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WRIT 201.03: College Writing II

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WRIT 201 College Writing II: Rhetoric and American Cultures

Section 03 – Spring 2019

Meeting time and place: Tuesday and Thursday 12:30-1:50 PM, Liberal Arts 205

Instructor: Emma Neslund

Email: emma.neslund@umontana.edu

Phone: 406-243-5231 (main number for the English Department)

Office: Corbin 258

Office Hours: Wednesday 1-3 PM or by appointment

Course Description

How do we communicate with writing in our day-to-day lives? In this class, we will opt out of the default emoji response and consider what can be achieved with words. We will explore a range of American writings from the 20th century to think about the backbone of writing. What constitutes good writing? How do you successfully convey complicated ideas? We will study speeches, debates, complaint letters, memoirs, film reviews, tweets, police crime reports, and essays in our search. The first question we will ask: Is this writing clear? Does it stand up to examination? As B.R. Myers says, “Great prose isn’t always easy but it’s always lucid.”

Writing is a form of self-presentation used now more than ever. The digital world has exploded the way we communicate. The style with which you write an email, cover letter, or Instagram post is a representation of yourself. You keep yourself presentable, don’t you? You brush your teeth, don’t you? You should take the time to write well, too.

Much of what we do will require you to engage with material, form an opinion, and express yourself. Exercises will range from rewriting passages of award-winning writing to preparing in-class debates to conducting research and relating your findings. By picking out elements that clutter bad writing and by highlighting details that enhance good writing, we will train ourselves to process information and express ideas with clarity and detail—be it for an argumentative piece, a research paper, or a text convincing a friend to bring you pepperoni pizza. Writing well is classy, playful, and fun.

Required Course Texts:

- The Elements of Style* by William Strunk Jr. and E.B. White
- Best American Essays of the Century*, Ed. Joyce Carol Oates

Other Course Materials

- a notebook
- a folder for class material
- a final portfolio folder or binder

WRIT 201 Requirements

- Completion of assigned readings and informed participation in class discussions and class projects
- Short assignments
- Four essays (4-5 pages each) and one revision
- A portfolio including your revised essays, selected class projects, and written responses
- Homework must be typed unless otherwise specified. Please use 12 point Times New Roman font, double-spaced, and 1 inch margins

WRIT 201 is an Intermediate Writing Course.

The university learning outcomes include:

- Use writing to learn and synthesize new concepts

- Formulate and express opinions and ideas in writing
- Compose written documents that are appropriate for a given audience or purpose
- Revise written work based on constructive feedback
- Find, evaluate, and use information effectively
- Begin to use discipline-specific writing conventions
- Demonstrate appropriate English language usage

Grading -- you must earn a C- in this class to be awarded credit

Participation (attendance, in-class discussion, written responses)	35%
Final Portfolio	65%

you must turn in your portfolio and complete all major essays by their deadlines in order to receive credit

Grading Policy:

Students enrolled in WRIT 201 are graded by the traditional letter grade A, B, C, D, or F.

To give you a sense of the check system I'll be using, please refer to the following descriptors:

Check: A project with a check generally meets its rhetorical goals in terms of purpose, genre, and writing situation without need for extensive revision. Written comments will elaborate on strengths, weaknesses, and strategies for focused revision.

Check minus: A project with a check minus meets the basic requirements, but would benefit from significant revision and a stronger understanding of rhetorical decision-making. Written comments will elaborate on strengths, weaknesses, and strategies for revision.

Unsatisfactory: A project with a U does not meet basic standards, and requires extensive development and attention. An unsatisfactory submission may be incomplete or inappropriate to the assignment. Such a submission may receive a request to rewrite within a week in order to receive teacher comments.

Major Assignments

Expect to write four essays and make major revisions over the course of the semester, in addition to other short writing assignments in and out of class. I will give you a detailed assignment sheet as we begin each of these major assignments.

Date	Assignment	Genre	Description
January 24 th	CRIME STATEMENT	(narrative)	an alibi that exonerates you from a crime
February 5 th	MEMOIR	(reflection)	a reflective narrative about a memory
February 14 th	FILM REVIEW	(analysis)	a review and analysis of a before unseen film
March 7 th	NEWSPAPER ARTICLE	(research)	an in-depth feature of an attended event or topic
April 4 th	COMPLAINT LETTER	(persuasion)	a letter outlining a problem and proposing a solution
April 18 th	REWRITE	(revision)	a revision considering feedback from a previous essay

Attendance

If you miss the first two classes, you will need to drop the course on Cyberbear and enroll in another semester. This is university policy and the reasoning behind it is that important groundwork for the semester is put in place over the course of the first few class meetings. More than two unexcused absences will compromise your grade.

- 3rd absence: final grade drops one letter grade (for example, A drops to B)
- 4th absence: final grade drops two letter grades (for example, A drops to C)
- 5th absence: final grade is an F

If you must miss class, *you are responsible* for obtaining any handouts or assignments for the class. Make sure you talk with me in *advance* if you are worried about meeting a deadline or missing a class.

Participation.

Come to class prepared and on time, read and consider all assigned material, engage in class discussions, ask questions, and contribute your knowledge in relevant ways.

Late Work.

