

English 108: College Writing and Research

Fall 2006

Missouri Western State University

Division of Liberal Arts and Sciences

Department of English, Foreign Languages, and Journalism

Section 10 MWF 10-10:50 Murphy Hall 106

Instructor: Greg Gildersleeve

Office: Eder Hall 213

Phone: 271-4578

Office Hours: 9-9:50 MWF; other times by appointment

E-mail:

Feel free to stop by during my office hours if you have a question or concern. If you cannot stop by during those times, I will be happy to schedule an appointment. You may also e-mail me, and I will respond as quickly as possible. You may reach me by phone during office hours.

Course Philosophy:

“*[Writing] allows one to shape one’s life and change one’s world.*” – Anne Rodier¹

Course Objectives:

Upon completion of ENG 108, you should understand that 1) argument is an effective and necessary tool in most careers, as well as in public policy and personal endeavors, 2) the ability to think critically and argue persuasively can have a major impact on every aspect of your life, 3) research is a necessary and vital component of argument that enables you to synthesize and analyze the ideas of others to support your viewpoint and refute opposing views, 4) effective writing shapes who you are and the world around you, and 5) writing for a specific audience increases the likelihood of your ideas receiving serious consideration : Writer + Work + Audience = Communication.

For specific course objectives, visit the English Department web site, <http://www.missouriwestern.edu/eflj/eng104.asp>.

Required Texts and Course Materials:

1. *St. Martin’s Guide to Writing* (7th ed.), by Rise B. Axelrod and Charles R. Cooper

2. Notebook for journal (bound composition books preferred)
3. Loose-leaf or spiral paper for in-class assignments
4. 3½ inch floppy disks, CD Roms, or jump drives
5. Photocopies for group work as requested

Recommended Texts:

6. *Elements of Style* (4th ed.), by Strunk and White
7. *Sin Boldly! Dr. Dave's Guide to Writing the College Paper* (2nd ed.) by David R. Williams, Ph.D.

Course Work

Assignment Format

All drafts of all major assignments must be typed. The heading of each assignment (which will appear in the upper left-hand corner) should include your name, the course and section numbers, the date, and the assignment number. All previous drafts, responses, notes, and scribbles that show your writing and thinking processes should be included. You will receive a handout with more detailed instructions.

Major Essays

You will complete three major essays and submit a course portfolio. If you do not turn in all four essays or submit a course portfolio, you **will not** pass the course, even if your grades for other writing tasks are satisfactory. *Note: The due dates listed below are subject to change.*

Essay One: Making an Argument – due week five

Essay Two: Proposing a Solution – due week ten

Essay Three: Justifying an Evaluation OR Speculating About Causes – due week fourteen

Portfolio – due week fourteen

Portfolio

At the end of the semester, you will be required to submit a portfolio that includes all drafts of the four essays, feedback from peer review, and all of your process materials, as well as other selected assignments. **Keep everything!** You will be required to refer to these materials when you write your fourth essay. Failure to include them with your portfolio will affect your grade. You will receive more specific guidelines for portfolio submission later in the semester.

Center for Academic Support

If you want additional help with your essay or with any aspect of composition, you can visit the CAS, which is located in Hearnese (LRC) 213. Appointments are encouraged, but if you are unable to make an appointment, you can drop by,

and the tutors will try to accommodate your request. (The CAS extension is x4524.) You can learn more about CAS services and/or submit an essay online at <

Evaluation and Grading Policy

Your grade will be determined on the basis of your progress as a writer, the writings you submit, and your class participation over the course of the semester. *Note that you must complete all four writing tasks and submit a course portfolio in order to pass the class.*

Components of your grade:

- Portfolio (four major writing tasks, completeness of portfolio, etc.) 60%
- Journal, homework, quizzes, in-class assignments, process materials, and final exam 30%
- Class participation (attendance and contributions to class activities/discussions) 10%

All work in this class is subject to evaluation, including your participation in discussions. Most – but not all – assignments will be graded, and most will be graded according to a standard grading scale. Some work, however, may be graded as “credit” or “no credit,” which means that, if you make a *reasonable* effort, you will receive all of the possible points. You are expected to complete all reading assignments before class begins on the date for which they were assigned; be prepared for discussion and/or a quiz. Some assignments will be completed and submitted electronically; if you do not have Internet access at home, please plan ahead.

Late work: Some assignments will be accepted only on their due dates and at the time I call for them (for example, quizzes or writing assignments that provide the basis for or serve as a response to class discussions). Late work will be subject to a penalty of 25% and should be submitted by the class period that follows the assigned due date. If you believe that extenuating circumstances prevent you from submitting the assignment on time, you must contact me in advance. *Note: Work schedules, funerals, court dates, and athletic competitions do not qualify as extenuating circumstances for late work.*

Grading Scale:

A 90-100% D 60-69%

B 80-89% F 59% and below

C 70-79%

Please Note: Throughout the semester, you will write several drafts of each of your essays. I will return each draft with my comments and a rubric that shows whether your essay meets the assignment criteria. At that time, rather than a letter grade, your essays will earn an “E” (early draft), an “M” (middle draft), or an “L” (late draft). An “E” needs significant work; an “L” meets the assignment criteria. Letter grades will be assigned when you submit your portfolio at the end of the semester.

Policies

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.

Attendance Policy

In order to improve student learning as well as to achieve compliance with federal financial aid policies, Western has a mandatory attendance policy for all 100-level courses.

You will be given an excused absence when acting as an official representative of the university, provided you give prior written verification from the faculty/staff supervisor of the event. Other excused absences include illnesses (your own or a close family member for whom you are a caretaker) and funerals, but you must bring documentation (a doctor's excuse, obituary with your name listed as a survivor, etc.).

All other absences will be deemed unexcused. The maximum number of unexcused absences allowed for this class before the midterm report, October 18 is **five**. Thus, when you have six unexcused absences 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.

Tardiness/early departures. I will read the roll call at the beginning of each class period. If you arrive after the roll has been called, you may be counted absent. It is your responsibility to tell me after class that you were present. Tardiness and early departures will be noted in the grade book. Two tardies or early departures will equal one unexcused absence.

Student Disability

Any student with a disability should contact Missouri Western's special needs coordinator for certification of special needs and expert recommendation for assistance. You should also contact me personally as soon as possible so that we can discuss how I can facilitate your success.

Academic Honesty Policy and Due Process

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 activity. Violations of academic honesty may result in a failing grade on the assignment, failure in the course, or expulsion from the University. When a student's grade has been affected, violations of academic honesty will be reported to the Provost or designated representative on the Academic Honesty Violation Report forms.

Please see 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>

Final words of wisdom:

Jackson, Jesse Helms, and Jesse Ventura each writing a history of the Clinton presidency. All three texts will be histories. But which one is “right” would be very much a matter of subjective political opinion. ... Liberals will hail the Jackson history as “inspired,” “insightful,” and “eloquent” while condemning the Helms history for its narrow ethnocentricity. Conservatives will praise the Helms history for its “penetrating analysis” and “constructive moral perspective” while condemning the Jackson history as being unscholarly and unobjective. Playboy will run excerpts from the Ventura history. All the reviewers will find objective reasons for their subjective opinions, and it is on these that the disinterested reader (if there are any) will have to make their judgments. ... As that cynic Pontius Pilate so succinctly put it, “What is truth?” We call this scholarship.”

– David R. Williams, Ph.D., p. 89

1 Rodier, Anne. “A Cure for Writer’s Block: Writing for Real Audiences.” Breakthroughs: Classroom Discoveries about Teaching Writing. Berkeley: National Writing Project, 2002: 121.