

## Empowering Freshman Writers Through Black Feminist Praxis and Multimodal Pedagogies in Online Learning Environments

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### Abstract

This paper explores innovative pedagogical strategies implemented over five semesters in online freshman academic writing courses. Grounded in Black feminist praxis, sociocultural theory, and creativity studies, this approach fosters inclusive and dynamic learning environments that empower students to engage deeply with academic writing. Central to this pedagogy is the integration of interdisciplinary guest speakers who share how writing has shaped their educational and professional paths, offering students real-world insights into the value of effective communication.

Additionally, partnerships with institutions such as the Metropolitan Museum of Art's Observant Eye program enable students to engage in close-looking sessions that develop visual literacy and critical analysis skills, enhancing their understanding of visual rhetoric and nuance. The courses offer flexible, multimodal engagement options—including digital chats, asynchronous group meetings, and reflective writing—to meet diverse learner needs. Students culminate their learning through creative, multimodal final projects, including written works, visual compositions, and podcasting.

This paper discusses the pedagogical impact of these strategies, supported by student feedback and reflections, demonstrating how culturally responsive and multimodal teaching practices can enhance student engagement, critical thinking, and writing proficiency in digital learning spaces.

