea of what academic discourse is and encouraging us to struggle with language, created an atmosphere where I felt like I could fall back on a simple (and strong) expletive to get my point across. Throughout the remainder of the semester, "fuck citizenship" became a refrain many of us fell back on to express our anger, our interpretations, and our desires.

As Julia and Rachel have both mentioned, we were assigned a number of blog posts throughout the course. These insisted we bring our academic mind into the community and then share our thoughts with a public audience. Because the public is quite different than the solitary

professor, writing blog posts required thinking about and cultivating a more—I’ll call it—accessible register. But it’s also terrifying to write for an unknown and potentially large audience! One of my blog posts refers to Sara Ahmed’s *The Promise of Happiness* and after Rachel tweeted about it, Ahmed retweeted it.



I was already too nervous to put my own name on my public blog posts, and then the first time I contribute, a “famous” scholar shared it. The intensity of audience awareness was palpable to me then in a way it never had been. The blog posts also gave us a chance to write about what we were learning, and what we cared about, without the boundaries that academic discourse puts on our work. Being able to more casually write about our academic ideas gave us space to play with our language facility. The practice of blogging, the course readings, and the community rhetorics we invited into our classroom all work against tokenizing markers of differences and cultivate an understanding of rhetoric that celebrates and leverages the dexterity inherent in the public’s diversity.

## **LOOKING AHEAD *CON LXS TRES* (WITH THE THREE (OF US))**

Inspired by Iris D. Ruiz and Raúl Sánchez’s *Decolonizing Rhetoric and Composition Studies*, we believe that individuals interested in community-based writing and teaching must consider how to decolonize university-community relations with these types of projects and initiatives. How can students become more rhetorically aware of the history of the land on which our universities were built? How do we encourage critical inquiry into the complex and uncomfortable reality of how students are positioned in relation to broader “publics” or “the community,” and that they are often positioned as being separate from communities, even when they identify with them? How can we also center the rhetorical expertise of communities and understand that we can learn from them without always needing to “help” them in some way (while also recognizing

how we can leverage the resources of our university to support the important decolonizing work that they do)? The point of reflection is to be able to move forward with better, more pronounced ways of attending to our original missions as feminist teachers. It is our responsibility to rethink the ways we teach rhetoric, who is rhetorical, what rhetorical situations matter for our students and in our classrooms, and how and where we invite our students to harness their rhetorical dexterity to write in ways that are meaningful for them, and not privileged by the exclusionary practices of our academic institutions.

We think one place to begin would be to look to Latinx scholars who are already moving our field in a direction that invites us to reconsider how communities can transform the university. While the literature covered in this piece and the syllabus for the course are not comprehensive, we encourage other teachers interested in Latinx rhetorics to consider what foundational texts, community writing, and critical pieces best reflect their own goals and objectives. Simultaneously, instructors should consider how their local context can inform the selection of texts and activities to promote a deeper understanding of the land on which they work, the cultural roots and sustenance of Indigenous and Latinx community knowledge, and the intersectional lens of Latinx identity.

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## **APPENDIX: EXCERPTS FROM SYLLABUS AND ASSIGNMENT DETAILS**

### **Seminar in College Composition, Theory, and Pedagogy: Latinx Rhetorics and Community Writing**

Mondays 4-6:40pm

Professor: Rachel Bloom-Pojar, Ph.D.

### **COURSE DESCRIPTION & GOALS**

This course will examine Latinx<sup>1</sup> Rhetorics and Community Writing in relation to contemporary theory, pedagogy, and practices of writing. In this seminar, we will learn how Latinx writers have taken up topics of culture, race, language, gender, sexuality, and identity in their academic and community-based work. This class will encourage critical approaches to writing outside of the academy and examine its importance for both social action and composition pedagogy. Drawing from cultural, digital, and translingual approaches to Composition Studies, we will also examine the complex and strategic ways communities leverage cultural and rhetorical skills in their everyday communication practices. Some of the questions we'll take up together include: What can composition teachers learn from Latinx rhetorics and community writing? How might our pedagogy become more attuned to intersectional identities by exploring the Indigenous, African, and activist foundations of Latinx rhetoric and writing today? What do Pedagogies and Writing Programs centered on Community Writing look like? This course will also include a community-engaged component that aims to cultivate conversations with individuals and organizations that use writing for social change, advocacy, and community-building. It's my hope that by the end of this course, you will be able to:

1. Understand the contributions of Latino/a/x writers and communities for theory and pedagogy in Rhetoric and Composition.
2. Articulate the intersections of culture, race, language, gender, sexuality, and identity in Latinx scholarship.

