ENG 1091G-093: Composition and Language
"Studies of Contemporary American Youth"

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English 1091, Composition and Language  
“Studies of Contemporary American Youth”  
Fall, 2006

Time and Place: 5:00 - 6:15, Tuesday/Thursday, 3170 Coleman Hall  
Instructor: Tim Engles  
Office: Coleman 3831  (Phone: 581-6316)  
Office hours: 2:00 to 3:00, Tuesdays and Thursdays  
E-mail address: tdengles@eiu.edu  
Course listserv: 1091f06@lists.eiu.edu

Required Texts:  
Branded: The Buying and Selling of Teenagers (Alissa Quart)  
Race, Class, and Gender (Rothenberg)  
The Blair Handbook (fifth edition) (Fulwiler)

COURSE POLICIES AND PROCEDURES  
(read the following sections carefully; they constitute our contract,  
and I will request your written agreement to them)

Course Objectives: This course has three main purposes—to continue the enhancement  
of your writing skills as developed in high school, to introduce you to the demands of  
writing at the university level, and to bring your writing up to the university level. We  
will focus on the enhancement of writing skills by examining the relationships between  
reading, writing, speaking, listening, and critical thinking. Upon completion of this  
course, the successful, hardworking student will have gained skill in prewriting, writing,  
revision, editing, and proofreading strategies, and in conducting and correctly  
documenting library and internet research. In order to focus your writing and to practice  
analyzing a specific subject for your future courses, we will have extensive readings and  
viewings on a particular topic, contemporary American youth.

Classroom Environment: In class, I expect all of you to participate in discussions (class  
participation will be figured into your final grade). The best way to demonstrate that you  
are active, engaged, and interested is by contributing regularly to class discussions, and  
by paying close, respectful attention to what everyone else has to say. If you have  
questions, no matter how simple or complicated, please go ahead and ask—chances are  
that other people have the same question. I do not plan to lecture in this class; I want us to  
contribute together to a positive, challenging, interesting learning environment. Finally,  
please do not chew gum, eat food or read outside materials during class, activities that are  
too distracting to others—drinking beverages is okay. If you wear a cap to class, please  
wear it backwards so we can see your eyes.

Regarding Writing: This is primarily a writing class, but you will do most of your  
writing outside of class. We will devote some of our class periods to various aspects of  
writing, and I will respond to your essays with extensive written commentary and  
suggestions for improvement. One of your most important tools for improvement will be
the comments and corrections I make in your writing; if you wish to see your writing improve and your grade go up as the semester progresses, you must pay carefully refer back to these written comments as you write subsequent essays.

Something else to keep in mind for later in the semester: This university requires that each student build an “Electronic Writing Portfolio,” which will include samples of the student’s writing over the course of his or her university experience. Students will be responsible for electronically adding essays to their portfolios, with their instructors’ assistance. Incoming freshman will be required to submit four essays to their portfolios, one per year over the course of their degree program. The essay you submit for the first segment may or may not be an essay written for this course—it could instead be one from English 1002 or 1092. If you decide to submit an essay for this course, you can find further information about how to do so at the online PAWS registration site. You are welcome to ask Dr. Engles if you have any further questions about this portfolio.

Regarding Reading: Since one skill you will be developing in this class is the art of textual analysis, you must give the readings more than a quick skimming over. Instead of wolfing them down right before class, set aside enough time to read carefully—take some notes and/or an outline of the reading, and decide for yourself, before coming to class, what each author is trying to describe and bring to light. Don’t plan on just waiting until class discussion to have the reading explained to you. Also, to ensure that your final grade reflects your reading effort, I will give frequent "pop" quizzes at the beginning of class on required readings, and your final average on these quizzes will constitute a healthy percentage of your final grade. Finally, BE SURE to bring the appropriate book or books to class if a reading assignment is listed for that day.

Grading: Your final course grade will be either A, B, C, or NC (no credit). Students must at least be writing at a C level by the end of the course to pass. While a grade of NC is not figured into a student’s GPA, a student who receives a grade of NC must take the course again. The final grade will be determined in the following way:

- 10% Essay 1 (2-3 pages)
- 20% Essay 2 (4-5 pages)
- 20% Essay 3 (4-5 pages)
- 30% A formal, analytical report (10-12 pages) on your research findings
- 20% Participation, quizzes, and attendance

