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ENG 1001G-016: Composition and Language

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ENGLISH 1001G: COMPOSITION & LANGUAGE

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Fall 2003
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Required Materials:

Texts: *Here's How to Write Well*, 2nd edition
The College Writer's Reference, 3rd edition
American Voices: Cultural and Community, 5th edition
Online: *A reference Guide to Using Internet Sources*
A reliable dictionary (Webster's, American Heritage, or Random House are good choices)

Other: An activated EIU e-mail account; the ability to send and receive Microsoft Word™ attachments
Two 3.5 inch floppy disks on which to preserve your writing (one is for backup)

Course Goals & Rationale:

English 1001G is based on a few simple principles. One of these principles recognizes that everyone in this class is already a writer, and that we all have experiences and insights that are worth writing about. Another is that writers learn and improve their skills by writing: by writing to pursue our interests, by experimenting with new rhetorical strategies, by having a receptive audience, by receiving helpful commentary from others, and by reflecting upon our own work, we hone our skills and discover new ways of thinking.

In accordance with these principles, class sessions will be run as workshops rather than as lectures. It is therefore essential that you attend class consistently. In class, I will ask you to write—often experimenting with your own writing; sharing your writing in pairs, small groups, or possibly with the entire class; and also giving your responses to other people's writing.

The course is designed in order to help you develop your writing abilities, and especially to hone the skills and techniques that will help you to succeed with university-level writing assignments. Particularly, the course seeks to improve your ability:

- to address your writing to groups of intelligent adult readers with whom you are not personally acquainted, and thus to view every writing project as a potential publication project.
- to write for various audiences and purposes—for example, to explore a complex topic, to communicate your ideas with others (fellow students, fellow members of a community), and to create particular effects (effects of persuasion, of tone, etc.).

- to develop and extend your own thinking by questioning your own views and considering the views of others, thus developing the ability to write essays that move through an extended train of thinking rather than simply defend a static position.
- to use various kinds of thinking and discourse (for example, narrating, explaining, analyzing, defining, interpreting, arguing) and using evidence or examples.
- to draw upon various sources of thought and information: your own experience and observations, conversations with others, and also information from published texts.
- to revise your writing in substantive ways by means of re-thinking and re-seeing, and also by means of experimenting with various possibilities.
- to learn how to copy-edit your own drafts successfully.
- to be a perspicacious reader of your own and other people's writing, and to offer constructive, engaged commentary.
- to understand and manage your own writing process.

Course Requirements:

The bulk of your grade this semester will be determined by four essay projects. For each of these essays, I will distribute a one-page outline of the essay's goals, the assigned length, and other considerations such as your audience and/or the sorts of sources from which you will draw. Each of these essays will go through a four-stage process of writing and revision (see handout on the four types of drafts), during which we will help one another re-think, re-write, and polish our initial efforts.

Twice this semester, we will schedule times to meet individually in my office in order to discuss your writing. You are welcome and encouraged to schedule additional conferences with me to discuss any ideas, problems, or concerns related to the course, but these two conferences are required, and missing one will be equivalent to two regular absences.

Much of our class time will be spent writing, and this writing will often be collected and graded. In such cases, your grade will be either a $\sqrt{+}$, $\sqrt{}$, or $\sqrt{-}$, and will be reflective of your ability to accomplish the stated goal of the assignment: in-class work that satisfies these goals will receive a $\sqrt{}$; work that is particularly imaginative, inventive, and clean will receive a $\sqrt{+}$; and work that falls somewhat below the median will get a $\sqrt{-}$. Missed in-class assignments cannot be made up.

A small but significant part of your grade this semester will be determined by participation. A brief word on the meaning of this term may be useful here. Participation does not only mean talking a lot. In order to participate well in this course, you should plan on contributing actively during our in-class discussions, and on making sure that your comments and questions indicate a close engagement with the texts we read. Usually, these texts will be texts that are written by your fellow classmates, and so in order to provide these writers with a receptive audience, you must demonstrate great care in understanding what they have written, a personal commitment to helping them improve upon their work, and a desire to be courteous. Participation will be determined by both the quality of your written comments on other writers' work and your contributions to in-class discussions. Idle talk—the sort of talk that does not push our discussion forward by demonstrating your close attention to matters at hand—does not qualify as participation.

