

**Department of English, Foreign Languages, Journalism**

**Division of Liberal Arts and Sciences**

**English 104-05 -- College Writing and Rhetoric**

**Course Syllabus -- Fall 2001**

**Instructor: Bill Church**

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**Office Hours:** 1:00 - 2:00 daily and by appointment

**Class Meeting Time and Room:** 11 - 12:20 TTh, JGM106

**Required texts and materials:** *Critical Thinking, Thoughtful Writing*, John Chaffee; *The New Century Handbook*, Hult & Huckin. You will also need computer disks formatted for IBM compatible computers, and you will need a spacious journal that will endure heavy use. You will also be required to bring additional copies of your papers for peer work several times this semester.

**Recommended text:** A collegiate dictionary with at least 200,000 entries.

**Students with Disabilities:** Anyone who has a disability that prevents the fullest expression of her or his potential to succeed in this course must notify me in writing as soon as possible so we may discuss course requirements, options, and accommodations.

**Course Description & Goals:** Please see the following Internet site, which we will review in class:  
<http://www.missouriwestern.edu/eflj/eng104.asp>

**Academic Honesty:** Most cheating is accidental. If, however, I determine that a student is cheating deliberately or repeatedly, I will minimally award a failing grade for the project. I may submit a failing grade for the entire course if circumstances warrant. In addition, I will forward in writing the names and acts of all involved students to the chairperson of the English department chair and to the dean of students. In cases of suspected plagiarism, the burden of proof is on the student, so it is in your best interest to keep every piece of writing you generate for every assignment.

**Grading Method:** I use portfolio grading, which means that I assign neither a letter grade nor points to any writing assignments until the end of the semester. I respond to each major paper by informing students that it is either "acceptable" or "unacceptable." If I deem the work "acceptable," that assessment will convert to at least a "C" for that paper at semester's end. Further revision is completely at the student's discretion. If I deem a work "unacceptable," the paper in question would be at best a "D" at semester's end and likely result in a repetition of the course if all other work were of the same quality.

**Grading Criteria:**

\* Quality and completeness of your portfolio (75%)-- by this I mean not only the

caliber of your final drafts but also the number of revisions you have done and the extent and quality of those revisions. Your portfolio will contain varied works such as summaries, letters, critical analyses, major arguments, and assorted other writings as assigned. No one will pass without completing all assignments, regardless of the quality of work submitted.

\* Reflective letters and questions (15%) – you will write in-class reflective letters on the due dates of all major papers. Within or attached to your letters you will pose questions you have about your writing. Your letters and questions will frequently provide more insight into your growth as a writer and thinker than the papers will. The quality and quantity of responses you receive from me will be in direct proportion to your analyses and questions.

\* Participation (10%) – this means you will have read all assigned readings carefully and have been prepared to discuss them intelligently. It also means you always met deadlines for all stages of each assignment, from posting the earliest working drafts to offering insightful comments on your peers' work during peer review sessions.

\* Quiz scores – I will regularly reward careful reading and consider your scores as part of participation.

\* Timeliness – students who receive grades higher than C will meet all deadlines for all aspects of the composition process on all writing tasks.

\* Attendance – your constant presence is mandatory for your success (please see "Attendance Policy" below).

The highest grades will go to the students whose efforts and intellects allow them to produce the most complete, clear, correct, and insightful writing. Portfolios from these students will contain multiple drafts of every assignment, thoughtful reflective letters with every submission of every draft, and thoughtful questions for me to answer about their writing. Likewise, students who receive the highest grades will have received the highest quiz scores, contributed meaningfully to class discussions, and met all deadlines for drafting and submitting work, in addition to fulfilling the attendance requirements.

Missing deadlines, major papers, excessive classes, journal entries, and quizzes will result in substantially lower grades, in many cases to the point of failure. Also, superficial, off-topic or poorly edited papers, or an unwillingness or inability to contribute meaningfully to class discussions or to revise papers effectively, will result in low final grades.

**Midterm grades:** I submit a "C" for students whose work is complete and passing and whose absences are below the limit. I submit a "D" for students whose work is complete but not acceptable. I submit an "F" for students whose work is incomplete or grossly unacceptable and/or who have exceeded the absence limit.

**Attendance:**

\* you may miss all or part of two classes without penalty beyond missed points;

\* the third and fourth absences (more than fifteen minutes of any class) will

lower your final grade by one-half of a letter per absence;

\* the fifth absence results in an automatic "F," and you should withdraw immediately;

\* I reserve the right to waive the penalties for extenuating circumstances, though I

accept no obligation to do so.

Although all of us will occasionally experience an emergency or illness that causes us to miss class or arrive late, students who succeed will minimize absences.

**Make-up Work:** This course doesn't lend itself to make-up work. When we read and discuss a selection, we can't recreate that experience later. Nor can in-class writings and group work be recreated later. And obviously I can't allow make-up quizzes after we've gone over the answers in class, which we will always do. Therefore, in this course, missed work is permanently missed.

**Excused Absences:** Common sense must prevail. I may grant special consideration to students who can document extenuating circumstances or who are representing MWSC. However, students need to notify me of planned outings in advance and turn in their work or take their quizzes before each absence. I will verify the absences of students representing the college by contacting the appropriate MWSC personnel.

**Classroom behavior:** As stated in the *MWSC Student Handbook*, instructors "may establish additional classroom rules and expectations for conduct in the classroom. Behavior which disrupts the classroom environment or interferes with other students' ability to learn may be grounds or justification for dismissal from the classroom" (28). Sleeping, conducting private conversations, using computers for other than assigned purposes, eating, drinking, damaging property, and using vulgar or deliberately offensive language are some of the more common acts that can damage the learning environment. Likewise, all telephones are to be silent during class time. No headphones may be worn, no music listened to, no homework done for other classes. Let's establish a cordial and respectful atmosphere in which we can have fun while learning together.

**Final Exam:** Tuesday, Dec. 4, 11:30-1:20. Will write argumentative paper in class.