ENG 1001G-025-032: University Composition 1

Christopher Hanlon
Eastern Illinois University
ENG 1001 is required of all undergraduates at EIU, and that’s because a facility in written communication is indispensable to all educated people. The least important thing about writerly confidence and ability is that it is crucial for professional livelihood. More important, the writerly way of life promotes careful examination of facts, rigorous construction and cross-examination of logic and reasoning, careful attention to the beliefs and arguments of other people, thorough-going introspection of the sort that allows mature people to take stock of their beliefs, biases, and motives—in short, all of the intellectual qualities that outfit citizens for participation in a democratic society.

For all of those reasons, you’re going to work hard over the next sixteen weeks on your writing. Much of our class time together will be spent writing; I am going to have you writing in preparation for most class meetings; and since good writing is always a product of energetic revision, you’re also going to re-arrange your words, re-conceive your ideas, and in general re-write your way to a more accomplished style this semester.

Following the ideas on writing set forth in the very first text we’ll read together (Gerald Graff’s and Cathy Birkenstein’s They Say/I Say), we’re going to hold one central idea as more important than any other: that good academic writing is always a form of conversation. Just as you can’t have a conversation by yourself, you can’t succeed as an academic writer unless you are reading other writers and then writing in ways that reveals your deep understanding of those other writers. We are not going to do the sort of writing that simply declares opinions. Rather, we are going to work on the kind of writing that uses the opinions of other people as a way to enter into a dialogue and to leverage our own ideas.

I am also going to take special effort this semester to socialize students into the culture of the University. One thing I know about successful writers is that they understand their audience—if you don’t know who you’re writing for, in other words, you can’t reach them effectively. Here, such understanding entails an appreciation of how this institution differs from those you’ve known, and how, for example, an attempt to view the University through the lens of K-12 education can lead to all sorts of misunderstandings on your part that can cause delay in your transformation into a university student. Indeed, students, entering the university is transformative, and I intend to help you negotiate some of the details.

Course Requirements & Policies

Grades for this class will be determined using the following formula.

Grading Formula

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Component</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Essay 1</td>
<td>20%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Essay 2</td>
<td>20%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Essay 3</td>
<td>20%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Essay 4</td>
<td>20%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Out-of-class writing</td>
<td>10%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Class Citizenship</td>
<td>10%</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>100%</strong></td>
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Assignments

Four major writing and research assignments will determine the bulk of your grade this semester. The due dates for the final drafts of these assignments appear on the course schedule. Well in advance of each of these assignments you will receive a detailed assignment description which will help you to begin the process of developing an academic essay.

Out-of-class writing: You're also going to write virtually every day in preparation for our class, but that doesn't mean I'm collecting and grading every piece of writing you undertake. Part of being a university student, you'll discover, entails finding ways to motivate yourself to do your best work even without the pressure of a teacher who plans on poring over everything you do. In other words, part of socializing yourself into the culture of the university is to abandon the demand that you be issued "credit" for everything you do—sometimes, you don't get credit; instead, you get practice, or you get intellectual enrichment.

That said, sometimes your out-of-class work will be graded and examined—pored over, in fact, by the entire class. Here's how this will work: Every out-of-class assignment I assign should be brought in, complete and printed, for the next class meeting. I will often pick students at random to show the rest of the class what they came up with, and will display those students' results using our document camera. You'll never know if you might get picked, and so my advice would be to be ready every time with your best work. If you get picked, hang around after class ends, and I'll let you know what your grade for that assignment is.

One last word I want to offer concerning all of the writing you do for class, and this should also be considered a rule of thumb for your work at University and in life more generally. Any piece of writing you prepare for another person to read should be absolutely free of grammatical or spelling errors. Some students, I understand, are not yet able to do this reliably, but very early on, I'm going to take steps to identify such students so that I can help them get into the right class. This class, ENG 1001, is not the right class, for it assumes proficiency in standard written English grammar and sentence construction. The problems and challenges we will take up this semester concern argumentative and rhetorical strategies—we will not be devoting significant time to issues of grammar. So make sure that you proofread and edit every single piece of writing you prepare for any class you take: any essay you write, any exercise you complete, any e-mail you send.

As you develop your essays, I encourage you to use EIU's Writing Center located at 3110 Coleman Hall. This free service provides one-on-one conferences with writing center consultants who can help you with brainstorming, organizing, developing support, and documenting your papers. The Writing Center is open to help any student from any major at any stage of his or her writing process, and its system of one-to-one conferences demonstrates respect for individual writers, all of whom can benefit from feedback about their works in progress. To schedule an appointment, you can drop by the Center or you can call 581-5929. The Writing center is open Monday through Thursday, 9 am to 3 am, and 6 pm to 9 pm. Friday's hours of operation are from 9 am to 1 pm.