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<sup>1</sup> Pronounced "La-teen-x," Latinx is "a gender-neutral or non-binary alternative to Latino or Latina" (Oxford Dictionaries).

3. Write academic and public-facing texts about Latinx rhetorics and community writing.
4. Demonstrate an understanding of how community-engaged work can inform pedagogy and practice for contemporary composition.

### *Required Texts*

You will need to either purchase or borrow from the library the following books

1. *Bootstraps: From an American Academic of Color* by Victor Villanueva
2. *Decolonizing Rhetoric and Composition Studies: New Latinx Keywords for Theory and Pedagogy* edited by Iris Ruiz and Raul Sanchez
3. *Rhetorics of the Americas 3114 BCE to 2012 CE* edited by Damián Baca and Victor Villanueva
4. *Community Literacies en Confianza: Learning from Bilingual After-School Programs* by Steven Alvarez
5. *Language, Culture, Identity and Citizenship in College Classrooms and Communities* by Juan C. Guerra
6. *Borderlands/La Frontera: The New Mestiza* by Gloria Anzaldúa
7. *This Bridge Called my Back: Writings by Radical Women of Color 4th edition* edited by Cherrie Moraga and Gloria Anzaldúa
8. *Sites of Translation: What Multilinguals Can Teach us about Digital Writing and Rhetoric* by Laura Gonzales
9. *Translanguaging Outside the Academy: Negotiating Rhetoric and Healthcare in the Spanish Caribbean* by Rachel Bloom-Pojar
10. *Toward a New Rhetoric of Difference* by Stephanie Kerschbaum

## **ASSIGNMENTS**

### *Proposals*

Write two 250-500 word proposals: one for your mini-conference presentation and one for your final project. This should present an abstract, but can also talk about what you will do with the presentation and final project, what research it will draw from, and what you hope to present by the end of it. If you are proposing to write a seminar paper/article for the final project, you must identify what audience you'd like to aim it at (or a couple options if you're not sure) and

include links to the author/submission guidelines. Each proposal is worth 50 points.

*Blog Posts: Class & Community Highlights*  
<http://www.writingandrhetoricmke.com>

I'd like to see if we can naturally curate an engaging blog that will function in part as a discussion forum to test out your ideas, bring up questions or concerns, and build on each other's insights from class. I will only require that you post 3 times, and then ask that you check the blog every week and comment when you feel moved to encourage and support your peers, respond to their questions or thoughts, or add to the conversation. These comments should be timely within the week that things are posted and they will be considered as part of your overall effort to participate in class. Each post should reflect the genre of blog posts, be approximately 500-750 words, and will be valued at 30 points each with a total of 90 possible points for this category.

1. **Class Highlight Post:** Starting the second week of class, write at least 1 post that highlights something we read, discussed, and/or learned together in class. You will sign up for a week to write this post at the start of the semester. Everyone else should check in with the blog each week to comment on posts and participate in the ongoing conversation.
2. **Community Highlights Posts:** Write at least 2 blog posts that report on your visit to a Latino/a/x site or cultural event in the local community (this can include the wider UWM community). You'll need to give us the context for the event or place, and any unique or interesting aspects you want to highlight about it that builds on or enhances what we're studying in class. Please ask permission before taking pictures of anyone else there (mentioning that this would be posted online) or focus on non-human subjects or presenters who may be photographed by others. If you want to attend an event with classmates, you can write a collaborative post that reflects each of your perspectives on the experience.

*Presentation of Community Research*

Prepare an oral presentation that highlights an approach to integrating Latinx Rhetorics and/or Community Writing (or similar initiatives) into Pedagogy or Programs at UWM. Everyone will choose an aspect to highlight about writing or literacy work being done in the community and how you think that could be promoted, supported, or built upon with our writing classes and teacher training in the English department. This does not need to apply to first year composition, but it can. If you're from a different department and you'd like to focus on how this could apply to your home department, we can talk about options for that and who we might invite to these presentations.

The final product may take on a variety of forms, genres, or modes, depending on what you think would be most effective for sharing with others. You might focus on integrating an idea, a specific type of assignment, service learning or community engagement initiative to an existing class, program, teacher training, or other space on campus. You will develop a 10-15 minute presentation that provides the relevant context, argument for the use of this concept, and reflects the research you've done on local community work. You have the option to collaborate with one other classmate for this project. In this presentation, you should prepare some visual aid, either in the form of a printed handout or a digital presentation of some sort (not limited to Powerpoint). The presentation and materials will be worth 100 points and partners will receive the same grade, unless extenuating circumstances played a role in the distribution of labor, which you should notify me about ASAP.

