

Missouri Western State University  
College of Liberal Arts and Sciences  
Department of English, Foreign Language and Journalism  
English 108 College Writing and Research  
Spring 2010

**Instructor:** Amy Chastain  
**Office:** Eder Hall 213  
**Phone:** (816) 668-1690  
**Email:** [achastain@missouriwestern.edu](mailto:achastain@missouriwestern.edu)  
**Office hours:**  
M 12 p.m. to 4 p.m.  
W 1 p.m. to 3 p.m.

**Required Texts**      *Branded: The Buying and Selling of Teenagers* by Alissa Quart  
                              *Hip Hop Revolution: The Culture and Politics of Rap* by Jeffrey O.G. Ogbar  
                              *Female Chauvinist Pigs: Women and the Rise of Raunch Culture* by Ariel Levy  
                              *Everyday Writer with Exercises* by Andrea Lunsford  
                              Flash drive

**Required Work**  
Student-led class  
Class participation  
Blogging  
Weekly readings  
Critical Response Journals  
Engage in peer review and response  
Four major projects  
Final portfolio

**Grading Policy**

100 – 90 percent (A)  
89 – 80 percent (B)  
79 -70 percent (C)  
69 – 60 percent (D)  
59 – 0 percent (F)

(10 percent) Class participation  
(10 percent) Student-led class  
(10 percent) Blogging  
(20 percent) CRJs  
(50 percent) Portfolio

**Course Policy**

You have just signed your life away to an extensive reading and writing course! Now that you have, you should know it is to your own benefit. You will have an opportunity to read three different perspectives all pertaining to commercial American culture. *Branded: The Buying and Selling of Teenagers* discusses how the marketing sector has packaged our tweens and teens. It explores different avenues of packaged tweens and teens from clothes to music, from plastic surgery to education. *Hip-Hop Revolution: The Culture and Politics of Rap* addresses authenticity of hip-hop artists alike including Eminem – a white artist who resides in an African American owned avenue. It addresses how hip-hop lyrics have objectified African American women and reduces them to “tits” and “ass.” *Female Chauvinist Pigs: Women and The Rise of Raunch Culture* discusses that it isn’t just men who are objectifying women, but women too are doing it to themselves.

However different these there perspectives are, one thing that interlaces them is the dominant standard of commercialized American culture. That if you stand alone than with the “packaged goods” or with commercial white America, that you are dynamically different. You are ostracized—something is wrong with you. I hope that you take this opportunity to find a familiar voice in these three perspectives that you are able to draw connections between your own life. That you arrive at the notion that standing up against commercialized America isn’t such a bad thing. And that you can draw these conclusions in your writing.

You will have the opportunity to write for different mediums this semester. This is an extensive writing course and with no doubt, you will be writing until your eyes begin to bleed. However, what you will find is that you TOO have a voice as you draw connections across texts and your own life. You will be able to select subjects of your own interest that are embedded within these texts. You will conduct your own “scholarly” research where you will arrive at your own conclusions. It is up to you where this course may take you as a writer, but understand the role language and rhetoric play in your own life, in your own field of study and discover where truth resides.

What you complete in this course emphasizes the four objectives of English 108:

- 1) Learn to write for different audiences and purposes.
- 2) Learn to use active reading and critical thinking.
- 3) Learn to use writing processes.
- 4) Learn written conventions.

For more information regarding course descriptions and objectives, please visit <http://www.missouriwestern.edu/eflj/eng108.asp>.

*Welcome to this community of writers and scholars.*

### **Blogging**

Each of you will create a BlogSpot account. Your blog will serve as an analysis of assigned readings, topics and/or writing assignments. You will post and respond to your blog as well as those in your blogging circle weekly. This will allow you an opportunity to hear other voices, other reactions, other analyses. Take every advantage of this site. I will also make posts regarding reading and writing assignments as well as comment on your blogs. Be certain to check your blog daily for feedback and response.

You will be required to post at least a minimum of 250 words to your blog. The topics of the blog post will be controlled, but not limited to class discussion, reading and writing assignments. Your response to your blogging circle should provide insightful analysis.

