

Missouri Western State College, Division of Liberal Arts and Sciences  
Department of English, Foreign Languages, and Journalism  
English 104  
Spring 2006

Cynthia Bartels

Office Hours: 8:00-9:30 TR, 2:00-3:30 R, and by appointment

SSC 222N

816-271-5812

[cbartels@missouriwestern.edu](mailto:cbartels@missouriwestern.edu)

### **Required Texts**

*A Pocket Style Manual* D. Hacker or another handbook you already own

*The Things We Carried* - Tim O'Brien

*America Now*- Robert Atwan

Computer disks for revising and saving all work.

4 manilla Folders,

Thin notebook with dividers and lots of paper

Reserve material ( Bartels Eng 104) in library

Optional:

*The Viet Nam War in American Stories, Songs, and Poems* Ed. H. Bruce Franklin

We will use our text in class; be sure to bring it daily. Please have all supplies by the second week of class.

### **Course Objectives**

Upon completion of ENG 104, you should understand the following:

- Writing can be used for different purposes.
- Multiple audiences exist.
- Writing is a recursive process.
- Many productive ways exist to generate ideas and images for your work.
- Common patterns of organization exist.
- Formal distinctions exist among different prose genres.
- Editing skills enable writers to polish their work in order to keep the reader's attention focused on the message conveyed or the experience created.
- Reading is an interactive process that functions in our lives as a pleasurable activity as well as a means of acquiring knowledge.

A more detailed description of the course goals/objectives is available at

<http://www.mwsc.edu/eflj/eng104.html>.

### **Content**

Writing well involves reading, understanding that reading, forming opinions, and expressing your views in logical form. Readings and writings in this class will focus on current issues in America and how those are related to history, specifically the Viet Nam War. I expect you to develop insight and knowledge about these issues and to be able to express this knowledge in written form. Doing so is essential to performing well in class.

## Grading Criteria

Grades will come from the following. Point values are approximate, and I reserve the right to alter some assignments.

Journal entries and DEJ: 15%  
Four Writing Projects: 20% (5% each)  
Evaluations, workshops, participation, quizzes : 10%  
Reflective letters and peer evaluations: 10%  
Portfolio: 45%

**Journals:** We will keep active reading journals. Usually, the topics for these entries will come from the sections following the particular reading in your *America Now* text. These entries will include a DEJ for the book *The Things We Carried*. All entries are required to be one full page, typed, double spaced. If you complete this length and show you have read and thought about the material, you will receive full credit. Although the entries have due dates and we will discuss them in class, I will not be collecting them each class. I assume you complete all of them on time. As long as I have not collected the entries, you can continue to write any missed entries. However, once I do check and record entries, you can no longer make up any missed ones. I often do not tell you in advance when I will collect the entries, and I also may assign journal writings in class. You will receive a zero for any journal entry that you do not have with you in class at the time I record it unless you have made prior arrangements with me. Thus, bring your journal with you at all times and be in class at all times to earn full journal credit. If you follow this practice, you can easily earn 100% of the journal points, and thus boost your grade.

**Projects:** We will complete four projects in this class. Each of the projects contains small process assignments that are just as important as the finished product. Regardless of what the student's point total would indicate, no one will pass this class without completing **all** projects on the original due date.

**Reflective letters:** You will write in-class reflective letters or evaluations on the due dates of all projects. You also will write evaluations of yours and other's papers from time to time. Learning to evaluate your own and others' writing is a very important skill. These evaluations will frequently provide more insight into your growth as a writer and thinker than the papers will. They are very important and should be written with your best effort.

I also hope to set up a web shell where we can exchange papers from other classes. If this site occurs, then you will be required to post papers on that site and respond to others' papers posted there.

**Portfolios:** I use portfolio grading, which means that I do not assign a final letter grade to the four major projects until the end of the semester. We consider each project a draft until it reaches its final form which will appear in the portfolio. I respond to each project paper with a grading rubric that indicates the degree to which that paper is "PR," or Portfolio Ready. Work I deem PR will convert to at least a "C" for that paper at semester's end. The student may decide on the amount of further revision and when s/he revises. Work not deemed PR will be at best a "D" at semester's end and likely result in a repetition of the course if not revised successfully. If you complete the paper and all the steps involved in writing it, if it represents a good effort on your part to fulfill the assignment, and if the paper is close to being PR, you will receive most or all of the possible points. Failure to complete any parts of the writing process or to complete the paper will reduce the points you receive. Anyone who does not write a paper that fulfills the assignment will not receive full credit for the project and must rewrite the paper on his/her own time until the paper meets the assignment.