- Your work must be typed, printed, and in class with you to be considered on time
- Late or handwritten homework does not receive credit
- Emailed assignments are considered late
- If you miss class, the homework is due the next class period; homework will be marked late unless your absence is excused

Portfolio Grade Descriptors for WRIT 201

A

Superior portfolios will demonstrate initiative and rhetorical sophistication that go beyond the requirements. A portfolio at this level is composed of well-edited texts representing different writing situations and genres that consistently show a clear, connected sense of audience, purpose and development. The writer is able to analyze his or her own writing, reflect on it, and revise accordingly. The portfolio takes risks that work.

B

Strong portfolios meet their rhetorical goals in terms of purpose, genre, and writing situation without need for further major revisions of purpose, evidence, audience, or style/ mechanics. The writer is able to reflect on his or her own writing and make some choices about revision. The writer takes risks, although they may not all be successful.

C

Consistent portfolios meet the basic requirements, yet the writing would benefit from further revisions of purpose, evidence, audience, or writing style/mechanics (or some combination) and a stronger understanding of rhetorical decision-making involved in different writing situations and genres. The writer composes across tasks at varying levels of success with some superficial revision. The writer has taken some risks in writing and exhibits some style.

D

Weak portfolios do not fully meet the basic evaluative standards. Most texts are brief and underdeveloped. These texts show a composing process that is not yet elaborated or reflective of rhetorical understanding related to composing in different genres and for a range of writing situations. Texts generally require extensive revisions to purpose, development, audience, and/ or style and mechanics.

F

Unacceptable portfolios exhibit pervasive problems with purpose, development, audience, or style/ mechanics that interfere with meaning and readers' understanding. Unacceptable portfolios are often incomplete. A portfolio will also earn an F if it does not represent the writer's original work.

Participation Grade Descriptors for WRIT 201

A

Superior participation shows initiative and excellence in written and verbal work. The student helps to create more effective discussions and workshops through his/her verbal, electronic, and written contributions. Reading and writing assignments are always completed on time and with attention to detail. In workshop or conferences, suggestions to group members are tactful, thorough, specific, and often provide

other student writers with a new perspective or insight.

B

Strong participation demonstrates active engagement in written and verbal work. The student plays an active role in the classroom but does not always add new insight to the discussion at hand. Reading and writing assignments are always completed on time and with attention to detail. In workshop or conferences, suggestions to group members are tactful, specific, and helpful.

C

Satisfactory participation demonstrates consistent, satisfactory written and verbal work. Overall, the student is prepared for class, completes assigned readings and writings, and contributes to small group workshops and large class discussions. Reading and writing assignments are completed on time. In workshop or conferences, suggestions to group members are tactful and prompt, but could benefit from more attentive reading and/or specific detail when giving comments.

D

Weak participation demonstrates inconsistent written and verbal work. The student may be late to class, unprepared for class, and may contribute infrequently or unproductively to classroom discussions or small group workshops. Reading and writing assignments are not turned in or are insufficient. In workshops or conferences, suggestions to group members may be missing, disrespectful, or far too brief and general to be of help.

F

Unacceptable participation shows ineffectual written and verbal work. The student may be excessively late to class, regularly unprepared, and not able to contribute to classroom discussions or small group workshops. This student may be disruptive in class. Reading and writing assignments are regularly not turned in or are insufficient. In workshops or conferences, the student has a pattern of missing, being completely unprepared, or being disruptive.

Plagiarism Policy

If I suspect that something a student has written has been plagiarized, in full or in part, intentionally or unintentionally, I take the following actions:

- I alert the student of areas of the text that are suspicious
- the student receives no credit on the paper, pending failure, and it is up to him/her to prove that he/she turned in original work
- each student is asked to provide me with hard copies of the research she/he used in writing the paper
- if the student cannot provide documentation of her/his research, the student will fail the paper

*these measures are also put into action when a paper is poorly cited. When a student brings his/her research to me I use the time to talk with them about citation and make sure that they understand how and when to cite in the future.

In the case that the student is unable to provide evidence of his/her original work, or in the case that I have evidence that the student has intentionally plagiarized his/her work:

- the student will automatically fail the given assignment
- the student may fail the course unless, at my discretion, I offer alternative assignments and/or conditions
- I may pursue a plagiarism citation unless, at my discretion, I offer alternative assignments and/or conditions
- the student may receive alternate assignments, etc. to avoid failure. In this instance, all conditions must be met. I need to see evidence of excellent work and effort, and work must be completed

on time.

- all other previously established conditions in the class (i.e. attendance, participation, homework grades, etc.) still stand and can still cause a student to fail the course
- in the case of blatant or egregious offenses, I will not negotiate against course failure and will pursue a University Citation of Plagiarism

Students with Disabilities

Qualified students with disabilities will receive appropriate accommodations in this course. Please speak with me privately after class or in my office. Please be prepared to provide a letter from your DSS Coordinator.

Participation in University Assessment

This course requires an electronic submission (via Moodle) of an assignment stripped of your personal information to be used for educational research and assessment of the university's writing program. Your paper will be stored in a database. This assessment in no way affects either your course grade or your progression at the university

This syllabus is subject to change.