### **Student Led Discussion**

Every Wednesday we will have a student-led class. You need to come prepared with focus questions for the class as well as some sort of activity. The focus on the class is up to you. YOU decide what you want to “teach” that day and how you want to teach it. It should, in some way, relate to the topics we have talked about that week. Your lesson should offer NEW information that inform either class discussion, the author we are reading, or kairos for what we are reading about. This is my way of turning the class over to you, giving you the opportunity to take control of your education, and set the agenda for part of the class. Be as creative as possible with your lesson. Make sure that students are engaged intellectually and pushed to think critically about the text and the lesson. PowerPoint lectures are not allowed. Get interactive with your lesson!

### **Response Journal**

Your *Critical Response Journal* is a two to three page, typed critical analysis (response) to the assigned readings and/or movies shown in class. These are not summaries of assigned readings and/or movies, but critical analyses. I’m not interested in reading a summary of an assigned reading or movie; I am most interested in how you analyze it, how it relates to you and your own life and why it caught your attention. In the critical analyses you construct, make connections across the texts to discussion and finally, to you. These critical analyses are meant to further your aid in understanding and your analysis of the text.

### **What about Grammar?**

Over the course of the semester, we may revisit the *Everyday Writer* written by Andrea Lunsford in regard to matters in writing, grammar and punctuation. After major writing assignments are due into me, I will identify error patterns in our writing and review them in class. This will be a worthwhile opportunity for you in how to address matters pertaining to your writing, grammar and punctuation. You will also be given the opportunity to fix any errors after I hand the drafts back to you. You may fix the smaller errors in grammar and punctuation in preparation for the portfolio.

For matters regarding MLA style, grammar and punctuation, the *Everyday Writer* is a valuable tool. I recommend it for bedside reading! We will review the *Everyday Writer* extensively each week in compliance with your supplemental reading materials, so I expect you to have it with you during each and every class period.

Although grammar is interlaced into the writing process, I am more interested in how you format your argument, how you select and research your subject. I am interested in what different perspectives you offer and address and how you organize such

information.

### **Peer Review**

Peer feedback is essential in any work you construct. It allows you an opportunity to voice your opinion and concerns in your peers' work. You have a voice and I expect you take every opportunity to use your voice respectfully.

With each and every major writing assignment, you will be required to give feedback on your peers' drafts. At the onset of each major writing assignment, you will be assigned to a group of three – your blogging circle. On Mondays when drafts are due to your fellow peers', you will exchange drafts with your group members (this can also be done electronically). If you decide to e-mail it to your group members, allow enough time so that they are able to provide you with detailed feedback. Furthermore, you will need to print it off, so that you can make handwritten comments. You have until that Friday of that same week (by class time) to return each draft to your group members. You will turn in each draft that was commented on in with your draft that is due to me (you should have two drafts that were commented on).

Peer review will be conducted outside of class; however, I will allow class time, so you can talk to your group members about giving feedback and the drafts.

### **Writer's Notes**

When you turn in any of the four major writing assignments, you will also turn in with it your writer's notes. Your writer's notes, comprised of one to two paragraphs, will tell me how you approached the writing assignment, how you arrived at your subject and what intrigued you about it and your research. You will record where you think your strong areas are and why as well as your weak areas and where you may need more help. You will also tell me what I can do to help you with this writing assignment in preparation for the portfolio. Finally, how did you revise your writing assignment from your peers' comments? What was the most helpful? What was not? *In a nutshell, what do you want me -- the instructor -- to know?*

### **Working Portfolio**

Your working portfolio is a collection of all of the writing you will do for this class. In it will include all of your in-class writing assignments, CRJ writing assignments, drafts, and essays. All of the writing you complete in this class will remain in a folder that I will provide you with on the first day of class. You will receive this folder at the beginning of class and return it to me at the end of class. Any homework that is due will be placed in this folder.

