

Department of English, Foreign Languages, Journalism

Division of Liberal Arts and Sciences

English 104-15 College Writing and Rhetoric

Course Syllabus - Summer 2005

Instructor: Bill Church

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Office Hours: Normally available shortly before and after class.

Class Meeting Time and Room: 10:30 - 1:20, Monday through Thursday, Murphy 105. *Please note: We do have one Friday class period, June 3, because of the preceding Monday holiday.*

Required texts and materials: *Critical Thinking, Thoughtful Writing*, by John Chaffee; *Tuesdays with Morrie*, by Mitch Albom; *The Bluest Eye*, by Toni Morrison. Please purchase a spacious journal that will endure heavy use. You will also be responsible for providing multiple copies of drafts on peer review days. All papers submitted for peer review or for my evaluation, other than those written in class, must be **word processed**.

Recommended texts: A collegiate dictionary with at least 200,000 entries, a thesaurus, and a style manual of your choice such as Strunk and White's *Elements of Style*.

Students with Disabilities: Anyone who has a disability that prevents the fullest expression of her or his potential to succeed in this course must notify me in writing as soon as possible so we may discuss course requirements, options, and accommodations.

Course Description & Goals: In short, my goal is that you learn to identify rhetorical elements at work and to employ them to your advantage. I will also challenge you to examine how rhetoric has affected your sense of self and then decide if who have been told you are is who you wish to be. Our readings, discussions, and papers will all engage that broad topic. For a more exhaustive and standard discussion of course goals, please refer to the following Internet site, which we will review periodically in class: <http://www.missouriwestern.edu/eflj/eng104.asp>

Academic Honesty: Most cheating is accidental. If, however, I determine that a student is cheating deliberately or repeatedly, I will minimally award a failing grade for the project. I may submit a failing grade for the entire course if circumstances warrant. In addition, I will forward in writing the names and acts of all involved students to the chairperson of the English department chair and to the dean of students. In cases of suspected plagiarism, the burden of proof is on the student, so it is in your best interest to keep every piece of writing you generate for every assignment.

Grading Method: Given the pace of this course, I will use four mini-portfolios, one for each major paper. I will provide specific guidelines for each unit, one per week. Each mini-portfolio will be due at the end of class on the concluding day each week: June 3, 9, 16, 23. The mini-portfolio will include all assignments for each unit including quizzes, cover letters, summaries, and responses, as well as exploratory and revised drafts for my evaluation. Each week's mini-portfolio will be included in your final semester portfolio.

Grading Criteria:

Your final grade will be based on the quality and completeness of your portfolio. Your portfolio will consist of all four mini-portfolios which will include your four major papers and abundant shorter works such as vocabulary-building and editing assignments, summaries, responses, letters, critical analyses, and other writings as assigned. No one will pass without completing all writing assignments, regardless of the quality of work submitted. In addition, the factors identified below will affect your course grade.

Timeliness -- students who miss any deadlines on any major papers, including peer review, without documented extenuating circumstances are ineligible for course grades higher than C.

The highest grades will go to the students whose efforts and intellects allow them to produce the most complete, clear, correct, and insightful writing, much of it the result of careful and thorough reading. Portfolios from these students will contain multiple drafts of major assignments, thoughtful reflective letters with every submission of every draft, and thoughtful questions for me to answer about their writing. Likewise, students who receive the highest grades will have received the highest quiz scores, contributed meaningfully to class discussions, and met all deadlines for drafting and submitting all assignments, in addition to fulfilling the attendance requirements.

Missing excessive classes, deadlines, assignments, and quizzes will result in substantially lower grades, in many cases to the point of failure. Falling behind on or ignoring reading assignments will ensure failure. Also, superficial, off-topic or poorly edited papers, or an unwillingness or inability to contribute meaningfully to class discussions or to revise papers effectively, will result in low final grades.

Attendance: Anyone not present when I take roll at the beginning of class will be marked absent. While I may show leniency to those who arrive slightly late on rare occasions, I will enforce this policy strictly for repeatedly late students. Under no circumstances will I change an absent to a present for anyone who arrives more than fifteen minutes late.

Students who miss more than twice risk failing the course.

Excused Absences: Common sense and human decency will prevail. I will grant special consideration to students who can document extenuating circumstances. Extenuating circumstances include, for example, auto wrecks, prolonged illnesses, blizzards, funerals, power failures, unforeseen medical emergencies involving loved ones, and mandated court appearances. Changing a work schedule, however, is not extenuating. Anyone who enrolls in a class with a clearly designated meeting time is obligated to keep that time open for class.

Make-up Work: This course will seldom lend itself to make-up work. Class discussions cannot be recreated. Nor can in-class writings and group work be recreated later. And obviously I can't allow make-up quizzes after we've gone over the answers in class, which we will always do. Therefore, in most cases, missed work is permanently missed.

Classroom behavior: As stated in the *MWSC Student Handbook*, instructors "may establish additional classroom rules and expectations for conduct in the classroom. Behavior which disrupts the classroom environment or interferes with other students' ability to learn may be grounds or justification for dismissal from the classroom" (28). Sleeping, conducting private conversations, using computers for other than assigned purposes, eating, drinking, damaging property, and using vulgar or deliberately offensive language are some of the more common acts that can damage the learning environment. Likewise, all telephones are to be silent during class time. No headphones may be worn, no music listened to, no homework done for other classes. Let's establish a cordial and respectful atmosphere in which we can have fun while learning together.

Final Exam: Thursday, June 23, Murphy Hall 105.