Missed quizzes and late papers: We will have unannounced quizzes on course reading material at the beginning of many of our sessions. Because the answers to unannounced quizzes tend to arise during class discussion, and because one purpose of the quizzes is to encourage punctual class attendance, these quizzes will not be announced ahead of time and they cannot be made up (even if you come to class late). Again, these quizzes are one way to award those who attend class regularly and on time. On the other hand, I recognize that students must miss class at times and therefore might miss a quiz through no fault of their own, so at the end of the semester I will drop your lowest quiz grade when calculating your grades.
Essays will be sent to Dr. Engles as e-mail attachments formatted in Word or Rich Text Format (more on how to do so soon). The essays will be graded on a 100-point scale (90-100 = A, 80-89 = B, etc.). Late essays will be penalized fifteen points for each day they are late (including those sent late on the due date—the first fifteen-points-off day begins one hour after the deadline listed on the Daily Schedule below). If for some reason you want to send an essay before it is due, you may do so. Also, you will have individual conferences with Dr. Engles on your writing; it will be okay to call Dr. Engles (581-6316) if you must miss a scheduled conference, but if you miss one without doing so, the penalty will be ten points off the current essay assignment.

**ATTENDANCE POLICY:** I will take attendance, and I expect you to attend class every day, on time and prepared to discuss the material listed for that day on the “Daily Schedule.” More than three missed classes will lower your class participation grade (which is 20% of your final grade) to an F. Missing class frequently will also harm your grade on the reading quizzes. Regarding tardiness: this is a small class, so late arrivals are disruptive—if for some bizarre reason you wish to get on my bad side, you can easily do so by developing the habit of arriving late for class. If you will not be able to arrive for this class on time because of other commitments, drop it and take another section. Finally, you are responsible for all assignments, whether you attend class or not. Get the telephone number and/or e-mail address of one or two other students in class so you can find out about missed assignments before you come to class.

**E-mail Activity:** Enrollment in this class requires an e-mail account, and you must check it frequently, preferably every day, for messages pertaining to the course. E-mail is the quickest, easiest way to reach me if I am not in my office; I welcome any and all questions and comments. A functioning email account is crucial for this course—if you do not send me an email message at the above address by Friday, August 25 at 3:00 p.m. to confirm your email address, I will assume that you have chosen against fully participating in the course, and I will therefore drop you. In your message, describe yourself in whatever way you choose, and also write a statement to the effect that you have read and agree with these course policies and procedures. I will use the address from which you send me this message to subscribe you to the class listserv.

**The Writing Center:** Free one-on-one help is available at our Writing Center. Highly qualified tutors are there to help you with organization, essay development, grammar, punctuation, and other problem areas. They are not proofreaders, though; think of them as free writing tutors who can offer you expert advice on specific problem areas in your writing.

**Office Hours and Conferences:** I will be in my office and available to consult with you at the hours I’ve specified on the front of the syllabus. You do not need to make an appointment if you wish to come to talk with me during office hours. If my office hours are inconvenient for you, I am also available by appointment: let me know if you want to make one, and we’ll find a time that is convenient for both of us.
**Saving Your Essays:** You will need to revise and/or correct much of the work you do over the course of the semester, so I recommend that you set up a separate English 1091 folder on your computer or in your email account, and save all drafts and graded copies of your essays there (in addition to a thumb drive or flash drive, if you have one). "The computer ate it" or "The Internet wasn’t working" are not acceptable excuses for failing to turn in an assignment by its deadline. Backing up files in multiple locations is the only way to be sure that you won’t lose a file. Also, to avoid confusing yourself, get in the habit of overwriting old versions of an essay when you can, and of keeping track of which version of an essay is most recent. Finally, keep graded copies of your early essays; the corrections and comments on these essays are a valuable resource that you should refer back to before turning in final copies of subsequent essays.

**Academic Honesty:** I expect you to act with integrity in and out of class, and so does the Eastern Illinois University. It is your responsibility to understand fully what plagiarism is and how to avoid it; note carefully the English Department’s official policy statement on plagiarism (of course, the part regarding an “F” does not apply to this course):

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 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.

Also, keep in mind that this is a “skills course.” That is, you are here to develop a skill that will help you perform better in your future college courses, and then in your career. With the advent of the Internet, using the writing of others, either in whole or in part, has become increasingly easy and, to some students, tempting. However, it’s also easier than ever for an instructor to catch students doing so. Again, remember that the consequences of being caught are severe, but also remember that doing your own writing in this course, while sincerely trying to improve your writing, will definitely help you in the future. Finally, if you ever wonder whether what you’ve written borrows too heavily from another writer, just ask me to look at your work—students who didn’t think they were plagiarizing have been accused of it.

**For students with disabilities:** If you have a disability and wish to receive academic accommodations, let me know; also, if you haven’t contacted the Coordinator of Disability Services (581-6583), do so as soon as possible.
ENGLISH 1091: DAILY SCHEDULE

This schedule may change; any changes will be announced in advance. Reading and writing assignments are to be completed by the dates on which they appear on the syllabus. BE SURE to bring the appropriate book or books to class if a reading assignment is listed for that day; students who show up without a copy of the day’s reading assignment may be marked absent.

