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ENG 3001-007: Advanced Composition

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English 3001 Section 07: Advanced Composition, Spring 2002

Instructor: Dr Ray Watkins
Monday and Wednesday 3 to 4:15
Coleman 340/3210, Computer Room (CR), and 306/3140, Lecture Room (LR)
Office: Coleman 339 K/3010
Email address:

Textbooks:

The Blair Handbook, Toby Fulwiler and Alan R. Hayakawa
Researching Online, David Munger etc.
A Pocket Style Manual, Diana Hacker

Materials and Essays in Course Packet (available at Copy Express in the student union):

"The Reciprocal Relationship of Workplace Culture and Review," Susan Kleimann
"Confronting Class in the Classroom," bell hooks
"White Privilege and Male Privilege: Coming to See Correspondences Through Work in Women's Studies," Peggy McIntosh
Chart: Differences Between Literary and Business English, Tom McKeown

Course Policies and Procedures

Goals: English 3001 is an advanced composition course in intellectual investigation, analysis, and argumentation that will enhance your understanding of academic and professional writing and give you practice in producing both. Our subject matter is the world of work, and the place of writing and ideas in the modern workplace. As an advanced course in writing, we will necessarily focus on honing your editorial and copy-editing expertise, from initiating and designing a research project to an oral presentation of your initial findings to a finished report.

Our goals include the refinement of skills in the following areas:

1. Using bibliographic and field research -- improve your knowledge of how libraries work and how to use them; improve your knowledge of how to go out into the world and collect information relevant to your interests as a researcher. In addition to extensive on-site workplace research, including but not limited to interviews and observations, you will familiarize yourself with library
resources (reference materials, on-line catalogues, periodical indexes, electronic databases, etc.) and online information. Reasoned arguments are dependent upon knowing how to find, evaluate, and then use good information. In addition to learning how to find information, you want to improve your skills in using that information. You cannot make use of an article or essay if you cannot summarize its basic argument and identify how it is constructed. Whatever you find in your field research must be compiled, organized, and written up in a coherent manner. Therefore, using research means finding materials, and knowing how to understand them and incorporate them into your own writing. Incorporating research materials includes knowledge of appropriate documentation styles, as well. There are several of these standardized documentation styles; we will be using MLA, but if you have a strong preference for another style (APA, for example) you are welcome to use that.

2. Critical reading -- improve your ability to read critically, to question, and to evaluate what you read. In order to be a more critical reader, you have to participate in what you are reading, actively deciphering the argument in all its parts rather than passively receiving strings of words. Active participation in this course will help to improve your ability to summarize what you read and then to evaluate the claims and assumptions on which the argument is based. Although you will be given the chance to express your own opinions frequently in this class, the process of data collection and analysis we are going to be learning is very different from simply "saying what you think" or even "presenting the facts." Writing of all kinds is less about opinions and facts per se and more about reasoned arguments. Knowing the difference between these two forms of discourse—in other words, knowing how to recognize and produce persuasive discourse—is key to success in our class, in college, and beyond.

3. Constructing arguments -- improve your ability to construct your own arguments. This skill depends on your mastery of critical reading. The better reader you are, the better writer you can be. Again, one of our aims is to learn to distinguish between an opinion and a reasoned argument based on carefully constructed texts, evidence, and so on. A major challenge of this course lies in learning to weave together disparate sorts of information and data, gathered from the field as well as from texts.
Arguments that consist of evidence of more than one kind, I believe, are the most persuasive kind.

4. Collaborative learning -- improve your ability to learn from and to teach others about your own thinking and about writing. Much of your success in this course will depend on the process of drafting and peer critiques. You will practice forming honest, thorough, and constructive critiques of your writing as well as your peers' writing, and how to make use of what you have learned from your own self-critique and that of others.

