Welcome to English 202B — Writing in the Humanities. English 202B is designed as an upper-level composition course and we’ll certainly be doing our share of writing: four major papers plus a resume unit.

But as its title suggests, the course will take us beyond “Writing” and into that vexed topic of what it means to be somehow “in the Humanities.” One major focus of our course, therefore, will be aimed toward the “humanities” and what role they currently play both in higher education and in our culture outside academia. What are the humanities? What does it mean to be “in” them? Are they valuable components of higher education? Why should they still be valued in a world that measures progress by microprocessor speed? These knotty issues will lead us to many of the recurrent themes of the so-called “culture wars”: the science/humanities relationship, the troublesome notion of “postmodernism,” and the question of good citizenship in a global order. You’ll have the opportunity to answer and debate these questions in a series of short (2-3 page) response papers that will be scattered throughout the term.

Our major papers will allow you to explore your ideas both in the microcosmic realm of your own corner of the humanities but also in the larger arena of humanities education in general. In brief, our papers are as follows:

1.) **Thinking About the “Humanities.”** (15% of final grade) According to Neil Postman, the Humanities are not embattled from the sciences, but rather from technology itself. What role does technology play in your discipline? What obstacles does your discipline need to overcome in order to achieve “success”?

2.) **Discourse Community Analysis.** (15%) Explain the dynamics of your own particular corner of the humanities world. What debates are hot topics? What historical issues have been settled and are collecting dust? Does your “major” have a large role to play in the scheme of things? How would you argue for its importance?

3.) **Discourse Community Position Paper.** (20%) Choose an active debate within your community, explain it, and take a stand on it.

4.) **Postman/Bloom Evaluation.** (20%) A formal summary of your reactions to the analyses and proposals presented by Neil Postman and Allan Bloom.

5.) **Resume/Cover Letter unit.** (15%) A practical hands-on unit for the job seeker.

The remaining 15% of your grade will be based upon workshop participation, class discussion and attendance.

**Texts:**
- course packet

| Jan 11 | Introduction to Course |
| Jan 13 | Neil Postman: *Technopoly*, Ch. 1, “Judgment of Thamus” (3-20) |
| Jan 15 | Self-Introduction Due; Ch. 2, “Tools to Technocracy” (21-39) |
| Jan 18 | Postman: Ch. 3, “Technocracy to Technopoly” (40-56) |
| Jan 20 | Postman: Ch. 4, “The Improbable World” (56-70) |
| Jan 22 | Postman: Ch. 5, “The Broken Defenses” (71-91) |
| Jan 25 | Postman: Ch. 6, “Medical Technology” (92-106) |
| Jan 27 | Postman: Ch. 7, “Computer Technology” (107-122) |
| Jan 29 | Postman: Ch. 9, “Invisible Technologies” (123-143) |
Feb
1 Postman: Ch. 9, “Scientism” (144-163)
3 Postman: Ch.’s 10 & 11, “Great Symbol Drain” and “Resistance Fighter” (164-199)
5 **Draft Workshop: Paper One** (Thinking about the “Humanities”)

8 **Paper One Due; begin Resume Unit**
10 Resume work
12 **Draft Workshop: Resume**
15 **Final Resume and Cover Letter due**
17 John Swayles: “The Concept of Discourse Community”
19 David Bartholomae: “Inventing the University”

Mar
1 **Draft Workshop: Paper Two** (Discourse Community Analysis)
3 Patricia J. Williams: “The Death of the Profane”
5 **Paper Two Due**
8 - 12 **Spring Break — No Classes**
15 Michel Foucault: “Docile Bodies”
17 Foucault cont’d.
19 Deborah Tannen: Intro to *Gender and Conversational Interaction*, “Relativity of Linguistic Strategies” and Preface to *You Just Don’t Understand*

22 Jacques Derrida: “Structure, Sign and Play in the Discourse of the Human Sciences”
26 Bloom, Part I: “Clean Slate” and “Books” (47-67)

29 Bloom: “Music” and “Relationships” (68-97)
31 Bloom: “Relationships” (97-121)

Apr
2 Bloom, finish Part I: “Relationships” (122-137)

5 **Draft Workshop: Paper Three** (Dis. Comm. Conflict); skim Bloom, pp. 141-172
7 Bloom: “The Self,” “Creativity” and “Culture” (pp. 173-193)
9 **Paper Three Due**

12 Bloom: “Values” (194-216)
14 Bloom, finish Part II: “Nietzscheanization” and “Ignorance” (217-240)
16 Bloom, Part III: “From Socrates to Heidegger” (pp. 243-68)

19 Bloom: “From Socrates to Heidegger” (268-293)
21 Bloom: “The Sixties” (293-325 [or so])
23 Bloom: “The Sixties” and “The Student” (325-356)

26 Bloom: “The Student and the University” (356-382)
28 **Draft Workshop: Paper Four** (Postman/Bloom Response)
30 **Final Evaluations; Papers due in my mailbox Tuesday May 4, 5:00 pm.**