

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

ENG 108-09, -11 College Writing and Research
Murphy Hall 106, 11:00-12:20 (09), 2:00-3:20 (11), TTh
Spring 2008

*"There are days when the result is so bad that no fewer than five revisions are required.
In contrast, when I'm greatly inspired, only four revisions are needed."
--John Kenneth Galbraith*

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Office Hours: 9:30-11:00; 1:00-2:00 TTh

Course Description and Objectives:

Students will complete three formal research projects in addition to other graded and ungraded work. In these assignments, students will learn to analyze, synthesize, and evaluate the thinking of others in order to discover, articulate, develop, test, and support their own points of view.

As part of the general studies goals for the course, students in ENG 108 will learn to write for different audiences and purposes, to use active reading and critical thinking, to use writing processes and conventions, to write for different audiences and purposes, and to use active reading and critical thinking. This course also meets the state level competencies of communicating, higher order thinking, and managing information. For more information on the institutional and state goals and competencies, see the English Department web site for general studies courses at <http://www.missouriwestern.edu/eflj/>.

Required Materials:

- Maner, Martin. *The Research Process*. 2nd ed. London: Mayfield, 2000.
- Walters and Brody, eds. *What's Language Got to Do with It?* New York: Norton, 2005.
- A notebook exclusively devoted to keeping a research journal.
- An unabridged college dictionary.
- A college handbook (guide to style, grammar and usage).
- Computer disks/flash drives for revising, saving, and backing up your work.
- Photocopies of your work and secondary sources.
- Stamina and good humor.

Instructor's Attendance Policy:

Regular attendance is an essential part of the student's educational experience and a requirement for an adequate evaluation of student academic progress. For this and other reasons, attendance is mandatory. If you have more than two unexcused absences during the semester, your final grade will be seriously affected. Excessive absences will result in failure of the course. Chronic lateness and/or leaving early will count toward absences. Excused absences involve acting as an official representative of the university after prior notification from the faculty/staff supervisor of the event. At the instructor's discretion, an absence may be excused in the case of a documented and unforeseen emergency. All other absences will be deemed unexcused.

You are responsible for material covered or assignments given during your absence, so ask another student to inform you of what happened while you were gone. Note that not all in-class activities and assignments can fairly and

adequately be "made up," even in the case of an excused absence. For example, unless you have a time machine, you cannot go back and participate in carefully scheduled and directed classroom discussions or group activities after the fact. Moreover, such context dependent and interpersonal participation is central to the course.

If I should be unable to meet class, you will be notified by the secretary, a fellow instructor, or by an officially stamped and dated note on the classroom door.

Institutional 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 and 200-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. All other absences will be deemed unexcused.

The maximum number of unexcused absences allowed for this class before the midterm report is three. Thus, when you have four 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.

Policy on Late Work:

All out of class assignments are due at the beginning of the hour on the due date. Learning is a cumulative process, and each assignment is designed to build on the previous one. As late work disrupts this important aspect of the learning process, late work will not be accepted without prior notification and approval. When reasonably possible, however, missed assignments will be accepted after the due date in the case of an excused absence (see above).

Preparation and Participation:

You are required to make significant contributions to class in the form of preparation and participation. Preparation includes completing the readings and daily assignments, as well as bringing your assignments, textbook, and other materials with you on the appropriate days. If you come unprepared, you will receive a zero for any work due that day.

Participation includes the help you give to fellow writers and the contributions you make to class discussion. Active and insightful contributions to class discussion are therefore not "extra credit." Like the written assignments, your tactful and substantive comments are part of the minimal requirements for successful completion of the course. If you are a naturally quiet person, force yourself to be more vocal; do not assume that if I do not call on you that you need not participate, as it is your responsibility to voice your observations at appropriate and relevant times. Conversely, if you are a naturally talkative person, you may have to restrain yourself so that everyone has the opportunity to contribute.

Why is discussion so important? Because live classroom discussion:

- gives me an additional indication of how closely and thoughtfully you have read, enabling me to evaluate your knowledge and abilities more fairly and accurately.
- helps you think in terms of the subject matter by giving you practice in thinking.
- helps you learn to evaluate the logic of and evidence for your own and others' positions.
- helps you learn what counts as evidence and how to evaluate knowledge claims.
- helps you understand how knowledge is arrived at in the discipline.
- gives you practice arguing with others respectfully and professionally.
- gives you opportunities to formulate applications of principles.
- helps you construct knowledge you can recall and apply when needed.
- gives you prompt feedback on difficult or confusing issues and material.
- increases your retention of material through explaining, summarizing, and questioning.
- stimulates new ideas, approaches, questions, reading and research.

"Writing is the hardest work in the world not involving heavy lifting." --Peter Hamill

Student Conduct:

As a condition of remaining at MWSU, the college 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. Behavior that disrupts the classroom environment or interferes with other students' learning will result in dismissal from the classroom. Passionate and forceful language is sometimes appropriate. Intolerance, intimidation, and dogmatism are not.