BLAIR: Blair Handbook
RCG: Race, Class, and Gender in the US

T AUG 22  Introduction to the course and to each other, and discussion of Essay One

R AUG 24  before class read Quart’s Branded, Introduction and Chapter One

F AUG 25  3:00 p.m.: Deadline for sending Dr. Engles an e-mail (tdengles@eiu.edu)

- since I teach several courses, explain which one you’re in (English 1091)
- describe yourself in whatever ways you choose, including your career aspirations
- After reading the above “course policies and procedures” carefully on your own, write a statement in this e-mail saying that you have read and agree with them (also, if you disagree with any of them, feel free to explain why)
- explain what specific, particular problems you think you have in your writing
- finally, as with ALL e-mail messages, write your name at the end of it, as you would in a letter (however, signoffs such as “Sincerely” are not necessary)

T AUG 29  Essay One due at the beginning of class; in-class video screening: The Merchants of Cool

- Writing assignment: write and turn in on Thursday a typed, double-spaced, 1-2 page response to The Merchants of Cool in connection to your own youth. What in the program reminds you of your own experience? How so? What does the video reveal about some facet or facets of your own experience?

R AUG 31  Discussion of The Merchants of Cool

F SEP 1  Deadline to drop a course without a grade

M SEP 4  No classes (Labor Day)

T SEP 5  Branded, Chapters Three and Six

- Writing assignment: write and turn in on Thursday a typed, double-spaced, 1-2 page response to one of these two chapters in connection to your own youth (be
sure to read both chapters). What in the chapter reminds you of your own experience? How so? What does Quart reveal about some facet or facets of your own experience?

- discussion of topics for Essay Two

**R SEP 7** *Branded*, Chapters Seven and Eight

**T SEP 12** Writing Workshop; before class, read BLAIR, Chapters 36-37, “Shaping Paragraphs” and “Improving Openings and Conclusions”


**T SEP 19** NO CLASS—individual conferences on final draft of Essay Two

**R SEP 21** NO CLASS—individual conferences on final draft of Essay Two

**T SEP 26** Before class, skim through Rothenberg’s *Race, Class, and Gender* in search of interesting, potentially insightful readings that relate somehow to our topic of American youth

- Choose two readings, and write down a brief explanation of why you think the class should read them
- During class, you will defend your two choices to the class, and the class will then vote on readings for the next two weeks

**R SEP 28** *RCG*,

**T OCT 3** *RCG*,

**R OCT 5** *RCG*,

**T OCT 10** *RCG*, ; discussion of topics for Essay Three

**W OCT 11** Semester mid-term

**R OCT 12** *Branded*, Chapters Twelve and Thirteen

**T OCT 17** *Branded*, Chapter Fourteen and Afterword

**R OCT 19** *RCG*, reading to be announced; discussion of topics for Essay Three

**F OCT 20** Deadline for W for Course Withdrawal

**T OCT 24** BLAIR: Chapters 40-41, “Building Vital Sentences” and “Being Concise”
R OCT 26  No class—meet with Dr. Engles individually regarding your paper’s rough draft (see the “conference schedule” for instructions on how to prepare for this meeting)

T OCT 31  No class—meet with Dr. Engles individually regarding your paper’s rough draft (see the “conference schedule” for instructions on how to prepare for this meeting)

R NOV 2  BLAIR: Chapter 11, “Research Essays”; in-class: discussion of Essay Four, Analysis of a Teen Movie

T NOV 7  In-class film-screening; film and reading TBA

R NOV 9  In-class film-screening; reading TBA

T NOV 14  Discussion of film and Essay Four; sign up for essay conferences

R NOV 16  Reading: BLAIR, Chapter 23 & 24, “Library Research” “Internet Research”; in-class: Library Tour and Research Introduction with Karen Whisler, Booth Library Librarian; meet in lobby of Booth Library South entrance (the side near Coleman Hall), NOT in Coleman Hall!

NOV 20 to NOV 24  No Classes (Thanksgiving Break!)

T NOV 28  No class—meet with Dr. Engles individually regarding your paper’s rough draft (see the “conference schedule” for instructions on how to prepare for this meeting)

R NOV 30  No class—meet with Dr. Engles individually regarding your paper’s rough draft (see the “conference schedule” for instructions on how to prepare for this meeting)

T DEC 5  Writing Workshop and Three-minute Essay Summaries

R DEC 7  Last Day of Class: final instructions, tearful, heartfelt farewells, etc.

• final essay must be sent to Dr. Engles by 4:00 today

DEC 11 –15  Final Exam Period (No exam in this course)