Fall 2015

ENGL 1157

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I. Course Description

In this course, we will explore writing as a process for inquiry and a practical life skill. We will also explore the many reasons that writers write and the many genres they use to express their ideas. Through critical thinking, reading, and writing and through discussion, peer review, and classroom and online exercises, you will develop the skills necessary to express your own ideas across a variety of genres.

The process of writing your essays and projects will include a number of activities: pre-writing, journaling, discussing, evaluating your audience, determining your purpose, developing a focus, writing drafts, peer reviews, working with a coach, working within a team, incorporating sources, refining your focus, revising your draft, editing your prose, and proofreading. Your final projects and essays should be interesting, thoughtful, well-written pieces of college-level prose. You will complete a series of related, connected assignments leading up to each of our three major projects; each individual part will make up the whole of your project. Keep EVERYTHING you write for this course. You’ll need it in order to assess your progress as a writer, to document your Process Work, and to include in your final portfolio (15% of your final grade).

By the end of this course, you will form an awareness of (and have practice in) applying these multi-layered and intersecting strategies to be effective twenty-first century thinkers and communicators. You will also learn how these skills transfer to your academic, everyday, and professional lives.

II. Course Objectives

After successfully completing this course, you should be able to

- Perform the tasks associated with the writing process (pre-writing, writing, revision, proofreading and editing) and become proficient in MLA format
- Determine purpose and audience in your own and others’ writing
- Understand how purpose, audience, and context affect writing style, voice, and tone
- Summarize, analyze and/or evaluate texts and other forms of discourse in multiple genres
- Apply appropriate rhetorical strategies for diverse writing situations
• Demonstrate familiarity with and/or compose in different genres with a variety of purposes for a variety of audiences
• Conduct research using library and non-library resources
• Incorporate source material successfully into your own work

III. Required Texts and Materials

• Ballenger, Bruce. *The Curious Writer* (UNO custom second edition)
• Allison, Jay and Dan Gediman. *This I Believe II* (provided at first-year orientation)
• One three ring binder to keep your ongoing work in and for your final portfolio (sometimes available in the English department office)
• A notebook and writing implements

IV. Course Assignments

1) Process Work: Your major assignments will be supported with a number of activities, called Process Work (PW), which we will complete both in class and as homework (including fast writing, brainstorming, journaling, group work, sketches, drafts, peer review, workshops, research, online responses, and more). Class attendance also counts toward your Process Work grade for each class project. The compilation of your process work will become your final portfolio.

2) Long and Short Compositions: Your work in this class will be composed of three projects, each culminating in a Long Composition (LC). To prepare you to compose each project’s LC successfully, you will compose a Short Composition (SC) designed to help you understand the genre in which you’ll be writing. See weighted averages to understand how this work will figure into your final grade. You must turn in a hard copy of your paper as well as an electronic submission via Moodle’s TurnItIn function.

3) Portfolio and Letter of Reflection: At the very end of the course, you will compile a portfolio of your work throughout the course and compose a final letter of reflection in which you look back at your experience over the course.

A Note on Revision

Good news! Revision is an integral part of the writing process and is highly encouraged. You are required to revise at least one long composition (LC) this semester. You may revise and resubmit each of your three SC and the first two of your three LC projects, provided that you:

- have pre-approval from me via email or conference and adhere to an agreed-upon deadline
- have turned in a complete project—no drafts, outlines, or incomplete papers
- have submitted the project’s process work on time (drafts, bibliographies, etc.)
- schedule an appointment with a Writing Center coach and have your coach confirm it
- understand that revision deadlines are limited to within two weeks of the original due date

If, and only if, you do all of the above, your new grade (as determined by me) will replace the original grade.

V. Class Participation and Conferences

Class participation, brief writing assignments, in class exercises, blog responses, and quizzes: Your success in this class requires that you keep up with reading and writing assignments, think about them, and come to class prepared to discuss them.

Conferences: My door is open. Although you will attend a mandatory writing conference at midterm, I encourage you to schedule conferences with me as well as in the Writing Center (LA 334, 280-7054) to discuss any stage of your writing process.
VI. Grading

Grading Guidelines:

- An “A” (90-100) represents achievement that is outstanding relative to the level necessary to meet course requirements.
- A “B” (80-89) represents achievement that is above the level necessary to meet the basic course requirements.
- A “C” (70-79) represents achievement that meets the basic course requirements.
- A “D” (60-69) represents achievement that is worthy of some credit even though it fails to meet fully the basic course requirements.
- An “F” (anything below 60) represents achievement that fails to meet the course requirements to such a degree that it is not worthy of credit.