The formula I will use to determine **final grades** will look like this:

Essay #1	15%
Essay #2	10%
Essay #3	20%
Essay #4	25%
In-Class Assignments	10%
Participation	10%

Lastly: You are required to have access to your free EIU e-mail account for this course. I will communicate with you via e-mail *frequently*, and I have had trouble reaching AOL and Hotmail users in the past, so you need an EIU account. Also, you must hand in your drafts via e-mail attachment, so it is important to activate your account as soon as possible. If you have not yet activated your EIU e-mail account, you may do so by visiting the PAWS website at <http://www.eiu.edu/~registra/pawhome.htm> (you may also reach this page by clicking the PAWS icon in the lower right-hand corner of the EIU home page at <http://www.eiu.edu/>). You will need your PIN, the same number assigned to you by the Registration Office in Old Main, in order to activate your account.

Course Policies:

Please note the English Department's statement on plagiarism (that is, the intentional or unintentional use of another writer's intellectual property without proper acknowledgment):

Any teacher who discovers an act of plagiarism—"The appropriation or imitation of the language, ideas, and/or thoughts of another author, and representation of them as one's own original work" (Random House Dictionary of the English Language)—has the right and the responsibility to impose upon the guilty student an appropriate penalty, up to and including immediate assignments, of a grade of F for the assigned essay and a grade of F for the course, and to report the incident to the Judicial Affairs Office.

While it is unpleasant to raise this issue before a group of people who have as yet given me no cause to do so, please understand that I am prepared to execute this policy. Also, please make a point of noting the following: I will not tolerate any form of academic dishonesty in this course. If I come to suspect misconduct of any kind, I will become dogged about rooting it out, and if my suspicions are confirmed, I will dispense appropriate penalties. That said, let's not allow this to become an issue for any members of our class.

Students are allowed to miss three class meetings without excuse. These are days you should set aside to cover afternoons when you aren't feeling well, or when you need to be home for family or friends, or when your car won't start. After three absences, every additional unexcused absence incurs a deduction of one-half letter grade from the student's final grade. In the case of an excused absence (as defined by University policy), students must make their excuse in writing, accompanied by the appropriate written documentation, and submit the excuse to me no later than the first class following the absence(s). In no case will a student be allowed to miss more than six class meetings for any reason, excused or unexcused, and the reason for this is

that after having missed two weeks of the course, students can no longer say they have met the same obligations as their fellow students.

Papers and drafts are due on the dates indicated in the course schedule included at the end of this syllabus. I am sometimes willing to grant extensions if (1) students provide a persuasive reason for me to do so, and (2) the request is submitted at least two class meetings in advance of the paper's due date. I will never grant an extension on the day a draft is due, and I will hardly ever do so the day before it is due. If I grant an extension, I will always expect to see the extra time reflected in the final product: papers that are granted extensions are read with an even more demanding eye than those that have not.

COURSE SCHEDULE

WEEK 1

Class meets in Coleman 3140

Monday, August 25

- Introductions
- Course outline

Wednesday, August 27

- Exploratory Writing, Essay #1

Friday, August 29

- Exploratory draft #1 (in-class)

WEEK 2

Class meets in Coleman 3210

Monday, September 1

- Labor Day—no class meeting

Wednesday, September 3

- Mid-process draft #1 due; e-mail draft to me by 12 noon; bring hard copy and draft on diskettes
- What to do with comments

