ENG 1091G-097: Composition and Language, Honors

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English 1091, Composition and Language, Honors
"This I Believe" in the Classroom and the World

Instructor: Dr. Robin L. Murray 
Office Hrs: T/R 9-9:30; R 1:30-3:30 & by appt.
Class time and place: Tuesday/Thursday, 9:30-10:45
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Objectives:

This course is designed to help motivated students become more discerning and critical readers and thinkers, more informed citizens, and more articulate and effective speakers and writers. The course requires reading and writing expository and argumentative prose and carrying out responsible research. Designated "writing-centered," the course focuses on written expression as a major learning activity and the primary basis of evaluation. (For information on criteria, refer to "Guidelines for Evaluating Writing Assignments in EIU's English Department.")

Required Texts:

This I Believe
Writing: A Guide for College and Beyond
A Pocket Style Manual
They Say, I Say

Attendance Policy:

I will be here; you be here, too. Any more than three absences will affect your grade. Perfect attendance will earn bonus points. Classroom participation is an essential part of your grade, so I urge you to make regular attendance a high priority.

Speaking of Participation,

We learn together by interacting with real dialogue. Often I will start discussions with entrance cards and general questions to make sure the assigned reading was generally understood. But I expect those discussions to take on lives of their own. In other words, classroom discussion does not mean telling me what you think I want to hear or merely responding to my questions. Bring your prejudices, beliefs, complaints, and enthusiasm to these readings. I hope to learn from you, as well. You all will learn from each other.

Grades:

I hate giving grades, but it's an institutional policy I can't get around. Grades focus on end-products; this course is a course in the writing process. The following grade break-down is designed to emphasize the importance of discussion, writing improvement, revision, etc. (all elements of the writing process), as well as the polished essays (end-products).
Group Proposal 15%
All work towards paper 1 (This I Believe) 10%
All work towards paper 2 (Summary/Critique) 10%
All work towards paper 3 (Taking a Position) 10%
All work towards paper 4 (Observation—Service Learning I) 10%
All work towards paper 5 (Artifact) 10%
Portfolio 35%

Explanation:

English 1001, a course in explanatory and persuasive writing, including argument and synthesis, is required of every student at the university because it cultivates skills and qualities of mind essential for serious study in any course. You will receive instruction and practice in analyzing a subject, generating ideas, clarifying your purpose, identifying audience expectations, composing, revising, and editing. You will also come to understand the writing process and what constitutes good writing. You will grow as a writer and critical thinker and, I hope, develop in you the self-confidence and interest in writing that will lead you to think of yourself as a writer.

Assignments:

In addition to impromptu pieces, you will write at least five polished essays, which build on less formal writing assignments. I will read, evaluate, and promptly return some of the brief writings and all polished assignments. Ample comments will suggest your strengths and weaknesses. These comments will be more useful to you than the grade, so read them carefully and consider the advice. They will help you revise your chosen essays for your portfolio.

Grades:

Grades on papers and at the end of the course express my judgment about a variety of matters:

B and A work shows initiative, skill, and intelligence. Its features are an insightful purpose, effective organization, concrete and well-reasoned development, fluent sentences, and suitable and distinctive diction. A work distinguishes itself from B work because of the sense of voice it reflects.

C writing is adequate and competent. Its purpose is clear. Its development is reasonably appropriate and concrete. It is free of serious and frequent error.

Characteristic weaknesses of writing below the C level result from lack of control over both subject and the conventions of written language. These weaknesses include an unfocused sense of purpose; inadequate development; wordy, awkward, unclear sentences; errors in usage, grammar and spelling.

Please see the rubric on the back of the Electronic Writing Portfolio Submission form model I will provide for you today as a guide to competent writing.
Requirements:

In order to receive a passing grade, you must complete and submit all assignments. You need to attend class regularly, be prepared to participate in activities, and be at scheduled conferences. Poor attendance, tardiness, late papers, or missed conferences will prompt me to reduce a grade.

