

ENGLISH 108: COLLEGE WRITING AND RESEARCH

Spring 2010

Missouri Western State University

College of Liberal Arts and Sciences

Department of English, Foreign Languages, and Journalism

Section 03: MWF 9:00 – 9:50, Murphy 113

Section 06: MWF 10:00 – 10:50, Murphy 113

Section 07: MWF 11:00 – 11:50, Eder 208

Instructor: Tom Pankiewicz

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Office Hours: MW 1:00 - 2:30, Th 10:00 – 12:00 and by appointment.

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COURSE OBJECTIVES

For the specific course objectives, please visit the English Department website at <http://www.missouriwestern.edu/EFLJ/eng108.asp>

MATERIALS

Required:

A self-selected non-fiction book.

Lunsford, Andrea A. *Easy Writer*. 4th ed. Boston: Bedford/St. Martin's, 2010.

Bookmark the following web sites:

The OWL at Purdue: <http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/>.

Re: Writing at Bedford/St. Martins: <http://bcs.bedfordstmartins.com/rewriting/>.

Student Center for *Easy Writer*: <http://bedfordstmartins.com/easywriter>.

Recommended:

Graff, Gerald and Cathy Birkenstein. *They Say/I Say*. New York: W.W. Norton, 2006.

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This description may be a dangerous document. It may seem overwhelming and lead to lines at the registrar's office, but, I believe, you will soon realize why I wish to describe the course and the sequence of assignments.

According to the English Department website (<http://www.missouriwestern.edu/EFLJ/eng108.asp>)

ENG 108 students will complete three formal research based projects in addition to other graded and ungraded work. In these assignments, students will learn how to analyze, synthesize, and evaluate the thinking of others in order to discover, develop, and test their own points of view. Final drafts of all formal writing assignments must be word processed. All students are expected to be prepared for class and participate in class discussions related to reading and writing assignments. In addition, students will keep complete portfolios of all their writings.

While I will adapt these objectives somewhat, this course will follow their spirit.

Part I: Select and Read a Non-Fiction Book

- Your writing and research will be based on a topic examined in depth by a non-fiction book that you will select.
- The book you select must meet a set of criteria that will be discussed on the first day of class.
- **A letter identifying and explaining your book selection will be due on Monday, January 25.**
- You will need to purchase a copy of the book since most libraries have limited check out policies. Almost every book you select may be purchased from Amazon or from a used book dealer via Amazon.com.
- Read the book by Wednesday, February 17, 2010.

Part II: What the Text Says

- **Write a focused summary of the book.**
- Research critical reviews of the book. Read and print at least three substantial, signed reviews.
- **Write a review of the book, citing previous professional reviewers.**
- **Write an argument, researching and presenting your position on a controversial topic from the book.**

Part III: What the Text Means

- Explain a major concept—a Big Idea, a “Larger Conversation”—discussed in your book. Select a concept that you know your readers in the class must learn.
 - Research how the author presents the concept.
 - Research the concept beyond the book by examining three to five of the author’s references and/or by researching three to ten references.
- **Complete an annotated bibliography of at least ten sources you have consulted.**
- **Explain the concept to an audience of classmates in a documented essay.**

Part IV: How the Text Inspires You

- **“Showcase” your book and concept essay to the class.**
- **Or Compose and Present a “creative piece” that independently examines a theme or idea examined in your book.**

Part V

- A series of class readings, class discussions and informal writings will be assigned.

Essay Format:

All essays must be word-processed, double-spaced and use 12-point Times New Roman. Be sure to save each assignment on the university’s “P” drive or a jump drive. Keep a hard copy or a working copy of each draft in your writers’ notebook. Every semester at least one student struggles to complete an assignment because of computer problems or a disk failure. Save and back up all of your work.

Because of the variety of word processing programs, operating systems, printers and email accounts, it would be best to save material as an rtf (Rich Text Format) file.

Place your name, course, and date in the upper left hand corner. Center the title. Number the pages.