Class Citizenship

I expect students to model strong class citizenship in this course. Among other things, this means working hard to make our discussion run well. To make the discussion run well: (1) you should complete all reading assignments, and as you read you should form ideas, draw connections, raise problems, and take notes; (2) you should plan on participating—at least making a comment or asking a question of me or your classmates—every day; (3) you should be careful not to dominate discussion (i.e., those of you who are not shy should give other students an opening to participate).
and (4) you should participate with tact and civility (take other people's remarks and questions seriously, don't interrupt, respond courteously, etc.). The grade for class citizenship will depend upon meeting all these criteria. I will tend to lavish encouragement on students who engage as strong class citizens. I will tend to become irritated with students who never have anything to say or who seem otherwise feckless, vacant, or useless.

One last note on participation: Participating well doesn't simply mean talking a lot—it also means frequently responding to the comments of others, all the while showing that you are engaged in a process of careful and close reading and thinking.

When we discuss readings or practice writing together, obviously, I expect you to be doing that. One way to convince me that you are a terrible class citizen is to be checking your e-mail, surfing the web, texting someone, or otherwise clicking away on a keyboard while discussion is underway. If I see you paying attention to a computer screen or wireless device while you should be paying attention to one of your fellow students (or to me), expect a sharp and public rebuke.

**Attendance and Deadlines**

I expect every member of this class to attend every class meeting. But that said, events can very occasionally interfere. For that reason I'm granting you three personal days to draw upon in the event of illness, family emergency, unavoidable schedule conflict, or other personal complication that might make it impossible for you to attend class. Are you a student athlete who needs to attend an event? Use these days for the purpose and plan on missing no other classes? Has a member of your immediate family suffered a horrendous accident or (though I blanch to imagine it) left us altogether? Obviously this is a time to spend with loved ones, and here are two excused absences to use in order to do that. But if you use those absences for any reason at all, and then take another absence—for any reason at all—plan on losing some points from your final grade.

In no case may a student accumulate six or more absences, for any reason, and still pass the course—if illness, family emergency, or other extenuating circumstances cause you to miss more than five classes, you have my sympathy, and you should petition for a withdrawal.

Students who habitually show up for class a few minutes after it's started should find a professor who's into that and take their course instead. This professor is annoyed by it and reacts badly.

Late assignments will be penalized for their lateness. If they are very late, they may not be accepted at all. I am not unbending in this policy in the case of extreme circumstances, but in order to be granted an extension, students must contact me, with a compelling case to make, at least two days before the paper's due date.

**Etc.**

Students are of course responsible for knowing Eastern Illinois University regulations and policies regarding academic honesty. Plagiarism, even if unknowing or accidental, can result in your failing the course and in further action by the university. 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 own 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 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.

If you have any questions about what constitutes plagiarism, feel free to ask me to clarify. Also, please make a point of noting the following: I will not tolerate any form of academic dishonesty in this course. If I come to suspect misconduct of any kind, I will become dogged about rooting it out, and if my suspicions are confirmed, I will dispense appropriate penalties.

I'm a little embarrassed—for Eastern, that is—to have to tell you that in order to save money, the University recently removed telephones from faculty offices. So if you need to call me for some reason, you'll have to call the English Department line at 581-2428, and the Department secretary will send someone to my office to let me know that I should come to the main office to take a call ... what a recipe for a lot of crossed wires. And this at a time when Eastern's tuition is higher than ever? Methinks you might consider writing your state representatives in Springfield, students. Where are your tuition and taxes going, anyway?

Now on top of that, I get a little testy about badly-written e-mails. In fact, as this is a writing course, we're going to talk about how to write a decent e-mail (and how not to embarrass yourself by writing the other kind), but since we're not there yet, you need to consider yourself as-yet-uncertified for addressing faculty via e-mail. Don't worry; you'll get the chance to earn that certification soon.

But until then, practically speaking, this means that our out-of-class contact must occur the old-fashioned way: through my office hours. They're printed at the top of this syllabus, and I want you to use them throughout the semester whenever you have a question, problem, or concern you can't work through on your own. I also want to talk with you about interesting ideas you have this semester, just as I want to talk with you—personally—about the readings we take on. Hey, maybe it's a good thing that they've taken out the phones. Higher education is made less likely, shall we say, when too many interactions between student and professor unfold at a remove; and in any case too many students now use e-mail and their phones as a way to avoid their professors. When you need to communicate with me, my office hours—or an appointment—should be your first avenue.
Required Texts

Stuart Greene and April Lidinsky, eds., *From Inquiry to Academic Writing*, 2nd edition (Boston and New York: Bedford/St. Martin’s, 2012)

Schedule

class meets in Coleman 3130

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Activity</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mon 8/20</td>
<td>Introductions, course outline</td>
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<tr>
<td>Wed 8/22</td>
<td>Read “Entering the Conversation” from <em>They Say/I Say</em>; complete Exercise 1 in “Entering the Conversation,” bring to class</td>
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<tr>
<td>Fri 8/24</td>
<td>Read Emerson, “Friendship” (1841; e-reserve)</td>
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class meets in Coleman 3120

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Activity</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mon 8/27</td>
<td>Read Chapter 1 of <em>They Say/I Say</em> (pp. 15-27)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Wed 8/29</td>
<td>Complete Exercises 1 and 2 (pp. 26-27)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Fri 8/31</td>
<td>Writing Center orientation</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Read Chapter 2 of <em>They Say/I Say</em> (pp. 28-38)</td>
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<td>Complete Exercises 1 and 2 (p. 38)</td>
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class meets in Coleman 3130