*Final Project: Scholarly Paper or Pedagogical Project*

For the final project, you'll have a choice of doing one of two projects: a traditional **seminar paper to be submitted to a journal for publication** or a **pedagogical project** that will consist of **proposing a course, creating class materials for major assignments and activities, and a rationale** for why these materials reflect the material studied this semester on Latinx Rhetorics and Community Writing. Depending on which approach you decide to take, I'll respond to your proposal with details of assignment requirements. [See below for these details]. The seminar paper should be a researched paper

that presents a compelling argument or set of claims that takes up multiple topics from the semester and additional research on Latinx Rhetorics and Community Writing. It should also demonstrate some integration of both “local communities” and “the academy” however you’d like to integrate the engagement between the two in your pedagogical design or scholarly argument (you may also use other related words).

*Option 1: Final Paper*

1. **Cover Page:** Write a cover page that includes your paper title, your name, the target journal, a brief statement on how your paper fits the scope and aims of the journal, the word/character parameters for the journal, citation style, and any other parameters that they provide for authors that would be relevant to how you wrote the paper.
2. **The paper:**
  - a. **Content:** The content of your paper should be fitting with the type of article it will be (argumentative, theory building, review of relevant literature, etc.) and reflective of what you’ve learned and we have discussed in class this semester. Your paper should make a unique contribution to the scholarly conversations on the topic(s) and demonstrate your own approach to analyzing or discussing the topic(s). Drawing on at least 2-3 concepts and multiple texts from class, you’ll bring texts and ideas from class into conversation with outside research you have done to support the overarching claim(s) you’re making.
  - b. **Organization:** The organization of the paper is easy to follow and clearly connects what you’re trying to say throughout the paper. By the end of the paper, your reader understands the points you were trying to make and you provided sufficient explanation or evidence for individual claims that you set out to discuss at the beginning of the paper. If you decide to organize the paper in a non-linear fashion, different from what is common to academic writing in English studies, you’ll want to provide some sort of guide in or around your writing to help your reader follow it (see Style for more info on this).

- c. **Outside-of-class research:** The paper makes a reasonable effort to integrate sources and authors outside of the scope of our class to help support the main ideas of the paper and demonstrate an understanding of the broader conversation in the scholarly literature. While the external research does not need to be exhaustive, it should reflect an effort to integrate important names and texts in the conversation, even if you intend to read more of those texts in the future to build on this paper before submitting it for publication. All sources must be cited properly to give credit to others for their contributions to your thinking/writing.
- d. **Style:** The writing style and formatting (font, in-text citations, bibliography, etc.) should be intentional and fitting for the target journal while making a clear and connected argument or set of claims throughout the paper. If the style pushes genre conventions for the specific journal's articles, there should be some sort of explanation or rationale for this intentionality in the writing, either, throughout the piece, in footnotes or endnotes (depending on the journal), or on your cover page in a short note to me.

*Option 2: Final Pedagogical Project*

Save all of the following components as one document (.docx or PDF):

1. **Rationale:** Write a 3-5 page rationale for your course design and its reflection of your learning in our class. Cite readings and concepts from class to explain the thought process behind how you designed this course and the ways it reflects major topics from our readings and class discussion. Include a reference list in MLA or APA at the end of it.
2. **Syllabus:** Design a syllabus for the course. Include the following components, plus anything else you think is essential to your peers/me understanding what the class would entail: a) Title of course, instructor information, and office hours b) Description of course & goals (learning outcomes, course goals, or whatever you'd like to focus on)

- c) Reading List d) Major Assignments and Deadlines e) 2-3 “Policies” or Statements that reflect your pedagogical approach f) Sample Class Schedule (Use either Fall or Spring 2018 as a sample for the dates). Choose either a Mon/Wed/Fri (50 min), Tu/Th, or Mon/Wed (75 min) schedule.
- 3. Major Assignment Prompts:** Write prompts for the major assignments you would have in this class. Include all the details you think students would need to know to begin working on the assignments and understand what would be expected of them in the process and final product.
  - 4. Class Activities:** Write a 1 page summary for 2 in-class activities that you would use for this class. These activities should reflect your overall rationale for the course and your ethos as a teacher. Include an estimate for how long aspects of the activity would take for either a 50 minute or 75 minute class.