Assistance:

To assure your success and to benefit fully from this course, take responsibility for improving your own writing. Seek personal assistance and direction from me during office hours.

The Writing Center (301 Coleman Hall) offers determined students opportunities to develop their writing skills. It offers free one-on-one tutorial service to any student at the university. Please call them for an appointment at 581-5929 or just walk-in at 301 Coleman Hall. Graduate students with English degrees are eager to help you at any point in the writing process.

Electronic Writing Portfolio:

Please note that you can submit an essay either from English 1001 or English 1002 that I consider at least minimally competent according to the rubric on the enclosed hand-out. The actual submission process will be online this semester but will follow the same procedure noted on the enclosed form. This submission to your portfolio is your way to demonstrate your writing competency. I will accept submissions up until Thanksgiving break. Please see me with any exceptions.

Formatting:

Always keep a personal copy of any polished paper you submit to me. Save it in rich-text format, as well, so it could easily be submitted to the EWP. Secure all sheets together. Put your name and the page number in the top right corner of each sheet but the first. On the first page put a title and the following:

Your name
Assignment Number
English 1091
My Name
Date
Please document consistently in either MLA or APA format.

Plagiarism Statement:

"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—has the right and the responsibility to impose the guilty student an appropriate penalty, up to and including immediate assignment of "F" for the course."

ADA Compliance Policy:

If you have a documented disability and wish to receive academic accommodations, please contact the Coordinator of the Office of Disability Services (581-6583) as soon as possible.
Tentative English 1091 Calendar--Subject to Change

August

25 Course introduction. Peer introductions. Choose readings from This I Believe. You must choose fifteen from the EIU Reads list and five of your own choosing. Read the first four essays for Thursday.

27 Entrance card about reading. Introduce “This I believe Essay” assignment and discuss “This I believe” essays. Read next six essays for next Tuesday.

September

1 Entrance card about reading. Discuss readings and essays.

3 Rough draft of “This I believe” essay due for peer review and conferences

8 Conferences, continued

10 Final draft of “This I believe” essay due. Reflect on your writing. Introduce summary/critique assignment. Read next six “This I Believe” essays for Tuesday.

15 Entrance card about reading. Discuss readings. Read next four essays for Thursday.

17 Entrance card about reading. Discuss readings and summary/critique.

22 Rough draft of summary/critique assignment due for peer review and conferencing.

24 Conferencing, continued.


October

1 Entrance card about reading. Discuss reading. Read Faigley pp. 488-524 for Tuesday.

6 Entrance card. Discuss reading and student submitted version.

8 Arguments, continued

13 Rough draft of taking a position piece due for peer review and conferences.
15 Conferences, continued.

20 Final draft of taking a position paper. Reflect on your writing. Introduce observation assignment as one of your “service learning” pieces. Read Faigley 166-187 for Thursday.

22 Entrance card. Chapter 11, Faigley. Read 128-165 for Tuesday

27 Entrance card. Chapter 11, Faigley and essay discussion.

29 Rough draft of observation due for peer review and mini-conferences.

November

3 Final draft of observation due. Reflect on your writing. Introduce proposal assignment, a group project based on one of your observations of an organization on or near campus. You will create a group proposal together. But each of you will also create an artifact for your organization based on their needs—a pamphlet, a blog, etc. Read excerpts from Chapter 17.

5 Proposal

10 Proposal

12 Rough draft of proposals due for peer review and conferencing.

17 Conferencing, continued

19 Final draft of proposals due. Reflect on your writing. Talk more about “part three” of the service learning section of this class.

23-27: Thanksgiving Break

December

1 Draft of your individual artifact due for peer review and conferencing.

3 Conferencing, continued.

8 Final draft of artifact due. Reflect on your writing. Discuss your portfolio.

10 Last Class! Portfolios due. Portfolio should include drafts, peer reviews, and final copies of the following: Reflection, “This I Believe” Essay, Critique, and two other pieces written for class, other than your group proposal.