

Missouri Western State University, Division of Liberal Arts and Sciences
Department of English, Foreign Languages, and Journalism

English 108: College Writing and Research
Spring 2010

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Welcome

Hey, how's it going. In this class you will study the academic argument. We will learn how the argument cannot exist without a counter-argument, why the art of compromise is so critical today, and how to conduct successful research so these arguments and counter-arguments are valid.

Texts/Required Materials

Quinn, Daniel. "Ishmael." New York: Bantam/Turner, 1992.

Jump/flash drive¹

A printer and ready supply of ink

Access to the Internet²

An open mind/ability to examine alternative viewpoints

Assignment Overview/Grade Breakdown

Argument/Counter-Argument Paper: 10%

Finding a Common Ground Paper: 10%

Annotated Bibliography: 20%

Social/Philosophical Persuasive Research Paper: 20%

You will also be graded on your participation in class discussions and the two debates³ we have scheduled for the semester.

Class participation: 20%⁴

Two debates: 20 %

¹ For a brief time in the nineties, blaming a computer for lost/corrupted work was acceptable, but it became overused and is now considered hackneyed. Save your work in several places, as this excuse will not be tolerated on due dates.

² The bulk of our required reading will come from the Internet. Take notes.

³ If you miss a debate, you must write a 2-3 page paper in order to receive credit.

⁴ Class participation includes your critical input to discussions, debates, quiz grades, preparedness for class/conferences, general alertness (read: not sleeping. I reserve the right to mark you absent if you sleep through class), contributions to group work, workshops, paying attention to your peers/me, not interrupting, not texting, exercising civility, asking questions which spark intelligent dialogue, and contributing to the greater good.

Absence/Tardiness Policy

If you miss more than two classes you will not get an A, if you miss more than three you will not get a B. You get the idea.

Only university related absences will be excused, meaning I must receive a signed letter from a university employee to excuse you.

My policy on tardiness is that it is irritating.

Communication/Community

Especially in an English class, especially in an English class that focuses on argument, communication is central. We will have a range of discussions, and I look forward to your participation. Good communication encourages community, and hopefully that is what we will form through our creative and critical discussions.

The best way to get in contact with me is through email, though calling during office hours also works pretty well. I check my email Monday through Friday. It is important you ask questions when they arise and stay in steady contact with me. Make sure your university email account is active.

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

Misc./Inspiration

- I do not want to see or hear your cell phone, iPod, BlackBerry, or any other electronic during class. It is disruptive to the learning environment, not to mention a touch impolite. Keep them off and out of the way. **I reserve the right to mark you absent if you pay more attention to an overpriced gadget as opposed to the glory of education.** If, for some reason, you need to keep your phone on during class, please see me prior to class starting.
- If you must turn in something late, it will go down by one letter grade for everyday the assignment is late.
- A class learns to teach itself.
- Don't mistake kindness for weakness.

- Writing is a process.

Spring 2010 Schedule for English 108

Week 1

T, 1.19

Course intro

HW: Listen to *This American Life* episode 387, Arms Trade 2009:

http://www.thisamericanlife.org/Radio_Episode.aspx?sched=1088

R, 1.21

Introduce first paper

HW: Read first section of *Trial by Fire* by David Grann, pgs. 1-6:

http://www.newyorker.com/reporting/2009/09/07/090907fa_fact_grann

Week 2

T, 1.26

Discussion, library databases

HW: pgs. 6-10, bring a topic (for your paper) to class

R, 1.28

Discussion, MLA format

HW: pgs. 10-14

Week 3

T, 2.02

Discussion, thesis statements

HW: pgs. 14-20, bring a rough draft to class

R, 2.04

Rough draft due; in-class peer review

HW: Bring three debate ideas to class; Read *Body Ritual Among the Nacirema* by Horace Miner:

<https://www.msu.edu/~jdowell/miner.html>

Week 4

T, 2.09

Brainstorm and vote on debates

HW: Prepare to turn in first paper

R, 2.11

First paper due; assign debate teams; introduce second paper

HW: Meet with your debate team; bring debate material to class for group work; Read Kansas City Star article

Week 5

T, 2.16

Collaborative debate work

HW: Prepare for your debate; prepare to turn in your proposal

R, 2.18

Debate No. 1; **proposal due**

HW: Prepare for your debate

Week 6

T, 2.23

Debate No.2

HW: Listen to *Fresh Air* interview, “Questions on Public-Private Prisons for Immigrants”:

<http://www.npr.org/templates/story/story.php?storyId=121248709>

R, 2.25

How to be a Digital Deputy

HW: Listen to This American Life episode 119, “Lock-Up:”

http://www.thisamericanlife.org/Radio_Episode.aspx?episode=119

Week 7

T, 3.02

Discussion

HW: Bring a rough draft to class

R, 3.04

Rough draft due; in-class peer review

HW: Bring three debate ideas to class; listen to Radiolab episode, “Zoos”:

<http://www.wnyc.org/shows/radiolab/episodes/2007/06/01>

Week 8

T, 3.09

Brainstorm and vote on debate topics

HW: Prepare to turn in second paper

R, 3.11

Second paper due; assign debate teams; introduce annotated bib

HW: Meet with your debate team; bring debate material to class for group work

Week 9

Classes cancelled for Spring Break

Week 10 (Mid-Term grades due March 24)

T, 3.23

Collaborative debate work

HW: Prepare for your debate; prepare to turn in your proposal

R, 3.25

Debate No. 1; **proposal due**

HW: Prepare for your debate

Week 11

T, 3.30

Debate No. 2

HW: Begin reading Ishmael, 1-3

R, 4.01

Discussion

HW: Prepare to turn in your annotated bib; Ishmael 4-5

Week 12

T, 4.06

Annotated Bib due

HW: Ishmael 6-7

R, 4.08

Discussion

HW: Ishmael 8-9

Week 13

T, 4.13

Assign presentation order

HW: Ishmael 10-11

R, 4.15

Chimp Haven

HW: Ishmael 12-13; prepare for your presentations

Week 14

T, 4.20

Presentations

R, 4.22

Presentations

Week 15

T, 4.27

Presentations

HW: Prepare to turn in your final paper

R, 4.29

Final paper due; presentations

Week 16 (Final Grades due May 13)