

**Missouri Western State College**  
**School of Liberal Arts & Sciences**  
**Department of English, Foreign Languages, and Journalism**

**ENG 108: College Writing and Research**  
**Spring, 2004**  
**Dr. Mike Cadden**

Section 13: 2:00 pm –3:20 pm, T/Th, 104 Murphy Hall (JGM)

Office: 222-F Eder Hall (SS/C)

Office Hours: 8:30-9:30 am, 11:00 am -12:30 pm T/Th; 2:00 pm – 4:00 pm W; and by appointment.

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URL: <http://www.missouriwestern.edu/eflj/faculty/cadden.asp>(This syllabus is on my website)

**On the Course:**

In ENG 108 we'll be getting better acquainted with the practices of developing and defining our ideas in writing, but we'll also spend some time working on strategies for finding material and incorporating the voices and thoughts of others in our writing. We'll have research essays, workshops, and an exam along the way.

ENG 108 is a tough course. It is "tough" in the sense that it requires a lot of work and a good attitude about a process that may have you stumble before you write with confidence. Writing is hard work at any level; it never gets easy, though you will get better at both understanding what you have to do and executing those writing and revision tasks. Since, as I write above, the in-class and out-of-class portions of the course are designed to help you understand and succeed in completing each essay, your success hinges on your willingness to be here, prepared and attentive.

See the English Department web site for a more complete description of ENG 108:

<http://www.missouriwestern.edu/eflj/eng108.asp#Course>

**Materials:**

Spatt, Brenda. Writing From Sources. 6<sup>th</sup> ed. New York, NY: St. Martins, 2003.

Suggested: A college-level dictionary and thesaurus; a college level language handbook (the department's default book is Hult, Christine A. and Thomas N. Huckin. The New Century Handbook.)

MLA Citation information provided by Diana Hacker and Bedford/St.Martins Press: Hacker, Diana. Research and Documentation Online. Bedford/St. Martins. 20 Dec. 2003. <<http://www.dianahacker.com/resdoc/humanities/sample.html>>

Attendance: The MWSC *Policy Guide* states that "each instructor will determine and make known to the class the requirement for attendance" (45). I can assure you that your presence in class will improve your grade: we discuss and work on the assignments in class, so missing class means almost certain confusion on what are demanding assignments. I *will not* accept absence as an excuse for ignorance. In short, if you're not here, you're going to suffer through other assignments directly and indirectly. I will not formally assign a number of absences to failure; I'll allow those things will be related naturally. Be on time, please.

Academic Dishonesty: All cases in which students pass off others' work as their own will be referred to the Dean of Student Affairs. Students also run the risk of failing the assignment as well as the course, depending on the magnitude and nature of the offense. If you are unsure about how you are using sources, please check with me.

Late and Missing Work: I reserve the right to refuse any late work.

Revision Policy: All essays may be revised at any time, however many times that you like, and may be resubmitted by our last class period. Homework may be revised up until one week after it is returned. Workshops may not be revised.

Policy on Students with Disabilities : Any student in this course who has a disability that requires different contexts for either evaluation or expression should contact me in the first few weeks of the course so that those needs can be considered.

**Evaluation:**

Essay Assignments: 70%

Workshops: 20%

Participation: 10%

### **Calendar:**

Jan. 20 T- Introduction to the course: syllabus, discussion of five writing stages, the essay assignments in relation to each other, and workshops.

22 H- Above continued and an introduction to WebCT and our use of it this semester.

27 T- Summary and paraphrase introduced; Spatt 38-46; 93-104; handouts.

29 H- Summary and paraphrase used in your text; Spatt 110-11.

Feb. 3 T- Other ways to incorporate voice; Spatt 68-92.

5 H- Incorporation issues and practice continued.

10 T- Incorporation issues and practice continued; Works Cited—on the use of MLA style. See Diana Hacker site <<http://www.dianahacker.com/resdoc/humanities/sample.html>>

12 H- **Workshop 1:**

17 T- **Workshop 2:**

19 H- **Essay #1 Due;** Essay #2 explained; Finding subjects, narrowing the subject, and collecting data; finding the variety of resources and evaluating their relative usefulness; Spatt 140-46, 237-40.

24 T- Collecting and focusing both subject and data; MWSC resources discussed.

26 H- Collecting and focusing both subject and data continued.

March 2 T- Introducing the rhetorical proposal—laying a contingent foundation.

4 H- Working through potential models--focus

9 T- Working through one model in particular--order

11 H- Issues of revision (adapting the rhetorical proposal); returning to Works Cited (acknowledging sources) Spatt 366-92.

