

ENG 104: College Writing and Rhetoric

Section 14: 12:30 - 1:50 TTh
Spring 2005

Missouri Western State College
Division of Liberal Arts and Sciences
Department of English, Foreign Languages, and Journalism

Instructor: Dr. Donaher

Office: SS/C 222 L

Office Hours: TTh 9:30-11:00 and 2:00-3:00, and by appointment

Phone: 816-271-5964

E-mail: donaher@missouriwestern.edu

URL: <http://staff.mwsc.edu/~donaher>

Course Philosophy and Objectives

Language is the blood of the soul into which thoughts run and out of which they grow. --Oliver Wendell Holmes

English usage is sometimes more than mere taste, judgment and education--sometimes it's sheer luck, like getting across the street. --E. B. White

Language is a city to the building of which every human being brought a stone. --Ralph Waldo Emerson

This course is about the exploration of language, both oral and written, and about exploring our respective linguistic heritages. We will think, discuss, and write about where our language comes from, how our lives have been shaped by the language communities we inhabit, and what language issues impact our daily lives. Our written assignments will also give us more practice with the formal aspects of academic writing; thus by the end of English 104, we will also understand that:

- writing can be used for different purposes;
- multiple audiences exist;
- writing is a recursive process;
- there are many productive ways to generate ideas and arguments;
- common patterns of organization exist;
- formal distinctions exist among different prose genres;
- polished writing keeps the reader's attention on the message;
- reading is interactive.

These goals are more clearly articulated at <http://www.missouriwestern.edu/eflj/eng104.asp> - Objectives

Required Materials

Textbooks:

- Goshgarian, Gary. *Exploring Language*. Tenth Edition. New York: Pearson/Longman, 2004.
- Easy access to a good, large College Dictionary.
- Access to a basic grammar/punctuation handbook as needed.
- Access to an *MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers*.

Other:

- A Student E-mail Account at MWSC.
- Disks and Storage Case for revising, saving, and backing up your work.
- A LARGE Binder Notebook with Notebook Paper and Dividers for holding hard copies of your projects, notes, and copies of materials

gathered and received.

- A Hole Punch, so that articles and other materials may be inserted into your notebook.
- A Pocket Folder, Binder Notebook, and Plastic Page Sleeves in which to submit disks and hard copies of final research papers.
- Stamina and Good Humor.

Assignments

Pre-Writings and Other Assignments

Students will do a number of invention writings for each paper including brainstorming, freewriting, and topic evaluation. These invention strategies allow the student to explore a variety of topics and topic approaches before drafting and revising the paper. Students will also respond to the readings and do other kinds of assignments and sharing on WebBoard, an online bulletin board.

Paper One - Language and Literacy Narrative

In this narrative essay, you will examine and reflect upon a significant experience you have had with language, whether spoken or written. As you explore your own history as a reader, writer, and speaker, you will also read and respond to the significant language experiences of others. This paper is based upon your personal research and will use minimal citation.

Paper Two - Speech Community Profile

In this explanatory essay, you will profile and analyze a particular speech community, its uses, and users. As you study your chosen community, you will read about and respond to essays and films about other kinds of language communities, as well as learn about the history of the English language in general. This paper will require some outside research and formal citation of sources.

Paper Three - Language Issue Paper

In this persuasive essay, you will be researching and writing about a language issue, like animal communication, gendered communication, language in the mass media and advertising, language censorship, or the English Only movement. As you study your issue, you will read about and respond to essays about a variety of language issues that will provide you with ideas and references for your own paper. This paper will require some outside research and formal citation of sources.

Grading

Students will do a variety of writing assignments over the course of the semester, including pre-writings, responses and other kinds of sharing, and formal papers. In order to pass the course, students must complete the papers; 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 papers) is accepted. Occasional lapses are understood, but chronic lapses can only pull the final grade downward.

Your Final Grade Distribution is as follows:

- Paper One and Preparatory Work = 20%
- Paper Two and Preparatory Work = 40%
- Paper Three and Preparatory Work = 40%

Course Policies and Requirements

Attendance and Promptness

Attendance is mandatory. School functions, illness, and personal crisis do not absolve you from your classroom obligations. So while due consideration is given to the student struck by lightning on the way to class, an absence cannot be designated as "excused" or "unexcused" --it simply "is." I consider two absences to be reasonable; absences beyond two will effect your final grade, as you are not here to participate or turn in your work. Chronic lateness will count toward this total.

Regular attendance is an essential part of the student's educational experience and a requirement for an adequate evaluation of student academic progress. You are responsible for material covered or assignments given which you missed because of absence. All out-of-class assignments are due at the beginning of the class period. No late assignments are accepted, except as noted below.

You should note, however, that mere attendance does not mean you will pass the course. You must perform adequately on the tasks required and show initiative in completing the course requirements.

If I should be unable to meet class, you will be notified IN PERSON by a secretary, fellow instructor, or the CAI Lab Manager, Kelli Gardner. Be sure to note any assignments due upon my return.

Participation And Preparation

You will be expected to make significant contributions to the class in the form of participation and preparation. Participation includes the contributions you make to class discussion and the effort you make to be a part of our discourse community. Preparation includes doing the daily readings and responses as assigned, as well as engaging exuberantly in our activities. Keep in mind that live classroom discussion

- gives you practice arguing with others respectfully and professionally
- gives you opportunities to formulate applications of principles
- gives you prompt feedback on difficult or confusing issues and material
- increases your retention of material through explaining, summarizing, and questioning.

