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ENG 1091G-094: Composition and Language(Honors)

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English 1091 Fall 2003

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My approach in this class is to ask everyone to write a series of short narrative papers that reflect their experience and interests as people, as students, and as people with plans for themselves. The class is organized as a workshop, which means that I'll ask you to make copies of your papers for everyone in the class, and you'll read out loud most of your work. For these papers, probably seven in all, typically two single-spaced pages in length, you'll be asked to follow a fairly general prompt, made specific by you by what you choose to write about and how you choose to do it. I think you'll be surprised by the choices that people make and what they have to say, and I hope that you'll find a place and occasion for you to say the things you want to say. I think you also will be surprised how much you'll enjoy hearing the other papers and presenting your own work, however intimidating this may seem. My general hope for everybody in this class is that you will gain confidence in your ability to connect with an audience, that you'll learn to respect and develop your own abilities, and that you will recognize and respect the abilities of others.

Requirements for the course are fairly straightforward. I expect regular attendance, and I especially expect people to be there on the days papers are presented. Learning to listen to other people's work is as much a part of this class as presenting your own, and you need to be there. I also expect that your papers will be finished when they need to be. Because of the whole aspect of sharing your work with each other, deadlines make a difference, and it screws up the system if you're not ready. I recognize situations come up that you can't do anything about, and we can work with that, but in general, I expect you to meet these two basic obligations if you want to get a good grade for the course.

Evaluation for this class will run a little differently than perhaps you are used to. You'll get lots of feedback in class, and I will meet with everybody at least twice in the semester to look at your work overall, but individual papers will not be graded. The final grade for the course will be based on my sense of your performance in class—attendance, diligence, involvement—and the quality of your written work as it develops over the course of the semester. I try overall to be fair and realistic in my evaluations, and I can guarantee decent grades for people who make decent efforts.

"You write the best you can, and you take your chances."

Raymond Carver