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English 1157-034: Freshman Composition I

TTH 9:30-10:45am • ED 204 • Fall 2015

CONTACT INFORMATION

Instructor: Brock Thibodaux
Email: bthiboda@uno.edu
Office: LA 204
Phone: (504) 280-5420
Office Hours: Tuesdays 2:00pm-3:00pm, Wednesdays 12:00-1:00pm, and by appointment

REQUIRED TEXTS & MATERIALS

Please bring the following to each class:

- *The Curious Writer* by Bruce Ballenger
  (UNO custom 2nd ed.)
- *Aunt Alice vs. Bob Marley* by Kareem Kennedy
- Loose-leaf paper
- Notebook, folder, or binder (your choice)

COURSE DESCRIPTION

Writing is a process of inquiry; it is a path of intellectual curiosity. Writers must ask questions, explore ideas, take risks, embrace different perspectives, and think critically about themselves and the world around them. Writing is not simply recording what you know already and leaving it at that; writing is about starting with what you do not know – about yourself or about others – and seeking the unknown, combining it with the known, and crafting it into a unified work. As a process of inquiry, writing is not linear; rather, it requires circling back, revising, editing, changing, struggling, transforming.

This course will provide you with the structural support for writing, and from there, you will build your own meaning through your own words. Together, we will learn how to write different forms for various genres: personal narratives, profiles, reviews, etc. We will learn how to research, how to gain knowledge from the writing of others. We will learn how to connect our ideas so that our readers fully understand the entirety of our thoughts. We will also learn the importance of grammatical conventions so that our language enlightens, rather than distracts, our readers. By the end of the course, you will gain an understanding of voice and purpose in writing; you will learn how to write for different situations and audiences; you will read critically and think critically about your own ideas and the ideas of others; and you will practice the conventions of writing, such as grammar, punctuation, syntax, and style.

According to the course guidelines, “In 1157, students will produce a minimum of three projects, comprised of no less than 5000 words (total), 3000 of which are high-stakes (i.e., formally
assessed). The scaffolded assignments that lead to the production of these three projects should introduce students to a variety of genres and their conventions, should teach students how to conduct research and to integrate their findings into their own writing, and should create opportunities for students to understand how audience and purpose govern the content, scope, organization, and expression of their ideas.”

**COURSE GOALS**

After successful completion of the English 1157 and 1158 sequence, you will be able to display proficiency in the following areas:

**Rhetorical Knowledge**

Students should be able to
- Determine purpose and audience in their own and others’ writing.
- Understand how purpose, audience, and context affect writing style, voice, and tone.
- Apply appropriate rhetorical strategies for diverse writing situations.
- Demonstrate familiarity with and/or compose in different genres (such as editorial writing, personal narratives, reviews, satires, dialogues, letters, or profile essays).
- Demonstrate familiarity with and/or incorporate different media (such as PowerPoint presentations, web pages, podcasts, or visual essays).

**Critical Thinking, Reading, and Writing**

Students should be able to
- Analyze and/or interpret texts and other forms of discourse in multiple genres.
- Use logical reasoning.
- Summarize, analyze, evaluate, and respond to the ideas of others.
- Understand writing as a process that involves invention, drafting, collaboration, and revision.
- Identify and incorporate persuasive techniques.
- Write informative, analytical, and persuasive essays.
- Incorporate the ideas and texts of others.
- Use library and non-library research methods.
- Evaluate sources.

**Knowledge of Conventions**

Students should be able to
- Use standard grammar.
- Follow conventions for word choice, syntax, spelling, and punctuation.
- Follow conventions appropriate for the given genre and/or medium, such as style, diction, and format.
- Use a variety of sentence structures.
- Document sources in MLA style.

**COURSE STRUCTURE**

This course consists of three main projects. The first project is a **Personal Narrative** (Ballenger, 71-110); the second is a **Profile** (Ballenger, 111-154); and the third project is a **Review** (Ballenger, 155-192). Each project is composed of process work, a short composition, and a long composition.
PROCESS WORK (PW) • Process work involves a variety of activities, including but not limited to fast writing, brainstorming, prewriting, group work, drafts, peer review, workshops, research, and class discussion. You will complete the PW both in class and for homework. The PW will prepare you for the short composition.

SHORT COMPOSITION (SC) • The short composition is designed to help you understand the genre in which you will be writing. The SC will be returned with a grade and with comments. You will have an opportunity for revising each SC, at your instructor’s discretion. The SC will prepare you for the long composition.

LONG COMPOSITION (LC) • The long composition is the culmination of your previous work in this project. It will be graded for its content, form, organization, grammar, style, and overall effectiveness. You will have an opportunity for revising each LC, at your instructor’s discretion. At least one of your LCs must be revised.

At the end of the course, you will also compose a final Writer’s Letter of Reflection in which you look back critically at your experience as a writer over the course of the semester.

ASSIGNMENTS AND GRADING
Projects are graded on a 100 point (A-F scale, whereas an A=90-100, B=80-89, and so on). You must submit all the assignments required for this course in order to earn a final course grade higher than F.

An “A” represents achievement that is outstanding relative to the level necessary to meet course requirements.
A “B” represents achievement that is significantly above the level necessary to meet course requirements.
A “C” represents achievement that meets the course requirements in every respect.
A “D” represents achievement that is worthy of credit even though it fails to meet fully the course requirements.
An “F” 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 Reflection), you are likely to fail this course.

Calculating your grade in this course:

___________ Class Participation 5%
___________ Project One: Personal Narrative 25 %
I reserve the right to alter or modify any of these weighted percentages.

