Spring 1-15-2005

ENG 1001G-007: Composition and language

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Composition and Language
Spring 2005

English 1001G
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Instructor: Bridget Johnson
Office Hours: MWF: 9:00 - 10:00 am and 11:00 am - 12:00 pm
Office Phone: 581-6319

Course Description

Welcome to English 1001G, the ETIC (English Technology-Integrated Classroom). This is a writing centered course designed for the purpose of helping you become a more effective writer, as well as reader and thinker. Fortunately, we will have the opportunity to spend half of our time in the computer lab and half in a regular setting classroom. Please note which classroom we will be in from week to week in the course outline below.

In this composition class, you will be asked to write a number of informal and formal essays, respond to peer writing, and participate in class presentations and discussions. This class, in particular, will focus on increasing your understanding of the role writing has and will play in your life. In other words, you will examine what it means to read, respond, and think critically on subjects relating to the writing task. In approaching these issues, we will write from our personal experiences as well as conduct research on the beliefs held by others. The following is a list of goals/objectives we will work towards throughout the course of the semester.

Course Objectives:

- **Writing** – to go beyond creating the five paragraph essay and yet still write essays in a clear, logical and organized manner, applying all parts of the writing process, including pre-writing, researching, writing, and revising.

- **Responding** – to be able to respond constructively to your peers’ writing, to course assignments, and especially to your own strengths and weaknesses.

- **Critical thinking** – to be able to listen to the opinions and beliefs of others who may hold cultural, ethical and social values much different than your own – and in listening, be able to explore your own thoughts on these particular issues.

Texts and Materials

Fulwiler, Toby and Alan Hayakawa. *The College Writer's Reference*

Harneck, Andrew and Eugene Kleppinger. *Online! A Reference Guide to Using Internet Sources*

Kennedy, X.L., Dorothy Kennedy and Jane Aaron. *The Bedford Reader*

McMahan, Elizabeth and Robert Funk. *Here's How to Write Well*
Grading

Your grade in this course will be based not only on the quantity but also quality of work you do. First, you will be required to write a number of formal essays, including: one narrative essay, an informative/interview paper, a group project, and a final persuasive research paper (all at varying lengths). For your final essay, you will have to informally present your side of the argument in front of the class. We will discuss this in more detail in class. In addition, you will need to complete two peer reviews per essay; I will give you specific details on their format during the first few weeks of class. You will also be required to respond critically by writing short responses relating to essay assignments as well as issues relevant to today. At the end of the semester, you will be asked to reflect on yourself as a writer in your Writer’s Autobiography. So pay attention to what works for you as a writer as we work through the writing process. Finally, you will be asked to write additional in-and-out of class responses and to participate regularly. There will be no final exam in this course. All assignments must be turned in for you to pass the course. Refer to the following handout, “Guidelines for Evaluating Writing Assignments in EIU’s English Department” to determine how grading will be evaluated in this class. You must earn a “C” or better in order to pass this course. Anything lower than a “C” will earn you a “NC” (No Credit) and you will have to take this course again.

Revisions

As you will learn quite early on in the semester, writing is a process. Part of that process deals with revising. Therefore, you may revise any paper as long as it is handed in within one week after it has been returned to you. I will then take the average between your first and second paper. If you have any questions regarding my comments on any of your drafts, please make an appointment to see me.

Grading Scale:

The following is a breakdown of points for this class.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignment</th>
<th>Points</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Narrative</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Informative/Interview</td>
<td>75</td>
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<tr>
<td>Group Project</td>
<td>150</td>
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<tr>
<td>Research Assignment</td>
<td>200</td>
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<tr>
<td>Writing /Reading Responses</td>
<td>50</td>
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<tr>
<td>Writer’s Autobiography</td>
<td>25</td>
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<tr>
<td>Misc. (in-and-out of class writing /class participation)</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>600</strong></td>
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</tbody>
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The Grading Scale:

540 - 600 Points ............A
480 - 539 Points............B
420 - 479 Points............C
419 or below..............N/C
**Attendance:** Your participation and attendance is critical and needed in order to do well in this course. However, you are allowed to have three unexcused absences without them affecting your final grade. For each missed unexcused absence after that, your grade will drop one letter grade. Unless you have an excused absence, I will not accept late work in this class. You will automatically receive no credit for the assignment due on that particular day. As a result, please try to make an effort to attend every scheduled class date. If you have an excused absence (e.g. illness) you will need to meet with me as soon as you return to class, so you can make up the work. It is your responsibility to come see me about a missed or late assignment.

**Plagiarism**

Please note the English Department’s statement 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 Department 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.