Conferences:

Writers need readers. Discussing drafts with a close reader is one of the most effective practices writers employ. I plan to confer with each of you about your writing several times during the semester.

The best conferences occur when you come with a question or a concern about your draft or revision. You should initiate the conference, showing your control of your writing and focusing on areas you wish to emphasize. We should focus our conversation on your question and draft. You should leave with a written revision plan.

Center for Academic Support:

In addition to conferences, you will find readers who will discuss your writing with you at the Center for Academic Support. I encourage you to make use of these services throughout this course.

Grading Policy:

The following grading scale will be used to determine the course grade: A = 100 – 90%; B = 89 – 80%; C = 79 – 70%; D = 69 – 60%; F = 59 – 0% or missing any major assignment.

POLICIES:

Attendance Policy:

In order to improve student learning and to achieve compliance with federal financial aid policies, Western has a mandatory attendance policy for all 100-level courses. English 108 has an attendance policy. **If you miss six class periods during the entire semester, you will receive an F in the class.** A student will be given an excused absence when acting as an official representative of the university, provided the student gives prior written verification from the faculty/staff supervisor of the event; however, there are no other excused absences, exceptions or "makeups" for this attendance requirement. Furthermore, **the maximum number of absences allowed before the midterm report, March 26, 2010, for this class is five classes. Thus, when you have six absences you will be reported to the Registrar's Office, who will automatically withdraw you from this class.**

Late Work:

If you miss a class session, you are responsible for all material covered and assignments given during your absence. All assignments are due at the beginning of the class period. Late assignments will not be accepted.

If you find yourself facing difficulties with the class or with an assignment, drop by my office or schedule a conference to discuss the problem with me.

Student Disability:

Any student in this course who has a disability that prevents the fullest expressions of abilities should contact Missouri Western's special needs coordinator, Michael Ritter, for possible certification of special needs and expert recommendations for assistance. You should also contact me personally as soon as possible so that we can discuss class requirements.

Academic Honesty Policy:

Academic honesty is required in all academic endeavors. Violations of academic honesty include any instance of plagiarism, cheating, seeking credit for another's work, falsifying documents or academic records or any other fraudulent classroom activity. Cheating and plagiarism are not acceptable. If your teacher finds evidence of cheating or plagiarism, you have the burden of showing that the paper has in fact been written by you. You should keep thorough evidence of your writing processes for all papers so that you can meet this burden of proof. You will receive a grade of F (0 points) for any paper/assignment/exam that shows evidence of cheating and/or plagiarism. You have the burden of proving that a paper/assignment/exam showing evidence of cheating and/or plagiarism has been in fact written by you. You should keep thorough evidence of your writing processes for all papers so that you can meet this burden of proof. If you plagiarize a paper, you forfeit the right to revise that paper; if you cheat on an exam, you will not be allowed to retake the exam. Violations of academic honesty will be reported to the Provost or the designated representative on the Academic Honesty Violation Report Forms. Please see the Student Handbook for specific activities identified as violations of this policy and the student due process procedure.

Civility:

- Do not disturb the class's work. This includes arriving late for class since knocking on the door or starrng in the window always disturbs the class.
- Put your cell phone on silent and leave it alone.

Final Note:

I would like all of you to succeed in this class. If, at any time, you find yourself facing difficulties with the class or with an assignment, drop by my office or schedule a conference to discuss the problem with me.

If you know of any circumstances likely to make any of these policies or expectations difficult for you to meet this semester, drop by my office or schedule a conference as soon as possible to review your options.

Deadlines and Dates:

- January 25 – Book Selection Letter is due.

- February 5 – Class is cancelled. I will be off campus, serving as a reviewer for the National Writing Project.
- February 17 – Deadline for reading your book.
- February 22 – Focused Summary is due.

- March 1 – Review is due.
- March 8 – Argument is due.

- April 2 – Annotated Bibliography is due.
- April 16 – Concept (The Big Idea) Essay is due.
- April 19 – Begin “Showcase” presentations of the book and research project or begin the “Creative” Response.