

Fall 8-15-2005

ENG 3001-008: Advanced Composition

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English 3001: Advanced Composition
“Gender, Race and Class and in the Professional Workplace”

Meeting rooms: Coleman Hall 3120 (computer lab) and 3130 (discussion room)
 Meeting times: Tuesday/Thursday, 2:00 – 3:15, except as noted on Daily Schedule
 Course listserv e-dress: 3001f2005@lists.eiu.edu
 Instructor: Tim Engles
 Office: Coleman 3831
 E-mail address: cftde@eiu.edu Phone: 581-6316
 Office hours: 3:30 – 4:30 Tuesday and Thursday, and by appointment

Textbook:

The Blair Handbook (fourth edition), Fulwiler
 Students must also purchase a course packet at Copy Express in
 EIU's student union

COURSE POLICIES AND PROCEDURES
(read the following carefully; these words constitute our contract,
and I will request your written agreement to them)

Description and Goals: A writing course is more useful and interesting if it has a central focus—ours will be the world of work, or more specifically, the effects of gender, race and social class in the “professional” workplace, that is, the kind of work environment that most of you will find yourselves in after graduation. In this course you will improve both your writing skills and your understanding of key elements of your own future professional life. Because we have a smaller group than those in most EIU courses, your individual writing problems (and you all have them!) will receive close individual attention, both from your instructor and from your peers.

More specifically, our goals include the refinement of skills in the following areas:

- **Clean, smart prose:** improve your ability to write clear, concise, and meaningful sentences, to compose organized and developed paragraphs, and to identify and address recurring grammatical or mechanical problems specific to your own writing (these vary from writer to writer). We will spend time talking about why a grammatically correct, clear, efficient style is so important to your success in college and in professional life.
- **Constructing arguments:** improve your ability to construct substantive, well-written arguments. One of our aims is to learn to distinguish between mere “opinion” and a “reasoned argument” that is based on carefully constructed points, evidence, and so on. You will also be encouraged to push yourself toward new realizations while writing—good writing is not so much having something to say as it is discovering new thoughts and insights that you would not have had if you had not started to write them down.

- **Critical reading:** improve your ability to read critically by questioning and evaluating what you read. Understanding the distinction between “opinion” and “reasoned argument” depends on your mastery of critical reading skills, which will enable you to discern and emulate the successful argumentative strategies of other writers. The better reader you are, the better writer you can be. In order to be a better reader, you have to participate in what you are reading, actively deciphering the argument in all its parts, rather than passively receiving strings of words. Active participation in this course will help to improve your ability to summarize what you read and then to evaluate the claims and assumptions on which the argument is based.
- **Minding your p’s and q’s:** work on misused words, missing commas, lack of subject/verb agreement, missing quotation marks, poorly incorporated quotations and inaccurate citations, misused semicolons . . . remember those bugaboos? Students sometimes complain that such “minor” mistakes in their papers are graded too heavily. Sorry, they’ll also be graded heavily in this course. However, there’s a good reason. Again, this course is meant to get your writing skills up to speed for professional life. All of you are sure to do at least some writing in your careers, and errors that students often consider “minor” actually stand out in professional life—they look sloppy and careless, and even worse, they make the *writer* look sloppy and careless. Thus, I will work with you to find and eliminate your own habitual errors, and we will conduct in-class workshops on the most common errors in advanced student writing.
- **Bibliographic research:** improve your knowledge of how online library resources work and how to use them. You will familiarize yourself with library resources (online catalogues and periodical indexes, electronic databases, and librarians) and other online information. Reasoned arguments are dependent upon knowing how to find, evaluate, and then use good information. In addition to learning how to find appropriate information, you will improve your skills in using such sources. You cannot make effective use of an article or essay if you cannot summarize its basic argument and identify how it is constructed. Therefore, using research means finding useful materials, and knowing how to read them and incorporate them into your own writing. Finally, incorporating research materials also includes knowledge of appropriate documentation styles. As you probably know, there are several of these standardized documentation styles (MLA and APA are the most common); you can use whichever style is used in your major, provided you do so *accurately*.
- **Collaborative learning:** improve your ability to learn from others and to teach them about your own thinking and about writing. As in most professional spheres, much of your success in this course will depend on the combined processes of drafting and peer critiques. You will practice forming honest, thorough, and constructive critiques of your peers’ writing, and your own writing skills will benefit from closely critiquing your classmates’ drafts.
- **Professional life:** learn about some of the more subtle aspects of how people interact and collaborate in the professional workplace. We will study significant factors that influence success in professional life, including such matters as race, class, gender, and sexuality.