**Students with Disabilities**

If you have a documented disability and wish to receive academic accommodations, please contact the Office of Disability Services (581-6583) as soon as possible.

**Questions/Concerns**

During the course of the semester, you may have questions/concerns regarding assignments or class discussions. If so, please do not hesitate to stop by my office to talk to me or email me your questions. Remember, we are all here to help each other become better at the skill and art of writing.

**Course Syllabus**

The syllabus below is tentative. We cannot always determine what technical issues will occur in the computer lab, or how far we will get in class discussion. So while we will attempt to closely follow this schedule, at times, it may be subject to change.

**Week 1 (3130)**

M (1/10) Introduction to Course
Diagnostic Essay

W (1/12) Pre-Writing Strategies
Assignment: Read a brief narrative/story, and write a one page, typed essay. In the first paragraph, briefly summarize the story. Then in the second section, describe what you liked or disliked about the story. Attach a copy of the story to your response.
F (1/14)  
Small and Large Group Discussion on Reading Response  
What makes a good Narrative Essay?  
Distribute Essay #1 - The Narrative  
Assignment: Begin to draft Essay #1

**Week 2 (3120)**

M (1/17)  
No Class – King’s Birthday Observation

W (1/19)  
Looking at Sample Essays  
Sign-up for Individual Conference  
Assignment: Bring in draft of Essay #1 to class

F (1/21)  
Grammar / Writing Workshop  
Assignment: Bring two copies of draft to conference

**Week 3 (3130)**

M (1/24)  
Individual Conferences

W (1/26)  
Individual Conferences

F (1/28)  
Peer Reviews (Bring 2 copies of draft to class)  
Assignment: Essay #1 and a Writing Response – describe the occupation you are interested in pursuing.

**Week 4 (3120)**

M (1/31)  
Final Draft of Essay #1 - The Narrative  
Small Group Discussion on Writing Response  
What is Field Research?  
Distribute Essay #2 – Informative / Interview Paper  
Assignment: Interview a professional in your field. Bring interview questions and answers to class on Monday, 2/7.

W (2/2)  
Paragraph Development Format –Reconstructing our paragraphs, adding smooth transitions.  
Assignment: Using the Paragraph Development Outline, rewrite two body paragraphs. Make sure you have clear topic sentences, major points and supporting details

F (2/4)  
Small / Large Group Discussion on Writing Response  
Discussion on Introductions and Conclusions  
Assignment: Work on an Introduction and Conclusion for your essay. Bring paper with intro, body, and conclusion to class on Monday.

**Week 5 (3130)**

M (2/7)  
Small Group Discussion on Interviews  
Incorporating Interviews and Narratives into our Essays  
Assignment: Bring 2 copies of Essay #2 to class on Wednesday
W (2/9)    Peer Reviews for Essay #2  
Distribute Essay #3 - Group Project - briefly meet with groups  
Assignment: Final Copy of Essay #2 due; work on Group Proposal and Contract

F (2/11)    Essay #2 due  
Library Tour – meet at South Entrance of Library  
Assignment: Begin to Gather Information for project

**Week 6 (3120)**

M (2/14)    Group Contract and Proposal due  
Briefly Meet with Groups  
Discussion on Quotations, Paraphrases and Summaries  
Assignment: Bring in Journal Articles, internet sources, etc. to class; also bring *A Writer’s Reference* to class on Wednesday.

W (2/16)    Briefly Meet with Groups  
Discussion on MLA style format for quotations/paraphrases/summaries  
Assignment: Continue to gather information for project

F (2/18)    Lincoln’s Birthday Observation – No Class

**Week 7 (3130)**

M (2/21)    Looking at Sample Essay  
Assignment: Continue to meet with groups

W (2/23)    Group Workshop on Project – We will meet in the classroom first and then go to the library.  
Assignment: Work on Presentation and Project; bring *A Writer’s Reference* to class on Friday. Bring all of your sources to class as well.

F (2/25)    Discussion on Works Cited  
Putting Group Works Cited Page together  
Assignment: Each group member needs to bring a copy of project report to class on Monday, 3/7.

**Week 8 (3120) – Group Presentations**

**Week 9 (3130)**

M (3/7)    Peer Reviews  
Assignment: Revise Group Project and Bring final project to class on Wednesday
Discussion on Project – Successes/Challenges/Questions
Letter to Instructor regarding Project
Essay #3 Due
Assignment: Write a one page typed response on whether smoking should or should not be permitted on Eastern’s campus.