Assignment Requirements:

All out of class written assignments for this course must be word processed unless otherwise specified. Non-word processed submissions will be returned with no credit. Assignments should follow MLA format, using no larger than twelve point type and one inch margins. Pages should be stapled together before you come to class (do not use paper clips or folders except for our major projects and do not fold down the corners of papers). Do not throw away any work you do for this class, from notes to drafts to final papers, and keep back-up copies of all papers you turn in.

Grading:

The standards for college English classes are higher than those used in high schools. All the guidelines and standards for classes at MWSU are similar to those used by other colleges and universities throughout the country. You, as a serious student, will appreciate the fact that we hold high standards for your work. Your grade will be determined by the quality of your daily work, writings, and exams, as well as by your preparation and participation. Assignments will be evaluated according to how well they meet the requirements and the following general scale.

A = Superior

B = Above Average

C = Average

D = Minimum = passing below average

F = Failing

Project #1 = 25%

Project #2 = 25%

Project #3 = 25%

Participation and Other Assignments = 25%

"If we had to say what writing is, we would define it essentially as an act of courage." --Cynthia Ozick

Instructor's Policy on Academic Honesty:

Plagiarism is a most serious offense and, therefore, will incur harsh punishment. Don't think you won't get caught; writing style is distinctive and verifiable. It is the student's responsibility to prove to the instructor's satisfaction that all work is their own.

Institutional Policy on Academic Honesty 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 *Student Handbook* and calendar 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>.

Disabilities:

Any student who has a disability that prevents the fullest expression of abilities should contact me immediately so that we can discuss class requirements.

General:

This syllabus is of a contractual nature, and by remaining in the course you acknowledge your acceptance of its stipulations in their entirety. If the goals, policies, procedures, standards, expectations, or obligations are unclear, then

you should speak with me immediately. If they are clear but unacceptable to you, then you should drop the course.

If you choose to remain in the course, be sure to keep a copy of this syllabus with you and to refer to it regularly. Policies are enforced without exception to ensure uniformity and predictability, to avoid confusion and anxiety, and to facilitate fairness and objectivity for all students. In the interest of efficiency, however, I reserve the right to make necessary alterations to this syllabus and to make announced changes in daily plans. Any announcements made in class automatically supersede this syllabus. It is your responsibility to find out about announced changes.

*"I write when I'm inspired, and I see to it that I'm inspired at nine o'clock every morning."
--Peter De Vries*

Final Thoughts:

For further explanations, comments, and advice, I am available during office hours. For additional help outside of class, I strongly recommend the Center for Academic Support.

I genuinely want you to succeed in this class and at MWSU generally. I therefore urge you to keep in mind that what you gain from this course, and from your education generally, is proportional to the amount of productive time and careful attention you devote to it. In the words of Abigail Adams (1744-1818), "Learning is not attained by chance, it must be sought for with ardor and attended to with diligence."

Course Outline:

This outline shows major readings and assignments, but additional readings and assignments may be given in class throughout the semester. Be sure to bring your research notebook, draft materials, and any sources with you to class each day.

- 1/15 Syllabus, Introduction
- 17 Ch. 1 (Nature of Research Writing), Ch. 2 (Finding/Narrowing Topic)

- 22 Ch. 2 Cont.; Library Day
- 24 Ch. 3 (Generating an Argument); Lupton and Miller 101

- 29 Ch. 4 (Finding Sources); Orwell 114
- 31 Ch. 4 Cont.; Rosenthal 128

- 2/5 Ch. 5 (Writing a Short Plan); Baron 136
- 7 Ch. 6 (Gathering Information); Lee 152

- 12 Ch. 7 (Research Paper Format: MLA); Marquez 207
- 14 Ch. 7 Cont.; Zentella 213

- 19 Project One Due, Ch. 9 (Writing the Rough Draft); Film
- 21 Ch. 9 Cont.; Abrahms et al 266-71

- 26 Ch. 10 (Revising the Rough Draft); Rickford 278, see also 331
- 28 Ch. 10 Cont.; Troutt 289

- 3/4 Ch. 11 (Editing); Erard 294
- 6 Project Two Drafts Due, Critiques

10-14 Spring Break

- 18 Project Two Due, Finding/Narrowing Topic (Ch. 2)
- 20 Finding/Narrowing Topic Cont.; Library Day

- 25 Generating an Argument (Ch. 3); Willer 336

- 27 Finding Sources (Ch. 4); McWhorter 376, see also Usage Guides 384-91
- 4/01 Writing a Short Plan (Ch. 5), Gathering Information (Ch. 6); Padden and Humphries 396
3 Gathering Information Cont.; Miller 470, Baron 477
- 8 Writing the Rough Draft (Ch. 9); Crystal 504
10 Writing the Rough Draft, Cont.
- 15 Project Three Drafts Due, Critiques
17 Revising the Rough Draft (Ch. 10)
- 22 Format (Ch. 7) and Editing (Ch. 11)
24 Project Three Due
- 5/6 Final Exam Period 11:30-1:20 p.m. (section 09); 2:00-3:50 p.m. (section 11)