

Missouri Western State College, Division of Liberal Arts and Sciences
Department of English, Foreign Languages, and Journalism
English 104-04: College Writing & Rhetoric
Spring 2003

Instructor: Roger Kirschbaum
Eng. 104, Section: 04
Time: Tuesday & Thursday 8 a.m. to 9:20 a.m.
Room: JGM 105

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Course Description:

In this course we will explore the various ways that perspectives can create multiple worlds of understanding. Using the Vietnam War Era (particularly 1964 to 1973) as a focus for our studies, we will read and discuss various texts in a search for various perspectives. We will write in both personal and academic voices in an attempt to convey our understanding or confusion, our criticisms, and our unique ideas and reactions. In this course you will become more familiar with an academically accepted style of writing, be encouraged to think critically, and pushed to question sources, ideas, and the opinions of many different perspectives, including those of your peers. The types of texts that we will come in contact with are historical narratives, political documents, short fiction, poetry, video, music, photography, and journalistic analyses.

It must be stressed that this is not a history course, and that I am not a history teacher. There might be some of you who know as much about the conflict in Vietnam as I do. However, I am a specialist in writing. An ideal semester would be one during which we as a group learn more about a turbulent era in our country's history, and you as students of writing become more comfortable with putting your ideas and responses in an academically acceptable written form.

It should also be noted that since we will be discussing war, the most barbaric of human endeavors, some of the materials we will read, hear, and see will be graphic and at times disturbing. Negative responses can be expected and will be addressed empathetically and with the utmost respect. With this being said, I look forward to a semester of growth – for each of you, as well as me.

Required Texts and Materials

Negotiating Differences, eds. Patricia Bizzell and Bruce Herzberg
Born on the Fourth of July, Ron Kovic
The New Century Handbook, Hult & Huckin

Attendance:

Because class discussion, small group work, and in-class writing will be important components of our class, your regular attendance and participation are required in order for you to be successful in this class. You are allowed to miss a total of one week of class for any reason. Since you are in a Tuesday/Thursday section of the course, that means you are allowed two absences. For every absence over two, your grade will be lowered; if you miss class five times, I will advise you to drop the course rather than receive a failing grade. Because work in class is an essential part of the course, there will be *no distinction made between explained and unexplained absences*. Missing more than two weeks of class simply means that you have not completed the necessary course work. The course is intensively interactive, which means that an essential part of the work for the course takes place in class, and cannot be made up outside of class. If you are absent from class, you are responsible for finding out about the work you missed and for whatever assignments are due during the next class period.

With this said, if unusual circumstances (as judged by me) force you to miss more than two class periods, I will allow that time to be made up by visiting the Center for Academic Support. For every class period missed over two, an hour and a half must be spent in the center working on a revision for one of the essays that is required for the course.

The Center is located in the library building. Contact Corla Dawson, the center's writing coordinator, to make an appointment. She can be contacted in LRC 213 or at 271-4531.

Grading:

In order to receive credit for the course, the following must be completed. Failure to complete any one assignment will result in failure of the course.

Four essays of varying lengths	60%
Reading/Writing Responses & Other Assignments	10%
In-Class Presentation	10%
Class Participation	<u>20%</u>
	100%

Essays:

Over the course of the semester you will write four essays, each written in a series of drafts. One of the essays will also involve a research component and an oral component, which will be presented to the class. Due dates are listed on the course schedule and detailed prompts for the essay assignments will be handed out well in advance of the due dates. You will receive my feedback and response to each of your essays as well as responses from your peer groups. I will be talking with you about my assessment of your work throughout the semester, and you should feel free to ask at any time where you stand. Generally, though, you will know how you are doing from comments on your papers. I will let you know immediately if there is a concern about your progress.

Reading/Writing Responses:

Throughout the semester you will be asked to do eight informal writing assignments in response to the reading, writing, and other activities that we are working on in class. Some of this writing will be done in class and some will be assigned as homework. The purpose of this writing will be:

- I. to help you prepare for class discussion**
- II. to encourage you to think critically about your own writing and reading habits**
- III. to give you a record of some of the thinking you have done during this class about your reading and writing.**
- IV. to provide source material for use in your essays.**

You should also feel free to complete additional, unassigned responses to the readings we are addressing and the discussions that take place during class. I prefer that your responses be typed, and one-page (double-spaced) in length. I will collect and respond to your individual responses from time to time.

During the semester, *one* of the eight responses must be to some other text outside of the assigned readings. This "other" text should be a contemporary newspaper or magazine article that deals with the Vietnam conflict that we are discussing or a protest song from that era. Attached to the class syllabus and schedule you will find a list of possible songs that could be used; it is by no means exhaustive. If you choose the protest-song option, and I hope many of you will, you will transcribe the song's lyrics and present them to the class. I have many of the recordings and should be able to help you find the others if you cannot find them on the internet or from some other source. We will play the song in class and use your transcribed lyrics and one-page response to spark discussion.

