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ENG 3001-005: Advanced Composition

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Regarding English 3001: Advanced Composition

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Class listserv: e3001fall@eiu.edu

Textbook:

The Blair Handbook, Fulwiler

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

“Confronting Class in the Classroom,” bell hooks  
“The Reciprocal Relationship of Workplace Culture and Review,” Susan Kleimann  
“White Privilege and Male Privilege: Coming to See Correspondences through Work in Women’s Studies,” Peggy McIntosh

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

Goals: This "Writing in the Wild" course 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. Because this is an advanced composition course, we will focus on honing your writing and editorial expertise, from initiating and designing a research project to an oral presentation of your initial findings to a polished formal report. Also, because we have the privilege of spending half of our class time in a computer lab, you will learn how to use your own EIU web page, and you will publish all of your work in this course on the Internet by linking it to this page. As you do so, you will also learn some of the basic techniques of web design, thereby acquiring a set of skills that is gaining increasing value in the marketplace for jobs.

More specifically, our goals include the refinement of skills in the following areas:

1. Constructing arguments: improve your ability to construct your own written arguments. One of our aims is to learn to distinguish between "opinion" and a "reasoned argument" based on carefully constructed points, evidence, and so on. This skill depends on your mastery of critical reading skills, which will enable you to discern
and emulate the successful argumentative strategies of other writers. The better reader you are, the better writer you can be.

2. **Critical reading**: improve your ability to read critically by questioning and evaluating 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 that we will be learning is very different from simply "saying what you think" or even "presenting the facts." Good 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 is key to success in our class, and in professional life.

3. **Bibliographic research**: improve your knowledge of how online library resources work and how to use them. In addition to extensive on-site workplace research, including but not limited to interviews and observations, you will familiarize yourself with library resources (online catalogues and periodical indexes, electronic databases, and librarians) and other online information. Reasoned arguments are dependent upon knowing how to find, evaluate, and then use good information. In addition to learning how to find appropriate information, you will improve your skills in using such sources. You cannot make effective use of an article or essay if you cannot summarize its basic argument and identify how it is constructed. Therefore, using research means finding useful materials, and knowing how to read them and incorporate them into your own writing. (Incorporating research materials also includes knowledge of appropriate documentation styles. There are several of these standardized documentation styles; we will be using APA, the widely preferred format for professional reports--more on this documentation style later.)

4. **Collaborative learning**: improve your ability to learn from others and to teach them about your own thinking and about writing. As in most professional spheres, 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 own 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, concise, 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 time talking about why a grammatically correct, clear, efficient style is so important to your success in college and in professional life.

6. **Professional life**: learn about how people write, collaborate, and interact in the professional workplace. By finding a working professional and studying that person's writing and work habits throughout the semester, and by reading and hearing periodic progress reports from your classmates on research with their writers, you will deepen your understanding of what life is like in the worlds beyond college. We will study
extensively various forms of workplace interaction, some of the typical writing practices of professional life, and significant factors that influence professional writing processes, including such matters as race, class, gender, and sexuality.

7. **Internet publishing:** learn how to build professionally presentable web sites. Although this is a writing course, an additional benefit at semester's end will be your mastery of basic web-publishing skills. This aspect of the course will be difficult at first for some of you, but I will be available for any questions or help you might need. I promise that ALL students who have patience with the computers will learn how to quickly publish and manipulate online documents. When you finally graduate from EIU, you'll be able to add a line to your professional resume asserting your skills in this area. In fact, web-publishing skills are increasingly appreciated by employers. As Jo Allen points out in her book *Writing in the Workplace*, "Web pages have become an important way to present information to the public. Businesses use Web pages for advertisements and sales. Governments at all levels publish announcements, reports, research results, and much-used forms on Web pages. Educational and health institutions use Web pages to relay course work, report data needed by various departments, and provide access to research facilities. With the expanding use of the web, you are likely to be involved in designing Web pages as part of your job assignment." Again, publishing your work on the Web will give some of you headaches at first, but I promise that it will become second nature for all of you well before the semester is over. Particular web-publishing skills that you will learn include:

- Converting word-processed documents to a web-ready format
- Transferring material from a disc or a computer to the Internet
- Using your own EIU home page (which you already have)
- Creating links to other documents of your own, and to other sites
- Creating and using an online working bibliography
- Retrieving, placing and manipulating images
- Making internal links within a document
- Publishing a polished, professionally presentable research report