Small Group Discussion on Reading Response
Discussion on the Persuasive Essay – Understanding the Persuasive Outline
Assignment: Write two body paragraphs and an opposing view paragraph regarding the above prompt.

Week 10 3/14 – 3/18 – No Classes – Spring Break

Week 11 (3120)

M (3/21) Small and Large Group Discussion on Writing Response.
Distribute Essay #4 – The Persuasive Research Essay
Pre-write on Topics
Choose Partners and topics
Assignment: Begin to conduct research on chosen topics

W (3/23) Work in class on submitting proposal for essay topic
Assignment: Continue to gather information for essay #4

F (3/25) Discussion on formal outline...organizing sources, etc..
Looking at Sample Outline
Assignment: Continue to gather information for essay #4 – Be prepared to give informal presentations on project to the class.

Week 12 (3130)

M (3/28) Individual Presentations

W (3/30) Individual Presentations
Conference Sign-up

F (4/1) Individual Presentations

Week 13 (3120)

M (4/4) Looking at Sample Research Essay
Assignment: Bring, at a minimum, complete outline to individual conference
W (4/6) Individual Conferences
F (4/8) Individual Conferences

**Week 14 (3130)**

M (4/11) Individual Conferences
Assignment: Bring two copies of Rough Draft to class on Wednesday

W (4/13) Peer Reviews for Essay #4
Assignment: Final Draft of Essay #4 due

F (4/15) Essay #4 due – Letter to Instructor

**Week 15 (3120)**

M (4/18) Discussion on Writer’s Autobiography
Assignment: Bring in two Rough Drafts of Autobiography to class on Wednesday

W (4/20) Peer Reviews for Writer’s Autobiography
Assignment: Work on Final Draft of Autobiography – due Monday

F (4/22) Discussion on Essay #4 – Revisions
Assignment: Revise Essay #4 (optional)

**Week 16 (3130)**

Large Group Discussion on Writer’s Autobiography
Retrieving EP Submission form
Assignment: Bring in Selected Essay and Submission Form to class on Wednesday

W (4/27) Revisions due for Essay #4
Peer Reviews for EP Submission – make sure to bring in form for me to sign
Assignment: Writing Response: What does it mean to be a critical writer/reader/thinker?

F (4/29) Small and Large Group Discussion on Writing Response
As you will learn throughout the course of the semester, each writing task serves as a building block for future assignments. The foundation of our writing, some may argue, begins with reflecting upon our own knowledge and experiences – our personal stories. Therefore, your first essay asks that you narrate an event that made you see yourself differently. Perhaps you may have accomplished something that you never thought you could have completed. Or there may have been a time when you had to say no to your peers – or suffer the consequences for saying yes. Nevertheless, we all have had experiences in our lives that have made us who we are today. So, think of the many moments in your life, choose one, and narrate no more than fifteen minutes of that event. Remember, a good narrative has a limited scope. You cannot possibly write a detailed narrative about your high school basketball season in two-three pages. Therefore, think about what makes a good narrative, and incorporate those characteristics into your paper. Refer to the following guidelines as you begin to draft this essay.

**Guidelines:**

- Your essay must be a minimum of 2 typed pages, double spaced- with 1” margins.
- You need to turn in at least one pre-writing exercise discussed in class.
- You also need to complete two peer editing sheets and have two other classmates peer edit your essay.
- Your audience for this essay will be your classmates as well as your instructor.
- In your conclusion, you need to leave the reader with a sense of how your ideas changed or were shaped, and perhaps even challenge the reader to think about her own views on the topic.
- You need to sign up for an individual conference. Conference dates are 1/24 and 1/26. A sign-up sheet will be distributed in class.
- Have fun; enjoy the process of the writing experience.

**Final Draft Due: Monday, January 31**
Every striving writer in this world has to have inspiration. It’s what makes them go that extra mile in their writing and put forth their effort. Without it, a writer is nothing; he or she just ceases to be. It’s the fuel in their engine, the wind in their sails, the energy in their batteries. As a writer myself, I’ve been bound with inspiration in my writing, working on editorials, short stories, and poems. I wasn’t always full of inspiration though, as it may seem. *Up to my sophomore year in high school, most of my writing seemed to lack any inspiration or interest. However, one fateful field trip, I would learn how to discover my lost feeling on inspiration.*

I’ve always been interested in writing. I loved to read science fiction stories from Timothy Zahn or Stackpole. I tried my hand at writing around the time of my junior high school year, but to no avail, I would only get a few paragraphs before I’d hit a dead end. I couldn’t stay interested or push forward. By the time of my high school years, I had a small collection of unfinished writings that I put away in frustration. My main goal was to write a full book in my lifetime, but I thought to myself, how can I? I would just sit at my desk; notes and pages sprawled out, staring at the wall, as if it would offer an answer to my problems. It would drive me up the wall trying to keep going into a story or a poem, only to stop midway. It was like hitting a wall and the only way out were to just back up and quit. Freshman year of high school I went on a sabbatical, avoiding writing anything other than necessary homework reports and essays. My teachers would always tell me that they seemed to lack inspiration or have little or no interest in them. The best
answer I could only come up with was that I was having writing problems. To my dismay, they did little to help.