### ***Spring Break***

23 T- **Workshop 3;** Midterm Grades Due tomorrow.

25 H- **Workshop 4.**

30 T- **Essay #2 Due;** Essay #3 explained—Selecting a topic from the essays in Spatt and narrowing/expanding.

April 1 H- Final Exam (April fools!); tomorrow is the last day to drop a class (no kidding. Really. No, *really*). Topic choice and narrowing continued. Return to the rhetorical proposal (identifying purpose/context).

6 T- Researching—strategies and resources (Library seminar with Ms. Christy Zimmerman); Spatt 240-70.

8 H- Locating sources—time in the library.

13 T- Sharing ideas as a class—rhetorical proposals.

15 H- Final review of citation and incorporation of sources.

20 T- **Workshop 5:**

22 H- **Workshop 6:**

27 T- **Essay #3 Due;** Essay Exams: concept introduced; Spatt Appendix D.

29 H- Essay Exam continued.

May 4 T- Evaluations; **all revisions due.**

**Final Exam (in our regular classroom): Thursday, May 6: 2:00 – 3:50 pm**

## *English 108 Essay Assignments*

*Dr. Cadden*

All Essays are to be posted under the appropriate heading on our WebCT site.

Essay #1 (20%); 4-5 pages: Your first essay task for ENG 108 is focused on the issue of incorporating others' voices into our own writing. So, for this assignment we need an excuse for trying to synthesize other texts into one of our own. We'll be a bit eccentric about this, though I hope we can have fun!

Choose a number—preferably a number under 200. Go to the MWSC (or your local) library and pick four print texts at random. These might be magazines, newspapers, academic journals, children's novels, popular magazines, cook books, owners' manuals, or books on any subject. **They should, however, represent a variety of sources rather than being all, say, popular magazines.** Photocopy the page that corresponds with the number you've chosen. You should have four pages, each from a different source. You'll turn in those copies the day your essay is due.

Your mission is to try to synthesize those seemingly unconnected pages. The point isn't so much that synthesis as it is the use of other texts in your own writing; in fact, you might be quite silly in your discussion of the four sources—as part of a murder mystery, a message from Mars, a new fad or New Age religion, as an argument about why the world is going to the dogs, a description of a new political philosophy, etc. While the main point isn't what you discuss, the paper should hold together with *some* purpose. Are there common denominators among them? Shared issues? Points of connection? The goal is to try to use those voices in as many ways as you can. I'll assess your versatility as someone incorporating these different voices. We'll be discussing those strategies in some detail in class.

Essay #2 (20%) 4-5 pages: This second essay asks you to construct an **argument** about something relevant to MWSC. You could pose an argument about the construction of your major, General Studies, student government, the fraternity/sorority system, parking, why I deserve a raise, the use of campus space, campus safety, *Griffon News* issues—anything *specific to MWSC*.

For this assignment you will need to draw on relevant MWSC documents—both print and electronic. You might interview relevant individuals as well. Three different *types* of sources will need to be used in the essay, though you may end up using more than three sources. The sources are to be referenced in the paper and cited in a works cited page at the end of the paper using MLA documentation.

Essay #3 (20%) 5-7 pages: Your third essay is an address or extension of an essay from Spatt's book. You'll notice a good many essays included in *Writing from Sources* on a variety of topics. I want you to use those essays as a collection of topics from which to choose one. The essay can directly address one other essay's argument, or you can simply use that essay as a reason to begin discussing a related issue. In either case, you need to employ outside material to bolster your argument/discussion. Whether you take on Ian Frazier's ideas about life on Native American reservations or simply use his essay as an opportunity to discuss a related issue regarding reservation life or management, you'll have to incorporate that essay and two other sources on the subject as you define and refine it. The sources are to be referenced in the paper and cited in a works cited page at the end of the paper using MLA documentation.

Essay #4 (10%): Essay Exam: subject and format to be determined.

## Grading Criteria for Writing in Dr. Cadden's English Courses:

A: 90-100 pts.

B: 80-89 pts.

C: 70-79 pts.

D: 60-69 pts.

F: 59 pts. and below

The high end of each range (~7-10) should be considered “plus”; for example, 88 is in the B+ range.  
The middle of each range (~4-6) should be considered a solid letter grade; for example, 75 is a solid C.  
The low end of each range (~0-3) should be considered “minus”; for example, 92 is in the A- range.

“A”:

General Qualitative Description: Excellent, Superior, Outstanding.

Conception: Your idea should contain some new, perhaps surprising, element, some angle that is uncommonly thoughtful and insightful. You are not rehearsing other people's ideas, and you are going beyond an average reading. You expose and challenge the explicit and implicit assumptions of the text. If you are incorporating research, you will have WORKED your sources--using what supports your argument, and acknowledging and dealing with what challenges it.

Organization: Your organization should be flawless and should match your content. You should anticipate, address, and work through opposition to your argument and build a strong case for your own. You should employ evidence with regularity and in appropriate circumstances. If you are incorporating research, you will spend some time positioning your argument in the context of the larger conversation.