Quality portfolios will exhibit improvement through multiple drafts of the projects, thoughtful reflection on what you have learned, and quality revisions. Likewise, students who receive the

highest grades will have contributed meaningfully to class discussions and met all deadlines for drafting and submitting all assignments, in addition to fulfilling the attendance requirements. All these factors indicate the student has put forth a strong effort, has developed his/her writing reading and thinking intellect, and can produce complete, clear and thoughtful writing. These qualities will result in a exceptional portfolio.

**Midterm grades:** I submit a "C" for students whose work is complete and passing and whose absences are below the limit. I submit a "D" for students whose work is complete but not acceptable. I submit an "F" for students whose work is incomplete or grossly unacceptable and/or who have exceeded the absence limit.

**Final grades:** Completion and quality, timeliness, attendance, and participation will all influence your final 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.

\* Attendance -- your constant presence is mandatory for your success (please see "Attendance Policy" below).

Missing excessive classes, deadlines, and assignments will result in substantially lower grades, in many cases to the point of 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.

Be sure to bring all work to class, in person, and on time. I cannot be responsible for work that you do not hand me personally. Remember that regardless of the quality of your portfolio, you will not pass the class unless you write all projects.

**Please Note:** If students are borderline between grades, other factors such as effort, class participation, attendance, and attitude will be used to determine the final grade.

### **Late and Make-up work and excused absences**

**Make-up Work:** It is nearly impossible to make up work in this class. Class discussions cannot be recreated, nor can in-class writings and group workshops. If you do not have your paper done, you cannot write a reflective letter. Therefore, I do not accept late work unless it results from an excused absence.

**Excused Absences:** If something should happen that prevents you from submitting your paper on time, you must make arrangements with me **before** the paper is due, not afterwards. At this time, we will plan a date by which the work will be completed. I will grant special leeway to students who can **document** extenuating circumstances. Extenuating circumstances include auto wrecks, prolonged illnesses, blizzards, funerals, 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. I will also grant special consideration to students who are representing MWSC. I ask that those students notify me of planned outings in advance and turn in their work or take their quizzes before each absence. I may verify the absences of students representing the college by contacting the appropriate MWSC personnel.

**Attendance and Tardies:** Each student is allowed three absences. Excessive (more than two) tardies or leaving early will count as an absence. Tardies occur when you enter the class after I have shut the door. I usually distribute handouts and review assignments at the beginning of class; if you are tardy, you will miss this info and must gather it on your own. For each of these

allowed absences you do not use, you will receive five extra points. However, after you use the allowed three absences, I will deduct 5 points from your final grade for each absence or its equivalent. If you accrue more than six absences, it is unlikely you will pass the course. Note that since this class meets only twice a week, six absences is over 1/3 of the class. If you must miss, notify me in advance and be sure to have a buddy whom you can contact to find out what we did in class. Do not expect me to rehash the class. Also, please do not ask me if we "did anything." This question irritates me.

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.

### **Plagiarism**

Plagiarism is claiming another's words, writing structure, images, or ideas as your own. Plagiarism and cheating of any kind will not be tolerated and may result in your failing the assignment or the course or being suspended or dismissed from the college. I penalize first offenses with an F for that particular project, second offenses with an F for the class. Please note carefully the statement on plagiarism on the departmental website, found at <http://www2.mwsc.edu/eflj/plagiarism.html>

### **Classroom behavior**

I expect you to respect everyone in this class. Part of learning to read and write well is exploring ideas. There will no doubt be people who have ideas different than yours. One of our goals is to learn to understand and respect different ideas. Remain open-minded; you may even change your own ideas. Understanding and developing ideas is a natural outcome of the reading and writing, and therefore of this class, and thus I consider these an accomplishment and evidence that you are becoming an educated and mature reader and writer.

I also expect you to behave respectfully in class. This means: do not interrupt, walk in front of anyone who is talking, enter the room or a workshop late, or leave your seat or the room while class is in session unless it is an emergency. It also means turning off cell phones before you enter the classroom, and keeping them off until you have exited the classroom.

### **Academic Support**

The Center for Academic Support, located in LRC 213, offers you assistance with your reading or with papers at any stage of the game. Contact the Center at 271-4624 or Coral Dawson, the Writing Director, at 271-4531. I highly encourage you to use this free service regardless of your abilities.