

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

English 108-09: College Writing and Research

Fall 2009
MWF 10-10:50, PW 206

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Welcome

Hey, how's it going. In this class you will study the academic argument. We will learn how the argument cannot exist without a counter-argument, why the art of compromise is so critical today, and how to conduct successful research so these arguments and counter-arguments are valid.

Texts/Required Materials

Graff, Gerald and Cathy Birkenstein. "They Say/I Say: The Moves That Matter in Academic Writing." New York: W.W. Norton, 2006.

Quinn, Daniel. "Ishmael." New York: Bantam/Turner, 1992.

Jump/flash drive [\[1\]](#)

An open mind/ability to examine alternative viewpoints

Assignment Overview/Grade Breakdown

You will write four main papers over the course of the semester, in addition to other informal writings you will do in and out of class. I will give you a detailed assignment sheet before we begin each task.

Argument/Counter-Argument Paper: 10%
Finding a Common Ground Paper: 10%
Annotated Bibliography: 20%
Ishmael-Related Research Paper: 25%

You will also be graded on your participation in class discussions and the three debates [\[2\]](#) we have scheduled for the semester.

Overall class participation: 35% [\[3\]](#)

Absence/Tardiness 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- and 200-level courses for Fall 2009.

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
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class before the midterms (October 12) 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.

You are responsible for all material covered and assignments given during your absence.

If you know you are going to be absent on a particular date when an assignment is due you must turn it in ahead of time. Any work missed in class cannot be made up if the absence is unexcused.

My policy on tardiness is that it's disrespectful.

Communication/Community

Especially in an English class, especially in an English class that focuses on argument, communication is central. We will have a range of discussions, and I look forward to your participation. Good communication encourages community, and hopefully that is what we will form through our creative and critical discussions.

The best way to get in contact with me is through email, though calling during office hours also works pretty well. I check my email Monday through Friday. It is important you ask questions when they arise and stay in steady contact with me. Make sure your university email account is active.

Please remember Missouri Western requires all students to help 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. Anyone who violates Missouri Western's policy on Civility and Cooperation will be asked to leave my classroom.

Student Disability

Any student who has a disability should contact Missouri Western's special needs coordinator for possible certification of special needs and expert recommendation for assistance. 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. Cheating and plagiarism are not acceptable. If there is evidence of cheating or plagiarism, you have the burden of showing that the paper 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. You will receive a grade of F (0 points) for any paper/assignment/exam that shows evidence of cheating and/or plagiarism. If you plagiarize a paper, you forfeit the right to revise that paper; if you cheat on an exam, you will not be allowed to retake the exam. Violations of academic honesty will be reported to the Provost of the designated representative on the Academic Honesty Violation Report Forms. Please see the 2007-2008 Student Handbook and Calendar for specific activities identified as violations of this policy and student due process procedure. This handbook is also available online at <http://missouriwestern.edu/handbook/index.pdf>.

Misc./Inspiration

- I do not want to see or hear your cell phone, iPod, BlackBerry, or any other electronic during class. It is disruptive to the learning environment, not to mention a touch impolite. Keep them off and out of the way. **I reserve the right to mark you absent if you pay more attention to an overpriced gadget as opposed to the glory of education.** If, for some reason, you need to keep your phone on during class, please see me prior to class starting.
- If you must turn in something late, it will go down by one letter grade for everyday the assignment is late.
- A class learns to teach itself.
- Don't mistake kindness for weakness.
- Writing is a process.

Fall 2009 Schedule for English 108

Week 1

Monday, 8.24

Agenda: Introduction to class

Homework: Purchase materials for class, listen to This American's Life, episode 387: Arms Trade 2009.

Wednesday, 8.26

Agenda: Discuss radio segment, introduce first assignment

Homework: Think of a topic, read "Hidden Intellectualism," pg. 142

Friday, 8.28

Agenda: Reading discussion

Homework: Prepare a proposal

Week 2

Monday, 8.31

Agenda: **Proposal due**, topic discussion

Homework: Continue working on your paper/citing sources

Wednesday, 9.3

Agenda: MLA

Homework: Prepare a rough draft

Friday, 9.5

Agenda: **Rough draft workshop**

Homework: Prepare to hand in first assignment, think of debate topics

Week 3

Monday, 9.7

Labor Day (no classes)

Wednesday, 9.9

Agenda: **First assignment due**, introduce Common Ground paper, brainstorm/vote on debate topics

