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ENG 1001G-043: Composition and Language

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Course Description

English 1001G is a reading and writing course designed to enhance critical thinking and communication skills. The written word rules here. We will examine how good writing looks (grammar), how it sounds (style), and where it goes (audience-oriented rhetoric). Over the course of the semester, you will produce short papers and a longer essay through stages of brainstorming, drafting, and fleshing out thesis statements and supporting ideas. You will not do this alone, of course. This is a workshop, which means that, much as in the world outside the university, you will be writing for an audience larger than your professor. You will receive and offer feedback on fellow students’ work. In these feedback loops, you will be encouraged to keep an eye on your own growth as a writer of clear, effective, persuasive, and citation-savvy arguments.

IMPORTANT NOTE: This is a writing-centered, writing-intensive course. You will do a lot of writing and responding. If you foresee difficulty in attending class regularly this semester, you should reconsider taking this course.

Required Texts


Course Goals

The primary aim of this course is to help you to become a sharper, more persuasive, and more self-reflective writer. Now that you are writing at the university level, you should start to become better able to:

- know your audience, and to write persuasively for different audiences and purposes
- reflect upon your own beliefs and consider the viewpoints and arguments of others
• nimbly use different genres of discourse; in defending a position, what mode of argument will you use, for example? Narrating, explaining, analyzing, defining, interpreting, arguing, and using evidence or examples?

• economically incorporate outside sources of ideas and information; this means expanding beyond your personal experience and engaging with the arguments published by others

• revise, revise, revise your writing

• copy-edit your drafts so that they are grammatically sound and readable

• offer insightful readings of other writers’ drafts

COURSE POLICIES FOR COMPOSITION AND LANGUAGE

Plagiarism

Plagiarism will not be tolerated and will result in a failing grade for the course. I will follow the departmental policy on plagiarism, and report all cases to Judicial Affairs: “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.”

Grades—See the Attached Grading Rubric

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Component</th>
<th>Weight</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Participation</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Short Papers</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Essay (including draft and peer-editing sheets)</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quizzes and In-Class Assignments</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grammar</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As you can see, the bulk of your grade is based on your writing. You will write one formal paper, which includes a draft and two peer-editing sheets for your partners in class. I will use the attached grading rubric for your paper.

For shorter assignments, I will use the check-mark system. I will mark your paper draft, peer-editing sheets, and in-class assignments on a scale of √+, √, √-, and √--.

√+ = excellent work that is strongly engaged, on-topic, and very well-written
√ = satisfactory work that is on-topic and cleanly written
√- = work that shows little engagement, is off-topic, and is hurriedly written
√-- = work that shows little understanding of the topic and is too short
Conferences
As I get to know your writing better throughout the semester, I will require that you meet with me on an individual basis. In these conferences, we will discuss where you think your writing and critical skills are improving or need more work. You should be prepared to ask questions about assignments I have returned, or assignments that you are writing for the course.

Late Policy—All Assignments Are Due at the Beginning of Class
I'll say it twice because it bears repeating: all assignments are due at the BEGINNING OF CLASS. For your formal essay, however, you will lose a full grade for every day past the due date. Thus four days late means an “F” or a “zero.”

Quizzes, In-Class Assignments, and Grammar
You cannot make up a quiz or in-class assignment after the class period in which it is administered.

Attendance and Participation
Participation is key. It means more than simply being present in class. It means being prepared, thoughtful, respectful of others, engaged, and fruitfully open to criticism. Because you are adults who have signed up for this course, I expect that you attend class. Do not bring excuses for missing class. The professor does not need for you to document or explain your absences. If you miss five or more classes, you will fail the course. For each class, I will note who attends and participates. Those who are “on” and present, ready for thoughtful discussion throughout the semester, will receive high participation grades. Accordingly, those who do not, will receive very low participation grades, up to and including “zero.” BRING YOUR TEXTBOOKS AND READER TO CLASS AND BE PREPARED FOR DISCUSSION. In addition, see again the two sections above—“Late Policy” and “Quizzes, In-Class Assignments, and Grammar”—as you cannot make up any missed assignments, including quizzes, in-class assignments, and grammar.

Respect
Because you have chosen to be in a university classroom, act like it and show respect for your professor and fellow students. Turn off your cell phone and any other electronic device. Bring your texts to class and be prepared for discussion. I will lower participation grades aggressively for those who show disrespect for others. This includes leaving cell phones on, texting in class, and snoozing.

Emailing
I want to get to know you and your work this semester. Thus I ask that you call me or stop by my office during office hours (or other scheduled times) so that we can talk. DO NOT EMAIL ME TO ASK FOR AN “UPDATE” ON MISSED ASSIGNMENTS, OR TO EXPLAIN AN ABSENCE. I will assign working groups so that you can contact group members for notes and missed work.

Required Paper Format
--Paper-clip sheets
--Include page numbers
--Use 12-point Times New Roman font, double-spaced lines, and one-inch margins
--Use correct MLA (Modern Language Association) format for all quoted material
--Include a Works Cited page
GRADING CRITERIA FOR ASSIGNMENTS

"A" Range: Outstanding. Original and creative ideas developed exceptionally well. Assignment is flawlessly revised and proofread.

