

# ENGLISH 108: COLLEGE WRITING AND RESEARCH

Section 40 - Internet

Fall 2001

Missouri Western State College

Division of Liberal Arts and Sciences

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## Course Philosophy and Objectives

I write when I'm inspired, and I see to it that I'm inspired at nine o'clock every morning. -- Peter de Vries

This course is designed to help you become a better researcher and writer of researched-based prose. To this end, you will learn about the nature and process of research, about how to find and use source materials, and about how to write researched essays. Students will complete three formal research 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.

At the end of English 108, you will understand that:

- writing can be used for different purposes
- multiple audiences exist
- writing is a recursive process
- many productive ways exist to generate ideas for your work
- common patterns of organization exist
- ideas are property in our culture and must be correctly attributed to their sources
- reading is an interactive process that functions in our lives as a pleasurable activity as well as a means of acquiring knowledge
- editing skills enable writers to polish their work so that readers are not distracted from the message conveyed or the experience recreated.

These goals are more clearly articulated at the General Studies English Courses website.

## Required Materials

Texts:

- Manor, Martin. *The Research Process: A Complete Guide to and Reference for Writers*. Second Edition. Mountain View, CA: Mayfield Publishing Company, 2000.

To order the textbooks by mail from the MWSC Barnes and Noble Bookstore, call Lisa at 816-271-4458. Bookstore Hours: Monday-Thursday 8:00-5:00, Friday 8:00-4:30.

Other:

- A Student E-mail Account at MWSC. Contact the Computer Center to learn how to activate your student account at 816-271-4354.
- To participate fully in this course, you must have ready internet access and be able to complete the assignments in a timely manner. Assignments are due every Wednesday, at noon CST, and no late work is accepted, except as outlined in the Course Policies.
- For word processing, you must use Microsoft Word '98 or earlier, or another compatible program. Compatibility means that files converted

from some other program to MSWord '98 retain their original format and layout and conform to MLA manuscript guidelines.

- To get started, read over the Syllabus and the linked Getting Started Instructions and Unit Overview Pages on the Course Schedule below.

## Assignments

### Pre-Writings and Research Exercises

To find and develop topic ideas, students will do a number of brainstorming, freewriting, and invention exercises for each project. Students will also develop their skills at research by doing a number of exercises designed to introduce them to the library and the other information sources. Students **must find adequate time to go to the college's library** to complete assignments. **NOTE:** while public libraries are nice places to gather general information, they are not considered research libraries and so do not often have many specialized research materials. You must have access to a college libraries specialized resources in order to do well in the course.

### Project One

For this project, students will learn how to find topics, generate arguments, find and evaluate sources, and write a prospectus with an annotated bibliography for a formal academic research paper. Researching and writing a prospectus allows the beginning college researcher to become more comfortable with the process of researching, topic formation, and documentation before trying to write the actual research paper.

### Project Two

For this project, students will learn how to find write and edit a formal researched essay based upon the prospectus developed in Project One.

### Project Three

For this project, students will gain more practice in finding topics, generating arguments, finding and evaluating sources, writing a prospectus with an annotated bibliography, and writing and editing a formal academic research paper. Students will become more comfortable with the process of researching, topic formation, research writing, and formal documentation.

## Course Policies and Requirements

### Saving Work

Students should save all their work, both graded and ungraded, for this class--from notes to drafts to final papers. There may be occasions when work needs to be re-submitted or grades verified. Back up disk copies should be made religiously at the end of each day's work, and if possible, make a current print copy as well.

### Formats for Submitting Work

All work for this course must be word processed and submitted in the format specified by the assignment. **Be sure to follow submission guidelines provided with each assignment carefully in order to receive full credit for your submissions.**

### Late Work

Learning is a cumulative process and each assignment in this course is designed to build on the last assignment; therefore late work disrupts this important aspect of the learning process. **Except for the final prospectuses and papers, no late work will be accepted under any circumstances.** Late final prospectuses and papers will not be discounted if turned in within 24 hours of the due date. After 24 hours, final prospectuses and papers will be discounted one letter grade for each additional 24 hours late (including weekends and holidays). No work will be accepted after noon CST on November 28, 2001.

### Plagiarism

*... it is better to fail in originality than to succeed in imitation.* -- Herman Melville

Plagiarism is literally the stealing of others' words and ideas and using them as your own. Make every effort to give credit where credit is due, and if you are not sure of "how"--ASK. Students are responsible for proving that all work turned in for grading is their own original work. Plagiarism is a serious offense and, therefore, will receive harsh punishment. Work with evidence of plagiarism will receive a zero. Continued plagiarism will result in failure of the course. Don't think that you won't be caught; writing style is

distinctive and verifiable.