**Major Writing Assignments:**

The course assignments will be divided into three major sections:

A. **The Writing in the Wild Research Project** includes:

- A formal letter confirming the arrangement at your research site
- A formal one-page proposal for your research project
- An informal, two-page written report on your preliminary research findings
- A formal, analytical report (2,500 to 3,000 words) on your research findings
- A formal letter of thanks to your writer in the wild

B. **Peer Critiques** (300-500 words each):

- On a proposal draft
- On two oral presentations
· On a formal report draft

C. Self-Commentaries (300-500 words each):

· On formal letter and proposal writing
· On the oral presentation
· On the semester as a whole

Your final analytical report will be based on ten to twenty hours of observation of professional writing "in the wild"; on interviews with your contact, and with other participants in the writing process; and on a critical analysis of your findings based on your own research. The finished report will be 2,500 to 3,000 words long, and it will incorporate at least two of our in-class readings and include as well three cited sources that we have not discussed in class.

You will be asked to read about and do research into several key issues relevant to writing in the contemporary workplace. You will be introduced to these issues through reading assignments and class discussions. Again, your oral presentation will explore the preliminary findings of your on-going research; this will also be a chance to receive further input and advice on your project from your peers.

Grades:

Your final grade will be determined as follows:

A formal letter confirming the arrangement at your research site 5%
A formal one-page proposal for your research project 10%
An informal, two-page written report on the preliminary findings of your research 10%
A formal oral report on your preliminary research findings 20%
A formal, analytical report (2,500 to 3,000 words) on your research findings 25%
Average of three peer-critiques 10%
Average of three self-commentaries 10%
Miscellaneous writing assignments and class participation (including attendance) 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. I will subscribe you to our class listserv (also known as a "discussion list") with your EIU e-dress, so even if you've been using another e-mail service, you must use your EIU account for this course. You can use this account on the Internet, at www.eiu.edu/mvmail. You will also use your EIU e-mail account to publish writings for this class on your own web site (as you'll discover, you already have a web site, courtesy of EIU). 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. Again, using an e-mail account frequently is crucial for this course—if you do not send me an e-mail message at the above address by the beginning of class on Friday, August 30, I will assume that you have chosen against fully participating in the course, and I will therefore drop you.
your message, 1) describe yourself in whatever way you choose, including your career aspirations; 2) list at least two types of "writers in the wild" whose writing you might like to research during this semester—are these people you already know? if not, how might you find and contact such professional writers?; and 3) write a statement to the effect that you have read and agree with these course policies and procedures.

Regarding the Writing Center: Tutoring services at the English Department’s Writing Center are free and students may drop in or schedule appointments during working hours. If you have had problems with grammar, punctuation, spelling, etc., I strongly recommend that you make use of this service.

Classroom Environment: In class, I expect all of you to participate in discussions (class participation will be figured into your final grade), and to attend regularly. 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 your prior notification will result in the automatic lowering of your grade for the current assignment 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 Daily Schedule
Fall, 2002

(this schedule may be subject to change, so be sure to check it regularly)

Week One (Computer Room, Coleman 3120)

M AUG 26 Introduction to the Course: discussion of course policies and procedures

• read the Frequently Asked Questions for this course; if you have other questions or concerns, ask Dr. Engles by writing to him at cftde@eiu.edu

W AUG 28 Technology Workshop: Setting Up Your 3001 Disc

• bring a new, blank computer disc to class
• In order to familiarize yourself more fully with what you'll be doing in this course, read Major Steps in the Writing in the Wild Research Project

F AUG 30 Working with Your EIU Homepage

• send the required e-mail message to Tim Engles by the beginning of class today; in your message, 1) describe yourself in whatever way you choose, including your career aspirations, 2) list at least two types of "writers in the wild" whose writing you might like to research during this semester—are these people you already know? if not, how might you find and contact such professional writers? (for a list of writers other students in this course have worked with, click here), and 3) write a statement to the effect that you have read and agree with these course policies and procedures.
• bring to class a disc, your EIU e-mail login, and your password (to see your login, EIU e-dress, and EIU web site, click here, enter your name in the search box, and press Enter)

