

Syllabus for ENG 100 Introduction to College Writing

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

“Western Connections” Learning Community: “Educational (R)Evolution”
English 100-66: Introduction to College Writing – Composition and Language
10:00-10:50 MWF Eder Hall 210 (lecture)
Writer’s Workshop: M or W 11:00-11:50 Eder Hall 222U/V
Fall 2006

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Required Texts and Course Materials:

Introduction to College Writing – ENG 100. McGraw-Hill, 2006, Third edition.

A Troubleshooting Guide for Writers. McGraw-Hill, 2005, Fourth edition.

(This handbook is important – please read all assigned chapters, respond to questions/test yourself sections and use as a reference when writing and revising– and is packaged with textbook; bring both to class and workshop)

Savage Inequalities. Jonathan Kozol. Harper Collins, 1991.

Computer disks

Photocopies for group work as requested

Folders

Course Description:

“One thing that is always with the writer – no matter how long he has written or how good he is – is the continuing process of learning how to write.”
-Flannery O’Connor

In this course we will discuss writing as a process. And you may ask, what does this statement mean? The truth is, no one just sits down and instantly produces a perfect piece of writing. There are many steps a writer goes through when producing a text, including pre-writing (or gathering and organizing ideas and thoughts), writing, revising and editing, and we will discuss these steps in this course. By breaking down these steps, hopefully, the writing process will seem less difficult. In discovering writing as a process, you will discover the reading and writing strategies and processes that work best for you. The emphasis here is on you and your attention to the topics. I know that you will not survive in this course if you come to class unprepared, if you do not revise your writing, if you do not ask questions and ask for my help, if you wait until the last minute to draft an essay or build a portfolio. I also know that you probably will succeed if you become someone who connects reading and writing to your life, to your experiences, and who reflects on the impact of these connections.

Obviously, becoming an independent and confident writer requires trusted readers of your writing. I will read drafts and schedule conferences to respond to your work; your Writer’s Workshop tutor will also read and respond to your writing; and the class sessions and the Writer’s Workshop sessions will focus instruction on your writing. Becoming a critical and thoughtful writer is essential for success in college. This course has been designed to help you make this effort.

In addition, this section is part of a learning community in which the issue of education will be discussed, read and written about. We will read about and discuss both your educational experiences as well as the state of education in our country. In this class, as well as your freshman seminar class (COL 101-66), you will read/discuss the book *Savage Inequalities* and you may discuss some of the following questions: What does education mean to you? What have been your past experiences in education? Why are you here? Where do you think education and college will take you in the future? How do you define knowledge and learning? How can education change and even empower people? Is our educational system fair and inclusive? If it is not always equitable and excludes people due to race or class, what are the consequences? If you could

change the educational system, what would you do? Hopefully these questions and answers will intrigue, challenge and help you. Moreover, there is a “service project” component for this learning community and, as a result, you will have the opportunity to visit an elementary school in St. Joseph and help the students in that school.

Course Goals and Class Assignments:

Reading Goals:

- Read actively for greater understanding;
- Use reading to improve writing by drawing ideas and information from written texts
- Use texts to understand own and others’ experiences;
- Read writing assignments effectively as a guide to creating better papers;
- Recognize good writing by actively reading good prose.

Writing Goals:

- Move from writer-based to reader-based prose
- Write at greater length more easily, more quickly, and more usefully;
- Structure writing to fit the assignment, purpose, and audience;
- Develop ideas and concepts with specific details, examples, and explanations;
- Craft more effective and polished sentences and paragraphs;
- Use effective planning, invention, revision, and editing to complete successful writing tasks.

General Studies Goals:

- Think critically and reason analytically;
- Write and speak clearly and effectively;
- Gain a greater awareness of the present through an understanding of other cultures and times;
- Understand and appreciate moral values and ethical choices;
- Understand and enjoy aesthetic experiences and share in related creative activities.

For common objectives/means and institutional competencies for ENG 100 also refer to the English department website at <http://www.missouriwestern.edu/EFLJ/eng100.asp>

Methods of Instruction:

Methods of instruction include textbook, lectures, class discussions, group work, writer’s workshops, informal writing assignments and formal writing assignments. Students will be expected to participate in peer revision groups and in-class writing exercises.

