2014

101-16 English Composition

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Xavier University
Spring Semester
College of Arts and Sciences

Course Name: English Composition
Course Number: ENGL 101
Section Number: 16
Meeting Times: T 7:00 pm – 9:30 pm
Location: Cintas Center 201
Instructor's Name: James Matthew Cummings
E-mail address: cummingsj3@xavier.edu
Office: Hinkle Hall, Room 243
Office Hours: T 6:00 pm - 6:50 pm and by appointment
Phone: 513-745-3219

(Be advised: I don't check my voice mail often, so use this as a last resort. I'll respond to email within twenty-four hours during the week. On the weekends and holidays, I cannot guarantee an immediate response.)

Course Description:
We seldom realize it, but writing isn't something we do just in formal academic settings. In our day-to-day lives, the call to write comes in many different situations, and each of those different contexts require us to make appropriate choices in order to communicate effectively. Whether it's an academic research essay, a personal statement for a scholarship application, or a social media update in which you assert your position on a topical public issue, when we write, we first must have a thorough understanding of all the critical factors involved that will influence how our audience will experience and understand our text.

In this course, we will be developing skills that allow us to communicate effectively, not just by writing "correctly", but by crafting texts that actively engage with the rhetorical situation. In addition to giving us an opportunity to make our views known to others, writing can be a process of discovery, and the projects we'll work on this semester will help us to explore and understand ourselves, our communities, and the issues that are important to all of us.

Revision will also be an important focus in the course. As we'll see, revision isn't something we do at the end of the writing process. Revision begins before we type our first word. Students will
submit several drafts of each essay, as well as reflections on the writing process that will help us to become more mindful and deliberate about our choices.

English 101 fulfills a Core Curriculum Requirement. It particularly reinforces the first goal, "students will be effective communicators in writing and orally," and its three student learning outcomes: 1) students will organize and express their ideas in writing and orally; 2) students will formulate clear and arguable theses, supported by evidence drawn from appropriate sources; and 3) students will utilize an effective writing process guided by audience, purpose, cultural context, and disciplinary standards.

Required Texts:

Classroom Text: Please bring your text book with you to every class period.

Blackboard: Although there is a textbook for this course, students will be accessing a number of different texts via the course's Blackboard site. This site should be accessible through every student's MyXU portal. Because we will be using Blackboard to view readings, submit work, and engage in discussions with one another throughout the semester, students must be able to have frequent access to this site. If you encounter trouble accessing the site, it is imperative that you contact XU IT Help Desk and have the issue resolved immediately. You may call them at 513.745.4357, or visit them at the Connection Center Desk on the main floor of the Conaton Learning Commons.

Being unable to access the course materials through Blackboard will not be an acceptable excuse for failure to participate in class discussions or failure to submit assignments on time.

Attendance:
Attendance is required and will be recorded at the start of each class meeting. Your active participation in this class will help you to achieve the goals of this course and accomplish your personal academic goals. Therefore, your regular attendance and informed and active participation are expected.

Any dates and/or assignments on the course calendar are tentative and can change. In the event that you must miss class, you are to notify me by email. However, it is your responsibility to find out what you missed and to complete all work by referring to the course Blackboard page. Because most course work will be submitted online, assignments are to be submitted by the assigned time and date, whether you are present in class or not. Because some assignments, such as in-class writing assignments and peer reviews, are designed to facilitate class discussion, these assignments cannot be made up. There are no exceptions to this rule. Again, it is each student's responsibility to stay informed about any calendar and assignment changes that occur.

I understand that missing class is sometimes unavoidable, therefore a student will not be penalized for missing class unless he or she misses three consecutive class meetings without contacting me by email. If a student misses three consecutive class meetings without contacting me by email, he or she will not be given a passing grade for the course, nor will he or she be
given a grade of \textit{Incomplete}. And remember, students are expected to submit assignments when the assignments are due whether they are present in class meetings or not.

\textbf{Texting, Cell Phone, Computer, Laptop, Smart Phone, Portable Music Players and Miscellaneous Electronic Device Use Policy:}

During class meetings, students are not permitted to use electronic devices, such as cell phones, laptops, or portable music players, unless I explicitly give permission for in-class activities. If a student is seen or suspected of using one of these devices during the class meeting, he or she will be marked as absent for that class period and any in-class work for the day will be given a grade of Zero. If a student is recorded as having any more than five absences due to misuse of these devices, his or her final grade for the course will be lowered one letter grade.

