Spring 1-15-2013

ENG 3001-005: Advanced Composition

M Leddy
Eastern Illinois University

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Office: Coleman 3741 (west hallway)
Office hours: MWF 10:00-11:00, 
MW 3:30-3:30, and by appointment
581-2428 (English Department)
E-mail: mleddy@eiu.edu
Mailbox: Coleman 3155

ATTENDANCE
Be here, on time, every time. You’re

ENGLISH 3001
ADVANCED COMPOSITION
PROFESSOR M. LEDDY
SPRING 2013

We will practice the art of writing—
sentences, paragraphs, essays—with as
much room for improvement as a
semester allows. Some writing will be
on assigned topics; some, on topics of
your devising. Some writing will be
practical; some will involve the mind
at play. All work in the course will
emphasize revision as a necessary
practice in writing. (I’ve made fifteen
small revisions in writing this
description.)

In the world beyond college, you’ll be
the one responsible for the shape your
writing skills are in. This course
provides a great opportunity to get
those skills in better shape now.

TEXTS
Claire Cook, Line by Line
Gerald Graff, et. al. “They Say/I Say”
Diana Hacker and Nancy Sommers, A
Pocket Style Manual
Michael Harvey, The Nuts and Bolts of
College Writing
John Trimble, Writing with Style
Virginia Tufte, Artful Sentences

Other reading will be available as PDFs
or photocopies.

You should have access to a hardcover
collegiate (college-level) dictionary
when reading and writing.

REQUIREMENTS
The course will require dedicated daily
work (reading, writing, sharing work,
talking), several pieces of writing, and
several conferences.

ATTENDANCE
Be here, on time, every time. You’re

LATE WORK, MAKE-UP WORK
Missed work cannot be made up. Late
work is acceptable only if you have my
approval in advance.

DISABILITIES
If you have a documented disability
and wish to receive academic
accommodations, contact the
coordinator of the Office of Disability
Services (581-6583) as soon as possible.

OFFICE HOURS
Talking to professors is one of the
smartest things a college student can
do. Please, come in to ask questions
and talk about your work in the class.
If office hours don’t work for you,
make an appointment.

If you feel uneasy about talking to
professors, read “How to talk to a

professor” for potentially helpful
dvice: goo.gl/VYskv.
E-MAIL
Before you e-mail me, please read and
follow the guidelines in “How to e-
mail a professor”; goo.gl/4n6EH.
These guidelines are read all over the
world and will serve you well in e-
mailing any professor (assuming that
your professor answers e-mail).

One guideline that you don’t need to
follow: you need not add your class
number and meeting time to your
signature. I’ll know who you are.

DECORUM
The atmosphere in our class should be
serious—not somber or pretentious,
but collegiate and genuinely
intellectual. No eating, sleeping,
talking, texting, or doing work for
other classes. No headphones, hoods,
IPODs, or phones. Electronic devices
should be turned off and out of sight.
Please show proper respect for our
community of learning.

DISCUSSION
Consider what the writer Thomas
Merton says about a teacher he
admired (Mark Van Doren, Columbia
University):

Most of the time he asked questions.
His questions were very good, and if
you tried to answer them
intelligently, you found yourself
saying excellent things that you did
not know you knew, and that you
had not, in fact, known before.

I like to ask questions that make
people think. I also like it when people
ask me such questions. Think of an in-
class question not as one whose
answer you’re already supposed to
know but as an invitation to think. I
know that this suggestion might go
against the grain of much of your
experience in classrooms. You should
be asking relevant questions too, of me
and perhaps of one another. Asking
questions is what's involved in critical inquiry.

One more observation on discussion, from the cultural critic Randolph Bourne:

A good discussion increases the dimensions of every one who takes part. Being rather self-consciously a mind in a group of minds means becoming more of a person.

As you can guess, I'm optimistic about discussion.

For more on questions and discussion, read "How to answer a question": http://goo.gl/DlzaG. (That's a capital I after the D.)

**GRADING**

Your grade will be based on your essays (60%), day-to-day work (20%), and participation in class and conferences (20%).

Essays receive letter grades. Other assignments receive numerical grades. Missing work of either sort receives a zero. Participation and conferences receive a numerical grade, an overall evaluation of the extent to which you're prepared and contributing: 100 (always), 85 (frequently), 75 (usually), 50 (sometimes), 0 (rarely or never).

To calculate semester grades, I use numerical equivalents for letter grades:

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>A</th>
<th>B+</th>
<th>B</th>
<th>C+</th>
<th>C</th>
<th>D+</th>
<th>D</th>
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<td>55</td>
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Sometimes when I grade writing I'll give a grade that falls between two grades—e.g., B+/A- (89.5).

For semester grades, 90 or above is an A; 80 or above is an A-; 70 or above is a B; 60 or above is a B-; below 60, an F.

**EWP**

You may include work from the course in your Electronic Writing Portfolio. Please make sure that you understand the requirements for the Electronic Writing Portfolio and that you fulfill them in a timely way. For more information: www.eiu.edu/~assess/.

**ACADEMIC INTEGRITY**

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 the representation of them as one's original work" (Random House Dictionary of the English Language)—has the right and responsibility to impose upon the guilty student an appropriate penalty, up to and including immediate assignment of a grade of F for the course.

And my statement concerning academic integrity:

Any breach of academic integrity—from a single sentence cut and pasted into a dinky little assignment to a wholly unoriginal essay—is a serious matter and will get you a serious penalty. The Student Standards office recommends an F for the course. You will also be required to take a course in ethics administered by Student Standards, whose staff will keep your misconduct on record and notify your other professors that one of their students has violated academic integrity.

You should be familiar with Eastern's statement on academic integrity and should ask if you have any questions about quoting from and/or documenting sources. But because the work of the course is to be an expression of your ideas in your words, aside from words and ideas from properly acknowledged sources, questions of plagiarism and collusion should never arise.

Do not "borrow" work or give your work to anyone (allowing someone else to make use of your work is also a breach of academic integrity and will also get you a serious penalty, up to and including an F for the course).

**PROVISIONAL OUTLINE**

Not yet. If the size of our class changes greatly, the amount of time we'll need for conferences will change, and that will make any week-by-week outline obsolete. Sit tight: there'll be an outline soon.

**ONE LAST THOUGHT**

From the historian Christopher Lasch, who became so determined to improve his students' writing that he wrote a small handbook of his own:

We learn to write well, if we ever do, by reading good prose, paying close attention to our own words, revising relentlessly, and recalling the connections between written and spoken language.