Spring 1-15-2001

ENG 1001-003

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Eastern Illinois University

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Ray Watkins  English 1001G  Eastern Illinois University

Policy Statement

English 1001G Watkins
Monday, Wednesday, and Friday 9 to 9:50 AM
Coleman Hall 340

Instructor: Dr. Ray
Section Number: 011
Office: Coleman 309K

Texts:

*Connections*, Stanford
*The Longman Guide to the Web*, Faigley
*A Pocket Style Manual*, Hacker

Goals: 1001G is a course in argumentation that will enhance your understanding of academic writing and give you practice in producing it. Our subject matter is the relationship between education, social economic class, and aesthetic taste. Writing assignments will grow out of our readings and class discussions. You will improve your skills in the following areas:

1. Critical reading -- improve your ability to read critically, to question, and to evaluate what you read. In order to be a more critical 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. You want to improve your ability to summarize what you read and then to evaluate the claims and assumptions on which the argument is based. Although you will be given the chance to express your own opinions frequently in this class, the process of analysis we are going to be learning is very different from simply “saying what you think.” Academic writing is less about opinions and more about “reasoned arguments.” Knowing the difference is key to success in our class and in college. In my view, its key to life too.

2. Constructing arguments -- improve your ability to construct your own arguments. This skill depends on your mastery of critical reading. The better reader you are the better writer you can be. Again, one of our aims is to learn to distinguish between “opinion” and a “reasoned argument” based on carefully constructed texts, evidence, and so on.

3. Using research -- improve your knowledge of how libraries work and how to use them. You want to familiarize yourself with library resources (reference materials, on-line catalogues, periodical indexes, electronic databases, and librarians) and online information. Reasoned arguments are dependant on knowing how to find and evaluate and then use good information. In addition to learning how to find information, you want to improve your skills in using that
information. You cannot make use of an article or essay if you cannot summarize its basic argument and identify how it is constructed. Therefore, using research means finding materials, and knowing how to read them and incorporate them into your own writing. Incorporating research materials includes knowledge of appropriate documentation styles, as well. There are several of these standardized document styles, but we will be using MLA.

4. Collaborative learning -- improve your ability to learn from and to teach others about your own thinking and about writing. Much of this course depends on the process of drafting and peer critiques. You want to learn how to offer honest, thorough, and constructive critiques of your writing as well as your peers' writing, and how to make use of what you have learned.

5. Clean, smart prose -- improve your ability to write clear 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 a lot of time talking about why so-called grammatical prose is so important to your success in college and in life.

Writing Assignments: Over the course of the semester you will be required to write a series of five major assignments (varying from 1 to 5 pages as the semester progresses) and to submit rough drafts and final versions for each--due dates are listed on the syllabus. See your index of assignments for more detail; I will be giving out instructions as we go. Along with each final draft, you will submit a one-page self-commentary that outlines your strengths and weaknesses as a writer (as you understand them to that point) and that identifies your future goals. For your own peace of mind always keep multiple copies--electronic and or paper--of all essays and written assignments turned in for comment. Finally, as the semester progresses you will be building a web-site portfolio of your work in order to facilitate peer critiques and to make your ideas available to your peers and to the public at large. Please be aware that you must have an EIU email account in order to participate in this course. That account comes with web space, which you will use to present your work.

Peer Critiques: You will be responsible for commenting on the work of your classmates and helping them with revisions of drafts. Peer Critiques will be done both verbally during class, and in writing as homework. If you are absent on the day we begin peer critiques, or the next class day when written versions are due, you will be responsible for making sure the critique is written and delivered to me and to the writer. (Again, this will mean having your work available on the World Wide Web). I will not comment on written assignments, however, if they are turned in late without proper explanation.

Other Course Requirements: You are required to attend class and to participate in all in-class work and discussion. In this class, writing is to be considered as a continuous process from the first week of class until the last, and not as a series of discrete events. Rather than write papers in
one long session, in other words, you will learn to write and to rewrite as a part of your daily routine, proceeding step by step towards a final draft. Similarly, you must learn to do your reading in small, manageable pieces on a daily basis, rather than all at once. Much of this class is done as workshops which by definition cannot be repeated. Missed classes will necessarily be reflected in the quality of your writing and in the calculation of your grade. Three absences will result in the lowering of your course grade; four unexcused absences will fail you in the course. Periodically throughout the semester you will be responsible for homework assignments that will also be counted as a part of your class participation and attendance grade.

**Late Or Missed Work:** As previously stated, you are responsible for delivery of all late critiques, drafts and final papers. Please note that because writing is an ongoing process of critique and revision, missed assignments can only adversely—and seriously—effect your final grade. There is no makeup for missed work in class or for missed writing workshops.

**Grades:** Final grades will be determined using the following formula. Note that the final essay grade is an average of the drafts and the self-commentary. As a result, in order to do well in this class, you will have to take each of the three stages of your writing—and your peer critiques—very seriously.

- **Peer Critiques** 10%
- **Miscellaneous Work / Attendance** 10%
  - Assignment One 10%
  - Assignment Two 10%
  - Assignment Three 15%
  - Assignment Four 15%
  - Assignment Five 20%
- **Final Web Portfolio** 10%

**Scholastic Responsibility:** Turning in work that is not your own or any other form of scholastic dishonesty will result in a major course penalty (including possible failure in the course). If you have any questions about the use you are making of source material see me before turning in the assignment in question. The discovery of plagiarism will result in a failing grade. Plagiarism may
result in indefinite suspension from the university.

Teacher Comments: In my written comments on your work, I will do my best to give you useful responses, to help you improve organization, development and support, or grammar and mechanics, word choice and style, etc. It is your responsibility to read my comments, however, to discuss them with me if you have any questions, and use them to improve your writing. I will not correct grammar for you or point out every possible technical error in a draft; instead I will mark only the first instances I see of grammatical errors and expect you to learn the problem and work to correct it throughout all of your writing. One of your main tasks this semester is to learn how to identify areas in which you feel you need improvement, and to work with me in applying that knowledge to your writing. I recommend that you quickly familiarize yourself with the services of the Temple Undergraduate Writing Center.

Complaints: Bring any questions you have about grades or policies to me first. Complaints we cannot resolve should be taken to the appropriate administrative official.