## **GUEST SPEAKERS**

We will be joined in person or via Skype/Google Hangouts by the following Guest Speakers:

**Christine Neumann-Ortiz**, Executive Director of Voces de la Frontera (March 26th), <https://www.huffingtonpost.com/author/christine-neumannortiz> , Voces on Twitter: @voces\_milwaukee

**Steven Alvarez**, Assistant Professor, St. John’s University (February 19th), <https://www.stjohns.edu/academics/bio/steven-alvarez>, Twitter: @Chastitellez

**Laura Gonzalez**, Assistant Professor, University of Texas, El Paso, (April 2nd), <http://www.gonzlaur.com/>, Twitter: @gonzlaur

**Stephanie Kerschbaum**, Associate Professor, University of Delaware (April 16th), <http://sites.udel.edu/kersch/>, Twitter: @slkersch

## SEMESTER SCHEDULE

Week/ Date/ Topic	Reading due	Writing due
<p><b>Week 1:</b> <b>Jan 22nd</b> Latinx &amp; Rhetoric</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A Brief History of Rhetoric &amp; Composition</li> <li>• “Mapping and recontextualizing the evolution of the term Latinx: An environmental scanning in higher education” by Cristobal Salinas Jr. &amp; Adele Lozano</li> <li>• Listen to “Latinx: The Ungendering of the Spanish Language” on Latino USA with NPR</li> </ul>	
<p><b>Week 2:</b> <b>Jan 29th</b>  Race &amp; the Academy</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Bootstraps: From an American Academic of Color</i> by Victor Villanueva</li> <li>• <i>Decolonizing</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Foreword - Ch. 1 Race by Iris D. Ruiz (v-15)</li> <li>• Ch. 9 Exito (Success) by Octavio Pimentel and Nancy Wilson (125-136)</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	
<p><b>Week 3:</b> <b>Feb 5th</b> Rhetorical History</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Rhetorics of the Americas 3114 BCE to 2012 CE</i> edited by Damián Baca and Victor Villanueva</li> </ul>	

<p><b>Week 4:</b> <b>Feb 12th</b> Language &amp; Writing</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “U.S. Spanish and Education: Global and Local Intersections” by Ofelia Garcia</li> <li>• <i>Decolonizing</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ch. 4 History by Jose Cortez (49-62)</li> <li>• Ch. 5 Code Switching by Jose Cano (63-75)</li> <li>• Ch. 6 Writing by Raul Sanchez (77-89)</li> </ul> </li> <li>• “Language Difference in Writing: Toward a Translingual Approach” by Bruce Horner, Min-Zhan Lu, Jacqueline Jones Royster, &amp; John Trimbur</li> </ul>	
<p><b>Week 5:</b> <b>Feb 19th</b> Community Literacies</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Community Literacies en Confianza: Learning from Bilingual After-School Programs</i> by Steven Alvarez</li> <li>• “‘La Biblioteca es importante’: A Case Study of an Emergent Bilingual Public Library in the Nuevo U.S. South” by Steven Alvarez &amp; Sara P. Alvarez</li> <li>• <i>Decolonizing</i> Ch. 2 Literacy by Steven Alvarez (17-29)</li> <li>• “Course Designs: Taco Literacy: Public Advocacy and Mexican Food in the U.S. Nuevo South” by Steven Alvarez</li> </ul>	

<p><b>Week 6:</b> <b>Feb 26th</b> Identity</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• UWM Plans to Become a Hispanic-Serving Institution</li> <li>• “Crafting a Composition Pedagogy with Latino Students in Mind” by E. Dominguez Barajas</li> <li>• “Chicanx/Latinx Rhetorics as Methodology for Writing Program Design at HSIs” by Aydé Enríquez-Loya &amp; Kendall Leon</li> <li>• <i>Decolonizing</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ch. 3 Citizenship by Ana Milena Ribero (31-45),</li> <li>• Ch. 7 Poch@ by Cruz Medina (93-107)</li> <li>• Ch. 11 Illegal by Amanda Espinosa-Aguilar (155-167)</li> <li>• Ch. 12 Mojado by Marcos del Hierro (169-181)</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	
<p><b>Friday,</b> <b>March 2nd</b></p>		<p>Presentation Proposal due at 5pm on D2L</p>
<p><b>Week 7:</b> <b>March 5th</b> Writing across Communities</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Language, Culture, Identity and Citizenship in College Classrooms and Communities</i> by Juan C. Guerra</li> <li>• “Welcome to Babylon: Junior Writing Program Administrators and Writing Across Communities at the University of New Mexico” by Michelle Hall Kells</li> </ul>	
<p><b>Friday,</b> <b>March 9th</b></p>		<p>Final Project Proposal due at 5pm on D2L</p>

