

Syllabus for ENG 108 College Writing and Research

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

ENG 108-05 – College Writing and Research

Instructor: Dawn Terrick

Spring 2008

TTH 9:30-10:50 am Murphy Hall 108

Office: Eder 222 F

Office Phone: 816-271-4313

Office Hours: Tuesday and Thursday 1:00-3:00, Monday 11:00-12:00 and by appointment

Email: terrick@missouriwestern.edu

Required Texts:

·*Class Matters*. Correspondents of the New York Times. New York: Times Books – Henry Holt and Company. 2005.

ISBN-13: 978-0-8050-8055-1

·*The Working Poor: Invisible in America*. David K. Shipler. New York: Vintage Books. 2004, 2005. ISBN: 0-375-70821-9

·*The Bedford Researcher*. Mike Palmquist. Bedford/St. Martin's Publishing Company. 2006 (second edition).

Required Materials:

·Computer disks, jump drives, etc. for revising and saving all work.

·Folders

Recommended Texts:

·A writing handbook or style guide of your choice

Course Description:

Research is "the spirit of inquiry. The habits of mind that good research writers develop are something we can teach that is truly multidisciplinary. That spirit is charged with curiosity, of course -- the itch to know and learn and discover. But it also involves the ability to ask researchable questions, the instinct to look in the right places for answers, a willingness to suspend judgment, and an openness to changing one's mind."
-Gary Goshgarian

"Writing [is] both a personal and social process. The writing process often begins with expressive writing: writing for oneself to articulate and clarify thoughts and feelings. Making one's thoughts public through writing then initiates a connection between the writer and his/her audience. Writing can empower us. As writers we can effect change within ourselves and the communities to which we belong."
-Marjorie Ford and Elizabeth Schave

We live in an information society, a society that is dominated by language; therefore it is imperative that we, as human beings, understand the information around us. Those who think critically about their own and others' ideas, sort through this information that is available to them and effectively convey their thoughts and ideas will be able to successfully function in this society. In order to achieve these goals as a class, we will:

·Improve our reading skills through extensive reading and participating in discussions regarding the readings.

·Summarize, analyze and evaluate written works

·Revise our written work. We will write drafts, reread first and second copies to rethink what we have discovered and revise for an organization appropriate to our main purpose and audience.

·Collect, sort through, determine the validity of and synthesize research and information. We will have to familiarize ourselves with several reference tools in the library, locate books and journals, locate source materials on electronic databases and participate in field research.

For common objectives/means and institutional competencies for ENG 108, also refer to the English department website at <http://www.missouriwestern.edu/EFLJ/eng108.asp>

Course Structure:

I have structured this course so that everything you read, discuss and write is connected:

The American Dream: Reality or Myth?

Oftentimes, we hear that, in America, if you work hard, then you can succeed – that is the American dream. That is why millions of immigrants flooded through Ellis Island at the beginning of the twentieth century and why millions of immigrants still cross our borders at the beginning of the twenty-first century. But is this true? Is it true that hard work, above all else, equals success? Is it true that you can cross or even erase class lines in our society? For families, the American dream means that each generation will improve and “move up” – children will be better off than their parents. As you look at your parents and grandparents, do you see this evolution? And what is “class” after all? Is it just about money or education or social status? Is it a governing force in American life or is it irrelevant today?

In this course and through your research projects, I would like you to think about these questions and provide your own answers and conclusions. In doing so, you can research and write about issues such as poverty, race, health care, working conditions, neighborhood, family structure, education, immigration, and segregation as well as take a closer look at your own family’s history and place within this American dream. I want you to choose an issue that is of importance to you and that you feel others need to know about. I also want you to include your own opinions, observations and even experiences in this project.

