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ENG 3001-005: Advanced Composition

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English 3001: Advanced Composition
fall 1997

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Hodges, Harbrace College Handbook

Course Design and Method: I have designed this course to provide you with practice in a variety of writing forms, culminating in the completion of two research projects in your field of study. Class time will be devoted to group work, peer evaluation, and discussion. Conferences with me for both groups and individuals are planned to complement class-time work and library/independent work. To complete the course successfully, you must:

1. plan two research projects in your field of study; the first project you will design in collaboration with your work group but execute alone, as an individual writer; the second project you will design and execute in collaboration with your work group; consultation with me on both projects is required;

2. meet with your work group each week and with me in conference several times during the semester in order to share your work, discuss your progress, and produce required materials as scheduled (proposals, outlines, working bibliographies, etc.); one scheduled oral report on your first project is required;

3. turn in two 1750-2500 word research papers (seven to ten double-spaced typed pages), the first on October 21 and the second on November 11;

Course Policies:

You must agree that everyone's work merits your consideration and respect, even if you do not agree with the values and/or ideas it communicates. Criticism must always be constructive -- that is, must provide specific, positive guidance for revision.

You must come to work group meetings and conferences prepared to share your work, to ask questions about your project, to try out new ideas, to discuss research problems and writing problems. You are in large part responsible for what gets done during group meetings and conferences, and your performance during them counts in my evaluation of your work at mid-term and term end.
Missing a scheduled conference or work group meeting without prior notification results in the automatic lowering of your grade for the current project one full letter. Call me to reschedule if you have to miss a conference; I will call you if I have to reschedule. Call your group members if you have to miss a meeting.

I will meet with you or your group regularly to discuss your progress -- at least once a week -- and read your work regularly, as it is produced, but I will not collect any work for grading until October 21.

Some conferences with me will be scheduled ahead of time, and additional meetings can be arranged as needed. Please feel free, however, to drop by my office during my office hours or any time you see me in my office.

I don't mind if you use the paper(s) you write for this course to fulfill other course requirements, but I suggest that you inform me and the other instructor that you plan to do so.

Final papers must be turned in on time. No exceptions.

All drafts must be typed. I cannot read handwritten work efficiently and neither can your fellow group members.

You must make copies for your own use of all materials that you turn in to me or to your group. Everyone must have a complete portfolio of required work at the end of the term.

You may use the style of documentation appropriate for your field of study.

There is no final exam for this course. The two projects you complete constitute 100% of your grade.

If you think that you cannot meet these requirements and policies, or do not wish to accept them as a binding contract with me and your classmates, please take this course with another instructor.

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.

English Department 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 representation of them as one's own original work' (Random House Dictionary) -- 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."
Tentative Schedule

Aug. 26: course introduction; in-class writing
Aug. 28: read Walker, chpt. 1 and 2; group assignments
Sept. 2: read Walker, chpt. 3 and 4; group work
Sept. 4: read Walker, chpt. 5 and 6; group work
Sept. 9, 11: read Walker, chpt. 11, 12, 13 or 14 (field specific material); paper topic proposal #1 due; group work
Sept. 16, 18: conferences (no class meetings); read Walker chpt. 7; proposal revisions due, if necessary
Sept. 23, 25: working bibliography due; group work
Sept. 30, Oct. 2: research notes due; working outline due
Oct. 7, 9: read Walker, chpt. 8; full draft due; oral reports on research findings
Oct. 14, 16: conferences (no class meetings); read Walker, chpt. 9 and 10
Oct. 21, 23: paper #1 due; group reassignments; introduction to collaborative project
Oct. 28, 30: conferences (no class meetings); paper proposal #2 due
Nov. 4, 6: conferences (no class meetings); proposal revisions due, if necessary
Nov. 11, 13: conferences (no class meetings); working bibliography due
Nov. 18, 20: conferences (no class meetings); working outline due
Nov. 25, 27: Thanksgiving Recess
Dec. 2, 4: conferences (no class meetings); full draft due
Dec. 9: class meeting; paper #2 due
Dec. 11: class meeting; paper #2 returned; course evaluations and assessments
Paper Topic Proposal

The paper topic proposals due the weeks of Sept. 9 and Oct. 28 should be carefully written essays in two parts. In the first part, describe as clearly as you can the subject of your research project. You should have narrowed your topic to a manageable level of specificity by this time, and I will expect your opening statement to demonstrate both your early background reading and careful thinking about the topic. Please take the time to develop your ideas in as much detail as possible at this point in your search. (Define specialized terms. Provide necessary background information. Cite authorities and/or sources you have used to develop your thinking on the topic.) In this section of the proposal, formulate your topic as a series of open-ended questions that you hope to answer during the course of your research project. You will improve your chances of success with the overall project if you ask probative questions that direct your search. (We will have ample opportunity in class to practice the skills necessary in framing these kinds of questions.)

In the second section of the proposal, explain your personal connection to the topic. How will finding out answers to your questions benefit you? Again, demonstrate that you have given the issues -- as they relate to you and your career goals -- careful consideration. Do not hesitate to be personal in this section of your proposal. Your group and I want to know what your motivation is for the work you are contracting to do with this proposal.

Remember as you work on this proposal that you are at an early stage of your research project and that your thinking about the topic will change as you progress. Don't use this proposal as a platform for preconceived notions; write in as objective a tone as you can assume; be prepared to revise your position/thinking on the subject as your project progresses and you become more informed. Write as though you are curious to find answers to the questions you ask, and as though finding the answers matters to you. Finally, use language precisely; make every sentence grammatically sound and clear.