

English 301 Advanced Composition
Department of English, Foreign Languages, & Journalism
MWSC Division of Liberal Arts & Sciences

Spring 2004

2:00 M 119 Murphy

W 108 Murphy

Dr. Kaye Adkins

Office: 222J Eder (SS/C)

Phone: 271-5967

Email (my preferred method of communication): kadkins@missouriwestern.edu

Office Hours: 12:00 a.m.-1:50 p.m. MW; 11:00-12:00 TTh

Required texts and materials:

Fadiman, ed., *The Best American Essays: 2000*

Williams, *Style: Ten Lessons in Clarity and Grace*, 7th ed.

Journal notebook

Recommended:

An email account

About the course: This course will work as a writer's workshop. Some days will be spent writing, so always come with writing materials. We will also be reading and commenting on each other's writing in small groups. You will be expected to provide members of your writing group with a copy of your essay before the group meets in class to discuss it. This can be done at the class period before your discussion or outside of class in whatever manner you all agree on. Each student will be required to keep a writer's journal. This should be kept in a separate notebook. You can choose something as simple as a spiral notebook or as fancy as a bound blank book. This is not a diary, nor is it necessarily a reading journal. Use the journal as a way to explore different subjects--ideas that interest you, thoughts about any current writing projects, explorations of subjects that interest you, commentary of writing, speeches, programs, news stories, or whatever that intrigue you. You should write at least a paragraph in this journal four (or more) times a week. You may be sharing these entries with each other and with me.

Course objectives: Quite simply, to help you become a better writer. During this course you will become aware of stylistic elements of writing that you probably haven't consciously considered before. You will also learn about the essay as a contemporary literary genre. Finally, by the end of the course, you should begin developing your own voice as a writer.

Assignments: There will be five essays assigned during the semester. The final essay will be a revision of an earlier piece. Early in the semester, I will give you very specific assignments, but later in the semester, you will have more freedom to choose your own topics.

Grading: As the semester progresses, my expectations rise, and my grading becomes more strict. At the beginning of the semester, I expect papers to have a clear thesis, reasonable organization and development, focused paragraphs, and sentence-level competency. During the course of the semester you should integrate the stylistic features we have been practicing. I also reward experimentation. If you want to try an unconventional approach to the essay, please do so. It is a good idea to see me with a draft and to explain what you are attempting, so I will know that when I grade your paper. Papers turned in late without an acceptable excuse will lose one letter grade for each business day they are late.

Grades will be weighted as follows:

Essay 1 10%
Essay 2 15%
Essay 3 15%
Essay 4 15%
Essay 5 25%
Journal and exercises 10%
Class/workshop participation 10%

Absences: Students with four unexcused absences will have their grade lowered one letter grade. If you miss class on a day you were scheduled to discuss another student's writing, return a copy of the student's text to him or her with marks and comments. If you must miss class and know in advance please contact me.

Academic honesty: "Since honesty in the classroom is required, cheating, plagiarism, or knowingly furnishing false information to the college constitutes a violation." Policy Guide II, B, C. In other words, the work you turn in should be your own.

Disabilities: Please let me know during the first week of class about any physical handicap or learning disability if you need special help or accommodation in order to do your best work.

Disclaimer: I try to adapt each of my classes to the needs and interests of the students. This means that the [Schedule of Assignments](#) may change.