

## **ENG 101-47 COMPOSITION I: Writing the Essay**

**Fall 2008**

**TR 11:00-12:15pm**

**MHRA 1213**

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**Office Hours: TR 1:00-3:00**

### **Course Texts**

*Reading Critically, Writing Well*

*A Reader's and Guide, 8th ed.*

*Rise B. Axelrod, Charles R. Cooper, and Alison M. Warriner, Eds.*

E-Reserves

### **Course**

The primary focus will be comprehending (by reading and re-reading) how various texts work as a way to, in your own writing and re-writing, engage content by manipulating tone (and perspective and presentation and...). We'll study the basic ideas of rhetoric by reading a wide variety of essays and working on various writing assignments, including both informal journal-style responses and more meticulous papers crafted over several weeks. In short, we'll try to figure out what some of the best rules for good writing are, and then figure out the best time to break them.

The main requirements for this class are keeping up with the readings, completing the various writing assignments, participating in class, including leading/beginning discussions, and contributing to writing workshops. You will be expected to have all the readings done by the day on which they appear in the Course Calendar, and to be prepared to discuss them in class. You will also be responsible (in terms of writing assignments but also in terms of the ongoing conversation of the class) for what we cover in class during discussion and lectures. If you are absent, please check with someone in class about anything you might have missed, and check Blackboard for any assignments or additions/changes to the reading list.

### **Attendance**

Coming to each class on time is vital. Grades will be given according to participation and the completion of work—both throughout the term and at its end. Participation depends upon attendance, so if you miss more than four classes (unexcused), your final grade will reflect this—it will drop one letter grade after four missed classes and continue to fall every two more absences (-4=B at best, -6=C at best, students who miss more than six classes may fail the course). Arriving 20 minutes late to class will result in a half-absence. Only in the case of an extreme emergency will an absence be excused beyond the number allowed. It is the student's responsibility to provide me with appropriate documentation for the extreme emergency and to discuss with me whether the absence will be excused.

## **Plagiarism**

Copying other people's work is a serious offense. If you plagiarize, there are serious penalties: . If you are concerned that you may miss a class or are unsure of what plagiarism may be, please discuss this with me.

## **Grading Evaluation**

1 Short Paper(3-4 pages) 10% This first paper will utilize specific approaches corresponding to several weeks' worth of reading. It will have distinct steps/components and introduce approaches to revision.

2 Papers (5-6 pages): 30% (15% each): These papers will utilize specific approaches corresponding to several weeks' worth of reading. Both papers will have distinct steps/components and require you to complete several different revision approaches.

Participation: 20%: This will be based on your preparation for class and your ability to answer questions about the readings and ideas and topics we engage in class as well as contributing to class discussions. You'll also be expected to occasionally share your own writing with the class and respond critically to your classmates' work. Also, an informal collection of short responses to the readings or ideas presented in class or ideas that might be presented in class. Each group of responses should be around 3 pages. Journals should be typed, but will not be graded for grammar or mechanics. The goal with this assignment is simply to write and explore different ideas and subjects. Some of these responses may be generated by in-class writing assignments, some will be in direct response to the readings and some will be left up to you.

Portfolio 40%: The final portfolio will contains the complete drafts of the three essays you will write in this class. This means each paper has been thoroughly scrutinized and revised(several drafts for each essay). The portfolio measures your essays' progress through your revision, and it illustrates how much effort and consideration you put into perfecting the papers you will have written during the semester.

## **Behavior**

Please be courteous to your fellow students when they are speaking, writing, and listening. This includes coming to class on time. (If you are late, I will know and your grade will reflect it) and with cell phones turned off. Food and drink is okay in class as long as it does not become a distraction. I will let you know if a certain food item becomes problematic.

## **Laptop Policy**

Unless specified by the instructor for an in-class assignment, laptops are not permitted during class. Exceptions will be made for students with disabilities that prevent them from taking notes by hand. Students with these circumstances need to contact the Office of Disabilities Services.

### **The Writing Center (MHRA 3211)**

If at any point throughout the term you need help with a paper or would like to gain a new perspective on your work, feel free to visit the Writing Center. Readers are available Monday through Thursday from 9 am to 8 pm, Fridays until 3 pm and Sunday evenings from 5 to 8 pm.

### **Disability Services**

Please contact the Office of Disability Services regarding any special assistance or any matters that may affect your performance in the class. Their number is 334-5440.

\* This syllabus is subject to change as the semester progresses. I will announce any changes in class.

T. 8/26: Introduction to Course

R. 8/28: Rhetoric in Film and Music (No Readings)

T. 9/2: : "On Keeping a Notebook," Didion, (E-Reserve); Discuss journal assignments

R. 9/4: Introduction, 1-12; 1<sup>st</sup> Journal Due

T. 9/9: Introduction to Autobiography, Dillard, 12-26, Writing Assignment

R. 9/11: "Always Running," Rodriguez, 33-39; Compare/contrast Dillard and Rodriguez

T. 9/16: A Guide to Writing an Autobiography; 64-76, "Playing B-Ball with Barack," Poe, 49-52; "From Outside In," Mellix (E-Reserve) 1st Paper Assigned

R. 9/18: David Sedaris essay (E-Reserve), " Winter Stars" and "My Story in the Late Style of Fire," Levis, Online (E-Reserve)

T. 9/23: "Longing to Belong," Shah, 27-33, "Rick," Benioff 52-58, Reviewing What Makes Autobiography Effective, 62

R. 9/25: Film: SHERMAN'S MARCH; 1st Paper Due

T. 9/30: Finish SHERMAN'S MARCH; Discuss Autobiography in Film.

R. 10/2: Introduction to Observation, 78-91; Discuss "Soup" from *The New Yorker*

T. 10/7: "I'm Not Leaving Until I Eat This Thing, Edge, " 93-101; Compare/contrast "Soup" and Edge's essay; 2<sup>nd</sup> Paper Assigned (Autobiography:

Writing from Life); 2nd Journal Due

R. 10/9: "In Plato's Cave," Sontag (E-Reserve) A Guide to Writing Observational Essays," 137-150

T. 10/14: "The Last Stop," Cable, 123-139, "Paddlers Sit Ready' Enduring the Sport of Dragon

Boating," Diehm, 130-136

R. 10/16: Film: GRIZZLY MAN; 2nd Paper Due

R. 10/23: Finish: GRIZZLY MAN; Discuss film.

T. 10/28: Introduction to Reflection, 150-166; Discuss Staples' essay "Black Men and Public Spaces"; 3<sup>rd</sup> Journal Due

R. 10/30: "Comes A Turtle, Comes A World," Safina, 167-173, "A Universe Lies on the Sidewalks of New York," Doloff, 174-178.

T. 11/4: "Diving into the Gene Pool," Miranda, 179-184; "Peeling Bananas," Lee, 190-195; Compare/contrast Miranda and Lee.

R. 11/6: "Whose Body Is This?," Haines, 196-199; A Guide to Writing Reflective Essays, 202-214.

T. 11/11: "Seeing," Annie Dillard (E-Reserve); 4th Journal Due

R. 11/13: "Teaching New Worlds..." bell hooks (E-Reserve)

T. 11/18: "A Visit to the Museum," (E-Reserve); Film: WHEN WE WERE KINGS; 3rd Paper Assigned

R. 11/20: No Class/Individual Conferences

R. 11/25: No Class/Individual Conferences

T. 12/2: Finish WHEN WE WERE KINGS; Discuss; 3rd Paper Due

R. 12/4: Exam Review