All of that was going to change next year.

I signed up for a group of classes, a ‘team’ for sophomore year, interested in what it had to offer. It was a trio of teachers who would work together to better educate the team. It was a class of Biology, English, and Math. The great thing about the team was that every assignment was went over by the teachers, to ensure the students weren’t getting too bogged down with work from one of their classes. Sometimes all three class assignments were combined into one, such as cooking foods based on our ethnicity. My writing was still sub-par compared to my peers. My English teacher, Mrs.Ghelfi, saw that I was lacking in that field. She would always come to me to help me on my reports and essays, trying to get me into the ‘writing groove’ she called it. She signed me up for an in school field trip for the Poetry Slam, a friendly contest in which famous poets such as Eddie Two Rivers and Mark Smith would help students write a poem and ‘slam’ them out on a microphone. She told me that it wasn’t till May, and that by that time, she’ll have me writing like a pro. I had confidence in her words, but I felt like it was going to be a rough journey.

The teachers in the team scheduled a field trip to Iron Oaks, a forest preserve with a small camp. They wanted us to learn leadership, teamwork, and other ‘abilities’ with the team of students. I still remember that cool April day to this day. The trees were starting to recover from the winter, and ground was soft and moist from rain the day before. The camp of Iron Oaks has an open yard, surrounded by tall trees with branching paths and benches for rest. The teachers organized the students into small teams, but no
leaders. They wanted us to learn teamwork through a series of games, like tug-of-war, 'skiing' and the human chain. By noon, we took a break for lunch, and afterwards, we were allowed to go on the trails until we had to return to the buses to go back to school. My friend Mike and I decided to go on the trails that wrap around a large hill. To make sure none of the students would get lost, we were given a brochure that shows all the main paths. We were instructed strictly to stay on the main paths, as we could easily get lost in the huge forest.

We took to the “Hill Path” and we just walked and joked along, hearing the voices of our friends down the hills. There was a lot of shade from the sun, but from the rainfall yesterday, it was muggy and somewhat hot outside. After about an hour or so, we didn’t pay attention to the brochure map when we took a branching path up a hill. A while afterwards, the path became less and less organized. It seemed to us that other hikers on their own made this path. We checked the map, and realized that we were far off the map. We couldn’t even relate our position to any known part.

We started walking in one direction, hoping maybe we’d recognize a landmark or see someone we know. We then came upon a small creek, which was on the map, but from the looks of it, we were either too far north or south. We didn’t have a compass, nor were we smart enough to know what side moss grows on a tree. I ventured a guess in one direction and we started hiking. From what I could assume, we were going up on the hill, which was good, since it was shown on the map, but only one half of it. Mike and I climbed up a quarry of rocks until we saw a small clearing with a crystal clear lake. We didn’t say anything to each other, just stared. The water was sparkling and a flock of birds were just returning from a trip, splashing down onto the water. From the high
ground, I could see everything clearly. We both saw the cabin, and the groups of students starting to form up to leave. We knew that if we were late, we’d both be in deep trouble. We quickly headed in the general direction of the cabin, finding one of the main paths and followed it back to safety.

When we finally reached the open clearing, we were covered with dirt, sweat, and bug bites. Mike headed off to get a drink while I stood to catch my breath. Our quick hike to retreat to the cabin was arduous, as we ran all the way down the hill and back towards to the clearing. Mrs. Ghelfi made her way to me, and I thought to myself that I was going to get a good talking to. She asked me why Mike and I were late returning to the clearing. I told her the story of us getting lost, and making our way through the unknown trails. She actually seemed more amused than mad about our escapade, which surprised me. She pulled me aside from the students, telling me she wanted to speak to me privately.

What she told me was the best words I could hear from a teacher. She said that what I just went through was like trying to find my inspiration, the problems, the difficulty, and the outcome. What she was telling me was making sense to me; I was starting to feel like I was changed. While I had worked hard and pushed on through the trails, I found my high point. From there I could see clearly my objective and my direction. She told me that’s what inspiration is to a writer, it’s their direction to their objective of writing. I just stood there, amazed at the truth in her words.

