

Spring 1-15-2014

ENG 3001-001: Advanced Composition

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We will practice the art of writing—sentences, paragraphs, essays—with as much room for improvement as a semester allows. Some writing will be on assigned topics; some, on topics of your devising. Some writing will be practical; some will involve the mind at play. All work in the course will emphasize revision as a necessary practice in writing. (I've made fifteen small revisions in writing this description.) The possibilities for our writing will come from reading: about culture, education, technology, and writing.

In the world beyond college, you'll be the one responsible for the shape your writing skills are in. This course provides a great opportunity to get those skills in better shape now.

TEXTS

Diana Hacker and Nancy Sommers, *A Pocket Style Manual*
Michael Harvey, *The Nuts and Bolts of College Writing*
Verlyn Klinkenborg, *Several Short Sentences About Writing*
Richard Lanham, *Revising Prose*
Virginia Tuftte, *Artful Sentences*

Other reading will be available as PDFs or photocopies.

You should have access to a hardcover collegiate (college-level) dictionary when reading and writing.

REQUIREMENTS

The course will require dedicated daily work (reading, writing, sharing work, talking), several pieces of writing, and several conferences.

ENGLISH 3001 ADVANCED COMPOSITION PROFESSOR M. LEDDY

SPRING 2014



ATTENDANCE

Be here, on time, every time. You're responsible for all assignments, whether or not you're here when they're announced.

Frequent absences will affect your grade, not through a system of points and deductions but simply because not being here will make it difficult to do the work of thinking and learning that the course is meant to involve. If you must miss a class, you should get in touch with me beforehand to find out what you will miss.

Photocopied pages to go with our reading will be available from an envelope on my office door.

LATE WORK, MAKE-UP WORK

Missed work cannot be made up. Late work is acceptable only if you have my okay in advance.

DISABILITIES

If you have a documented disability and wish to receive academic accommodations, contact the coordinator of the Office of Disability Services (581–6583) as soon as possible.

OFFICE HOURS

Talking to professors is one of the smartest things a college student can do. Please, come in to ask questions and talk about your work in the class. If office hours don't work for you, make an appointment.

If you feel uneasy about talking to professors, read "How to talk to a

professor" for potentially helpful advice: goo.gl/VYSkv.

E-MAIL

Please read and follow the guidelines in "How to e-mail a professor": goo.gl/4n6EH. These guidelines are read all over the world and will serve you well in e-mailing any professor (assuming that your professor answers e-mail).

One guideline that you don't need to follow: you need not add your class number and meeting time to your signature. I'll know who you are.

DECORUM

The atmosphere in our class should be serious—not somber or pretentious, but collegiate and genuinely intellectual. No eating, sleeping, talking, texting, or doing work for other classes. No headphones, hoods, iPods, or phones. Electronic devices should be off and out of sight before class begins. Please show proper respect for our community of learning.

DISCUSSION

Consider what the writer Thomas Merton says about a teacher he admired (Mark Van Doren, Columbia University):

Most of the time he asked questions. His questions were very good, and if you tried to answer them intelligently, you found yourself saying excellent things that you did not know you knew, and that you had not, in fact, known before.

I like to ask questions that invite thinking. I also like it when people ask me such questions. Try to think of an in-class question not as having an answer you're already supposed to know but as an invitation to think. I know that this suggestion might go against the grain of much of your experience in classrooms. You should

be asking relevant questions too, of me and perhaps of one another. That helps to make the class less like a quiz show and more like a conversation.

One more observation on discussion, from the cultural critic Randolph Bourne:

A good discussion increases the dimensions of every one who takes part. Being rather self-consciously a mind in a group of minds means becoming more of a person.

As you can see, I'm optimistic about discussion. For more on questions and discussion, read "How to answer a question": goo.gl/DIzaG.

GRADING

Your grade will be based on your essays (60%), day-to-day work (20%), and participation in class and conferences (20%).

Essays receive letter grades. Other assignments receive numerical grades. Missing work receives a zero. Participation and conferences receive an numerical grade, an overall evaluation of the extent to which you're prepared and contributing: 100 (always), 85 (frequently), 75 (usually), 50 (sometimes), 0 (rarely or never).

To calculate semester grades, I use numerical equivalents for letter grades:

A	95	A-	92	B+	87
B	85	B-	82	C+	77
C	75	C-	72	D+	67
D	65	D-	62	F	55

Sometimes when I grade writing I'll give a grade that falls between two grades—e.g., B+/A- (89.5).

For semester grades, 90 or above is an A; 80 or above, a B; 70 or above, a C; 60 or above, a D; below 60, an F.

EWP

You may include work from the course in your Electronic Writing Portfolio.

Please make sure that you understand the requirements for the Electronic Writing Portfolio and that you fulfill them in a timely way. For more information: www.eiu.edu/~assess/.

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

The English Department's statement on plagiarism:

Any teacher who discovers an act of plagiarism—"The appropriation or imitation of the language, ideas, and/or thoughts of another author, and the representation of them as one's original work" (*Random House Dictionary of the English Language*)—has the right and responsibility to impose upon the guilty student an appropriate penalty, up to and including immediate assignment of a grade of F for the course.

And my statement concerning academic integrity:

Any breach of academic integrity—from a single sentence cut and pasted into a dinky little assignment to a stretch of "reworded" prose to a wholly unoriginal essay—is a serious matter and will get you a serious penalty. The Student Standards office recommends an F for the course. You will also be required to take a course in ethics administered by Student Standards, whose staff will keep your misconduct on record and notify your other professors that one of their students has violated academic integrity.

You should be familiar with Eastern's statement on academic integrity and should ask if you have any questions about quoting from and/or documenting sources. But because the work of the course is to be an expression of *your ideas in your words*, aside from words and ideas from properly acknowledged sources, questions of plagiarism and collusion should never arise.

Do not "borrow" work or give your work to anyone (allowing someone

else to make use of your work is also a breach of academic integrity and will also get you a serious penalty, up to and including an F for the course).

PROVISIONAL OUTLINE (WEEKS)

- 1: Thinking about writing; Zinsser, "Writing Good English"
- 2-3: Harvey, Lanham
- 4-5: Paragraph work; readings on technology, conversation, and loneliness
- 6: First essay; conferences
- 7-8: Punctuation work; readings on writing, high school, and the workplace; second essay
- 9-10: Conferences, readings on college, third essay
- 11-12: Conferences, readings on academic integrity
- 13-14: Sentence work, fourth essay, conferences
- 15: Fifth essay; last things

THREE THOUGHTS

We learn to write well, if we ever do, by reading good prose, paying close attention to our own words, revising relentlessly, and recalling the connections between written and spoken language.

Christopher Lasch, *Plain Style: A Guide to Written English* (2002)

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Writing requires a high degree of inner alertness, especially when things are going wrong,

Verlyn Klinkenborg, *Several Short Sentences About Writing* (2012).

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職人氣質

[shokunin katagi] In Japanese culture, the spirit of the craftsman or artisan, a dedication to work for the sake of work, a devotion to getting things right for the sake of getting them right.