Homework: Think of a topic for your common ground paper

Friday, 9.11

Agenda: Assign debate teams and topics, discuss effective debating

Homework: Prepare for your debate

Week 4

Monday, 9.14

Agenda: **Proposal due**, begin first debate

Homework: Prepare for your debate if you haven't gone yet

Wednesday, 9.16

Agenda: Continue debate

Homework: Continue working on your common ground paper/debate

Friday, 9.18

Agenda: Finish debates

Homework: Continue working on your paper, read Orwell's "Shooting an Elephant"

Week 5

Monday, 9.21

Agenda: Discuss Orwell, root issues,

Homework: Read Obama's "Why We Need Health Care Reform"

Wednesday, 9.23

Agenda: Reading discussion, looking at the counter-argument

Homework: Continue working on your draft

Friday, 9.25

Agenda: Finding common ground on controversial issues

Homework: Read

Week 6

Monday, 9.28

Agenda: Surprise

Homework: ?

Wednesday, 9.30

Agenda: Surprise continued

Homework: Prepare for mid-term

Friday, 10.2

Agenda: Mid-term

Homework: Prepare your rough draft

Week 7

Monday, 10.5

Agenda: **Rough draft workshop**

Homework: Prepare to hand in your Common Ground paper

Wednesday, 10.7

Agenda: **Common Ground paper due**

Homework: None/enjoy life

Friday, 10.9

Fall Break (no classes)

Week 8

Monday, 10.12

Agenda: Researching

Homework: Think of debate topics

Wednesday, 10.14

Agenda: Brainstorm/vote on debate topics

Homework: Read Schlosser's "Why the Fries Taste So Good"

Friday, 10.16

Agenda: Discuss Schlosser, assign debate teams and topics

Homework: Meet with your debate team, prepare your proposal

Week 9

Monday, 10.19

Agenda: **Proposals due**, begin debates

Homework: Prepare for your debate if you haven't gone yet

Wednesday, 10.21

Agenda: Debate

Homework: Prepare for your debate if you haven't gone yet

Friday, 10.23

Agenda: Debate

Homework: Prepare to read Ishmael

Week 10

Monday, 10.26

Agenda: Begin discussing Ishmael, themes

Homework: read first chapter

Wednesday, 10.28

Agenda: Continue discussion on Ishmael, symbolism and metaphors

Homework: read 2-3

Friday, 10.30

Agenda: Look at possible arguments in Ishmael, introduce annotated bibliography and final research paper

Homework: read 4-5, think of a topic to research

Week 11

Monday, 11.2

Agenda: Begin watching "What Would Jesus Buy?"

Homework: read 6-7

Wednesday, 11.4

Agenda: Finish watching documentary

Homework: read 8-9

Friday, 11.6

Agenda: Discussion

Homework: Have at least 3-4 sources for your annotated bib, read 10-11

Week 12

Monday, 11.9

Agenda: Expectations for the end of Ishmael

Homework: Continue compiling sources for your annotated bib, read 12-13

Wednesday, 11.11

Agenda: Wrap up Ishmael

Homework: Prepare the rough draft of your annotated bib, think of debate topics

Friday, 11.13

Agenda: **Rough draft workshop**, brainstorm and vote on Ishmael-related debate topics

Homework: Prepare to turn in the final draft of your annotated bib.

Week 13

Monday, 11.16

Agenda: **Annotated Bibliography due**, assign debate topics and teams

Homework: Prepare for your debate

Wednesday, 11.18

Agenda: **Proposals due**, begin debates

Homework: Prepare for your debate if you haven't gone yet

Friday, 11.20

Agenda: Complete debates

Homework: Prepare your rough draft to bring to class

Week 14

Monday, 11.23

Agenda: **Rough draft workshop**, assign/discuss presentation order

Homework: Prepare for your presentation

Wednesday, 11.25 - Friday, 11.27

Thanksgiving Break (no classes)

Week 15

Monday, 11.30

Agenda: Presentations

Homework: Prepare for your presentation if you haven't yet gone, work on draft

Wednesday, 12.2

Agenda: Presentations

Homework: Prepare for your presentation if you haven't yet gone, work on draft

Friday, 12.4

Last Day of Classes

Agenda: **Final paper due**, Presentations

Week 16 **Final Exams**

[1] For a brief time in the nineties, blaming a computer for lost/corrupted work was acceptable, but it became overused and is now considered hackneyed. Save your work in several places, as this excuse will not be tolerated on due dates.

[2] If you miss a debate, you must write a 2-3 page paper in order to receive credit.

[3] Class participation includes your critical input to discussions, debates, quiz grades, preparedness for class/conferences, general alertness (read: not sleeping. I reserve the right to mark you absent if you sleep through class), contributions to group work, workshops, paying attention to your peers/me, not interrupting, not texting, exercising civility, asking questions which spark intelligent dialogue, and contributing to the greater good.