

## SENIOR WRITERS' SEMINAR, LEVEL 9 (W235439)

**Course Description:** Senior Writers' Seminar is a writing intensive course in which students develop writing skills by engaging with all steps in the writing process. The first semester writing projects will include personal/college essay, memoir, narration and/or description. Second semester writing projects focus on various approaches to argumentation, including visual essay, compare/contrast, and op-ed; students also begin to experiment with combining patterns of writing to produce more complex works.

Students in this course engage in critical reading in order to analyze readings and imitate writing styles of both professional and student writers. They select topics that are both interesting and relevant; draft and revise based on feedback; learn peer review techniques; edit and polish work to completion. This approach requires careful consideration of a writing task's audience and purpose in order to compose pieces that speak meaningfully to the various writing tasks posed by the course.

Core texts: Readings in this course include a summer reading, *The Girl Who Smiled Beads* (Wamariya & Weil), *Black Boy* (Wright), and essays featured in the course anthology, *Patterns for College Writing*. Though the focus in this course is primarily on shorter essays, students should expect to meet a significant amount of reading and may be required to engage in independent reading of greater length each semester.

Students in this course should expect to read and write regularly. Students keep a writer's notebook in which they explore topics in free-writing and early essays. They should also expect to conference with their teacher repeatedly during each writing cycle. This course is intended for students who wish to engage fully with their work as writers preparing for college writing experiences. In this course, students will share their work in small and larger groups in order to solicit feedback on various attempts with new techniques. They will collect material over each semester to present in a semester portfolio, which will also include metacognitive and reflection exercises through which students explain their thinking and their writing process and choices. Students will approach readings in this course not just as readers considering a topic, but as writers who seek to learn skills from the examples presented in each work.

**Those students who have taken AP Language and Composition as juniors should not enroll in this course, since it repeats writing modes already sufficiently covered.**

**SUMMER READING:** *The Girl Who Smiled Beads*, Wamariya and Weil

### I. FIRST SEMESTER

#### A. Core Texts:

*Patterns for College Writing: A Rhetorical Reader and Guide*,  
Kirsznner & Mandell  
*Black Boy*, Wright

#### Optional:

“Shi\*\*y First Drafts” (Lamott)  
Selections from *This Boy’s Life* (Wolff)  
“No Name Woman” (Kingston)  
Contemporary essays

#### B. Writing:

- College Essay/Personal Statement
- Memoir
- Description or Exemplification

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- Portfolio: Each student creates a final portfolio of his/her work, accompanied by reflections on the writer's growth.

**II. SECOND SEMESTER**

**A. Core Text:** *Patterns for College Writing: A Rhetorical Reader and Guide*, Kirsznner & Mandell

**Optional:**

*The Things They Carried*, O'Brien

*The Oedipus Cycle*, Sophocles

*Educated*, Westover

*No Name Woman* (Kingston)

**B. Writing:**

**Core Assignments: Pick three**

- Cause and Effect
- Comparison and Contrast
- Argument
- Debate
- Visual Essay
- Review (Documentary)

**C. Film:**

<b>Title</b>	<b>Director</b>	<b>Year</b>	<b>Studio</b>	<b>Rating</b>
The Great Debaters	Washington	2007	MGM	PG-13

**Selections:**

**A. Short Stories:**

<b>Title</b>	<b>Author</b>	<b>Note</b>
"Why Write?"	Auster	
"Hills Like White Elephants"	Hemingway	

**B. Essays:**

<b>Title</b>	<b>Author</b>	<b>Note</b>
Essays from Contemporary Culture	Ackley 4th edition	
The Business of Memory: The Art of Remembering in an Age of Forgetting	Baxter	
The Orwell Reader	Orwell	
Short Takes	Penfield (ed.)	