### **Portfolios**

Your portfolio will be a combination of all of the writing assignments you have completed over the course of the semester. The portfolio will include 10 to 12 pristine, edited text of your very best work. You will include all of the CRJs with my comments, all of the original major writing assignments with my comments and revised projects of drafts and CRJs. *You must extensively revise at least one major project to qualify for the portfolio.* In addition, you will include a writer's memo in which you will discuss what you revised, how you revised and why?

### **Mandatory Conference**

Mandatory conferences will be held sometime in March in and around Spring Break. You will be required to attend this conference. Failure to attend may result in your failure of this course. However, if you foresee an emergency or will not be able to attend, I require that you notify me **before** the scheduled time. You will need to reschedule.

In the mandatory conference, we will discuss your progress in the course, what you enjoy or may not enjoy, and if something needs to be reworked, omitted or reformatted. We will discuss your work as a writer and your approach to the major reading and writing assignments. *You are in control of this conference;* therefore, I expect you to arrive knowing full well what you wish to discuss and/or address. In order for me to help you as a writer, I need to hear from you.

### **Attendance**

In order to improve student learning as well as to achieve compliance with federal financial aid policies, Missouri Western has a mandatory attendance policy for all 100-level and 200-level courses. You will be given an excused absence when acting as an official representative of the university, provided you give **prior** written verification from the faculty/staff supervisor of the

event. All other absences will be deemed unexcused. The maximum number of unexcused absences allowed for this class before the midterm report is five. **When you exceed five absences at any time over the course of the semester, you will be reported to the Registrar's Office, who will automatically withdraw you from this class.** The Financial Aid Office will reduce financial aid as appropriate. This policy will be reinforced even after midterm.

Late arrivals and early departures will not be tolerated. If this persists, then it will add to your absences.

### **Missed/Late Assignments**

Late work will not be accepted. If you are absent, you can still turn the assignment in on time on the day it is due. If you foresee an absence, you may place it in my mailbox in the English, Foreign Language, and Journalism Suite. If you miss an in-class writing assignment, in-class work, or a pop quiz, it cannot be made up. If you are acting as an official representative of the university and have provided **prior** written verification from the faculty/staff supervisor of the event, you are still responsible for turning in the assignment on time.

### **Academic Honesty**

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 activity. Violations of academic honesty may result in a failing grade on the assignment in questions, failure in the course, and/or expulsion from the University. When a student's grade has been affected, violations of academic honesty will be reported to the Provost or designated representative on the Academic Honesty Violations Report forms.

Furthermore, you cannot use papers that you have originally written from other classes.

Please see the 2009-2010 Student Handbook and Calendar for specific activities identified as violations of this policy and the student due process procedure. This handbook is also available online at <http://www.missouriwestern.edu/handbook/index.pdf>

### **Miscellaneous:**

Missouri Western requires all students to help us maintain good conditions for teaching and learning. All students will treat their classmates and teachers with civility and respect, both inside and outside the classroom. Students who violate this policy may, among other penalties, be counted absent and asked to leave.

When you enter the classroom, your cell phones must be turned off or on silent. They should be out of sight while class is in session. If your cell phone goes off in class, I will give you one warning and if it happens again, I will take it for the rest of the class period. No texting! If you have a family emergency, you may place it on vibrate, but only after speaking to me prior to the class period.

I reserve the right to close the door after 10 minutes of class. We are all adults here and I expect each and everyone to be on time for class.

### **Student Disability:**

Any student who has a special need or disability that may affect his or her performance in this class should let me know before the end of the first week of classes. Disabilities include, but are not limited to impaired hearing, vision, and/or reading disorders. You should also contact the Disability Services Coordinator Michael Ritter for further assistance.

**Phone:** (816) 271-4430

**E-Mail:** [mr Ritter@missouriwestern.edu](mailto:mr Ritter@missouriwestern.edu)

### **Center for Academic Support:**

For additional help with your writing, please visit the Center for Academic Support. There is no cost for using CAS services.

Phone: (816) 271-4524

Hearnes Center, Room 213

Monday-Thursday: 8 a.m. to 9 p.m.

Friday: 8 a.m. to 3 p.m.