Textbook(s):

Please be sure to read all assigned textbook/handbook chapters, essays and other reading assignments, be prepared to discuss the essays in class and complete journal assignments and other exercises in regard to the essays.

Journals:

You will write (informal) journal entries/responses to most of your assigned readings. Please refer to your assignment schedule for journal entries. These entries will be your explanations of and reactions to the readings. You can also answer the questions under “Reflecting and Interpreting” in your textbook at the end of each essay. The average length for a journal entry is one full page. Entries can be hand-written or word-processed. The collection dates will coincide with the collection dates of your writing tasks/mini-portfolios. Journal entries will be graded on content and will be part of your grade for the portfolio and the course.

Writer’s Workshops:

This section of English 100 is participating in a pilot project of conferencing and tutoring in your Writer’s Workshop. One of the major goals of English 100 is to become an independent writer, a writer who has discovered strategies and processes to write competent and thoughtful essays. As in all sections of English 100, you have been assigned a mandatory, small group Writer’s Workshop which meets once a week. Your Writer’s Workshop will differ from the traditional workshop in that it will be a tutoring session focused on your writing rather than the planned workshop sequence of activities. In this section of English 100 you will confer with both your instructor and workshop leader during the workshop. You will receive personal responses and suggestions to help you develop and revise each essay and to help you grow as a writer. You will also be allowed time, in workshop, to write and revise. Your writing will become the central text of both the class and the workshop and your needs will become the content of the instruction.

This pilot project requires three commitments from you. First, you must confer with your instructor, workshop tutor and/or small groups in workshop. It is expected that you will schedule a conference with your workshop tutor or instructor

(conferences will rotate) at least once every two weeks. Second, you must bring a work-in-progress to each writing workshop/conference or be prepared to write, with the help of your tutor, in workshop . Your instructor and workshop leader will discuss your progress weekly. This is a labor-intensive effort on the part of your instructor and tutor, but it is one that we feel will benefit you. Third, you must share with us how this project is working. Since this is a pilot project, we need to know what activities are most helpful and what activities are ineffective, so we will ask for frequent feedback.

Workshops/Conferences:

- Be on time.
- Missing a workshop/scheduled conference will be counted as a workshop absence.
- If you do not come prepared to the workshop/conference, you will be marked absent. If a new draft or revised draft is required then coming to a workshop/conference without one will lead to a workshop absence. In addition, if the workshop/conference is one that requires you to write, then you must come prepared to write and spend the workshop hour writing and seeking help from your tutor and peers; if you do not, then you will be marked absent for workshop.
- Come to the workshop/conference with a question or concern about your latest assignment/draft. You must initiate the conference, showing your interest in your work and focusing on where you need a response.
- Leave the conference with a new text/draft, revision or written revision plan .
- Make-up workshop/conference: If you miss a workshop or are not prepared you will be marked absent; however, you have the opportunity to make it up. You can attend the general make-up session on Friday at 2:00 or 3:00 pm in Eder 222 U-V. However, in this makeup session, you will be required to complete a specific lesson or activity and you will not be able to receive feedback on your writing or to do your own writing. Moreover, you will be allowed only three make-up opportunities. Please remember that you and your writing will benefit the most by attending your regularly scheduled workshops/conferences and working on your writing.

Peer Revision Groups:

Prior to submitting your writing tasks, you will be required to participate in peer revision groups in which you will bring in copies of your rough draft to share with your group and receive feedback from your group in order to help you strengthen and revise your own written work. This is a required activity and will be part of your grade for the portfolio and the course. (Note: During these sessions I will also evaluate drafts).

Mini-Portfolios:

The mini-portfolio system is explained in an attached handout.