\textbf{Deadlines and Late Work:}

Most of the course work will be submitted online using the course Blackboard page. All work is to be submitted by the assigned time and date, whether you are present in class or not. Grades for essays submitted after the due date will be automatically reduced by 10%, and by 5% for each subsequent day past the due date. After one week, late essays will no longer be accepted and will receive no credit for the assignment. In-class assignments, such as in-class writings and peer workshops cannot be made up.

\textbf{Plagiarism:}

Representing the work of another as your own, whether through direct copying, unattributed paraphrasing, or inadequate citation practices constitutes plagiarism. If you do not know how to give credit where credit is due—and that is a legitimate concern—see me and we will review the process. A paper that is plagiarized in whole or in part will receive an F, the student producing it will receive an F in the course, and the paper will be turned over to the administrative supervisors to determine further action. Plagiarism can be grounds for dismissal from the University.

Also, all work submitted must be created originally for this course. This means that you may not "self-plagiarize", or submit work, in whole or in part, that was created or submitted for another course. Any "self-plagiarized" work submitted for this course will receive an F.

\textbf{Submission of Work:}

It is expected that all essays submitted for a grade will be saved as a Microsoft Word document, typed in a standard 12-point font, double-spaced, and with one-inch margins on all sides. Documents are to be saved with file names appearing as:

\texttt{LastName.FirstName.AssingmentName.docx} (or .doc).

So, if the student Flannery O'Connor were submitting a research essay, her document would be given the following file name:

\texttt{O'Connor.Flannery.ResearchEssay.docx}
Discussion Board posts, such as Early Drafts and Critical Responses, submitted on Blackboard, must be typed or pasted directly into the discussion forum. There should be no attachments posted into the Discussion Board.

**Evaluation:**

Your writing this semester will be evaluated primarily for its rhetorical effectiveness. Does it adequately consider the audience to whom it is addressed? Is it convincing, captivating, inventive? It will also be evaluated for classroom values that demonstrate your preparation for the tasks at hand, your participation in class conversation and collaboration, and engagement in the common texts and tasks. A third measure will be made of the academic value of your text. Does it speak, when it is supposed to, to an audience of scholars? Does it contribute to the production and dissemination of new knowledge? You will be given the chance to revise your work for inclusion in a final portfolio.

**Grading:**

This class will require about two hours of work a week outside of every credit hour of class. That’s about 6 hours of work a week. Work will range from reading, to researching, to writing. Your grade will be calculated based on the project weights listed below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>100-94%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A-</td>
<td>93-90%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B+</td>
<td>89-87%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>86-84%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B-</td>
<td>83-80%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>76-74%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C-</td>
<td>73-70%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C+</td>
<td>79-77%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D+</td>
<td>69-67%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>66-64%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>63% and below</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

You should refer to the English Department Grading Rubric (copies will be distributed in class) to familiarize yourself with the qualities an essay should have to receive a respective letter grade.

**Assignments:**

Working Drafts (approximately 30% of final grade)

* Because in this class we will be approaching writing as a process in which revision plays a significant role, students will submit several drafts of each of their writing projects. As we will discuss in class, what we are calling "working drafts" are different from "first drafts," "rough drafts," "free writing," and "brainstorming." Working Drafts will be submitted to Blackboard after the Peer Review. They must be typed and must meet the requirements discussed in class. Each Working Draft will receive detailed comments from the instructor as well as a grade. Students will use the comments from the instructor and their peers to revise these drafts for the Final Portfolio.

* Students will also include a Writer's Reflection of 250-300 words with their Working Draft discussing the writing and revision process. If a thoughtful Writer's Reflection is not included with a draft, the student's score will be reduced by 10%.

Final Portfolio (approximately 45% of final grade)
Throughout the course, we will work on five formal writing projects—Personal Narrative, Textual Analysis, Constructing an Argument, Researched Problem/Solution Essay, as well as the English Department Common Essay. At the end of the semester, each student will assemble a Final Portfolio, which will consist of revised final drafts of three of the first four projects (the Personal Narrative will not be included).

English Department Common Essay (approximately 10% of final grade)

* This assignment is required for all English 101 students at Xavier and will be the last essay you write during the semester. More information will be provided regarding the details of this assignment.

Final Exam (approximately 10% of final grade)

* You will compose a Final Reflective Essay during the exam period discussing your journey through the course. You may bring outlines, notes, and any other materials that might be helpful, but the essay itself must be written during the exam period.