Content: a persuasive, insightful presentation of your own ideas that excels in responding to the assignment; identifies and responds to the needs of the audience
Organization: clearly sets up reader expectations (frontloads main ideas and information) clearly states and specific thesis or central idea introduction sets up argument and direction of the report succeeding paragraphs or sections follow logically from the central idea body paragraphs are unified, organized, and coherent written and graphical cues provide a road map and signal the information that follows conclusion considers the ramifications of the central idea (answers the question, "So what?")
Evidence: appropriate use of evidence to prove and flesh out the central idea evidence follows by a thorough analysis that shows how it is critical correct documentation of sources
Style: language is clear and concise with few grammatical or stylistic errors word choice is precise and appropriately specific strong, lively, and distinctive tone and voice throughout sentence structure fit for complexity of ideas (variety suited to sense; appropriate coordination, subordination, modification, and parallelism) use of passive constructions only when necessary correct use of conventional format for the assigned genre of the report body paragraphs or sections blocked properly

"B" range: Displays sound understanding of the topic, some originality, and a sense of the issues involved in writing a persuasive report, rather than mere exposition; proofreading needed, mostly finished; may have one or two of the following problems:

Content: structure and argument are clear, but ideas lack depth and/or detail does not progress much beyond cliched ideas covers topic adequately, but not thoroughly topic needs more analysis
Organization: does not adequately or consistently set up reader expectations important ideas and information are not frontloaded central idea is vague, difficult to understand and/or to prove introduction does not set up direction of argument clearly body paragraphs do not follow logically from central idea body paragraphs are not unified, organized, coherent written and graphical cues are too vague or too general conclusion merely restates or summarizes the central idea
Evidence: too little evidence to prove and flesh out the central idea evidence is not integrated evidence needs to be analyzed more thoroughly evidence is not cited properly
Style: a number of grammatical or stylistic errors (including vague, repetitious, or colloquial word choice; shifting tenses; wordy or convoluted sentences; punctuation problems) tone and voice either too stilted and formal or too casual for a college-level report

"C" range: Displays either an uneven performance (serious flaws of comprehension and/or presentation); competent exposition without a real attempt at thinking through the assignment; further revision needed; essay has not been proofread; may have three of the problems outlined in the "B" range and/or:

Content: no thesis or discernible argument depends on cliches, rather than analysis, of the topic inadequate coverage of the topic; does not clearly address needs of the audience
Organization: introduction too vague, dull, confusing no roadmap or written and graphical cues conclusion overly general, repetitious, obvious, weak body paragraphs demonstrate problems with development/organization, which interfere with development of main ideas
Evidence: few relevant pieces of evidence; little actual analysis too much irrelevant evidence; no actual analysis
Style: stylistic and grammatical errors interfere with the content of the report sentences demonstrate problems with sentence boundaries (fragments, comma splices, run-ons) word choice often imprecise inconsistent tone and voice

"D" range: paper is off-topic (does not answer an assigned or approved topic; displays fundamental misunderstanding of the topic; major revising needed, reads like a first draft; has three or more of the problems outlined in the "C" range; or does not fulfill page requirements.

"F": no report submitted; report has been plagiarized (incorporates another author’s ideas or language without acknowledgment; or actually written by someone else).

COMMENTS:
For each class period, you need to have carefully read and **be prepared to discuss** the assigned selections in their entirety, starting on the page number given. I will note any exceptions.

**WEEK ONE**
T 8/26    Introductions
Th 8/28   Eric Schlosser, “Introduction,” from *Fast Food Nation* (handout)

**WEEK TWO**
T 9/2     Walker Percy, “The Loss of the Creature” (handout)
Th 9/4    Percy continued; Grammar (handout)

**WEEK THREE**
**MONDAY 9/8—Deadline to drop course without a grade**
*YOU MUST PURCHASE THE READER FOR THIS COURSE AT COPY-X*
Th 9/11   The Method (*Writing Analytically* 44-51)
           Marking up a draft for a potential thesis and claims (*Writing Analytically* 34-39, 136)

**WEEK FOUR**
T 9/16    Eric Schlosser, “Your Trusted Friends,” from *Fast Food Nation* (READER)
Th 9/18   Thesis, Part I: “Seems to be about x but could also be (is ‘really’) about y” (*Writing Analytically* 85-89)

**WEEK FIVE**
           Grammar

**WEEK SIX**
9/30-10/2  Individual conferences with Professor Park in her office, room 3030 in Coleman

**WEEK SEVEN**
T 10/7    Jessica Mitford, “Behind the Formaldehyde Curtain” (*Norton* 314)
Th 10/9   Grammar
WEEK EIGHT
Tu 10/14    Chapter 11: Style: Shaping Sentences (Writing Analytically 275-94)
Th 10/16    Grammar (at-home, due on Tuesday, 10/21); Professor Park will be away at a conference.

WEEK NINE
T 10/21    Peer-Editing in class: bring FOUR copies of your draft
Th 10/23    Grammar

WEEK TEN
T 10/28    Brian Fawcett, “Universal Chicken” (READER)
            Koen Vanmechelen, Cosmopolitan Chicken Project (ONLINE)
T 10/30    Grammar; King Corn

WEEK ELEVEN
T 11/4     King Corn continued; Scott Russell Sanders, “Looking at Women” (Norton 244)
Th 11/6    Grammar

Friday 11/7—Deadline to withdraw with a “W”

WEEK TWELVE
T 11/11    Peer-Editing in class: bring FOUR copies of your draft
Th 11/13    TBA

WEEK THIRTEEN
11/18-20    Individual conferences

WEEK FOURTEEN  M 11/24 – F 11/28     Thanksgiving Recess—NO CLASS

WEEK FIFTEEN
T 12/2     Grammar Exam
Th 12/4    DUE: Abstract of essays; Presentations

WEEK SIXTEEN
12/9, 12/11    Presentations continued