Style: Your presentation should be artful. You have obviously paid attention to the way your language sounds as well as what it says. You have found a way to make your presentation style match the content of your paper (other than a groovy font style!), perhaps through a sustained metaphor, or a particularly apt example that you carry through and refer to in the entire paper.

Grammar and Mechanics: Your paper should be absolutely clean and free of grammatical and mechanical errors of a rudimentary nature, though you may have a few problems with complex functions of grammar. You should never avoid complex language in order to avoid errors, in other words.

“B”:

General Qualitative Description: Above average, Good, Commendable.

Conception: Your idea will be better than average, but you may have overlooked or not acknowledged or interrogated the assumptions that inform it. The claim/idea is ambitious and, for that reason, may have gotten away from you. You will be rewarded for being ambitious even if you fall a bit short.

Organization: Your organization will be strong, but the signaling might still be a bit awkward; you may find yourself using a lot of directional phrases because your argument doesn't flow naturally. (Ex. "As I said earlier..." "Firstly, secondly, thirdly...") Here too the organization will match the content rather than being formulaic.

Style: It's clean, readable, there's a consistent sense of voice, and there aren't any places where a reader has to go back and reread a sentence just to understand its structure.

Grammar/Mechanics: Very few (almost no) errors of a rudimentary nature.

“C”:

General Qualitative Description: Competent, Average, Fine.

Conception: Your idea for your paper should reflect that you have read, thought about, and paid attention to the way we have talked in class about similar issues. Your main point should be clearly stated and defended with appropriate evidence. You should remain focused on your topic throughout your paper, and you should have thoroughly examined the aspects of your topic from your perspective. Your ideas should be internally consistent. There won't be anything terribly surprising, daring, or unusual here.

Organization: Your paper should have a logical, clearly identifiable organization. Each paragraph should address only one aspect of your topic, and when you change aspects, you start a new paragraph. Transitions between paragraphs should be competently handled. Your strategy, that is, how you manage the interweaving of your idea and your organization, should be standard and straightforward. For instance, if you follow a traditional pattern of an introduction that includes a flagged thesis statement ("in this paper I will..."), then proceed with evidence and close with a restatement of the initial problem. That's a standard, straightforward organization--a C strategy.

Style: Your style should be clear and readable.

Grammar and Mechanics: Your paper should not contain many distracting errors in grammar or mechanics. Minimally, you should have run a spell-check program, and you should know the difference between a complete sentence, a fragment, and a run-on.

“D”:

General Qualitative Description: Incompetent, Inadequate, Below Average.

Conception: Your idea will be immediately obvious to a casual reader--a no-brainer—yet it will be presented as news. It will likely also be not quite clear what it is that you are really saying. Split focus on more than one thesis or issue is likely.

Organization: Perhaps you split your focus (which means you start out talking about one thing and shift to another) which means that you are covering several or many issues in short paragraphs. You jump from one idea to the next with no logical strategy or transitions. If there is no plan, or if you don't stick to the plan, this is faulty organization. It may be evident that there wasn't ever really a structural strategy at all.

Style: Unclear language, usually. This may also be a matter of using the wrong words for your ideas. Simply put, the language is in bad shape.

Grammar/Mechanics: Consistent problems in sentence structure with little sign of proof-reading.

“F”:

General Qualitative Description: Unacceptable.

(The most common cause of an F is a failure to adequately address the assignment. For instance, if I specify that this assignment is to be researched, or if it is to address a certain topic in a certain way, you have to at least complete the assignment.)

Conception: No clear idea governs the words on the page.

Organization: No plan is evident, much less achieved.

Style: Incomprehensible most or all of the time.

Grammar/Mechanics: Consistent problems with rudimentary mechanical matters.

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The four major areas of concern discussed above (conception, organization, style, and mechanics) will be considered separately, when that is possible. I may find that it is difficult or even impossible to assess conception if the style and mechanics are at the “F” or “D” levels. It may well be the case that your organization is a real problem while conception, style, and mechanics are all quite good. The ultimate assessment, then, will be the combined consideration of all four areas. Any challenges to my assessments need to employ the above issues in those challenges.

I cannot assess effort. Note that I do not say that I *will* not assess effort; nobody can assess effort unless, perhaps, he or she is there watching you work. I assume that you *all* work very hard on your writing. I can only assess the final product.

I do not give grades based on your perceived needs. If you need a “B” in the course to keep your GPA up for a scholarship, loans, or admittance into a program, then be sure you perform at a “B” level.

I do not give grades on the basis of your sense of identity or personal academic history. I assess each piece of work on its own merits. Just because you consider yourself an “A” student does not mean that you will do “A” work each time; just because you consider yourself a “C” student doesn't mean that you won't do “A” work. Try to separate your performance from your identity.