



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

ENGLISH 112: HONORS COMPOSITION AND RHETORIC

Section 01/80: 9:30-10:50 TR - JGM 119
Spring 2006

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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 112, we will learn:

- to write for different audiences and purposes
- to use active reading and critical thinking
- to use writing processes
- written conventions

Honors composition classes address the University's Objectives for both ENG 104 and ENG 108, as well as the statewide Institutional Competencies for these courses. Information about these Objectives and Competencies can be found through the Department of English, Foreign Languages, and Journalism website at <http://www.missouriwestern.edu/eflj/>. This is an accelerated course, and successful completion of ENG 112 fulfills the University's two semester General Studies Composition requirement.

Required Materials

Texts:

- Eschholz, Paul, Alfred Rosa, and Virginia Clark. *Language Awareness*. Ninth Edition. Boston: Bedford, 2005.
- Weidenborner, Stephen, Domenick Caruso, and Gary Parks. *Writing Research Papers: A Guide to the Process*. Seventh Edition. Boston: Bedford/St. Martin's, 2005.
- Your choice of a collegiate dictionary, but it should be a behemoth of a dictionary. Size really does matter. Must be available to use in class.
- Articles and other texts used in research projects.

Other:

- A Missouri Western Email account
- Disks/Flash Drives 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. The notebook should be used exclusively for English 112--no history notes or math equations--just English. Love letters are allowable if the content is sufficiently interesting and the language sufficiently literary.
- 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 final research projects.
- Photocopies of your work and various sources.
- Stamina and Good Humor.

Assignments

Pre-Writings, Responses, Research Exercises, Quizzes

To find and develop topic ideas, students will do a number of brainstorming, freewriting, and invention exercises for each project. Students will also develop their skills of summary, synthesis, and argumentation by responding to the readings and to each other. Research exercises will provide an introduction to the library and the other information sources. Quizzes will be random, if at all, occurring only when I feel that we're falling down on our responsibilities, becoming lax in our standards, or succumbing to a general apathy for college and its power to enrich all our lives. Please don't make me give quizzes; it's best for all concerned.

Project One

For this project, students will write a two part, formal research paper on a language issue read about and/or discussed in class or that is tangential to issues raised in class. In the first part, students will provide an overview of the scholarly background of the issue, including an annotated bibliography of important books and articles on the topic. The second portion of the paper is a formal researched essay, in which the student argues for a particular perspective on the issue, appropriately citing critical source material. This paper involves formal library and online research, but may involve other kinds of research, like surveys, fieldwork, or interviews.

Project Two

For this project, students will write a formal researched essay and annotated bibliography on a language issue read about and/or discussed in class or that is tangential to issues raised in class. The essay will argue for a particular perspective on the issue and cite appropriate critical source material. This paper involves formal library and online research, but may involve other kinds of research, like surveys, fieldwork, or interviews.

Final Exam

The final exam will test your knowledge of research and writing by asking you to rate statements as "true" or "false." Statements that you rate as false must be accompanied by an explanation of why the statement is false.

Grading

We will do two research projects in this course and a final exam. In order to pass the course, you must complete the two formal research projects and take the exam. In addition, the quality of your work, the percentage of the work that you complete, and your efforts at participation will determine your final grade.

A word of caution: don't underestimate the value of small assignments, preparedness, and daily participation. Even if you receive passing grades on your projects, you can fail the course because of poor performance on daily assignments. Occasional lapses are understood, but chronic lapses can only pull your grade downward.

Your Final Grade Distribution is as follows:

- Research Project #1 (including all the work leading up to its completion)= 50%
- Research Project #2 (including all the work leading up to its completion, plus the Final Exam)= 50%

Course 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 unless you have a well-documented emergency.

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 Lab Manager. 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 University 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 bibliographies and papers, no late work will be accepted without a well-documented emergency.** Final bibs and 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

Textbook Abbreviations: LA = Language Awareness; WRP = Writing Research Papers

January

17 (T)

Introductions; Film: *Darmok*

19 (Th)

Readings on Doublespeak: "Propaganda" (123-133), "The World of Doublespeak" (152-162), and "The E Word" (165-169) in LA
Project One Assigned

24 (T)

Readings on English Only Movement: "Should English Be the Law?" (180-189) and "Bilingualism in America" (190-195) in LA and Ch 1:
Understanding the Research Process in WRP

26 (Th)

Readings on Speech Codes/Censorship: "Big Brother is Listening" (260-269) and "The Language Police" (276-288) in LA and Ch. 2: Deciding on
a Topic in WRP

31 (T)

Readings on Gendered Communication: "How to Give Orders Like a Man" (312-319) and "He and She" (322-325) in LA and Ch. 3: Moving from
Topic to Hypothesis in WRP

February

2 (Th)

Ch. 4: Developing a Search Strategy and Ch. 7: Finding Internet Sources in *WRP*
In Class Research

7 (T)

Ch. 5: Finding Books, Ch. 6: Finding Periodicals, and Ch. 8: Finding Other Kinds of Sources in *WRP*
In Class Research

9 (Th)

Ch. 9: Developing a Working Bibliography and Ch. 10: Evaluating Potential Sources in *WRP*
In Class Research

14 (T)

Ch. 11: Taking Effective Notes, Section of Ch. 18: Guidelines for Works Cited and Directory (250-266) in *WRP*
Work on Annotating Sources

16 (Th)

Meet in Library

21 (T)

Work on Bibliographies and Annotations

23 (Th)

Ch. 14: Organizing and Outlining and Ch. 15: Writing the Rough Draft in *WRP*
Drafting

28 (T)

Ch. 12: Paraphrasing, Summarizing, and Quoting and Ch. 13: Avoiding Plagiarism in *WRP*
Drafting

March

2 (Th)

Ch. 16: Revising the Rough Draft, Ch. 17: Understanding Documentation, and Section of Ch. 18: Using the MLA Parenthetical System (240-249) in *WRP*
Formatting the Final Document

7 (T)

Peer Critique Day - Must have 3 copies of Draft

9 (Th)

Revision Day

March 14-16: Spring Break

21 (T)

Project One Due

Film: *Signs of Apes, Songs of Whales*

23 (Th)

Readings on Media: "Talk Shows and the Dumbing of America" (363-369), "You Can't Say That" (372-379), and "Television News" (383-388) in *LA*

28 (T)

Readings on Advertising: "The Hard Sell" (423-435), "Weasel Words" (442-451), and "Let Them Eat Fat" (476-485) in *LA*

30 (Th)

Readings on Internet Language: "Gender Wars in Cyberspace" (300-304), "Blog" (510-511), and "Text Messaging" (513-514) in *LA*

April

4 (T)

Readings on Correctness: "In Praise of the Humble Comma" (111-1115), "Politics and the English Language" (138-149), and "English Belongs to Everybody" (537-540) in *LA*

6 (Th)

In Class Research

11 (T)

Meet in Library

13 (Th)

Work on Bibliographies and Annotations

18 (T)

Draft in Class

20 (Th)

Peer Critique Day - Must have 3 copies of Draft

25 (T)

Revision Day

27 (Th)

Project Two Due

May

4 (Th)

Final Exam - 8:30 am - 10:20 pm