Week Two (Discussion Room, Coleman 3130)

M SEP 2 LABOR DAY: NO CLASSES

W SEP 4 Course packet reading: bell hooks, “Confronting Class in the Classroom”

• read the first half of hooks’ article, and bring to class and turn in one written question in response to it

F SEP 6 bell hooks

• read the second half of hooks’ article, and bring to class and turn in a one- or
two-paragraph summary of what you see as her main point or points

Week Three (Computer Room, Coleman 3120)

M SEP 9 getting to know (or reacquainting yourself with) the Blair Handbook

• Bring your copy of the Blair Handbook to class
• bring a one-page explanation of why you will probably find two particular sections or chapters of this book useful this semester for improving your writing

W SEP 11 Technology Workshop: Converting Documents to HTML

• Blair Handbook: Chapter 59, "Writing in Business"
• bring your 3001 disc and work on Confirmation Letter in class, including proper tone, sufficient content, and acceptable formatting
• the letter should: briefly describe yourself and why you have sought out this particular person; confirm arrangements you've already discussed; very briefly describe the "writing in the wild" project, and mention that you've included a longer, printed description of the project; thank your writer for agreeing to work with you; accurately list the URL for your assignment index, in case this person would like to follow the progress of this project online; and state that you're looking forward to working with this person
• bring a brief, written description of who your "writer in the wild" will be this semester, including name, contact information, and workplace (if you don't come to class today, you must send this information to Dr. Engles via e-mail by 5 p.m.); penalty for not turning in this information by today--20% deduction in Confirmation Letter grade

F SEP 13 Technology Workshop: Design Issues in HTML

• bring to class, on disc, a draft of your Confirmation Letter
• practice alternative mode of saving word-processed documents to html
• plan to include a copy of the Research Project description as an enclosure with your letter when you send it; click here to print the description out in the lab
• Confirmation Letter Draft One due (must be published on your website by the end of class and linked to your Assignment Index)
• sign up in class for conference on worksite research and Confirmation Letter

Week Four (Discussion Room, Coleman 3130)

M SEP 16 No class--conferences on worksite research and Confirmation Letters
(remember, there is a penalty for missed conferences; if you can't make it, call ahead of time to reschedule)

• Reading: Blair Handbook, Chapter 14, "Field Research"
• come to conference (today or Wednesday) prepared to describe your general plans for working with your writer in the wild, based in part on your Blair reading (Chapter 14)--identify during the conference which sections of this chapter look useful for your research
• bring TWO printed copies of your Confirmation Letter Draft
• bring any questions you have about publishing items on your web site

W SEP 18 No class--conferences on worksite research and Confirmation Letters

• **Confirmation Letter Final Draft due** (publish Letter after your conference; **must be published by 10 p.m., unless you make other arrangements with me ahead of time**)

F SEP 20 Course packet: Susan Kleimann, “The Reciprocal Relationship of Workplace Culture and Review”

• read the first half of Kleimann’s article, and bring to class and turn in one written question in response to it
• discussion of proposal guidelines

**Week Five (Computer Room)**

M SEP 23 Kleimann

• read the second half of Kleimann’s article, and, by class time on Monday, send to the class listserv one, three-part question series about Kleimann's article, based on the bell hooks handout format

W SEP 25 Open Writing Workshop

• work on your proposals in class
• ask any questions you have about your web site
• **Proposal Draft One Due by 10 p.m. Thursday night**
• note that by next Monday at noon, you’ll need to go to a classmate's web site and then post on your site a peer critique of his or her research proposal, in accordance with the peer review guidelines

F SEP 27 ......

**Week Six (Discussion Room)**

M SEP 30 Course Packet: Peggy McIntosh, “White Privilege and Male Privilege: Coming to See Correspondences through Work in Women’s Studies”

• read the first half of McIntosh's article, and bring to class and turn in one written question in response to it
• **Proposal Draft Peer Critique due by Monday at noon**
• **Proposal Final Draft due by Tuesday (2/12) at 10 p.m.**

W OCT 2 McIntosh

• read the second half of McIntosh's article, and, by class time on Wednesday, send to the class listserv one, three-part question series about McIntosh's article, based
on the bell hooks and Susan Kleimann handouts format