On the bus ride home, I sat and thought to myself about my unfinished works in my desk. I decided that when I got back, I would finish them before anything else I’d work on. From that day on, I would always finish my works, never leaving one hanging while I’d try and start on another one. The Poetry Slam came by in May, and I would go
on to read three of my poems, and the next year, four more, and then for my final year, three of my best poems I read to an audience of over a hundred students. I felt that I had totally changed in my life of writing. Over the summer, I was asked to become a news poster and write editorials for a gaming website. I had submitted some of my sample works and the Webmaster wanted me on his staff.

Now as I sit here and remember my experience at Iron Oaks, it brings me to smile. In the past three years, I have learned a lot, from my friends, family, and teachers. But I still believe the best time of my life, which totally changed me, was Iron Oaks field trip. If it weren't for Mrs. Ghelfi today, then I probably wouldn't be writing this essay. If someone wanted advice on how to get inspiration into his or her system, I recommend that you should get lost in a forest and find your way.
I sat back watching as she neatly placed her belongings in their proper place. I listened tentatively as she talked on the phone making plans with her friends. Slowly, I moved around the room doing a lot of nothing to keep my attention from drifting to her. Deep inside my vocal cords wanted to yell “stop”, my heart wanted to cry “no”, and all my physical strength wanted to keep her from leaving. But, I saw see it in her eyes that she had to leave this place in order to be able to live with herself.

As she continued to busy herself around the room, picking up, placing, and stacking things, she made seldom glances at me. All I could do at this point was watch. I was not sure on which emotion I was experiencing, or what I was feeling the most. I was simply overwhelmed. I decided to pick up a book and to attempt to read. Shortly after, I realized not even a book could distract me. I finally allowed my eyes to linger on her for more than three constant seconds. It was in that moment, when I realized how drastically my life could change. Now that she was leaving there could be no more late night talks, no more crying on each other shoulders, no more complaining about life with a person you knew would always agree with you. I was positive that I would never find another one like her.

Just before I averted my eyes, she looked at me. I wondered if she felt the same as I did. I felt as if she was reading my mind she asked, “Would you like to keep this?” she pushed forward her entire CD collection in my direction. She knew I loved music almost more than life. I hesitated wondering if she was doing this to ensure me that I was in no-way responsible for her departure. “No, I can’t take your CD’s.” I said, not
believing I managed to utter the words. “Please, have them. I won’t be having a use for them anymore really.” I reached my hand and took a hold of the blue case holding about fifty CD’s. “Thank you very much” I said. “But here keep the case at least, I already have the one you bought me for Christmas.” She looked into my eyes and smiled, “Okay”. Suddenly, there was a quick pause that took forever to end. It was in that moment that it hurt the most.

I kept wishing I could go back to the moment before I found out she was leaving, and before my world began to change. I wanted to pretend that I was still there. I envisioned myself walking into our room, excited to tell her about something that happened to me earlier that day. I kept seeing her face brighten as she laughed heartedly. Those were the days I never wanted to end. I was not sure if any one could understand how much she meant to me.

As I allowed myself to step back into reality I noticed that all of her bags were completely packed. This was my opportunity to say something great. It was my time to let out at least a small portion of what I was feeling. To let her know that I believed we deserved more time together, it could not be over so soon. Still, something was holding me back; something would not let me speak. It was if my lips were sewn together and my tongue was frozen.

Almost instantly, the helpers came in and began moving her belongings down stairs to the car that would eventually carry her away. She carefully directed them as to what should go first and what should go last. The lump in my throat became larger and the hole in my heart felt deeper, my breath even quickened. Everything was gone, it was finally time to say goodbye. She came to me and hugged me uttering words my ears
refused to hear. I could not stop the tears from building in my eyes. I wasn’t sure if I said “bye”, “I’ll miss you” or anything similar. But she was gone. My first year at college would never be the same without her. We had shared those first days of freedom from our parent, responsibility for ourselves, and all the parties we could imagine. The reason she was leaving was still a blur in my mind mainly because it was too hard for me to say goodbye.

A few weeks later, I awoke in the same bed and in the same room, I looked to my left and as if I was in a bad dream I did not see her. Instead there was another girl, smiling back at me. I shook my head to try to make her disappear but she was still there. Then I remembered, this was my new roommate. What was her name? Kara, I recalled. “Good morning,” she sang like a bird. I smiled. I did not like her side of the room it was too different from my roommate before. Still, I figured she deserved at least one chance to impress me and I would give her just that, one chance. But first I just had to learn to wake up and remember her name.