Papers written at the beginning of the semester are graded under the same standards as papers written at the end of the semester, and a final draft is graded under the same standards as the first draft of an essay. Because of this, grades on drafts at the beginning of the semester will almost always be low, and the goal should be to improve the writing so that the grades improve throughout the semester as you become more adept at incorporating the approaches being learned into your writing.

**BEING PART OF A CREATIVE COMMUNITY**

In a writing class, all participants must behave with civility and respect at all times. Writing—and especially sharing writing—can be an at-times frightening endeavor. Moreover, what’s said and/or written about may sometimes be provocative. That’s a good thing; good writers take risks, and you should all feel comfortable enough to do so. Having said that, I expect that even when you disagree with the opinions of anyone in the class (including me), you will respect the right of each individual to have those opinions and you will behave with civility and respect at all times. No one in our class should ever feel belittled or undermined by anyone else in the class. Any actions that purposefully undermine or belittle either another person or a classroom activity will not be tolerated.

**SUBMITTING WORK**

You are expected to turn in your work on time. If an essay is turned in late, there will be a **one-letter grade deduction per day**. The typed essays (SCs and LCs) must be in proper MLA format: Times New Roman, 12-point font, 1-inch margins, double-spaced. A sample MLA document can be found on Moodle. **All short compositions (SCs) and long compositions (LCs) must be typed and turned in BOTH as a printed copy in class and as an electronic copy through Moodle.** We will discuss the procedure for turning in papers on Moodle when we are closer to the first LC.
CLASS ATTENDANCE

You are expected to attend class every day and to arrive on time. If you miss any part of class due to absence or tardiness, you will miss important class discussion and activities. In almost every class, we will be doing necessary process work (PW) for each project; if you miss the class, you will still be responsible for completing all of the PW.

TARDINESS: Class will begin promptly at 9:30. I will start every class by calling roll, and if you are not present when your name is called, then you will be considered either absent or tardy. If you do come to class tardy, please do so quietly and unobtrusively. In the case of tardiness, you will not be given any extra time or accommodations for in-class activities. Tardiness for 2 class periods will be equal to 1 absence. If you are late twice, then this will count as one absence; if you’re late four times, then this will count as two absences, etc.

ABSENCES: Students are allowed to be excused from approximately 225 minutes of class time over the semester, which translates to five MWF class periods. Missing more than 5 classes will result in a one-letter grade deduction for each additional absence. If you are absent for any reason, you are responsible for finding out what you missed in class and completing all homework assignments for the next class. You may come to my office hours to ask about what was covered in class.

Numerous absences may also result in deductions from your class participation grade. Please feel free to talk to me if you are concerned about absences or tardiness. We can discuss your reasons for missing class and consider possible solutions to your attendance problems.

In accordance with UNO policy, “A student who is not present to answer roll call is marked absent.” If you are absent, you are responsible for finding out what you missed and for having all assignments completed for the next class, regardless of the reason you were not present. If you wish to find out what was covered in the class in your absence, you must come to my office to see me. Do not e-mail me or call to ask about missed material. Your assignment’s grade will be lowered by a letter for every day it is late. Any failure to have an assigned draft for a peer review workshop will also be counted as an absence, since you will not be able to participate in class.

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

Any case of academic dishonesty – including but not limited to cheating, tampering with academic records and exams, falsifying identity, plagiarism, and being an accessory to acts of academic honesty – 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 will likely result in a failing grade for the course.

Students are expected to know and to follow UNO’s policy on academic dishonesty. We will discuss academic dishonesty in class, which will give you an opportunity to learn about proper citation in an academic essay; however, you are still responsible for knowing UNO policy outside of the information given in class. If you have any specific questions about it during any stage of your writing process, I highly encourage you to ask me about it during conference hours.
or to make an appointment in the Writing Center so that you can discuss it with one of the writing coaches.

**Moodle and UNO Email**

This class uses *Moodle* to facilitate information exchange. I will post helpful online resources to Moodle, including a link to the UNO Writing Center. I will also post supplementary readings, assignments, and digital content regularly, and I will notify you through your *UNO student email account* whenever I do so. You will be responsible for checking Moodle on a regular basis and completing all work I assign on it. Even more importantly, you must check your UNO email address on a regular basis.

You can access both Moodle and your UNO email by going to the UNO homepage, scrolling to the bottom, and clicking “Moodle” or “Student Email.” Alternatively, you can access Moodle through the following link: https://uno.mrooms3.net/login/index.php

I will be checking my email (bthiboda@uno.edu) at least once a day, Monday through Friday, and I will try to respond as promptly as possible; however, be patient in waiting for a reply. Do not expect a reply if you email me right before class starts, since I will most likely not see your message until after class. I probably will not check my email on the weekends, but if you do e-mail me over the weekend I will likely reply on Monday.

**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 each semester and follow their procedures for obtaining assistance.

**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. Please note that **these dates are subject to change:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Assignment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tues 9/8</td>
<td>SC 1 (Student Sketch)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thurs 9/24</td>
<td>LC 1 (Personal Narrative)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tues 10/13</td>
<td>SC 2 (Rhetorical Analysis of a Profile)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thurs 10/29</td>
<td>LC 2 (Profile)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tues 11/17</td>
<td>SC 3 (Annotated Bibliography)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thurs 12/3</td>
<td>LC 3 (Review)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tues 12/8</td>
<td>Letter of Reflection</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In accordance with the UNO calendar, we will **not** be having class on the following dates:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Thurs 10/15</td>
<td>Mid-semester Break</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thurs 11/28</td>
<td>Thanksgiving Break</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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