**F OCT 4 Class Discussion: Finding and Organizing Research Sources**

- read before class in *The Blair Handbook*, Section 15b, "Electronic Resources," and Chapter 16, "Sources"
- bring your *Blair Handbook* to class

**Week Seven (Computer Room)**

**M OCT 7 Technology Workshop: Design Issues and Techniques**

- read before class in *Online!,* sections 2c through 2j
- in class: locate and download an appropriate image from the internet, then publish it on your Assignment Index (we'll talk about how to do this during class--for directions, click here)
- in class (if you have time after the "image" tasks--if not, do it by 5 p.m. on Tuesday): post a message to our class listserv describing your research: describe your writer, and how your research is going so far

**W OCT 9 Technology Workshop: Online Research, Selecting Reliable Sources**

- Reading: review and generally familiarize yourself with the *Blair Handbook*, Chapter 57, "Social Sciences" (this chapter explains APA documentation style; this is the style most commonly used for business documents, and you'll be using it for your final report)
- by the end of class today (or by 5 p.m. Thursday at the latest), link to your assignment index an annotated bibliography of five sources (formatted in APA style) that will be useful in supporting and further shaping your research (use the criteria described in *Blair*, Chapter 15, to evaluate the apparent reliability of these sources); title this document "Working bibliography and research links," and link it to that section of your assignment index; throughout the rest of the semester, add links to any web sites that also become useful in your work for this class so that you can use this list of links as a handy gathering of online research sources; you can model your bibliography after this one, and don't worry about setting things up in nice tables and boxes and so on--a straightforward list of annotated links is fine. Also, the items need to be in APA style--list more than the name of the web site.

**R OCT 10 Self-Commentary One** must be posted on your website by 10 p.m.

- normal deadline rules begin with this assignment: fifteen points off for each day late; also, all previous assignments must also be posted by this time--any previous assignments not posted will receive a zero

**F OCT 11 Open Lab--work on updating your assignment index**

- turn in a written analysis of one of the Internet sites linked to your "Working bibliography and research links" that answers the "reporter's questions" about it,
as described in the *Blair Handbook*, 225-32

**Week Eight (Discussion Room)**

M OCT 14 Using Online Research Sources

- Special Guest: Karen Whisler, EIU Librarian
- Don’t come to our regular classroom! Instead, we will meet Karen Whisler at 1:00 (be on time!) in the foyer of the North entrance of your sparkling, newly renovated Booth Library

W OCT 16 Discussion: Business versus Literary English (based on the last, one-page reading in our course packet--bring this to class): WHY are various documents written in either of these ways? What purposes do different writing styles serve?

F OCT 18 FALL BREAK: NO CLASSES

**Week Nine (Computer Room)**

M OCT 21 Discussion of preliminary report requirements and other plans for the future

- Grammar Workshop and Technology Workshop: How to Avoid Excessive Usage of Passive Voice Constructions

W OCT 23 Grammar Workshop: How to Use Commas Accurately

- conference sign-up sheet passed around in class today

F OCT 25 Open Technology Workshop

- preliminary report draft one must be published by the end of class (1:50 p.m.); Dr. Engles will send you comments on this draft via e-mail (at the address linked to our online class list); the final draft, revised in response to those comments, must be posted by 10 p.m. on Friday, March 22
- attendance not required--I’ll be there in the lab, if anyone wants to work on their preliminary reports or other aspects of their web sites

**Week Ten (Discussion Room)**

M OCT 28 Discussion: Delivering Effective Oral Presentations

- Homework: write and bring to class a one-page description of an especially good OR an especially bad oral presentation that you have given--what in particular went well, or didn’t go well? What would you do differently?
- In-class video: "Time to Stand and Deliver"
- Discussion of Oral Presentation Guidelines
- Oral presentation schedule and peer review pairings handed out

W OCT 30 NO CLASS: Conferences on oral presentations and preliminary report drafts
• bring two printed copies of your Preliminary Report Draft to your conference (in CH 3831)
• look closely at the writing style of your Preliminary Report Draft; find two or three areas of your writing that you still need to work on, and bring to your conference two or three labels for these problems (passive voice, commas, choppy sentence style, awkward sentence structure, wordiness, etc.); also, bring your Blair Handbook; be able to identify the sections in this book that offer advice on these particular problems; and tell Dr. Engles how you found this advice from the book helpful, or perhaps, unhelpful
• also be prepared to discuss your general plans for your Oral Presentation, and to ask any questions that you have about it

