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## **COMP 1500: College Writing**

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# COMP 1500

## COLLEGE WRITING

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As “digital natives” in my Rhetoric of Health and Wellness Composition 1500 course, students were asked to compose photo essays of the current pandemic within their groups after studying the rhetoric of epidemics, such as HIV/AIDS. In their groups, they had to decide how they would observe, document, and curate the current pandemic in photos and in a written photo essay. They also presented their work to their peers and voted on which ones should be represented in *Digressions*.

During the process, we took cues from the historical, groundbreaking work of Gordon Parks in *Black Harlem*, as well as contemporary works in *Format* magazine, and a *New York Times* photo essay highlighting the impact of COVID-19 on the identity of New York City's Chinatown (June 30, 2020). A beautifully curated photo essay by their peers at the University of Pennsylvania that documented the epicenter of the current pandemic in New York City in May of 2020 was also discussed and used as a model (*The Daily Pennsylvanian*).

Motivated by what we learned, the students developed and created their own unique photo essays that traced the impact of the pandemic from South Florida to around the world, since we were all in different places. It was a challenging task, but I am extremely proud of their work and I hope they are too.