Peer Workshops

* We will discuss the Peer Review process in detail during class. Because these activities are designed around one-on-one, face-to-face interactions with your peers, Peer Reviews cannot be made up. **Missing a Peer Review, being unable to participate because of an incomplete draft, or otherwise being unprepared, will result in a deduction of 10% from the grade of your essay for that unit.**

In-Class Writing, Critical Responses, Rhetoric at Work, MLA Exercises, and Quizzes (approximately 5% of final grade)

* Again, because writing is a process that involves careful critical reading and thorough exploration of the many possibilities available in creating a text, we will be engaging in many different activities in each unit in order to build our texts from the ground up. Some of these activities include reading response exercises, informal reflective writing, invention exercises, style exercises, revision exercises, and editing exercises. Many of these activities will be done in class, some collaboratively, while others will be completed by each student independently and shared with the class, either during class time or via the Blackboard Discussion Board. These will be graded "credit/no credit" and will not be accepted late.

* Learning to communicate effectively through writing requires that we learn to read texts (both others' and our own) critically. Effective, thoughtful, and thorough reading skills are important for this. To develop our critical reading skills, we will be writing Critical Responses (and sometimes taking unannounced quizzes in class). We will discuss Critical Responses in detail early on in the course.

**Public Writing:**

All work in this class is public, and will be read by the instructor and fellow students. Please keep this in mind when writing texts.
### Tentative Assignment Calendar

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Day/Date</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Assignments Due</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Tuesday, January 14 | Course Introduction  
In Class Writing  
Discuss Critical Reading/About Written Critical Responses  
Introduce Personal Narrative Assignment |                                                                          |
| Tuesday, January 21 | Discuss Reading  
Invention/Topic Exploration  
Brainstorming Outlines | Assigned Reading:  
*St. Martin's* p. 1-22, 32-45  
Personal Narrative Early Draft  
Posted to Blackboard by 7pm, Fri., Jan. 17.  
Response to another student's draft due 7pm, Tues. Jan. 21 |
| Tuesday, January 28 | Peer Review  
Discuss Reading  
Discuss Revision | Assigned Reading:  
*St. Martin's* p. 22-30, 45-47, 561-572  
Peer Review  
Copy of Personal Narrative |
| Tuesday, February 4 | Introduce Textual Analysis Assignment  
MLA Introduction | Personal Narrative Working Draft  
Assigned Reading:  
"Backpacks & Briefcases"  
"Gender Roles and Mrs. Doubtfire"  
"Introducing: Lady Loser Comedy"  
(Download from Blackboard)  
Rhetoric at Work |
| Tuesday, February 11 | In-Class Writing  
View Video  
"Killing Us Softly" | Chosen Text  
Early Draft Textual Analysis  
Assigned Reading:  
*St. Martin's* p. 626-639 |
| Tuesday, February 18 | Discuss Reading  
Peer Review | Copy of Textual Analysis  
Rhetoric at Work |
| Tuesday, February 25 | Library Visit  
Introduce Argumentative Essay Assignment | Textual Analysis Working Draft |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Events</th>
<th>Assignments</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tuesday, March 4</td>
<td>Spring Break—No Class</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tuesday, March 11</td>
<td>Discuss Reading Brainstorming/Invention Workshop</td>
<td>Assigned Reading: <em>St. Martin’s</em> p. 242-260, 274-286 Critical Response Early Draft Argumentative Essay</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tuesday, March 18</td>
<td>Discuss Reading Peer Review</td>
<td>Assigned Reading: <em>St. Martin’s</em> p. 260-265, 286-291 One Copy Argumentative Essay Assignment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tuesday, March 25</td>
<td>Introduce Research Assignment: Choosing a Topic Library Visit</td>
<td>Working Draft Argumentative Essay Assignment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tuesday, April 1</td>
<td>Discuss Reading Effective Research Strategies MLA (Re)Introduction</td>
<td>Assigned Reading: <em>St. Martin’s</em> p. 296-310, 330-341 Critical Response Rhetoric at Work</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tuesday, April 8</td>
<td>Library Visit</td>
<td>Assigned Reading: <em>St. Martin’s</em> p. 322-328, 341-346 Critical Response Research Proposal/Early Draft (Due by end of class period)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tuesday, April 15</td>
<td>Peer Workshop Distribute English Dept. Common Essay Handout</td>
<td>One Copy of Research Essay</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tuesday, April 22</td>
<td>About Common Essay In-Class Writing</td>
<td>Working Draft Research Essay Assigned Reading: &quot;Academically Adrift&quot; &quot;Our Underachieving Colleges&quot; &quot;The Practical University&quot; (Available in Blackboard)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tuesday, April 29</td>
<td>Discuss Common Essay Topic Revision Workshop</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tuesday, May 6</td>
<td>Final Exam Reflective Essay</td>
<td>Final Portfolio</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Disclaimer: “The instructor reserves the right to amend this syllabus as deemed necessary and will communicate such amendment to the students in the course.”