5. Clean, smart prose -- improve your ability to write clear and meaningful sentences, to compose organized and developed paragraphs, and to identify and address recurring grammatical or mechanical problems specific to your own writing (these vary from writer to writer). We will spend a lot of time talking about why so-called grammatical prose is so important to your success in college and in life.

Major Writing Assignments:

A. The primary writing tasks of our course is called the Writing in the Wild research project. This project includes several important writing assignments, including but not limited to:

- A Research Log
- An Institutional and Biographical Portrait
- An Interview with your Writer/Research Subject
- A Discussion of Preliminary Research Questions
- An Annotated Research Bibliography
- A Preliminary Research Report
- A Final Report

B. Peer Critiques: You will produce the following helpful, effective, 500 to 600 word critiques:

- On an Oral Presentation
· On a Draft Formal Report

C. Self-Commentaries: You will produce the following informative and insightful 500 to 600 word self-commentaries:

· Introduction to the Writer-Researcher
· Mid Term Writer-Researcher Check
· The Writer-Researcher: On the Semester as a Whole

You final report must be based on fifteen to twenty hours of fieldwork, including observation of your writer/research subject "in the wild"; interviews with your writer/research subject, and with at least two other participants in the writing and/or writing process of your writer/research subject; and on a critical analysis of your findings based in your own research (see your for a complete list of major writing assignments). The finished report will be between 2500 and 3000 words, and include three cited sources that we have not discussed in class.

You will be asked to do research into several key issues relevant to writing in the workplace in contemporary society, including but not limited to collaborative and individual writing processes, the ways that class, race, and gender shape writing and writers, and the contrast between so-called business and literary styles of writing. You will be introduced to these issues through reading assignments and class discussions. Your oral presentation will explore the preliminary findings of your on-going research.

Grades: You final grade will be determined as follows:

A Research Log: 10%
An Institutional and Biographical Portrait: 10%
An Interview with your Writer/Research Subject: 10%
A Discussion of Preliminary Research Questions: 05%
An Annotated Research Bibliography: 05%
A Preliminary Research Report: 10%
An Oral Report Outline and Oral Report: 10%
A Final Report: 20%
Average of Three Self Commentaries: 10%
Average of Two Peer Critiques: 10%

Other matters:

E-Mail Activity: Enrollment in this class requires an EIU e-mail account, and you must check it frequently, preferably every day, for messages pertaining to the course. You will also use this account to set up and use your own course web site (the web portfolio). 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.

Regarding the Writing Center: Collaborative services at the EIU Writing Center are free and students may drop in or schedule appointments during working hours. I would strongly recommend that you make use of this service. Collaboration, as we shall see over and over again, is key to success in any research or writing project.

Classroom Environment: In class, I expect all of you to participate in discussions. The best way to demonstrate that you are an active, engaged, and interested reader and writer 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, go ahead and ask me, either in class or via e-mail--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, you must also be willing to give and receive constructive, insightful, frank criticism! I’m sure that all of you will work very hard on your projects, but try not to let criticism of your work hurt your feelings, and don’t hold back from offering helpful advice because you think it might hurt someone else’s feelings. (Also, please do not chew gum or eat food during class, activities which are too distracting to others--drinking beverages is okay. Finally, no caps, please, but if you want to wear one, turn it backwards so I can see your eyes.)

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. If you have more than four absences this semester, your course grade will drop a full letter grade for each absence beyond
four. Also, missing a scheduled conference meeting without prior notification will result in the automatic lowering of your grade for the current project by ten points. Call or write to me via e-mail if you have to miss a conference; I will do the same if I have to reschedule. 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 of one or two other students in class so you can find out about missed assignments before you come to class.

Academic Honesty: I expect you to act honestly and do your own work in this class, and so does Eastern Illinois University. It is your responsibility to familiarize yourself with the English Department’s policy 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 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 assignment of a grade of F for the course, and to report the incident to the Judicial Affairs Office.
English 3001-07 Daily Schedule (Subject to Change)

Week One: Computer Room (Coleman 340)

M Jan 7 Introduction to the Course—discussion of course policies and procedures.  
Note: Bring Disc, Email name and password; send required e-mail message to Dr. Watkins and subscribe to class listserv before class begins on Friday.  
W Jan 9 Introduction to Each Other; Technology Workshop Introduction: Creating Folders, Downloading Files, Linking. Reading for next class, bell hooks. Homework to be assigned.