- **Touchiness:** practice consideration and discussion of issues that many of us prefer to sweep under the rug. You will need to approach this course and its material with an open mind and a willingness to seriously consider viewpoints expressed from different perspectives. Be respectful of your classmates during discussions of these issues, and try to respond to the opinions and ideas that arise, rather than to the person raising them.

Grades: Your final grade will be determined as follows—

Two short essays (3-5 pages) 30%

Average of two peer-critiques 15%

A formal one-page proposal for your final research project 10%

A formal, analytical report (10-12 pages) on your research findings 30%

Miscellaneous writing assignments, quizzes, and class participation (including attendance) 15%

E-Mail Activity: Enrollment in this class requires an e-mail account, and you must check it frequently, preferably every day, for messages pertaining to the course. I will use this e-dress to subscribe you to our class listserv (also known as a “discussion list”); you will use it to read and perhaps respond to messages there, and also to send drafts of your essays as attachments to Dr. Engles and to your peer review partners. You can use your EIU account on the Internet (at www.eiu.edu/mymail) or another one, though I recommend that you not use free accounts, such as Yahoo or Hotmail. E-mail is the quickest, easiest way to reach me if I am not in my office; I welcome any questions and comments. Again, using an e-mail account frequently is crucial for this course, as it will be in your professional life—thus, if you do not send me an e-mail message (cftde@eiu.edu) by 3 p.m. on Friday, August 25, I will assume that you have chosen against fully participating in the course, and I will therefore drop you. In your message, (1) tell me which course you’re in (English 3001); 2) describe yourself in whatever way you choose, including your career aspirations; 3) write a statement to the effect that you have read and agree with (or perhaps disagree with) these course policies and procedures. Sending me this message will constitute your “signature” of our course contract, that is, these policies and procedures that you are reading.

Regarding the Writing Center: Tutoring services are free at the English Department’s Writing Center, and students may drop in or schedule appointments during working hours (Room 3110 of Coleman Hall, <http://www.eiu.edu/~writing/>). If you are aware of chronic problems with your writing, I strongly recommend that you make use of this service. While I will pay close attention to each student’s particular writing problems, I may advise some students to seek additional help at the Writing Center.

Classroom Environment: In class, I expect all of you to participate in discussions (class participation will be figured into your final grade), and to attend regularly. The best way to demonstrate that you are an active, engaged, and interested reader and writer is by contributing regularly to class discussions, and by paying close, respectful attention to what everyone else has to say. If you have questions, no matter how simple or

complicated, go ahead and ask me, either in class or via e-mail—chances are that other people have the same question. I do not plan to lecture in this class; I want us to contribute together to a positive, challenging, interesting learning environment. Finally, you must also be willing to give and receive constructive, insightful, frank criticism! I'm sure that all of you will work very hard on your projects, but try not to let criticism of your work hurt your feelings, and don't hold back from offering helpful advice because you think it might hurt someone else's feelings. Also, please do not chew gum or eat food during class, activities which are too distracting to others—drinking beverages is okay. Finally, no caps, please, but if you want to wear one, turn it backwards so we can see your eyes.

Attendance Policy: I will take attendance, and I expect you to attend class every day, on time, and prepared to discuss the material listed for that day on the “Daily Schedule.” **If you have more than three absences this semester, your course grade will drop a full letter grade for each absence beyond three.** Also, missing a scheduled conference meeting without your prior notification will result in the automatic lowering of your grade for the current assignment by ten points. If you have to miss a conference, call or write to me via e-mail in advance; I will do the same if I have to reschedule.

Regarding tardiness and late papers: This is a small class, so late arrivals are disruptive—if for some bizarre reason you wish to get on my bad side, you can easily do so by developing the habit of arriving late for class. **If you will not be able to arrive for this class on time because of other commitments, drop it and take another section.** Finally, you are responsible for all assignments, whether you attend class or not. Get the telephone number of one or two other students in class so you can find out about missed assignments before you come to class. Papers will be graded on a 100-point scale, and late papers will be penalized ten points for each day they are late, beginning one hour after the time of day at which they are due.

