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101-19/20 English Composition

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English 101

Required Course Materials:
- Other reading materials will be available on Blackboard, in the “Course Content” section, and arranged in folders by inquiry. I expect you in all cases to bring these materials for discussion and analysis. You will need to be able to print out readings, so if you do not have a printer, familiarize yourself with the location of computer labs and printers around campus.
- A notebook or loose-leaf paper for in-class writing (and a pen or pencil).
- Recommended: A folder or binder for organizing our handouts and written assignments.

Course Description: First off, this is a writing course. I will ask you to write, many, many pages, since our assumption is that the first step toward improved writing is, in fact, to write. But, of course, one does not write independently of other skills. In addition to a working knowledge of writing conventions, reflection, creativity, research, and critical thinking are essential to meaningfully, usefully, and successfully engaging in communication. Especially, you need to be curious, to ask questions about yourself, the texts we read, the world we live in. Writing, like any form of communication, does not happen in a vacuum. Therefore, we will examine the social and cultural contexts of communication, including college-level writing.

The course will be divided into five sections. As each section culminates in a paper, each sequence’s topics are coordinated with specific writing activities that will prepare you for college-level writing and critical thinking.

Participation – Preparation, Discussion, Sensitivity: This means that discussion is a very important component of each of our class meetings. I expect that you will come to class prepared to discuss the day’s assignment. You will need not only read the text but read in an observant, analytical manner. Take notes. Write in the margins. If there is a writing assignment focusing on a particular element of the text, focus on that element as you read but you should not neglect other ideas. This is particularly the case if these ideas interest you personally. You may want to raise these issues in the classroom yourself, especially if you plan to write about them in a major paper; the classroom is an excellent place to test the strength of your own ideas. If you pay attention and remain active and engaged during reading and during discussion you will have a much easier time completing assignments and papers. Taking notes is actually a good idea. If you enjoy staring at a blank screen or frantically typing mundane and incoherent ideas, feel free to disregard the preceding advice.

We are all learners in this classroom, the instructor included. We all have different and therefore valuable perspectives. I know that some of you may feel uncomfortable speaking up. If this is the case I will try to call on you individually so that you may contribute. But it is ultimately your responsibility to make sure your voice is heard. Of course, if you are
inclined to be confident and speak often, be aware that others who might not be as confident need to contribute as well; be mindful of your peers.

And in particular, be mindful of the language you use. One of the assumptions of this class is that language is both powerful and an indication of social intentions and values. Be self-critical; as you speak, reflect on your language. Be polite, though don’t feel you need to be stuffy. I encourage you to be engaged and excited, but I don’t tolerate mean-spirited comments and actions. Also be aware that some language is offensive and will not be acceptable. Stereotypes exists and people often act according to them but people are always more complicated. Please do not reduce people to stereotypical generalizations of their ethnicity, race, class, gender, sexuality, nationality, political orientation, etc. I will be happy to discuss with you any questions you have. I know that, depending on the situation, the line is not at all discreet.

**Course Rules for Professional Behavior:** No laptops, smartphones, iPads, iPods, or electronic equipment of any kind are to be used during class by students, unless I have granted permission, or their use is part of an assignment. When you are in class, you need to be as present as you possibly can. If you want to be absent, don’t come.

**Attendance, Absences, and Tardiness:** In order to participate according to the above parameters, you must, of course, be present. Regular attendance is required. You have four absences. Use them wisely. Unless you have a constitution of steel, you will get sick often in your first year of college; dorms, and universities in general, are Petri dishes for pestilence and disease. And from experience, I know the unexpected and the expected is liable to happen. If you are absent, you are responsible for obtaining updates to the schedule. Late arrivals are disruptive and inconsiderate. I will take attendance at the beginning of class. If you arrive late you are responsible for making certain your attendance is noted, and inquiring after handouts and assignments. If you arrive late, you may not participate in or receive grades for activities you have missed. For each absence over 4, you will lose 10 points.

**Grading Policies:** Your grade will be based on the following assignments, totaling 500 pts.
- 1st Paper: Communication Autoethnography (75 pts. or 15%)
- 2nd Paper: Rhetorical Analysis (100 pts. or 20%)
- 3rd Paper: Issue Research Paper (125 pts. or 25%)
- 4th Paper: Group Genre Project (50 pts. or 10%)
- 5th Paper: Common Assignment (50 pts. or 10%)
- Informal Assignments, Quizzes, and Participation (100 pts. or 20%)

Final tabulated points will indicate grades based on the following scale:
A = 500 – 465 pts
A- = 450 – 464 pts.
B+ = 435 – 449 pts.
B = 415 – 434 pts.
B- = 400 – 414 pts.
C+ = 385 – 399 pts.
C = 365 – 384 pts.
C- = 350 – 364 pts.
D+ = 335 – 350 pts.
D = 315 – 334 pts.
D- = 300 – 314 pts.
F = 0 – 299 pts.