Week Two Lecture Room (Coleman 306)

M Jan 14 Discussion: bell hooks  
W Jan 16 Discussion: bell hooks

Week Three: Computer Room

M Jan 21 NO CLASS--Martin Luther King Holiday  
W Jan 23 Technology Workshop; Research Agreement due.  
Reading BH, Chapters 11 and 14; Homework to be announced.

Week Four: Lecture Room

M Jan 28 Discussion: Field Research and Research Essays  
Reading for next class, Susan Kleimann. Homework: using hooks chart as template, create chart for Kleimann as well.  
W Jan 30 Discussion: Kleimann; Self-Commentary One due.

Week Five: Computer Room

M Feb 4 Discussion: Kleimann  
W Feb 6 Open Lab Portraits, draft one, due.  
Reading: Blair Handbook (BH) Chapters 1 and 2; Homework: to be assigned.

Week Six: Lecture Room

M Feb 11 Writing Workshop  
Reading: BH Chapters 3 and 7; Homework to be assigned.  
W Feb 13 Writing Workshop

Note: Portraits, final draft due Friday February 15.  
Reading Researching Online (OR), Chapters 8 and 9; Homework to be announced.
Week Seven: Computer Room

M Feb 18 Technology Workshop; Interview Questions, due.
Reading, OR, Chapters 10 and 11; Homework to be announced.
W Feb 20 Technology Workshop
Homework: Review chart on Business versus Literary English, bring examples to class to discuss.

Note: The first Research Log Check is Friday, February 22

Week Eight: Lecture Room

M Feb 25 Discussion Business v. Literary English; Interview due.
W Feb 27 Internet and Bibliographic Research with English Librarian Karen Whisler (in the New Library!)

Note: Your second Self-commentary is due Friday, March 1.

Week Nine Computer Room

M March 4 Open Lab; Preliminary Research Questions due.
W March 6 Open Lab
Reading over break: Peggy McIntosh; as before, homework is to use hooks chart as template, write a McIntosh Chart.

Note: Annotated Research Bibliography due, Friday March 8.

Week Ten: NO CLASS--March 11 to 15 (Spring Break)

Week Eleven: Lecture Room

M March 18 Discussion: McIntosh
W March 20 Discussion: McIntosh; Preliminary Report Draft One due.
Reading: BH, Chapters 19 and 20; Homework to be announced.
Note: Research Log Check Two, Friday March 22.

Week Twelve: Computer Room

M March 25 Writing Workshop
Reading: BH, Chapters 21 and 22; Homework to be announced.
W March 27 Writing Workshop
Reading BH, Chapters 23 and 24; Homework to be announced.

Week Thirteen: Lecture Room

M April 1 Writing Workshop
Reading: BH, Chapters 25 and 26; Homework to be announced.
W April 3 Writing Workshop; Preliminary Report Draft Two, due.

**Week Fourteen: Computer Room**

M April 8 Open Lab; **Oral Report Outline**, due.
W April 10 Oral Reports; **Oral Report Peer Critiques** due one week after assigned Oral Report

**Week Fifteen: Lecture Room**

M April 15 Oral Reports
W April 17 Oral Reports

*Note: Third Research Log Check is Friday, April 19*

**Week Sixteen: Computer Room**

M April 22 Open Lab; Course Evaluations; **Final Report Draft One Due**
W April 24 Open Lab

*Note: The Peer Critique for the Final Report Draft One is due Friday, April 26. Wednesday, May 1 is the due date for the Final Draft of your Final Report, for your Final Self Commentary, and for your Website to be completed.*