

## Advanced Composition 2000 01 Spring 2007

M,W,F: 9:00-9:50, Pearson House, Room 4

Instructor: Kenneth E. Harrison, Jr.

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Office Hours: Adjunct Office, Pearson House, Monday 10-11 a.m.

**Course Description:** Prerequisite: WRIT 1010. Sophomore status recommended. This class is designed for students who wish to strengthen their writing ability and critical thinking skills. It assumes basic familiarity with academic research and with essay form. The class is divided into two parts: the first part uses readings and writing assignments to familiarize students with a variety of essay types; the second part, the practicum, explores issues of organization, clarity, grammar, and usage through individual student projects. Does not count toward the English major or minor, but does fulfill the general education Communications requirement.

No matter which major a student pursues, joining the written dialogue of that academic discipline is necessary for success. This class teaches students how to become as focused, organized and clear in their thinking and writing as the scholars and writers and thinkers whose work they will read.

### Texts:

Hacker, Diana. *A Writer's Reference*. Boston: Bedford/St. Martin's, 1999. (Recommended)

Muller, Gilbert H. *The McGraw-Hill Reader: Issues Across the Disciplines*. 9th Ed. Boston: McGraw-Hill, 2006. (Required)

**Class Format:** The semester will be divided into two parts: the first and longer part will be our chance to look at a variety of writing spanning a number of disciplines and respond to them through weekly journals and several short papers, in order to strengthen our critical thinking and writing skills. The second part will be your chance to deeply explore and write about a topic within your major, in the style used by scholars in your field. This will be an exploration and an individualized process, but we will still work within our group to workshop essays as they move along and to analyze other essays within your particular field.

### Learning Goals:

1. To gain confidence in one's skills as a writer
2. To understand and demonstrate pre-writing, writing, editing, and revision in essay writing
3. To construct unified essays with a beginning, a middle, and an end
4. To understand that there are many dialects of the English language, each used appropriately in different contexts (cultural, professional, academic, etc.)
5. To develop a link between reading and writing, and to facilitate independent thinking
6. To better ourselves as readers, writers, and critical thinkers
7. Focus on our personal development as through the act of writing essays, as well as through approaching the act of writing as a process.

three free absences. Save them for emergencies, because you fail the course at five. Tardiness of more than fifteen minutes at the beginning of class or leaving more than fifteen minutes early will count as an absence. (Exceptions will be made for horrible illnesses and other emergencies. Speak to me!) If you are absent, it is your responsibility to find out the journal and/or reading assignment from one of your fellow students. (Make a buddy in class.) Your assignments are still due for the same day and you're expected to be prepared. This will prevent you from falling behind on your work.

### **Mid-Term & Final**

Your mid-term grade will be a cumulative grade (i.e., what your grade is up until that point). Your final examination will be your self-evaluation essay (a take home essay).

**Delayed Grades:** It is in your best interest to complete the work during the semester. Therefore, a delayed grade should be seen as a last resort. To be considered for a delayed grade, you must have at least 75% of the work completed and a documented excuse.

**Academic Dishonesty:** Plagiarism, recycled papers, or any other violation of academic dishonesty will not be tolerated and may result in failure of the course. The growth of your essays will be shown in your drafts and prewriting exercises, so any writing not your own will be fairly easy to spot.

Diana Hacker has written that your papers are "a collaboration between you and your sources. To be fair and ethical, you must acknowledge your debt to the writers of these sources. If you don't, you are guilty of plagiarism, a serious academic offense. Three different acts are considered plagiarism: (1) failing to cite quotations and borrowed ideas, (2) failing to enclose borrowed language in quotations, and (3) failing to put summaries and paraphrases in your own words" (*A Writer's Reference*, 4th ed., New York: Bedford/St. Martin's, p. 83).

### **Classroom Behavior:**

We are studying at Webster: be punctual, prepared, attentive, respectful, and serious. Engage in thoughtful dialogue with one another—we may be talking, from time to time, about touchy and difficult subjects, and it's vital that we keep open minds and hearts. Turn off cell phones, I-Pods, and all other assorted (and annoying) electronica.

WEEK NINE, Spring Break, No class

WEEK TEN

3/17: **Bring in Analysis Essay for Peer Review**

3/19: dialogue

3/21:

WEEK ELEVEN

3/24: **Analysis Essay due**, begin research projects

3/26:

3/28:

WEEK TWELVE

3/31: **Research Project Proposals due**

4/2:

4/4:

WEEK THIRTEEN

4/7: **Bring in research essay/project draft for first peer review**

4/9:

4/11:

WEEK FOURTEEN

4/14:

4/16:

4/18:

WEEK FIFTEEN:

4/21: **Bring in research essay/project draft for second peer review**

4/23:

4/25:

WEEK SIXTEEN

4/28: **Research Essay/Project Due**, the self-evaluation

4/30:

5/1: lingering concerns

WEEK SEVENTEEN

5/5 — 5/9: **Final Self-Evaluation Essay due**

## Learning Outcomes for WRIT 2000

Students who successfully complete this course will improve their abilities to

- Use critical reading and writing in a mutually reinforcing way.
- Think independently when using readings and other sources in their own writing.
- Effectively use a process of pre-writing, drafting, editing, and revising in essay writing.
- Construct unified essays with effective introductions, bodies, and conclusions.
- Recognize and use a variety of essay forms.
- Recognize that there are many academic, professional, and cultural discourse communities that use language and writing in different ways.
- Effectively use the tools and conventions of at least one specific discourse community (most likely the student's major discipline) in research-based writing.
- Conduct research, appropriately integrate the results into academic essays, and correctly cite the sources used.