<p><b>Week 8:</b> <b>March 12th</b> Mestiza Consciousness</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Borderlands/La Frontera: The New Mestiza</i> by Gloria Anzaldua</li> <li>• <i>Decolonizing</i> Ch. 8 Mestizaje by Gabriela Raquel Rios (109-124)</li> <li>• “Problematizing Mestizaje” by Eric Rodriguez and Everardo J. Cuevas (230-232)</li> </ul>	
<p><i>March 19th</i></p>	<p><i>Spring Break, no class</i></p>	
<p><b>Week 9:</b> <b>March 26th</b> Third World Feminist Writers</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>This Bridge Called my Back: Writings by Radical Women of Color</i> edited by Cherrie Moraga and Gloria Anzaldua</li> <li>• <i>Decolonizing</i> Ch. 10 Chicana Feminism by Candace Zepeda (137-151)</li> <li>• Read through Voces de la Frontera’s website: <a href="http://vdlf.org/">http://vdlf.org/</a> and their social media pages</li> </ul>	<p>Bring Preliminary ideas &amp; questions for Presentation &amp; Final Project to class</p>
<p><b>Week 10:</b> <b>April 2</b> Translation &amp; Digital Writing</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Sites of Translation: What Multilinguals can Teach us about Digital Writing and Rhetoric</i> by Laura Gonzales</li> </ul>	

<p><b>Week 11:</b> <b>April 9</b> Translan- guaging, Rhetoric &amp; Health</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Translanguaging Outside the Academy: Negotiating Rhetoric and Healthcare in the Spanish Caribbean</i> by Rachel Bloom-Pojar (will provide this text, but it will be available in March if you'd like a print copy)</li> <li>• "Unsettling Race and Language: Toward a Raciolinguistic Perspective" by Jonathan Rosa &amp; Nelson Flores</li> </ul>	
<p><b>Friday,</b> <b>April 13th</b></p>		<p>Rough Draft of Final Project due by 5pm on D2L</p>
<p><b>Week 12:</b> <b>April 16</b> Disability and Difference</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Toward a New Rhetoric of Difference</i> by Stephanie Kerschbaum</li> <li>• "Anecdotal Relations: On Orienting to Disability in the Composition Classroom" by Stephanie Kerschbaum</li> </ul>	
<p><b>April 17,</b> <b>2-3:30pm</b></p>	<p>Vilas Guest Lecture by Stephanie Kerschbaum, Curtin 368</p>	

<p><b>Week 13:</b>  <b>April 23</b>                  The Practice of Pedagogy</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “Race, Rhetoric, and Technology” By Angela Haas</li> <li>• “A Plea for Critical Race Theory Counterstory: Stock Story versus Counterstory Dialogues Concerning Alejandra’s ‘Fit’ in the Academy” by Aja Martinez</li> <li>• “Story to Action: A Conversation about Literacy and Organizing” by Eli Goldblatt with Manuel Portillo and Mark Lyons</li> <li>• Erin P. Gallegos “Mapping Student Literacies: Reimagining College Writing Instruction within the Literacy Landscape.”</li> </ul>	<p>Rough Draft of Presentations due by 4pm in our 854 OneDrive Folder for in-class workshop</p>
<p><b>Week 14:</b>  <b>April 30</b>                  Presentations</p>	<p>Presentations on Community Writing and Rhetoric due today</p>	<p>Written Materials due on D2L at 4pm</p>
<p><b>Week 15:</b>  <b>May 7</b>                  Last Day of Class</p>	<p>Prepare for Writing Workshop &amp; Wrapping up the semester</p>	<p>Upload your current rough draft of the final project to OneDrive by 4pm. Include a short letter to your reviewers at the beginning with questions and aspects you’d like feedback on.</p>

<b>Final “Exam” Day: May 14</b>		Final Blog Posts due today
<b>Friday, May 18</b>		Final project due by 5:00 pm on D2L

**Rachel Bloom-Pojar** is an Assistant Professor of Rhetoric and Composition at the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee. Her research focuses on rhetoric and writing at the intersections of culture, race, language, and healthcare. Her monograph, *Translanguaging outside the Academy: Negotiating Rhetoric and Healthcare in the Spanish Caribbean*, was published in 2018 with the NCTE Studies in Writing and Rhetoric Series.

**Julia Anderson** is a graduate student in the Women's and Gender Studies/Library and Information Sciences coordinated degree program at the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee. Her research interests include Chicana and queer studies, feminist histories, and social justice in archives. She is currently developing a thesis that supports radical feminist archiving strategies and community archiving initiatives.

**Storm Pilloff** is a PhD candidate in Rhetoric and Composition at the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee. Her research focuses on feminism and disability studies with a particular interest in embodied rhetorics. She is the English 102 coordinator and a mentor for the First Year Writing Program. She thinks getting a PhD is hard.

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