Policies:

Attendance Policy:

In order to improve student learning and to achieve compliance with federal financial aid policies, Western has a mandatory attendance policy for all 100-level courses. *This course has a very strict attendance policy in Writer's Workshops as well as in class. If you miss seven class periods OR four Writer's Workshops, you will receive an F in the class.* A student will be given an excused absence when acting as an official representative of the university, provided the student gives prior written verification from the faculty/staff supervisor of the event; however, there are no other excused absences, exceptions or "makeups" for this attendance requirement. *Furthermore, the maximum number of absences allowed before the midterm report, October 18, for this class is five (5).* Thus, when you have six (6) you will be reported to the Registrar's Office, who will automatically withdraw you from this class. The Financial Aid Office will reduce financial aid as appropriate. If you know of any circumstances likely to make this policy difficult for you this semester, you may wish to consult with your advisor to review your options. If you miss a class session, you are responsible for all material covered and assignments given during your absence. All out-of-class assignments are due at the beginning of the class period.

Late Work:

All writing tasks are due at the beginning of the class period on the due date. Each student is allowed one late paper, and only one late paper, and this must be discussed with me so we can discuss the extended due date. I will not accept/grade any other late papers. This is important because you must complete, turn in and receive a grade for all papers in order to pass this class. *In other words, a second late paper will result in failure of the course.* If you are not in class on the due date you are still responsible for submitting your assignment on time. Late in-class writing assignments will not be accepted.

Grading Policy:

Your grade will be determined on the basis of your progress as a writer, the writings (informal and formal) you submit, and your class participation over the course of the semester. Also note that smaller assignments and class preparation/participation are very important and do affect your grade. The components of your grade in the course are:

· Four writing tasks. *A student who does not turn in responses to all four tasks will not pass the course even if the grades achieved in the other writing tasks are satisfactory.*

Writing Task One Mini-Portfolio: 100 points

Writing Task Two Mini-Portfolio: 100 points

Writing Task Three Mini-Portfolio: 125 points

Writing Task Four Mini-Portfolio: 125 points

· Final exam: 100 points

Progress as a Writer/Revision Policy:

For all writing tasks you will be required to participate in peer revisions groups. Graded writing tasks (tasks one-three) can be revised and resubmitted for a “new” grade. You will have two weeks from the date the paper is returned in class to revise and resubmit each task paper. If you miss the two-week deadline, you forfeit the right to revise that specific task paper. It is required that your original, graded essay accompanies your revised essay. You will not have the opportunity to revise Writing Task Four; however, you will have ample opportunity to share and revise drafts with your peers, your workshop tutor and me.

Student Disability:

Any student in this course who has a disability that prevents the fullest expressions of abilities should contact Missouri Western's special needs coordinator, Michael Ritter, for possible certification of special needs and expert recommendations for assistance. You should also contact me personally as soon as possible so that we can discuss class requirements.

Academic Honesty Policy:

Academic honesty is required in all academic endeavors. Violations of academic honesty include any instance of plagiarism, cheating, seeking credit for another's work, falsifying documents or academic records or any other fraudulent classroom activity. You will receive a grade of F (0 points) for any paper/ assignment/exam that shows evidence of cheating and/or plagiarism and forfeit the opportunity to revise. You have the burden of proving that a paper showing evidence of cheating or plagiarism has in fact been written by you. You should keep thorough evidence of your writing processes for all papers so that you can meet this burden of proof. Violations of academic honesty will be reported to the Provost or the designated representative on the Academic Honesty Violation Report Forms. Please note carefully the statement on plagiarism on the departmental website and refer to the 2006-07 Student Handbook and calendar on page 21 for specific activities identified as violations of this policy and the student due process procedure. This handbook is also available online at <http://www.missouriwestern.edu/handbook/index.pdf>.

Miscellaneous:

Civility and Cooperation -- Missouri Western requires all students to help us maintain good conditions for teaching and learning. All students will treat their classmates, teachers, and student assistants 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 Missouri Western student handbook for further information.

Please note that you must complete all writing assignments in order to pass this course. In addition, admission into ENG 104 requires a “C” or higher in ENG 100. All drafts and final papers for this course must be word-processed. *It is also important to save all writing tasks on disks, keeping back-ups if necessary, and to save all drafts as well.

Please feel free to come see me if you have *any* problems or questions. You can make an appointment to conference about any paper or homework assignment, to discuss your progress in class, to clarify or question something that was discussed or done in class, etc. I believe communication is very important between an instructor and her students and, as a result, I will make myself available to you for any reason.