Peer Response Workshops:

Early in the semester, we will form small groups whose primary responsibilities will be to read and respond to group members' writing. During the peer response session, you will be asked to respond carefully and conscientiously to each group member's writing. For each peer response workshop, you will be responsible for making notes about the

feedback your peers offer to you and for keeping track of the feedback you offer to your peers. These written responses must be turned in with any final drafts of essays.

Due Dates:

Dates when assignments are due are listed on the attached course outline. No late work will be accepted. If unusual circumstances will keep you from completing an assignment on time, please speak to me about it immediately.

Paper Format:

All drafts and all essays must be typed, double-spaced, in a twelve point font or the equivalent, with one-inch margins. Sometimes I may ask that you turn in additional materials with your final draft, such as, for example, source materials. Having all your notes and drafts available when I read your final draft allows me to offer you more specific and detailed responses to your work and helps me better understand how you're developing as a writer and reader. Such materials are also an essential safeguard against plagiarism, since they demonstrate your own involvement in developing a final draft.

Plagiarism:

Intentionally using someone's words (or ideas) as your own, without explicit citation, is a serious offense in the university. The use of appropriate sources, citations and documentation will be important topics throughout the class. If you have questions about proper citation and documentation of any sources you are using, please see me.

Course Schedule Spring 2003

Week One

January 14	Introduction to course
16	Introduction to era

Week Two

January 21	Tim O'Brien, "On the Rainy River"
	Response #1 Due
23	Harold "Light Bulb" Bryant, Oral History
	Leslie McClusky, Oral History
	Response #2 Due

Week Three

January 28	Ron Kovic, First Three Chapters of <i>Born on the Fourth of July</i>
	Response #3 Due
30	First Draft Essay Assignment #1 Due
	Peer Response Workshop

Week Four

February 4	<i>Born on the Fourth of July</i> , Chapters Four through Six
	Response #4 Due

6 **Second Draft Essay Assignment #1 Due**

Week Five

February 11 *Born on the Fourth of July*, Chapter Seven
13 Yusef Komunyakaa, Poems from *Dien Cai Dau* (Handout)
Response #5 Due

Week Six

February 18 Bruce Weigl, Poems from *Song of Napalm* (Handout)
20 Ho Chi Minh, Declaration of Independence
Thomas J. Dodd, Speech
Final Draft Essay Assignment #1 Due

Week Seven

February 25 U.S. Department of State, *The White Paper* & I. F. Stone,
"A Reply to the White Paper"
27 David Dellinger, A. J. Muste, et al., "Declaration of
Conscience against the War in Vietnam"
Barbara Beidler, "Afterthoughts on a Napalm-Drop
on Jungle Villages near Haiphong" and Huy Can's
"Truth Blazes Even in Little Children's Hearts"
Response 6 Due

Week Eight

March 4 Paul Potter, from "The Incredible War"
Tim O'Brien, "The Things They Carried" (Handout)
Response 7 Due
6 **Film Day**
First Draft Essay Assignment #2 Due
Peer Response Workshop

Spring Break: March 9-16

Week Nine

March 18 Review
Martin Luther King Jr., "Declaration of Independence
from the War in Vietnam"
20 **Film Day**
**Introduction to Assignment #4 – Presentation and
Paper**
Second Draft Essay Assignment #2 Due

Week Ten

March 25 Lyndon B. Johnson, from "Peace in Vietnam and
Southeast Asia"

27 National Mobilization Committee to End the War
in Vietnam, "A Message to GIs and to the Movement"
Peer Group Meetings in Preparation for Assignment #4
Richard M. Nixon, from "Vietnamization"
Response #8 Due
Final Draft Essay #2 Due

Week Eleven

April 1 Spiro T. Agnew, Parasites, Protesters, and the Press
John F. Kerry, Testimony before the U.S. Senate
Foreign Relations Committee
3 **Library Workshop – Class will go to the MWSC
Library**

Week Twelve

April 8 Peer Group Meetings in Preparation for Assignment #4
Library Workshop – Class will go to the Library
10 Peer Group Meetings with Instructor
Final Draft Essay Assignment #3 Due

Week Thirteen

April 15 Library Workshop – Class will go to the Library
Peer Group Meetings in Preparation for Assignment #4
17 Final Writing Workshop

Week Fourteen

April 22 Presentations
24 Presentations

Week Fifteen

April 29 Final Presentation Day & Miscellaneous/Last Day of Class
Essay Assignment #4 Due

Week Sixteen

May 1-7 **Finals Week**