

English 100: Freshman Composition

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Course Objective

Language is power. While this course builds your writing skills, it will also show you how to think critically about your own language and the language all around you. You will write organized, argumentative essays, giving the subjects you explore deeper meaning through critical analysis. Writing allows you to shape how others see you and how others see the world: succeeding in this course will help you to shape your education, relationships, and professional path.

Course Materials and Assignments

ALWAYS bring paper, pens, and a regular folder (your writing portfolio) to class. You will need one 8 1/2" x 11" Blue Book for the final exam.

Required Texts:

75 Thematic Readings, published by McGraw-Hill.

A Pocket Manual of Style, by Diana Hacker (4th Edition).

On Writing, by Stephen King.

Frankenstein, by Mary Shelley (Norton Critical Edition).

Texts are available at the campus bookstore. You will also need an English dictionary. Always bring texts with assigned readings and your dictionary to class.

Essays (60% of your grade)

You will write five essays. The assignments become longer and more difficult as the term progresses, building your skills and testing your ability to choose and develop arguments suited to the required length. Each essay must be typed or word-processed in a 12-point font and double-spaced. Note your name, the course name, the instructor's name, and the word count at the top of each essay.

ESSAY ONE: Personal Narrative, 1250 words (5 pages), 10%

ESSAY TWO: Analysis of Advertising, 1250 words (5 pages), 10%.

ESSAY THREE: Close Reading, 1250-1500 words (5-6 pages), 10%

ESSAY FOUR: Literary Analysis, 1750-2000 words (7-8 pages), 10%

ESSAY FIVE: Research Paper, 2500-3000 words (10-12 pages), 20%

Grading: Essays are graded on the correctness of English usage and on how well they meet the assignment's specific requirements. *A* essays have few or no usage errors and meet or exceed all requirements. *B* essays may have a few errors, but they meet most or all requirements. *C* essays may have many errors and/or fail to meet a major

requirement. *D* essays have so many errors that they are often unclear and/or fail to meet multiple requirements. *F* essays lack organization and clarity and/or fail to meet most requirements. Incomplete essays—or essays that do not approximate the required word count—will usually receive *D*s or *F*s.

Lateness: You must turn in a hard copy of your essay during class on the due date. Late essays turned in during the first class meeting after the due date drop two letter grades. Later essays will receive an *F* or no credit (a *0*). Turn in all essays! An *F* is much, much better than a *0*. Two *0*s will likely result in failing the course.

Academic Honesty: Your essays must be your own work. Plagiarized work will receive a *0* and subject you to further penalties. See the *Class Schedule*, pp. 139-140.

Participation (30% of your grade)

Writing Portfolios: Your writing portfolio is a regular, slim folder where you keep ONLY required writings other than the five essays. Prior to each class meeting, write out two questions or arguable points about the readings for that day, and be prepared to share them with the class. Label these questions and points with the date of the reading assignment and the name of the reading. Keep them in the portfolio along with any other in- and out-of-class assignments, including assigned outlines and rough drafts. I do not announce portfolio due dates in advance, so always have your portfolio ready.

Class Discussions: I will not grade what you say in class, but I will note that you speak up and demonstrate that you're thinking about the readings. If too much silence in class makes me suspect you're not doing the readings, you might encounter pop quizzes.

Attendance: Class activities and writing workshops are vital to your success. If you must miss a meeting, inform me ahead of time by email. Five or more absences could result in failure or exclusion from class. See the *Class Schedule*, p. 20, for details.

Class Decorum: Be courteous to fellow students: I will not tolerate harassment or class disruptions. Make sure cell phones, pagers, and other electronic devices are either off or silenced. Do not be late to class. Lateness is a disruption and a failure to participate.

Final Exam (10% of your grade)

The final exam will involve short essays written in class on the scheduled date that test both your ability to organize your ideas and to use your knowledge of the readings.

Miscellany

I will not be able to critique whole essay drafts, but I'm happy to meet with you to discuss specific parts of your writing or other course-related issues. Email me or stay after class to schedule a meeting. I reserve the right to alter the policies and assignments described on this syllabus, but I exercise this right rarely. The syllabus tells you many of the things you need to know for this course. Keep it. Know it. Love it.

Schedule of Meetings and Assignments (subject to change)

Complete all readings BEFORE the class meetings under which they appear!