Friday, September 5

- Workshop: Embedding comments and tracking changes with Microsoft Word

WEEK 3

Class meets in Coleman 3140

Monday, September 8

- Concluding revision draft #1 due; bring hard copy
- Say-back

Wednesday, September 10

- Lecture/discussion: Four common grammar problems and how to fix them

Friday, September 12

- Proofreading workshop; bring hard copy of concluding revision draft

WEEK 4

Class meets in Coleman 3210

Monday, September 15

- Publication copy #1 due; email me essay by 12 noon
- Exploratory writing, Essay #2

Wednesday, September 17

- Homework due: bring names and addresses of two local newspapers that accept op-eds.
- Christopher Weedman leads exploratory workshop
- Conference sign-up

Friday, September 19

- Mid-process draft #2 due; email me draft by 12 noon; bring hard copy and diskettes
- Peer commenting

WEEK 5

Meet in my office, Coleman 3140

Monday, September 22

- Conferences

Wednesday, September 24

- Conferences

Friday, September 26

- Conferences

WEEK 6

Class meets in Coleman 3210

Monday, September 29

- Concluding revision draft #2 due; bring hard copy and diskettes
- Proofreading

Wednesday, October 1

- In-class assignment TBA

Friday, October 3

- Publication copy #2 due; email me copy by 12 noon; bring hard copy, cover letter, and stamped, addressed submission envelope

WEEK 7

Class meets in Coleman 3140

Monday, October 6

- Christopher Weedman leads class; in-class assignment TBA

Wednesday, October 8

- Christopher Weedman leads class; in-class assignment TBA

Friday, October 10

- Grammar workshop; Christopher Weedman leads class; in-class assignment TBA

WEEK 8

Class meets in Coleman 3210

Monday, October 13

- Discussion: David Nobles, "The Virtual University"

Wednesday, October 15

- Discussion: Christopher Hanlon, "Intellectual Property, 'Works For Hire,' and the Bottom Line"

Friday, October 17

- Fall Break: No class meeting

WEEK 9

Class meets in Coleman 3140

Monday, October 20

- Discussion: Nick Bromell, "Welcome to Princeton, Inc."

Wednesday, October 22

- Discussion: John Henry Newman, "The Idea of the University"

Friday, October 24

- Continue discussion
- Exploratory writing, Essay #3

WEEK 10

Class meets in Coleman 3210

Monday, October 27

- Exploratory writing, Essay #3
- Writing in the dark

Wednesday, October 29

- Mid-process draft #3 due; email me draft by 12 noon; bring hard copy and diskettes
- Peer commenting

Friday, October 31

- Reading, sharing
- Peer commenting

WEEK 11

Class meets in Coleman 3140

Monday, November 3

- Say-back

Wednesday, November 5

- Concluding revision draft #3 due; bring hard copy

Friday, November 7

- Publication copy #3 due; e-mail me by 12 noon; bring hard copy

WEEK 12

Class meets in Coleman 3210

Monday, November 10

- Discussion: Research papers
- Exploratory writing for research paper

Wednesday, November 12

- Formulating research questions
- Making an argument vs. compiling a report
- Conference sign-up

Friday, November 14

- Visit to Booth Library; class meets at library's South entrance

WEEK 13

Class meets in Coleman 3140

Monday, November 17

- Conferences; meet in my office

Wednesday, November 19

- Conferences; meet in my office

Friday, November 21

- Mid-process #4 due; email me draft by 12 noon; bring hard copy
- Say-back

WEEK 14

Thanksgiving Break—No Class Meetings

WEEK 15

Class meets in 3210

Monday, December 1

- Concluding revision draft due; bring hard copy and diskettes
- Christopher Weedman leads class; in-class assignment TBA

Wednesday, December 3

- Christopher Weedman leads class; in-class assignment TBA

Friday, December 5

- Citation workshop

WEEK 16

Class meets in 3140

Monday, December 8

- Bring hard copy of concluding revision draft
- Proofreading; citation checking

Wednesday, December 10

- No class meeting

Friday, December 12

- Publication copy #4 due; e-mail me copy by 12 noon; bring hard copy to class
- Last discussion: Writing "out there"