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<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Activity</th>
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<tr>
<td>Mon 9/3</td>
<td>Labor Day, no class meeting</td>
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<tr>
<td>Wed 9/5</td>
<td>Read Chapter 3 of <em>They Say/I Say</em> (pp. 39-47)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Fri 9/7</td>
<td>Complete Exercises 1 and 2 (p. 47)</td>
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<td></td>
<td>No class meeting</td>
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class meets in Coleman 3120

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<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Activity</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mon 9/10</td>
<td>Meet Karen Whisler in Booth Library, South entrance</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Read Chapter 4 of <em>They Say/I Say</em> (pp. 51-63)</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Complete Exercises 1 and 2 (pp. 62-63)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Wed 9/12</td>
<td>Read Chapter 5 of <em>They Say/I Say</em> (pp. 64-73)</td>
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<td>Complete Exercises 1 and 2 (pp. 71-73)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Fri 9/14</td>
<td>Read Chapter 6 of <em>They Say/I Say</em> (pp. 74-87)</td>
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<td>Complete Exercises 1 and 2 (pp. 86-87)</td>
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class meets in Coleman 31'30

Mon 9/17  Read Chapter 7 or *They Say/I Say* (pp. 88-97)
Complete Exercises 1 and 2 (p. 97)
Wed 9/19  Read Chapter 8 of *They Say/I Say* (pp. 101-14)
Complete Exercises 1 and 2 (pp. 113-14)
Fri 9/21  Read Chapters 9 and 10 of *They Say/I Say* (pp. 115-132)
Complete Exercises 1 and 2 on p. 122

class meets in Coleman 31'20

Mon 9/24  Essay #1 due, beginning of class
Wed 9/26  Conferences in my office
Th 9/27  Conferences in my office
Fri 9/28  Conferences in my office

class meets in Coleman 31'30

Mon 10/1  Read Charles Lamb, “A Dissertation upon Roast Pig” in *The Norton Reader* (pp. 266-71)
Isolate a paragraph you like; imitate it using contemporary
language and describing a food about which you feel strongly
Wed 10/3  Read Michael Pollan, “An Animal’s Place” in *The Norton Reader* (pp. 619-34)
Isolate a paragraph you like; imitate it, but dealing with a
food-related controversy of your choosing
Fri 10/5  Fall break, no class meeting

class meets in Coleman 31'20

Mon 10/8  David Foster Wallace, “Consider the Lobster” in *The Norton Reader* (pp. 635-47)
Isolate a paragraph you like; imitate it, but dealing with
another ethical, food-related problem
Wed 10/10 Read Lars Eighner, “On Dumpster Diving” in *The Norton Reader* (pp. 31-40)
Fri 10/12  Essay #2 due, beginning of class

Mon 10/15  Conferences in my office
Tues 10/16  Conferences in my office
Wed 10/17  Conferences in my office
Th 10/18  Conferences in my office
Fri 10/19  Conferences in my office

class meets in Coleman 31'20

Mon 10/22 No class meeting, but read Caroline Bird, “College Is a Waste
of Time and Money” in *The Norton Reader* (pp. 372-80)
Wed 10/24  Brent Staples, “Why Colleges Shower Their Students With
A’s” in *The Norton Reader* (pp. 329-30)
Disagree, in one paragraph, with one of Staples’ points
Read William Zinsser, "College Pressures" in *The Norton Reader* (pp. 380-86)

class meets in Coleman 3130

Mon 10/29 Read Ralph Waldo Emerson, "The American Scholar" (e-reserve; bring the essay to class)
Wed 10/31 Read Nicholas Bromell, "Welcome to Princeton, Inc." (e-reserve; bring the essay to class)
Fri 11/2 Read Carol Twigg and Diana G. Oblinger, "The Virtual University" (e-reserve; bring text to class)

Read Mark Edmundson, "On the Uses of Liberal Education: As Lite Entertainment for Bored College Students" in *From Inquiry to Academic Writing* (pp. 322-36)

Wed 11/7 Read Gerald Graff, "Other Voices, Other Rooms" in *From Inquiry to Academic Writing* (pp. 337-43)
Fri 11/9 Essay #3 due, beginning of class

class meets in Coleman 3130

Mon 11/12 Bring to class two commentaries on the results of the U.S. Presidential election; write a paragraph putting these commentaries into conversation
Wed 11/14 Bring to class two commentaries on the results of the U.S. Presidential election in terms of its ramifications for a single, specific issue; write a paragraph putting those commentaries into conversation
Fri 11/16 Proposal for Essay #4 due, beginning of class

Mon 11/19 - Thanksgiving break
Fri 11/23

Mon 11/26 Conferences in my office
Wed 11/28 Conferences in my office
Fri 11/30 Conferences in my office

Mon 12/3 Conferences in my office
Wed 12/5 Conferences in my office
Thurs 12/9 Final draft of Essay #4 due, beginning of class
Last discussion, Coleman 3130