Writing and Grading: I try to be fairly broad-minded in what I value in my students’ writing. I generally value creativity and expression of individual voice and will often give you the opportunity to write creatively. If you venture into unexplored territory, you will rarely be punished for it, as long as you keep in mind the assignment criteria. In academic writing I value clarity of argument and critical thinking. But feel free to use your own voice rather than what you consider to be academic style as you compose academic papers. In fact, I prefer that you do so; you will generally produce more lucid, purposeful writing. Correct prose (syntax, grammar, spelling) is important as well, but secondarily so. Nevertheless, incorrect prose will affect your grade up to 10 percentage points. If I can’t understand what you are saying, it is difficult to grade it. And incorrect prose can sometimes, if not always, indicate unclear ideas. The quality of your ideas is important but the expression of them is no less so. These are tips you might consider and they also indicate what is permissible – from my perspective – in your writing. They are general but please use them as a heads-up, a helpful hint in case you were wondering.

Of course, each of the five paper assignments will require different, specific parameters. I will notify you at least two weeks in advance of the assignment’s due date as to what those requirements will be. To receive the highest grade you will need to meet all specific requirements. These papers will receive a percentage grade according to their stated requirements.

Quizzes and informal assignments, individual or group, will receive a point total as assigned. Some informal assignments will be longer and more involved and may be worth up to 10 points. At the end of the semester, these assignments will total 100 pts. (See above).

Required Format for Papers:
• Typed and stapled
• Double spaced (that’s at least 21 lines per page so check your WP template)
• 1 inch margins
• Times New Roman 12 point font
• Meaningfully titled (not simply by the name of the assignment)
• Numbered pages
• MLA format for all citations

Drafting and Revisions: Drafting and revision are an important part of the writing process. We will work on drafting and revision prior to the due date of all major papers, so you will have time to develop each. Because peer response is an important part of the course and contributes to your development as a writer, your grade will be impacted if you are absent for the in-class peer evaluation or if you do not complete other peer evaluation activities (e.g., online sessions).

You may revise one of the first three individual papers 1, 2, or 3. This revision will be the last day of class. If you choose to revise I recommend that you conference with me in person with your original graded paper in hand. Along with your revised paper you will need to submit a memo detailing the revisions you made and the reasons behind them. I also need
you to turn in the original graded copy with your revision. If the revised paper receives a higher grade, the previous paper’s grade will be dropped and replaced with the higher grade.

**Late Papers/Late Assignments:** Late papers will be reduced by 5 percentage points if received after the class period the day they are due and 10 percentage points if before one week has passed. If papers are more than one week late, they will receive a 20 percentage point reduction. You may not make up this point reduction in your revision. That is, it is best to turn the paper in on time, receive the lower grade, and use your revision to better your grade. In other words, turning in your papers on time is vital to your success in this class. Late informal assignments will not be accepted outside of the class period they are due. I understand that certain exceptional circumstances may require individual re-negotiations of these policies; please do feel free to talk with me if such circumstances arise for you during the semester. I look forward to our time together; and set these ground rules to create as much space and time as possible to concentrate on your needs as readers, writers, and researchers.

**Emailing, Conferences and Office Hours:** If at any point in the term, you would like to meet with me for any reason, I will be in my office during the above stated office hours and I encourage you to stop by. I do not like to dialogue over e-mail as it is time-draining, in-box crowding, and subject to misinterpretation and misplacement. I do try to respond in a timely manner but I cannot always do so. If I do not receive an e-mail you have sent or somehow misplace it I will try to understand but I make no promises. In other words, please come see me. I am available to chat, discuss class ideas, discuss paper ideas, etc. I may require that students conference with me individually sometime during the semester, which meeting will be counted as an additional attendance mark. If you need to meet outside of my office hours, do not hesitate to ask for an appointment. I will try to accommodate you.