PART ONE: Writing with the “So What” Factor

Week One

Jan. 10: Course introduction

Syllabus overview; in-class introduction essay

Jan 12: Words, precision, definition, and context

75: Naylor, “A Question of Language” and Brownmiller, “Pornography”

Week Two

Jan. 17: MARTIN LUTHER KING DAY—NO CLASS

Jan. 19: Sentences, grammar, and style

75: Tannen, “‘I’m Sorry’” and Orwell, “Politics;” Pocket 24-54 (55-62 recommended)

Week Three

Jan. 24: Arguable and compelling thesis statements (three theses)

75: White, “Meaning of Democracy” and Jefferson, “Declaration;” Pocket 113-115

Jan. 26: Paragraphs, main ideas, supporting ideas, transitions, style, and voice

75: Anzaldúa, “Wild Tongue” and Hurston, “How It Feels;” Pocket 2-22

Week Four

Jan. 31: Images, experience, and meaning (descriptive paragraph)

75: hooks, “Keeping Close to Home” and Woolf, “The Death of the Moth”

Feb. 2: The significance of experience (DRAFT, ESSAY ONE, 2 copies, workshop)

75: Rose, “I Just Wanna Be Average”

PART TWO: Writing the World through Advertising

Week Five

Feb. 7: Making an argument (ESSAY ONE, 1 copy, turn in)

75: Paglia, “Rape” and Jackson, “Who Makes”

Feb. 9: Rhetorical strategies

75: Truth, “Ain’t I a Woman,” King, “I Have a Dream,” and Swift, “Modest Proposal”

Week Six

Feb. 14: Decoding advertising (bring in an ad or a description of one)

75: Twitchell, “‘But First, a Word from Our Sponsor’”

Feb. 16: Advertising and control

75: Steinem, “Sex, Lies, and Advertising” and Barry, “Red, White, and Beer”

Week Seven

Feb. 21: PRESIDENT’S DAY—NO CLASS

Feb. 23: Value and Context (DRAFT, ESSAY TWO, 2 copies, workshop)

75: Baker, “Work in Corporate America” and Eighner, “On Dumpster Diving”

PART THREE: Writing the World through Literature

Week Eight

Feb. 28: Literacy and freedom; truth and popularity (ESSAY TWO, 1 copy, turn in)

75: Douglass, “Learning to Read and Write;” On Writing all through p. xix

Mar. 2: Stories of (and as) the Self

On Writing 3-63

Week Nine

Mar. 7: Success and self-destruction

On Writing 63-131

Mar. 9: The good, the bad, and the competent

On Writing 135-194

Week Ten

Mar. 14: Visions and revisions

On Writing 194-275

Mar. 16: Revisions and (re)reading

On Writing 277-297 (OUTLINE and DRAFT, ESSAY THREE, 2 copies, workshop)

MARCH 18: ESSAY THREE, ONE COPY, IN MY MAILBOX BY 5PM because...

MARCH 21-27: SPRING BREAK—NO CLASSES

Week Eleven

Mar. 28: Bodies as objects

75: Atwood, “The Female Body,” and Krauthammer, “Of Headless Mice and Men”

Mar. 30: Expecting hideous progeny

Frankenstein: “Preface” vii-xii, “Preface” 5-6, and “Preface” 169-173

Week Twelve

Apr. 4: Mad science / dangerous knowledge

Frankenstein 7-58

Apr. 6: Stories within stories

Frankenstein 59-101

Week Thirteen

Apr. 11: Monstrous justice

Frankenstein 103-156

Apr. 13: Interpretation (OUTLINE and DRAFT, ESSAY FOUR, 2 copies, workshop)

Frankenstein: Levine, “Tradition of Realism” and Gilbert and Gubar, “Monstrous Eve”

PART FOUR: Researching and Defending Your Claim

Week Fourteen

Apr. 18: Research topics (ESSAY FOUR, 1 copy, turn in)

Pocket 101-102

Apr. 20: Finding and using sources; library orientation

Pocket 103- 111

Week Fifteen

Apr. 25: Defining a position (Annotated source list)

75: Gould, “Darwin’s Middle Road”

Apr. 27: Considering counter-arguments (TOPIC and SOURCES, 1 copy, turn in)

75: Koch, “Death and Justice” and Rachels, “Active and Passive Euthanasia”

Week Sixteen

May 2: Approaching sources critically (OPTIONAL REVISION, 1 copy, turn in)

75: Whitehead, “Divorce Culture” and Bennett, “America at Risk”

May 4: Arguments, opinions, and judgments (OUTLINE, ESSAY FIVE, 1 copy, turn in)

75: Quindlen, “Evan’s Two Moms” and Tisdale, “We Do Abortions Here”

Week Seventeen

May 9: Refining research (DRAFT, ESSAY FIVE, 2 copies, workshop)

Group work and individual discussions

May 11: Review for final (ESSAY FIVE, 1 copy, turn in)

FINAL EXAM: Monday, May 16 (date is tentative—see *Class Schedule*, p. 142)