A large part of research is reading and truly understanding what you read and, as a result, the first weeks of the course will focus on refining your evaluation and analysis skills. Your reading and writing assignments will reflect this. Then, we will begin to narrow our focus to the final research project. Your research project will involve exploring your topic from different perspectives and utilizing a variety of sources. Moreover, the reading and research you complete for this project will allow you to obtain new information and points of view and, as a result, you will be able to develop a more informed and substantial perspective on your topic. You will be able to decide the specific issue of this project (although there are guidelines, certain topics I will not accept and your topic must be approved by me). Your topic can be related to your major, intended career, an issue that you have read about or have been involved in within your community, etc. I will review the details of this project in class. You will also be required to write “smaller,” but equally important, papers and these papers are some of the different stages in the process of the final research project (project proposal, observation, background essay and interview paper). Each paper will be submitted and graded and you will have the opportunity for revision. These assignments will then be synthesized and expanded into your final research project. Although you must meet certain deadlines, you will also be given the opportunity to work at your own pace on your project. By breaking down a large writing and research project into smaller steps, it will make the entire process less intimidating and easier to manage. However, be aware that this course entails extensive writing and researching and, as a result, requires that you remain aware of due dates and stay on schedule.

Methods of Instruction:

Methods of instruction include books, textbooks, lectures, class discussions, group work/in-class workshops, informal writing assignments, formal writing assignments and a final exam. Students will be expected to participate in peer revision groups and in-class exercises. Students will also be required to give an oral presentation regarding their research project at the end of the semester.

Policies:

Attendance and Class Preparation/Participation: In order to improve student learning and to achieve compliance with federal financial aid policies, Western has a mandatory attendance policy for all 100 and 200 level courses. 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. All other absences will be deemed unexcused unless you can provide a valid, documented and unavoidable reason. *The maximum number of absences allowed before the midterm report, March 19, for this class is three (3).* Thus, when you have four (4) 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 violate the attendance policy after the midterm mark, your grade will likely be affected. 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. Students are expected to attend every scheduled class meeting. Also, arriving to class late is disruptive. As a result, chronic lateness will likely affect your final grade. Students are also expected to come prepared to every class meeting and participate in class discussion for this is the only way we can all share ideas, ask questions and learn.

Late Work: All writing assignments 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 the instructor. 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. Consequently, if you submit more than one late paper, you will fail 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. Late presentations will not be accepted.

Revision: All formal, graded writing assignments, except your final research project, 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 paper. However, you cannot revise other portfolio work. If you miss the two-week deadline, you forfeit the right to revise that specific paper. It is required that your original, graded essay accompanies your revised essay. Although you cannot revise your final research project, you will write it in “stages” and those stages can be revised. You will also have ample opportunity to obtain feedback from your peers and from me regarding your final research project.

Grading: Your final grade will be based upon your papers and portfolios (which include your formal writing assignments, in-class exercises, peer revision work and research process), oral presentation and final examination. Please remember that you must complete all assignments in order to pass the course.

· Paper #1:	100 points
Rhetorical Précis/Analysis	
· Paper/Mini-portfolio #2:	100 points
Project Proposal	
· Paper/Mini-portfolio #3:	100 points
Background Essay	
· Paper/Mini-portfolio #4:	100 points
Interview Paper	
· Final Research Project/Portfolio:	350 points
· Oral Presentation of Project:	100 points
· Final Exam:	100 points

Due Dates: Please be aware of due dates for all assignments. It is important that you plan your time and decide upon whom you are going to interview and what site you are going to observe before the assignment is distributed. It is also important to schedule your own time to go to the library and engage in research (not only library research but research on the computer and in the field); some class time will be allotted for this but it will not be enough time for you to complete your research.

Paper #1:	Feb. 5
Paper/Mini-Portfolio #2:	Feb. 19
Paper/Mini-Portfolio #3:	Mar. 18
Paper/Mini-Portfolio #4:	Apr. 3
Oral Presentation:	Apr. 10-24
Final Paper/Mini-Portfolio:	Apr. 24

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. In addition, you must submit all of your research, notes and copies of documents with all of your papers/portfolios. 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 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>.

Students with Disabilities: Anyone who has a disability that prevents the fullest expression of his or her potential to succeed in this course must notify Michael Ritter, Special Needs Coordinator, me as soon as possible so that we can discuss class requirements and accommodations.

Miscellaneous: All drafts and final papers for this course must be word-processed. Please note that you must complete all major assignments and the final examination in order to pass this course. In addition, all research, notes, outlines, drafts, etc. must be submitted with your written work. It is also important to save all work on disks, keeping back-ups if necessary.

Please feel free to come see me if you have *any* problems or questions. 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.