## Classroom Courtesy

Students are expected to be courteous and respectful in all of their exchanges with the instructor and other students. Because this course is conducted without face-to-face encounters, one should be particularly careful to note how tone, rhetoric, and language all contribute to the overall impression of one's communications.

## Student Disability

Any student in this course who has a disability that prevents the fullest expression of abilities should contact me by the end of the first week so that we can discuss class requirements.

## Computer Usage

You must have daily access to a computer with internet capability in order to do well in this course. For this course, you must use your MWSC email account for all correspondence and assignment submission.

Most students can set up their email accounts via the MWSC homepage. Go to: <http://www.missouriwestern.edu> and click on the Student Life link, then Click on E-mail Password (Original). Follow the onscreen instructions.

## Time Expectations

As with all college courses, a steady devotion to duty is expected. The readings and assignments are exactly the same as those given in my on campus version of this course, and you are expected to devote the same amount of time to completing the course requirements that you would be required to devote were the class held on campus. This means that you will have three hours of course activities in lieu of three hours of traditional classroom time and that you will have up to nine hours of homework per week. On the average, however, you can expect to spend about an hour per day (7 hours per week) completing course activities and requirements.

Unlike a traditional on campus course, however, you do have greater flexibility in determining how you will distribute your weekly workload. While assignments are due each week by Wednesday, at noon, Central Standard Time, you can choose to complete your work over several short work sessions or over fewer, longer work sessions. Keep in mind, though, that you cannot hope to do well if you wait until the last minute to complete the week's work--you may miscalculate how long it will actually take you to do the work or you may have computer problems that interfere with the completion of your duties. Remember: no late work is accepted *under any circumstances*, so anticipate that there will be occasional glitches, whether personal or technical, and strive to turn in your work a little ahead of the Wednesday deadlines.

## Grading

Students will do a variety of writing assignments over the course of the semester, including pre-writing exercises, research exercises, prospectuses, annotated bibliographies, and formal researched essays. In order to pass the course, students must complete the final projects; in addition, the quality of their work and the percentage of the other assignments completed will determine the final grade.

A word of caution: don't underestimate the value of small assignments since no late work (other than final projects) is accepted. Occasional lapses are understood, but chronic lapses can only pull the final grade downward.

Your Final Grade Distribution is as follows:

- Research Project #1 = 30%
- Research Project #2 = 20%
  
- Research Project #3 = 50%

## Some Final Thoughts

This syllabus is of a contractual nature, and by remaining in the course you acknowledge your acceptance of its stipulations. If the goals, policies,

procedures, standards, expectations, or obligations are unclear, then you should speak with me immediately. If they are clear but unacceptable to you, then you should drop the course.

If you choose to remain in the course, be sure to keep a copy of this syllabus with you and to refer to it regularly. Policies are enforced without exception to ensure uniformity and predictability, to avoid confusion and anxiety, and to facilitate fairness and objectivity for all students. In the interest of efficiency, however, I reserve the right to make necessary alterations to this syllabus and to make announced changes in daily plans.

Life is unpredictable--at least for the most part. I recognize that at times your outside life may interfere with your classroom life. It is up to you to set your priorities and to realize that "doing it all" is not always possible or even desirable. If you are feeling stressed about all you have to accomplish, remember that sometimes you can miss class, sometimes you can come to class unprepared, and sometimes you can really mess up--without it effecting your grade unduly. If, however, what should be an occasional problem completing your work becomes a chronic problem, come see me. If I understand what is going on in your life, I can more easily help you achieve your goals.

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## Course Schedule

A detailed Writing Assignment Calendar is attached to each Unit Overview. Please refer to it for specific dates, details, and instructions.

### Getting Started

#### Day One (August 18)

- Meet on Campus, Saturday, August 18, 2001, MC Building, Recital Hall, 8:30 am
- Getting Started Instructions

### Project One

#### Weeks One - Five (August 20 - September 26)

- Project One Overview and Assignment Calendar

### Project Two

#### Weeks Six - Eight (September 27- October 17)

- Project Two Overview and Assignment Calendar

### Project Three

#### Weeks Nine - Fourteen (October 18 - November 28)

- Project Three Overview and Assignment Calendar