Academic Honesty: I expect you to act honestly and do your own work in this class, and so does Eastern Illinois University. It is your responsibility to familiarize yourself with the English Department's policy on plagiarism: “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 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 assignment of a grade of F for the course, and to report the incident to the Judicial Affairs Office.”

English 3001 Daily Schedule Fall, 2005

(this schedule may be subject to change; BE SURE to bring the appropriate book or books to class if a reading assignment is listed for that day; students who show up without a copy of the day's reading assignment may be marked absent)

Week One (Discussion Room, Coleman 3130)

T AUG 23 Introduction to the Course: Discussion of Course Policies and Procedures

- Discussion of Richard E. Thompson, "The Changing Face of Gender Issues in the 21st Century Workplace" (2005) (handout)
- be sure that you have access to a working e-mail account
- You will be subscribed to an e-mail listserv in this course, and you will occasionally receive numerous e-mail messages from others in class. Use an account that you want to use for this listserv (preferably your EIU account, but another is okay) to send the required e-mail message to Dr. Engles—the deadline for this assignment is 3 p.m., Friday, August 26.
- In your message, 1) state which course you are in (English 3001); 2) describe yourself in whatever way you choose, including your career aspirations; 3) write a statement to the effect that you have read and agree with these course policies and procedures.

R AUG 25 Gender in the Workplace

- Reading for today—"Language, Sex, and Power: Women and Men in the Workplace," An interview with author Deborah Tannen by Richard Koonce.(1997) (handout from Tuesday)

F AUG 26 Remember to send the message described above to Dr. Engles by 3 today

Week Two (Computer Room, Coleman 3120)

T AUG 30 Sending E-mail Attachments

- Before class, write one or two double-spaced pages making any thoughtful connections you can between your probable or potential future workplace and any points raised in either or both of the two articles we read last week; then send this document to yourself as an attachment over e-mail. If you don't use Microsoft Word, send it to yourself in rich text format (so that the file name ends in "rtf")

R SEP 1 Course Packet Reading and Discussion: Gendered Professional Dress Codes

- Before class read the first half of Kirsten Dellinger, "Wearing Gender and Sexuality 'On Your Sleeve'" (2002) (underline important or confusing passages)

as you do so), then bring it to class, along with two written questions that you have about anything in the article (questions will be turned in to Dr. Engles)

Week Three (Discussion Room, Coleman 3130)

T SEP 6 Read second half of “Wearing Gender and Sexuality ‘On Your Sleeve’” and bring a typed, one-paragraph abstract of the article that you have written

R SEP 8 In-class film screening: *In the Company of Men*, written and directed by Neil LaBute (1997)

Week Four (Computer Room, Coleman 3120)

T SEP 13 Continue screening of *In the Company of Men*

R SEP 15 Discussion of depictions of gender in *In the Company of Men*

- Bring to class a two-page, typed explanation of connections you see between this film and points raised in any one or two of the articles we have read this semester
- discussion of topics for Paper One

Week Five (Discussion Room)

T SEP 20 Getting to Know (or Reacquainting Yourself with) the *Blair Handbook*

- writing assignment: flip through the *Blair Handbook* and then bring to class a one-page explanation of why you will probably find any two particular sections or chapters of this book useful this semester for improving your writing; what advice do these sections offer? What have you done in the past to work on the problems described in these sections?
- bring your copy of the *Blair Handbook* to class

R SEP 22 Passive Voice Workshop

- BLAIR reading before class: “Selecting Active or Passive Voice,” 395-400; also, find some sentences, in this reading or elsewhere, and practice switching them from passive to active voice, or vice versa, in your head

Week Six (Computer Room)

T SEP 27 Peer Review Workshop

- before class, read BLAIR, “Paragraphs,” 332-42
- before class, send yourself a rough draft of your own Paper Two, in either Word or rtf format
- peer review pairings: to be announced

- send Peer Review as e-mail attachment to both your partner and Dr. Engles by the end of class, or, if you can't finish that quickly, by 7 p.m. tonight

R SEP 29 Open Writing Workshop: Work on Essay One in class; send it to Dr. Engles by the end of class (deadline for sending this essay as an e-mail attachment: 3:15 p.m. today)

Week Seven (Discussion Room)

