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ENG 1001G-020: Composition and Language

Timothy Shonk
Eastern Illinois University

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English 1001G
Policies and Procedures
Fall 2004
Shonk

Dr. Timothy A. Shonk
Phone: 581-6310
Email: cftas1@eiu.edu

Texts:
The Bedford Guide for College Writers, 6th ed. (BG)
The Blair Handbook, 4th ed. (BH)
The Bedford Reader, 8th ed. (BR)

Materials:
A Green Pen or Pencil
A Good Desk Dictionary
A Cheap Folder for the Essays

Goals:
The primary goal of the course is, simply, to make you a better writer and, through that process, a better thinker. To these ends, the course work is designed to teach you the methods and purposes of different writing tasks; the means of developing a mature and lively writing style; the tactics of effective argument and exposition, the importance of concise, concrete prose.

Papers:
During the course of the term, you will complete seven full essays, ranging from 200 to 1200 words. Assigned lengths should be observed; extremes at either end of the assigned word count are discouraged. All writing will be submitted in the following manner:

1. Unless otherwise instructed, you must hand in typed/printed copies.

2. Put your name below the title, centered on the first page; at the bottom of the page, place the type of paper assigned and the date submitted.

3. Papers are to be handed in at the beginning of the hour of the date upon which they are due. Papers submitted afterwards will be deemed late. Papers that are incomplete (e.g., lacking assigned corrections) will also be deemed late.

4. All fresh essays are to be accompanied by the previous essay(s) corrected in the assigned format. In correcting your own essays, you will address your particular weakness in style, diction, and grammar. I will show you the proper methods of correction early in the term.
5. Late papers will be penalized a letter grade per class day until the assignment is completed in its entirety.

6. Unless I am informed ahead of time of compelling reasons for your absence, I will accept your papers from no one other than you. If you are forced to miss a deadline and are unable to inform me beforehand, I will require documentation of your emergency.

7. Remember, the word *deadline* derives from a line, real or imaginary, drawn around old prison grounds. One crossing that line without permission was in immediate danger of serious injury or death—hence, dead line.

**Class Meetings:**

During class meetings, you will receive detailed information about the assignments, methods of organization, grammatical principles, rhetorical devices, and the like that I encourage and reward in your writing. A small part of your grade (about 6%) will be based on your participation in these discussions and in short impromptu writings. *Because we frequently do group work and impromptu writing exercises, because the nature of the course requires continuous writing and rewriting, and because development as a writer requires constant exposure to ideas and samples of writing, a student who accumulates more than 6 unexcused absences is subject to failure for the course.*

**Grades:**

In such a course in which improvement is the imperative and in which rigid standards are impossible to adhere to without exception, commenting on grades with any precision is difficult. We will follow the guidelines in the English Department’s “Standards for Grading Essays” for individual essays, along with other requirements cited in class. For the final course grade, the written quizzes and first four essays are roughly equivalent in weight. The final three essays will weigh more heavily to reward improvement. The final research paper will count over twice as much as an early essay. Thus, each early essay and each formal quiz will count about 8% of the final grade, the fifth and sixth essays about 13% each, the final paper about 20%. More precise comments on the course grade will be given early in the semester.

**Final Comments:**

These policies, I admit, seem to come from the keyboard of a dour professor whose faculties are fading as his arteries are hardening. They may seem oppressive, “nit-picky” even. But this is not the intent. This course is difficult for most freshmen, and handling dozens of essays at a time is no easy task for me. If we adhere to these policies, however, students’ anxieties ease because they know
what is expected, and the uniformity of grading and format makes the assessment of essays more efficient for me. I can thus spend more time with your thoughts and observations, less time irritably marking minor errors of format.

One final point, however, must be stressed. Students occasionally complain that they do poorly in writing classes or on individual essays because the professor does not agree with their moral/religious/political views. I assure you that you will never be penalized for any such differences. If those views set forth in the essays are undeveloped, vague, illogical, unsupported, or contradictory, your grades will suffer for those reasons, not for your personal beliefs themselves. For the most part, your essays are judged on their clarity of purpose and argument, their coherence in argument and exposition, their clarity of prose, and their adherence to the conventions of grammar.

I do not require individual conferences as many instructors do, feeling that forced conferences occupy time better spent by the both of us if you have no compelling reasons to talk. At times, though, I may ask you to make an appointment with me because we need to discuss some writing problems. At other times, you may want to discuss your past essays, talk about potential ideas for papers, wish me to review a draft before submission, need more help with an assignment, or feel “lost” and in need of some guidance or advice. If so, you should never hesitate to come by my office. The hours listed above are reserved for students. Thus, you will never be interrupting me or “bothering” me. Those hours are yours. If those hours conflict with your schedule, see me after class, and we will make other arrangements.
Aug. 23  Introduction to the Course
25     Paragraphing:  BH 332-42
27     Paragraphing:  cont.
30     Description:  BG 51-64

Sep.  1  In-class paragraph writing
  3     Narration:  BG 35-50
  6     Labor Day--No Classes
  8     "Champion of the World,"  BR 86-90;  "Salvation" (to be provided)
 10    Comma Splices and Fused Sentences:  BH 472-81
 13    Punctuation:  BH 613-22
 15    Punctuation:  BH 643-55
 17    Exemplification:  BR 175-80  Narration Essay Due
 20    Introductions and Conclusions:  BH 343-56
 22    Thesis Writing:  BH 59-60;  BG 271-75, 293-94
 24    "Design Flaws,"  BR 193-96;  "Black Men and Public Space,"  BR 205-08
 27    Comma Usage:  BH 590-96
 29    Comma Usage:  BH 596-603

Oct.  1  Classification:  BR 311-17  Exemplification Essay Due
  4    "The Ways We Lie,"  BR 389-97;  "The World of Doublespeak,"  
       BR 399-06
6  Sentence Writing:  *BH* 357-73
8  Fall Break--No Classes
11 Sentence Writing:  *BH* 374-88
13 Sentence Writing (cont.)
15  Comparison and Contrast:  *BG* 90-96,  *BR* 213-20  **Classification Essay Due**
18  "Grant and Lee: A Study in Contrasts,"  *BR* 242-46
20  "Remembering My Childhood,"  *BR* 234-41;  "Neat People,"  *BR* 223-25
22  Sentence Writing Review
25  **Sentence Writing Exam**
27  Cause and Effect:  *BG* 108-16  **Comparison/Contrast Essay Due**

Nov.  1  In-class Causal Analysis exercise
3  Using Internet Sources:  *BH* 195-202;  217-24
5  In-class critiquing exercise
8  Argumentation:  *BG* 117-37  **Causal Analysis Essay Due**
10  "Live Free and Starve,"  *BR* 529-33;  "How to Fix the Pre-med Curriculum (to be provided)
12  Definition:  *BR* 459-67
15  "Being a Chink,"  *BR* 474-77;  "The Holocaust,"  *BR* 491-95
17  In-class definition exercise
19  Proposal Writing:  *BG* 138-55
22-26  Thanksgiving Break--No Classes
29  "A Modest Proposal,"  *BR* 653-62  **Definition Essay Due**

Dec.  1  Using Sources:  *BG* 570-83
MLA Documentation: *BG* 616-30

Documentation (cont.)

In-class critiquing exercise

Course Evaluation

Note: *We do not meet during final exam week*