

Fall 2015

ENGL 1158

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English 1158: English Composition

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Hours: 8-1050 M-F

And by appointment

TEXT: Ballenger, The Curious Writer (2nd edition)

COURSE OBJECTIVES AND EXPECTED OUTCOMES

Upon completion of English 1158, students should be able. . .

- To produce clear, articulate, and informative persuasive writing.
- To do scholarly research, incorporate it into their writing, and document it properly.
- To develop and refine what the “habits of mind” essential to being an engaged, thoughtful student and an informed, productive citizen—asking questions, looking for answers, suspending judgment, engaging with different viewpoints, and reflecting on discoveries.
- To use standard grammar and punctuation and to develop a clear and fluid writing style
- To understand how the various communication skills acquired in this composition class are fundamental for effective learning in other contexts, both inside and outside the classroom.
- To more astutely analyze and/or interpret texts of ALL kinds, not only written texts.

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course explores writing, and all that goes into it, as a part of the larger process of academic inquiry and personal development; academic inquiry involves learning how to find answers to questions related to the various subjects that typically engage and interest university students in **all** majors. We are primarily concerned with persuasive or argumentative writing in this course, and one of our goals is to master the basics of argumentation.

To that end, we will read a number of short essays on various subjects of current and enduring interest. Learning how to read and analyze is crucial to intellectual development and will pay significant dividends during your college career and beyond (you’re just going to have to trust me on that). We will read these essays closely and discuss them thoroughly in class.

Attendance, Participation, and Classroom Deportment: Needless to say, you should attend each class and participate in discussions and activities. Always bring your text and other relevant materials to class and be alert and engaged.

I do not allow any electronic devices to be used in class—including laptops, iPads, and, needless to say, phones: you must turn off your cells phones and put them away during class.

The classroom is a professional environment; this is your job (or one of them) for the next 15 weeks, and you are expected to treat everyone in the classroom with courtesy and respect, including me as well as the course material. You may not agree with everything that is said or discussed in the classroom, but obviously, respect for the opinions of others and for the material we will read and discuss is very important.

Excessive absences (more than three) will have a negative effect on your grade; every unexcused absence beginning with the fourth will result in a one-half letter grade reduction of your final grade. Please arrive on time and don't begin packing up your stuff until I have indicated that class is over. Both of those are part of being courteous and respectful. Three tardies equal one unexcused absence.

Of course, occasionally emergencies may arise, but if you frequently arrive late or leave early, I will have to lower your participation grade. Please let me know either before or immediately after class if you must miss class, arrive late, or leave early. Since this is not a lecture class but rather is interactive and discussion-driven, your attendance and participation are crucial; I count on you being here and being prepared to make the class interesting and lively. **Attendance and participation count for 10% of your final grade.**

GRADING SCALE

A+=100; A=95; A-=92; B+=88; B=85; B-=82; C+=78; C=75; C-=72; D+=68; D=65; D-=62; F=55.

88-100 A

78-87 B

67-77 C

60-66 D

Below 60 F

YOUR PORTFOLIO:

This semester we will write FIVE essays; we will write three versions of what I'm calling a 'Persuasive Proposal' and two versions of an Argumentative Essay. Essentially, we're producing TWO long essays—approximately 1500 words each. We'll do two drafts of the first and one draft for the second. I will give you feedback and a grade on these three drafts, each of which counts for 10% of your grade. The two final drafts count for 30% each. Please get yourself a folder of some kind in which to keep your semester's work, including the graded drafts and the final drafts of your TWO major projects. DO NOT LOSE ANY OF YOUR WORK; I must have your entire body of work in order to assess your performance and determine your final grade. Total portfolio percentage: 90%

DAILY SYLLABUS (Through Midsemester)

AUGUST

20—Introduction to course and to each other. Review of syllabus and overview of schedule for first unit.

25—John Moore: "The Case Against Working While Going to College" and a sample student essay, "False Impossibilities," that agrees with Moore's argument by proposing solutions to the problem in question. Both essays are posted to Moodle.

27-- We will continue our discussion of the above essays. For today, please generate ideas that we could use if we were writing an essay that refutes Moore's argument. Also, read The Curious Writer (CW), Chapter 6, "Writing a Proposal," 193-top of 203.

SEPTEMBER

1, 3—Read CW, 215-32; bring to class possible topics for your proposal (see example on 215).

8—Write a sketch for your proposal essay, using the directions for guidance and the student sketch on 220, “Loving and Hating Reality TV,” as a model.

10-- Janet Kowolsky, “Making the Grade” (posted to Moodle). We will discuss some of the techniques of persuasive/argumentative writing.

15—Kowolsky, continued. **First Draft of Your “Argumentative Proposal” essay due.**

17--**LIBRARY SKILLS DAY**

22—CW, “Citing Sources,” 223-40.

24--**SAMPLE RESEARCH ESSAY:** Amanda Stewart: “In Search of the Great White” (posted to Moodle)

29, **OCTOBER 1—SAMPLE STUDENT ESSAY:** “See You in Class”; plus, a revision of that essay (posted to Moodle). **The final draft of your “Argumentative Proposal” essay is due on October 1st.**

OCTOBER

6, 8—**SAMPLE STUDENT ESSAY:** “Abandoning Tradition: Taking a Break Before College”

13--**MENTAL HEALTH BREAK :)**

15—**MIDSEMESTER BREAK**

Plagiarism and academic dishonesty: Academic integrity is fundamental to the process of learning and evaluating academic performance. Academic dishonesty will not be tolerated. Academic dishonesty includes, but is not limited to, the following: cheating, plagiarism, tampering with academic records and examinations, falsifying identity, and being an accessory to acts of academic dishonesty. Refer to the UNO Judicial Code for further information. The Code is available online at http://www.uno.edu/~stlf/policy%20Manual/judicial_code_pt2.htm.

Accommodations for Students with Disabilities

Students who qualify for services will receive the academic modifications for 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.

Learning Resource Center: Tutors are available to help you with your writing in LA 334 (280-7054). I encourage you to take advantage of this opportunity, but remember that it is not their function to correct, revise, or edit your essays, only to help you learn strategies and skills to help you strengthen and improve your writing on your own.