F NOV 1 NO CLASS: Conferences on oral presentations

• preliminary report final draft must be published by 1:00 p.m. today

Week Eleven (Don't go to Coleman Hall--Go to Booth Library, Room 4440)

M NOV 4 through F NOV 8: Oral Presentations

• "Oral presentation peer critique" deadline: one week after the second of the two presentations you critique
• “Self commentary on oral presentation” deadline: one week after your own presentation (both must be posted on your website, and you must also notify Dr. Engles via an e-mail message that you have posted each item); write and publish as a link to your assignment index a one-paragraph self-commentary on your oral presentation, answering these questions: How well do you think your presentation went? What would you do differently if you could do it again? What did any of your classmates do that you think you could have done to improved your own presentation?

Week Twelve (Go to Booth Library, Room 4440, 4000-level)

M NOV 11 through F NOV 15: Oral Presentations

Week Thirteen (Computer Room)

M NOV 18 Writing Workshop: Regarding the Final Report

• Keep working all week on your report, including additional outside readings, interviews, observations, writing the report itself, and so on

W NOV 20 Writing Workshop: Passive vs. Active Voice & Working with Attachments

• Read before class: Blair Handbook, 432-36 (BE SURE to bring your book to class)
• Sign up for conferences on final report pairings for in-class passive vs. active voice exercise: TBA
• In-class exercise: (1)cut and paste a paragraph TWICE from a classmate's final
preliminary report into a blank Word page (find your partner's page here); (2) in the second version of the paragraph, identify any "passive" verbs, and then change them to "active" verbs; (3) save the two paragraphs as a Word document on your disc; (4) open your e-mail account in web e-mail, and send the revised version to your classmate AS AN ATTACHMENT (not in the body of the message); (5) when you receive your partner's attached copy of two versions of your paragraph, open it in Word; (6) look over the changes, then write below the second paragraph a response to EACH changed sentence--do you think it sounds better, or not? Also, write a couple of sentences in response to this question: do you think excessive use of passive voice is a problem in your writing? (7) Then send this entire document (which is probably 1.5 or so pages) to Dr. Engles as an attachment (cftde@eiu.edu)

F NOV 22 Open Lab: work on your final report

NOVEMBER 25-29 THANKSGIVING RECESS

Week Fourteen

WORK HARD ALL WEEK ON YOUR FINAL REPORT, EVEN AFTER YOU GET THE ROUGH DRAFT PUBLISHED!! Also, bring two hard copies of your rough draft to your conference.

M DEC 2 NO CLASS—Conferences on final report

• final report rough draft must be published by noon today

W DEC 4 NO CLASS—Conferences on final report

F DEC 6 NO CLASS—Conferences on final report

• peer review of a classmate's report draft must be published by noon today; also, due at this time: an e-mail message to the person whose draft you critiqued, telling that person that your critique is published, and where it is (include the URL in your e-mail message)

Week Fifteen (Computer Room)

M DEC 9 Technology Workshop: Creating Internal Links, Fine-tuning Your Web Site

• For instructions on creating links within a page to another section in that page, click here.

W DEC 11 Writing Workshop: Revising and Editing, Revising versus Editing

• Reading and Writing Assignment: Go to the Plain English Network and familiarize yourself with the site by clicking around and finding out what's there; then find their "major guidance document--WRITING USER-FRIENDLY DOCUMENTS," and peruse the online version (you can also print out a printable version). Find two
sections of this guidance document containing advice that you think will be helpful toward editing your report; write down the titles of these two areas, and be able to tell the class why you found the advice they offer useful.

F DEC 13 Last day of classes (no final exam): Meet in the Computer Room for Final Instructions, Tearful, Heartfelt Good Byes, etc.

- due date for the Final Draft of your Final Report (must be published by 5:00 p.m.)
- Final Self-commentary must be published by Monday, April 29, at 5 p.m.; final fine-tuning of web site also due at this time
- Also by Monday at 5:00, write your final Formal Letter, make a hard copy and send it to your writer in the wild, AND send a copy of the letter in the body of an e-mail message to Dr. Engles (cftde@eiu.edu)