Sharing Your Work

Students are expected to share their writings and other work with members of the course and, therefore, should not choose to write on topics they consider of a sensitive nature. Further, all work that a student produces may be shared by the instructor with the class for purposes of example and training. Such work will be as anonymous as possible. Finally, the instructor may share your work anonymously with future classes or in her own writing and research.

Classroom Courtesy

Students are expected to be courteous and respectful in all of their exchanges with the instructor and other students and students should be particularly careful to note how tone, rhetoric, and language all contribute to the overall impression of their words and writings. The college expects all students to conduct themselves so as to maintain an effective environment for learning; to act responsibly in accordance with good taste; and to respect fully the rights of others.

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.

Revision

Revision is an important part of the writing process, and each project that we do will go through an intensive draft and revision stage before being turned in. Drafts will be graded for completion, and each final essay will be graded on its merits and appropriateness to the assignment. Since each paper will receive critiques before the final version is submitted for grading, you must consider the final version to be final.

Late Work

All assignments are due at the beginning of the hour on the due date, unless otherwise specified. 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 papers, no late work will be accepted.** Final papers will not be discounted if turned in within 24 hours of the due date/time. Otherwise, they will be discounted one letter grade for 24 hours past the due date, including weekends and holidays. No work will be accepted after the last class day before final exams.

Computer Usage

You will be called upon to read materials online, use Webboard, and to use computers in and outside of class time. Further, all drafts and final papers for this course must be word processed, in accordance with Missouri Western's desire for you to become computer proficient. MWSC has a number of computer labs to help you complete this requirement. Learn to use the labs early and plan ahead to get into them during the busy parts of the semester.

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 and hard copies should be made religiously at the end of each day's work.

Time Expectations

As with all college courses, a steady devotion to duty is expected; thus, while much work will be done in class, you must set aside an appropriate amount of time EACH day to completing your assignments, including time to go to the library and the computer lab. Remember: no late work is accepted *under any circumstances*, so anticipate that there will be occasional glitches, whether personal or technical, and be sure to allow an extra hour or two in your schedule each day to handle unanticipated problems.

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. You are responsible for proving that all work turned in for grading is your own original work. Papers with evidence of plagiarism will receive a zero and will result in failure of the course. Other forms of academic dishonesty, like cheating, will also result in failure of the course. Don't think that you won't be caught; writing style is distinctive and verifiable.

Final Thoughts

Despite Einstein's assurances that even the motions of dust motes have pattern, life to us mere mortals is unpredictable. 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 overly stressed about all you have to accomplish, you need to come see me.

Course Schedule

January

18 (T)

Introduction to the Course
The Personal Narrative
Assignment: The Language and Literacy Narrative

20 (Th)

Keller, "A Word for Everything" pp 65-69
Lamott, "Getting Started" pp 123-127

25 (T)

Malcolm X, "A Homemade Education" pp 61-64
Marin, "Spanish Lessons" pp 79-84

27 (Th)

Childers, "What My Students Have Taught Me About Writing" pp 128-133

February

1 (T)

Peer Critique Day: Must Bring Copies of Paper One Draft

3 (Th)

Murray, "The Maker's Eye: Revising Your Own Manuscripts" pp 119-123

8 (T)

Paper One Due
Assignment: The Speech Community Profile
Film: *The Story of English: Mother Tongue*

10 (Th)

Film: *The Story of English: A Muse of Fire*

15 (T)

Roberts, "A Brief History of English" pp 32-41
Millward, "The Story of Writing" pp 42-51

17 (Th)

Film: *American Tongues*
Internet Research on Speech Communities

22 (T)

Film: *The Story of English: Black on White*
Internet Research on Speech Communities

24 (Th)

Esling, "Everyone Has An Accent But Me" pp 564-569

Gorman, "Like, Uptalk?" pp 291-293

March

1 (T)

Tannen, "'I'll Explain It To You': Lecturing and Listening" pp 255-266

Tannen, "Taking TV's 'War of Words' Too Literally" pp 377-381

3 (Th)

Gerberg, "What is a Cartoon?" pp 333-337

Lutz, "With These Words, I Can Sell You Anything" pp 393-406

8 (T)

Taheri, "The Semantics of Murder" pp 216-218

Flower, "Writing for an Audience" pp 115-117

10 (Th)

Reading on Standard Paragraph Formats

Reading on Citing Quotations and Paraphrasing According to MLA Style

Reading on Doing Field Research/Interviews

Spring Break: March 13 - 20

22 (T)

Interview Day

24 (Th)

Peer Critique Day: Must Bring Copies of Paper Two Draft

29 (T)

Paper Two Due

Assignment: Language Issue Paper

Film: *Signs of the Apes, Songs of the Whales*

31 (Th)

Lutz, "Doubts About Doublespeak" pp 184-187

Lewis, "Language Abuse" pp 417-425

April

5 (T)

ALA, "The Freedom to Read" pp 445-448

Maggio, "Bias-Free Language: Some Guidelines" pp 505-514

7 (Th)

Silvergate, "Muzzling Free Speech" pp 487-489

Lawrence III, "Regulating Racist Speech on Campus"

12 (T)

Rovira, "Let's Not Say Adios to Bilingual Education" pp 590-593

Crawford, "A Nation Divided by One Language" pp 594-596

14 (Th)

Simon, "Why Good English is Good for You" pp 555-563

Bryson, "Good English and Bad" pp 572-580

19 (T)

Doing Library Research

21 (Th)

Library Research

26 (T)

Peer Critique Day: Must Bring Copies of Paper Three Draft

28 (Th)

O'Connor, "Saying is Believing" pp 139-144

May

5 (Th)

Paper Three Due

Final Exam 11:30-1:20