IMPORTANT NOTE: If you earn a ZERO on any major assignment (Long Composition, Short Composition, or Portfolio), you will likely fail this course.

Grading Structure:

1) Project One: Narrative (This I Believe) 25 points
   - 20% Process Work
   - 30% Short Composition (SC)
   - 50% Long Composition (LC)

2) Project Two: Profile Essay 30 points
   - 20% Process Work
   - 30% SC
   - 50% LC

3) Project Three: Review/Research Project 30 points
   - 20% Process Work
   - 30% SC
   - 50% LC

4) Portfolio: Overall participation and A Writer’s Reflection 15 points

Attendance and Tardiness: Your steady attendance is critical to your success in this class. You are permitted up to five absences from class for the semester. I strongly urge you to stay well beneath the allowance. Three instances of tardiness equal one absence. If you come to class more than twenty minutes late, you will be counted as absent. You are responsible for all work assigned or due on a day that you are absent from class. If you wish to find out what was covered in class during your absence, you must come to my office to see me. All requests to make up in-class writing assignments must be accompanied by a documented excuse (doctor’s note, court summons, etc.). The make-up time must be during my listed office hours. This also applies to the shorter, informal assignments that form the process work for your longer assignments. No make-up quizzes are available under any circumstances.

Extensions: You may turn in one SC or one LC one class period after its due date, no explanation necessary. If you choose to do this, you must notify me which essay to apply this extension to. All other late assignments will be docked one letter grade for each additional day they are late.

VII. Course Policies

Classroom Etiquette: We will create our own ethos for classroom and blog etiquette which will be posted on Moodle.
Moodle/UNO E-mail: Every UNO student has a computer account and access to Moodle. It is a requirement of this course that you use this resource. Please check your UNO e-mail daily. I will try to respond to your email within 24 hours, Monday through Friday. If you have problems accessing Moodle or your e-mail, it is your responsibility to contact the University Computing and Communications (UCC) Help Desk to resolve the issue.

Wordpress Blog: There is a wordpress blog for our homework writings, responses, and discussions. You will be given instructions for signing up, logging in, and posting. All blog postings will be visible to me and your classmates.

Accommodations for Students with Disabilities: Students who qualify for services will receive the academic modifications to which they are legally entitled. It is the responsibility of the student to register with the Office of Disability Services (UC 260) each semester and follow their procedures for obtaining assistance.

Cellphones, Laptops, and Pads: These are not to be seen or heard during class. NO EXCEPTIONS.

Dropping the Course: If you stop attending class, please make sure to formally drop the course in the registrar’s office. If you stop attending class without dropping the course, you will receive a final grade of F.

Academic Dishonesty: Any case of academic dishonesty, including but not limited to plagiarism or cheating, will be handled according to departmental and university regulations and may result in failure of this course. A plagiarized paper will result in a grade of zero for the assignment without opportunity for revision. A zero on any graded composition usually results in a failing grade for the course.

VIII. Course Schedule

I will hand out a course schedule for every project, which will include your reading homework and your writing assignments and deadlines. These schedules will also be posted on Moodle. The following is an overall schedule of your major assignments for this course. These dates are subject to change; should that happen, I will send out a revised schedule. All reading and writing homework is due the day it is posted on your Project Schedules and in accordance with the schedule below.

PROJECT ONE:
   Wednesday, 1/28  SC 1 (This I Believe)
   Friday, 2/13   LC 1 (Personal Narrative)

PROJECT TWO:
   Wednesday, 3/4  SC 2 (Interview and/or Research Summary Presentation)
   Monday, 3/30  LC 2 (Profile)

PROJECT THREE:
   Wednesday, 4/15  SC 3 (Annotated Bibliography)
   Wednesday, 4/29  LC 3 (Review)

PORTFOLIO (FINAL)
   Friday, 5/8  Compilation of Work and Letter of Reflection (Final Exam)

Note: This schedule is tentative. You are responsible for all changes or additions announced in class, whether or not you are present for class on the day of an announcement. Should the schedule change significantly, I will send out a revised version.