

Missouri Western State University  
Department of English, Foreign Languages, and Journalism  
**English 108-12 – College Writing and Research**

Instructor: Meredith Katchen  
Office Hours: MWF 9:30-10:30, MW 3:00-3:30, TR 12:30-1:30  
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### **Course Overview**

This course introduces students to ideas and information about writing and research. This class will help students learn to control their own written work and, within it, ideas and information from sources.

### **Required Books and Materials**

*A Pocket Style Manual*, Hacker

Packet of readings

One spiral notebook, 50 – 70 pages, to be used for this class only

### **Basic Writing Components**

Journals: Bring your spiral notebooks to each class meeting. You will use them for notes, responses to readings, exercises, drafting, and other in-class writing. You can count on some sort of journaling each time we meet. I will collect and evaluate journals several times during the semester. Journals will be evaluated primarily by volume, thoroughness, and thoughtfulness. Journal entries will frequently be read aloud or discussed in class; therefore journaling in this class will include class participation. Missed journal entries cannot be made up. Journal work will be worth approximately 35% of the total points available for the course, roughly 10 points per class meeting.

Essays: These assignments will be given in writing in advance of due dates. Some will be due quickly, in which case emphasis will be given to a narrowed range of evaluation criteria. Some will require more time to complete, and these will be evaluated by a fuller range of criteria, including content, structure, style, grammar, and mechanics. ***Any essay that fails to meet basic assigned criteria will be given a grade of zero until all criteria are satisfied.*** A longer assignment that does meet the basic criteria, but which does not earn a grade that satisfies you, may be revised and resubmitted for a higher grade on the condition that you discuss your revision plans with me in advance. Essays will be worth approximately 60% of the total points available for the course. Quick assignments will generally relate to journal entries, and longer essays will in turn generally flow from journals and quick essays.

Final Exam: There will be a mandatory final exam worth approximately 5% of your grade.

## Grading

Other than rewards and punishments for attendance, all points for this course will be earned from writing. I will use a 1000 point scale for the semester. At the end of the semester, I will convert the points you have earned to a letter grade according to the following formula: 900+=A, 800-899=B, 701 to 799=C, 600-699=D, below 600=F.

## Grading Bonus

There will be at least one opportunity to earn a bonus of 20 points by presenting your research to an English 104 class reading the same material as this class.

## Attendance

Beginning with our second class meeting, attendance will be noted. Journal work cannot be made up, so each absence will result in missed journal points. If you have a note from a physician, I may consider allowing you to make-up a journal entry for partial credit. No excuse changes the fact of an absence, and each absence will be counted as an absence regardless of the excuse. An absence may also cause a student to miss an assignment, a syllabus change, a helpful exercise, a due date, a discussion, etc, all of which negatively influence a student's performance. Absence, regardless of the reason, does not excuse a student from responsibility for being prepared for subsequent classes. Attendance and absence will be rewarded and punished in the following manner:

0 absent	= +15 points
1	= +5
2	= +/- 0
3	= -10
4	= -25
5, etc	= -25 <i>additional</i> points for each absence

For your information, a combination of lost journal points and rewards for good attendance or punishment for poor attendance will result in the following point possibilities, assuming that essays and final exam achieve maximum points – an assumption made here only to demonstrate the system:

0 absent	= 1015 possible points	A
1	= 990	A
2	= 970	A
3	= 945	A
4	= 915	A
5	= 865	B
6	= 815	B
7	= 765	C
8	= 715	C
9	= 665	D
10	= 615	D
11	= below 600	F

**Lateness**

One of my pet peeves is punctuality, particularly when it is chronic. Once roll has been called, a late student will be penalized between ½ and one full absence, depending on one's time of arrival. I see lateness as disrespectful to me, to classmates, and to the University.

**Late Work**

I reserve the right to refuse to accept late work. Further late work may NOT be eligible for revision, so late work that does not meet assigned criteria may be permanently entered as earning zero points. Conversely, I reserve the right to grant deadline extensions to a student who discusses his or her deadline problem with me before the assignment is due.

**Revision of Written Work**

As previously mentioned, written work may be revised if it is given a grade of zero or if you would like to resubmit a longer essay for a higher grade. Your grade will never, under any circumstances, go down as a result of a revision. In addition to conferencing with me prior to revising a paper, make sure to attach all previously evaluated versions of that same paper.

**Plagiarism**

Any deception regarding the authorship of the whole or a part of written work will be dealt with harshly, up to and including a failing grade for the assignment, failure for the course, and my recommendation for expulsion from MWSU. If I suspect you have plagiarized, the burden of proof will be on you to recap your writing process and to demonstrate your command of your material.

**Disabilities and Special Needs**

Any student who has a special need or disability that may affect his or her performance in this class should contact MWSU's Special Needs Coordinator for assistance. Also, let me know right away so that appropriate arrangements can be made to make sure your needs are met as quickly and completely as possible.

**Civility and Cooperation**

Missouri Western requires all students to help us maintain good conditions for teaching and learning. All students will treat their classmates and teachers with civility and respect, both inside and outside the classroom. Students who violate this policy may, among other penalties, be counted absent and asked to leave. You should review your MWSU student handbook for further information.

**Projected Major Assignment Due Dates**

Essay #1	February 14
Essay #2	March 9
Essay #3	April 18