**Academic Dishonesty:** will not be tolerated. Because of easy access to information on the Internet, plagiarism has become a large problem in writing classes. Cutting and pasting text from the web, and representing this text as your own, is plagiarism. Quoting and paraphrasing from an author without giving the author credit is plagiarism. Stealing another writer’s ideas without giving the writer credit is plagiarism. When in doubt, use a citation! I regularly check papers for plagiarism, and am skilled at using Internet search engines to find original sources, including Internet paper mills. If you cut and paste from the web, I will probably find the original, even if you attempt to disguise it by paraphrasing and/or patching different sources together. Do note that academic dishonesty also includes turning in your own work composed for another assignment/class. If you plagiarize once, you may receive anywhere from a zero to an F at 59%. If you plagiarize twice, you may receive an F for the course. In all cases the dean of your college will be informed and you may receive expulsion from the university. You have a right to dispute any accusations of academic dishonesty, which will be resolved through a meeting of you, your instructor, and the department chair.

**Additional Resources:**
Writing Centers: http://www.xavier.edu/writing_center/ Phone: 745-2875
Disability Services (Learning Assistance Center): Phone 745-3280
Course Goals as articulated by the Xavier University Writing Program:

Goal 1: Rhetorical Knowledge and Writing Processes
Students will be writers who have developed an effective writing process guided by the rhetorical elements of audience, purpose, and cultural context.

Goal 2: Critical Thinking, Reading, and Writing
Students will understand writing as an art that helps them solve problems analytically, creatively, and rhetorically and as a means of inquiry, thinking, communication, and argumentation.

Goal 3: Knowledge of Conventions
Students will be writers who understand the role and use of information

Goal 4: Writing in Community
Students will be writers who understand the power and ethical responsibility that come with the production of written discourse.

English 101 Daily Schedule with Readings*

Tuesday, August 26
-Syllabus and Introductions

Thursday, August 28th
- Begin Inquiry 1
- Culture and Communication
Reading: “Human Culture” and “Culture and Language” websites.

Tuesday, September 2nd
-Values, Power, and Communication
Reading: Amy Tan’s “Mother Tongue”

Thursday, September 4th
- Introducing Paper 1
- Rhetoric
Reading: *Everything’s an Argument (EAA)*, pgs. 3-7, 22-29.

Tuesday, September 9th
- Observing and Writing in Detail
- Conclusions and Audience
Reading: Sample Student Essay

Thursday, September 11th
- Draft Due – Bring in 3 copies for peer review.

Tuesday, September 16th
- Begin Inquiry II: Rhetorical Analysis and Visual Rhetoric
Reading: *EAA*, ch. 14, “Visual Arguments”

Thursday, September 18th - Paper 1 Due
-Continue Visual Rhetoric
- Advertising
- View *Killing Us Softly*
- Analyzing in Detail

Tuesday, September 23rd
-Begin Classical/Academic Argumentation
- Review *Killing Us Softly*
- Begin Academic Structure and Thesis Statements
Reading: *Everything’s an Argument (EAA)*, pgs. 123-127

Thursday, September 25th
- Continue Academic Structure and Thesis Statements
- Academic Structure and Paragraph Claims
Reading: Jack Solomon’s “Masters of Desire”

Tuesday, September 30th
- Academic Structure and Transitions
- Begin Group Project
Reading: Handout on transitions.

* Subject to change according to course needs
Thursday, October 2nd
-Review Academic Structure
-Using and Citing Sources
**Reading:** Paula Mathieu’s “Rhetoric of Gourmet Coffee”

Tuesday, October 7th
**Proposal for Paper 2 Due**
-Group Presentations

Tuesday, October 9th – Fall Break

Tuesday, October 14th – **Paper 2 Draft Due**
**Reading:** None. Bring in three copies of your draft for peer review.

Thursday, October 16th
-BEGIN Inquiry III
-Asking Questions, Understanding Issues
-Researching and Evaluating Sources

Tuesday, October 21st – **Paper 2 Draft Due**
-Brainstorming Questions
-BEGIN Analyzing Arguments
**Reading:** *EAA* ch. 7 “Structuring Arguments”, pgs. 182-196

Thursday, October 23rd
-BEGIN Inquiry III
-Asking Questions, Understanding Issues
-Researching and Evaluating Sources

Thursday, October 28th
-Identifying Fallacies
-Putting Arguments in Conversation
**Reading:** *EAA*, ch. 17 “Fallacies of Argument.”

Thursday, October 30th
-Continue Analyzing Arguments
-Discussion Work

Tuesday, November 4th
-Handling Sources and Authorial Voice
**Reading:** Read three sources and summarize their claims and supporting evidence.

Thursday, November 6th
-Handling Sources: Signal Phrases and Arrangement.