T OCT 4 Race Matters in the Professional Workplace: bring to class, on Tuesday OR Thursday, a one-paragraph abstract of either one of our next two readings

- Course Packet reading for today: Michelle T. Johnson, excerpt from *Working while Black: The Black Person's Guide to Success in the White Workplace* (2004)

R OCT 6 Course Packet: John P. Fernandez, "Communication and Conflict Resolution: Tips for Minimizing Race- and Gender-Related Difficulties" (from *Race, Gender, and Rhetoric: The True State of Race and Gender Relations in Corporate America* [1998])

Week Eight (Computer Room)

T OCT 11 Course Packet: Peggy McIntosh, "White Privilege and Male Privilege: A Personal Account of Coming to See Correspondences through Work in Women's Studies" (1988)

- read the first half of McIntosh's article, and bring to class and turn in one written question in response to it (a question that you yourself are wondering about, regarding anything at all in the article)

R OCT 13 Continue McIntosh

- read the second half of McIntosh's article, and bring a typed, one-paragraph abstract of the article that you have written

Week Nine (Discussion Room)

T OCT 18 Class in the Classroom, Class in the Workplace

- Course Packet: bell hooks, "Confronting Class in the Classroom"; read the first half of hooks' article, and bring to class and turn in one written question in response to it (a question that you yourself are wondering about, regarding anything at all in the article)

R OCT 20 Continue discussion of hooks; discuss topics for Paper Two

- read the second half of hooks' article, and bring a typed, one-paragraph abstract of the article that you have written

Week Ten (Computer Room)

T OCT 25 Peer Review Workshop

- before class, send yourself a rough draft of your own Paper Two, in either Word or rtf format
- peer review pairings: to be announced
- send Peer Review as e-mail attachment to both your partner and Dr. Engles by the end of class, or, if you can't finish that quickly, by 7 p.m. tonight

R OCT 27 Grammar Workshop: Five Simple Rules for Achieving Comma Glory

F OCT 28 5 p.m. – deadline for sending Dr. Engles your final draft of Paper Two

Week Eleven (Discussion Room & Booth Library)

T NOV 1 Discussion of Final Research Project

R NOV 3 Technology Workshop: Using Online Research Sources

- read before class in *The Blair Handbook*, Section 15b, "Evaluating Electronic Resources," and Chapter 16, "Sources"
- bring your *Blair Handbook* to class
- Special Guest: Karen Whisler, EIU Librarian; **instead of going to Coleman Hall, go to the Booth Library Computer Classroom, on the Fourth floor**

Week Twelve

T NOV 8 NO CLASS: Conferences on Research Project Proposals

- bring to your conference two printed copies of your Research Project Proposal
- look closely at the writing style of your Research Project Proposal; find two or three areas of your writing that you still need to work on, and bring to your conference two or three labels for these problems (passive voice, commas, choppy sentence style, awkward sentence structure, wordiness, etc.); also, bring your *Blair Handbook*; be able to identify the sections in this book that offer advice on these particular problems; and tell Dr. Engles how you found this advice from the book helpful (or perhaps, unhelpful)

R NOV 10 NO CLASS: Conferences on Research Project Proposals

Week Thirteen (Discussion Room)

T NOV 15 Writing Workshop: Topic TBA

R NOV 17 Writing Workshop: Topic TBA

NOVEMBER 21-25 THANKSGIVING RECESS

Week Fourteen (Computer Room)

T NOV 29 Writing Workshop: Revising and Editing, Revising versus Editing

- Reading and Writing Assignment: Before classes, go to the Plain English Network (<http://plainlanguage.gov>) and familiarize yourself with the site by clicking around and finding out what's there; then find their "major guidance document--WRITING USER-FRIENDLY DOCUMENTS," and peruse the online version (you can also print out a printable version). Find two sections of this guidance document containing advice that you think will be helpful toward editing your report; write down the titles of these two areas, and be able to tell the class why you found the advice they offer useful.

R DEC 1 NO CLASS—Conferences on Final Report

Week Fifteen

T DEC 6 NO CLASS—Conferences on Final Report

R DEC 8 Last day of classes (no final exam): Meet in the Discussion Room for Final Instructions, Tearful, Heartfelt Good Byes, etc.

- **due date for the Final Draft of your Final Report—must be sent to Dr. Engles by 5:00 p.m. today)**